

EXTANT

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2d PRINTING AMERICAN DELIVERY

The ship carrying our container docked in New York sometime in the third week in November. Delayed by customs, it will soon be taken to Steve Factor's factory in New Jersey, where, under the aegis of Bob Lacovara, the boxes will be shipped out. Some subscribers may already have received their books. They may even be a few extra sets for those who failed to subscribe in time. Contact Suan Yong.

Anyone moved to express themselves publicly about their new VIE book set are welcome to use the EXTANT letter bag. The many people who have donated their free time during 5 years (see the volume 44 credit section) will be interested in your views.

THE ELLERY QUEEN VOLUME

The title of the Ellery Queen volume will be:

Strange She Hasn't Written
Death of a Solitary Chess Player
The Man Who Walks Behind

These original titles replace the published titles, which are:

The Four Johns
A Room to Die in
The Madman Theory

The volume will be numbered '14 bis'. It will be approximately 600 pages long.

Work on this volume, in view of progressive evaporation of project structures, depends to a greater degree than usual upon individual dedication. Important and difficult TI work is being done by Chuck King, Rob Friefeld, Steve Sherman and Tim Stretton. Legendary locator Hans van der Veeke, and that prince among women, Deborah Cohen, are doing the Imping. Koen Vyverman and John Schwab are helping with Techno proofing files. Marcel van Genderen, Bob Luckin and Brian Gharst are doing extraordinary CRT work—over which the

spirit of Robin Rouch hovers like a beneficent goddess—, Chris Corley is organizing Post-proofing, Joel Anderson is creating the cover files. John Schwab and I are composing. Bob Lacovara and Suan Yong are managing subscriptions and production planning. This work, as with all the other VIE books, is taking hundreds and hundreds of hours. The effort, like the effort which produced all 44 regular VIE volumes, is being donated, free of charge, to subscribers, for the greater glory of the work of Jack Vance. But as a subscriber to this special VIE volume you not only complete your VIE set, but, also, become an active volunteer, a force in the creation of the volume.

Regarding the stories themselves, Steve Sherman made this comment:

Finished PP on Death of a Solitary Chess Player earlier today and returned bis-161 to Chris. It was my first read of this story, which I find to be entirely Vancean. I was struck by the fact that once again Jack informed the plot with elements from one of his many professions, in this case carpentry. This story refutes once more the canard that Jack is casual in plotting.

Though we hoped to put the book into production by early November, it is clear that this is no longer realistic. The advantage to this delay is that more subscribers will have the opportunity to reserve a volume. We hope to be in production sometime in December, with delivery no later than February.



NOTE FROM THE FRONT: THE FOUR JOHNS

by Rob Friefeld, October 18, 2005

The last of Jack Vance's three Ellery Queen novels is now in Textual Integrity review for publication as a supplement to the Vance Integral Edition. Lucky for all of us, Chuck King's visits to the Mugar Library bore unexpected fruit; he found most of the manuscript for *The Four Johns*. We are now in a position to see exactly what Jack Vance meant when he disavowed this 'tarted up' novel.

'Ellery Queen' was the pseudonym of the writers Daniel Nathan ('Frederic Dannay') and Manfred Lepofsky ('Manfred B. Lee'). They were cousins, Brooklyn boys, and wrote nearly 40 EQ novels together. Their earliest works in the 1930s were written at the height of the deductive crime story craze. Lepofsky died in 1971, Nathan in 1982. I don't know how strong a hand they took in editing Jack's EQ stories—Dannay is said to have played a vigorous role—but without question they were capable of doing a very great deal, much more than the vassarite grammarians we have presumed for the science fiction works. The editors are highly regarded

creative writers. What they did with Jack Vance's manuscript no doubt suited their needs perfectly.

But we want a Jack Vance novel. The MS Chuck has found is clearly not the final version. It contains many of Jack's editing marks, sometimes whole pages crossed out. It would be incorrect to simply restore the entire MS, as seductive as it often is. Many passages seem to have been edited by Jack Vance in his way, and then edited by EQ in theirs. To sort this out, we rely on our experience with Jack's editing tendencies: he rarely adds material, he usually pares—often ruthlessly—to a clearer, cleaner text. He is never cheap or sensational. Where it cannot be sorted out (without picking and choosing words and phrases), my bias is to revert to the MS version. Jack may have improved on it, but it is never 'bad'.

Here is an instructive passage from the MS. I've put [brackets] around a few bits that we tentatively agree were cut by Jack himself:

He reviewed the entire [circumstances of the] affair, from Friday night to the present moment . . . Mary Hazelwood [in his car. Mary Hazelwood with her temple crushed in. A pair of images crossed his mind; Mary Hazelwood as he had seen her a week or so before, superbly clean and pretty in a candy-striped blue, pink and white frock. And Mary Hazelwood] in a rumpled blue suit, stiff and contorted, [features awry,] life gone. He saw again the area of the blow, [with] the odd semi-circular contusion . . . He sipped his drink, heart suddenly pounding. He rose to his feet, went into his bedroom, opened his wardrobe. To the side were a pair of ski boots: heavy objects with cogs on the heel.

Mervyn picked up the right boot. It was in its normal condition. He took it by the toe, swung it down at the bed. The sole was elastic, the heel struck with great force. He examined the left boot—peered closely. A faint dark stain on the cogs? A blonde hair caught in a rough spot. He held the boots closely together, scrutinized them. The left boot was stained. The blonde hair was real.

Mervyn carried the left boot back into the living room. He was aware that police laboratories employed tests of surprising sensitivity to detect the presence of human blood.

Mervyn took the boot to the kitchen sink, washed the heel. He used scouring powder, scrubbed, polished, rinsed. He rubbed the heel with vinegar, then with vinegar and salt, then more scouring powder. Then he dipped the heel in ammonia. He looked at the heel. It seemed clean. But the tests were fantastically sensitive. He turned on the burner of his stove; the gas flame burnt clean and blue. Mervyn held the heel in the flame, scorched it well. Then once more he scoured it, rinsed it, dried it. What of the tests now? Mervyn felt that he had probably defeated them.

He returned to the living room. His eyes felt as if they were full of hot sand. But he had no desire to go to bed. He had uncovered another stratagem, another trap his enemy had arranged for him. Was this the last? What else could there be? . . . He stood swaying with fatigue. There was a prickling sensation at his neck. Mervyn felt uncomfortable. He knew he was being watched. A slight sound? Or his imagination? He whirled, faced the front door, but could not bring himself to fling it open. Suddenly furious, he strode to the front door, swung it open.

The doorway showed blank.

He looked out, right and left, then stepped into the court.

There was no one to be seen. The fountain tumbled in the slanting moonlight.

Mervyn stood quietly a moment listening. No sound. He returned inside, locked the door, turned out the light. He undressed, threw himself down on the bed, and presently fell asleep.

Possibly a little rough, but it works. Look now at the passage as published by Ellery Queen:

He reviewed the entire affair, from Friday night to the present moment. Mary Hazelwood in a rumpled blue suit, stiff, contorted, life gone. He saw again the area of the blow, the odd semicircular contusion. And suddenly, heart pounding, he jumped up and ran into his bedroom and yanked his wardrobe open and snatched from its top shelf his ski boots. He took one of the boots by the toe and dashed over to his bed and swung the boot viciously. The heel struck the white spread with great force, leaving a crescent-shaped indentation in the spread . . . He thought he would faint. But he nerved himself and examined the heel of the boot closely. He could find nothing, and he tossed it aside and peered at the heel of the other boot, the left one. Was that a dark stain on the cogs? Yes! And a wisp of blond hair caught in a roughened cut mark. A blond hair . . . like Mary's.

Mervyn ran back through the living room to his kitchen, carrying both ski boots. His head was a jumble of thoughts: That stain . . . blood . . . must be blood . . . hair . . . Mary's . . . maybe others they'll find under a microscope . . . they can test for blood . . . establish blood type . . . test for hair . . . identify . . .

At the kitchen sink, he washed and washed and washed the heel of the left boot. He used scouring powder, he scrubbed, he polished, he rinsed. Then he rubbed with vinegar. Then he rubbed with salt. Then he rubbed with more scouring powder. Then he dipped the heel in ammonia, rinsed again. But those police-laboratory tests were fantastically sensitive, he told himself. He turned on one of the burners of his range; he held the heel over the clean blue flame and scorched it over and over. And then, once more, he scoured the heel and rinsed it; and finally he dried it.

And then, for good measure, went through the entire process again with the right ski boot. Just in case, he told himself.

He was gasping when he returned to the living room, as if he had run five miles. His eyes felt as if they were full of hot sand.

Sleep was out of the question.

He dropped like a sack of feed on the couch.

So he had caught and balked another trap laid by his enemy. Were there others? There must be others . . .

And suddenly his neck prickled, at the nape.

He was being watched! He knew it . . . There! Wasn't that a slight sound?

Mervyn slewed about on the couch, glaring at his front door, biting his lower lip, flexing his fingers, scarcely breathing. You damn patsy, he said to himself, get up and go over to that door and open it and find out once for all . . . Suddenly he was in a rage. He jumped off the couch, dashed to the door, jerked it open . . .

No one.

He peered out, right, left.

No one.

He actually stepped out into the court and took a deliberate look around. Nothing stirred. The fountain tumbled in the slanting moonlight.

Mervyn stood stock still, listening. All he heard was the fountain and his own raling breath.

So he went back into his apartment and locked his door and snapped off the living-room light and went into his bedroom and undressed quickly in the dark and crept into his bed and pulled the sheet over his head, like a child.

And presently he fell asleep.

It has an effect, certainly, but it isn't Jack Vance. A large part of the novel, over 80%, can be recovered from the MS. In essence, the VIE version will be the first printing of a lost Jack Vance novel.



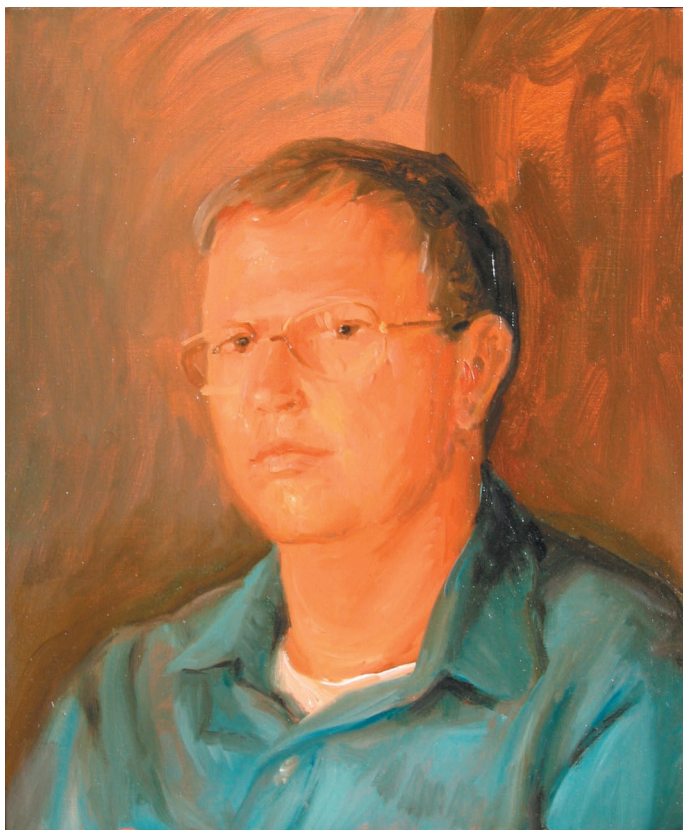
WHO IS BOB LACOVARA?

By Paul Rhoads

When you first lay eyes on him he seems a mild, even a conventional fellow, but soon sallies of unexpurgated sardonic wit plant a seed of doubt. Then, again, you are baffled and disarmed by rambling, self-deprecating accounts of wonderful adventures and misadventures.

One of the world's leading engineers, Bob Lacovara has formed minds at powerful institutions like Stevens Institute of Technology, designed futuristic weaponry for the American Army, and steered missiles and rockets though outer-space. As for the VIE project, after cleverly wrapping me around his little finger and taking up what he called, jocularly I now see, the post of 'second in command', he proceeded to run the show. As titular 'first in command' I had to do huge amounts of scut work. Bob did allow me a few scraps of glory, as well as the steady drenching in tons of virtual offal the position mainly involved. Bob, genuinely fastidious, has taste for neither. The VIE was another payload to guide at its target; 44 books to the homes of over 500 subscribers. The VIE volunteers were the missile.

Bob is dedicated not to appearances but to realities. I found that out the hard way. Let's be frank; Bob seems like an affable, soft-hearted bumbler; in fact he is the opposite: a hardened cynic of unlimited competences. His respect for convention, and sometimes even law, is, shall we say, 'limited'. But, given this capacity for cold-blooded calculation and shameless exploitation, one is surprised at his other qualities; a devoted father of several adopted children, and a hopeless romantic, boyishly thrilled, in mid-life, to marry, his childhood sweet-heart. Bob makes long plans, and carries them out. His friends are a set of



Bob Lacovara , as seen, warily, by Paul Rhoads.

colorful eccentrics, selected by Bob per an utterly personal schedule of criteria, and to whom he opens his heart with rare unreserve. But the dark sides comes out with respect to a carefully maintained enemy-list. These unfortunates are exposed, at need, to the public opprobrium they 'so richly deserve' by means of the *nec plus ultra* point of Bob's facile pen.

Bob is a connoisseur of all the fine things, from cigars to the arts, which makes all the more poignant how, in the course of his *rocambolesque* adventures, and despite his most roguish maneuvers,



Bob's new bride.



When this little smile begins to appear; beware.

he has occasionally escaped with only his shirt. All the rest was lost — temporarily, for Bob Lacovara has pluck. He moves on to the next adventure with his habitual disconcerting mix of naive enthusiasm and flinty-eyed flexibility.

I have long tried to pierce the secret of this extraordinary character. Now I think I have: Bob Lacovara *is* Cugel the Clever. Just put that baby face under a fancy hat . . .



CADWAL AND THE NEW MENACE OF ECOLOGICAL-HEGEMONY

by Paul Rhoads

The collapse of Communism has meant an inevitable weakening of militant atheism, relativism and deviancy promotion—even if all this is not yet fully visible. We are in an era of an ineluctable ideological withering, a retreat of the ensemble of error and high-brow high-jinks designated by that vague though popular term of opprobrium, ‘Leftism’—or, as certain curmudgeons would have it: ‘modernism’. This, and the vigor of the war upon Islamic tyranny, leave me optimistic about the direction of the world. Today’s youth, in its majority, is shaking off the yoke of propaganda and beginning to think for themselves. The world’s intellectual, political and media elite, which have discredited themselves almost beyond hope, are steadily being replaced by new people and techniques not automatically opposed to traditionally held values or common sense.

A cloud, however, does loom on the horizon: global eco-hegemony.

The planet Cadwal was only one world among many. The eco-hegemony of Araminta Station was, therefore, not ‘global’ in the radical sense a 21st century terrian eco-hegemony would be. Even at the height of the struggle on Cadwal disaffected Peefers, supernumerary Agents, and those Yips enterprising enough to procure the means, had other places to go. This escape hatch, or pressure valve, however, did not prevent a war which destroyed at least 70% of the planet’s population. The struggle took place as if there were no other place to go. *The Cadwal Chronicles*, therefore, casts light on the coming struggle against the gathering forces of eco-hegemony.

Given the way the issue is framed in today’s debate, it comes to light in the following apparently extreme question: is global eco-hegemony necessary? Man’s effect on the environment, it is claimed, is both catastrophic and trans-national: the only solution is ‘world governance’—code for a centralized terrian power, a global hegemony. This approach puts great weight on the technical issues; is global warming a fact and, if so, is Man the cause? On the other hand, might the recent warming trend be a blip on a climatological flat-line, or even an anomalous upward incident in a downward trend? If the upward trend is confirmed, is Man indeed the decisive factor or merely a contributing factor, and if the latter to what degree? The eco-hegemonists, and their media relay, are already convinced: the trend is dangerously upward and Man is the decisive factor.

Is this catastrophe scenario true, or merely an alarmist political strategy? Almost 100% of the eco-hegemonists, for example, are also against the war in Iraq. If global warming were as obvious and urgent a matter as they pretend, could its advocates, so to speak, not be recruited across the political spectrum?

Given the vast rewards, of power and prestige, to be reaped by whomever might gain global power, the technical aspect of

the ecological question may not be the decisive one. It is easy to see how the delights of tyranny, so well analyzed by the Greek philosophers, could motivate pretenders to the post of global-Omphaw, even if they had to win the prize through a bog of bogus science. And, even if the most extreme ecological alarmism turns out to be justified, could it not be true that a multilateral, cooperative method, rather than an ominous ‘world governance’, is the best approach? Has not democratic government proved itself the most feasible, ultimately flexible, reactive and successful, of all the bad regimes available in the real world? Complaining that because America will not sign the Kyoto agreement, because a crucial country has frustrated a group effort, that ‘global-governance’ is therefore necessary, is dishonest. The reasoning behind American rejection of Kyoto, which is bi-partisan, are never allowed public exposure. Instead it is assumed, announced, and repeated ad nauseam, that America stands for short-term profiteering at the expense of the global environment on which all depend, including future generations. I am not saying the anti-American allegations are untrue. But should we not at least be exposed to the actual arguments behind the Clinton and Bush rejections of Kyoto—to say nothing of honest reporting about the terms of the proposed treaty itself, as well as how other countries are talking about it, and also how they are actually acting in regard to it?

My comments cannot be understood unless it is understood that I by no means exclude the possible reality of the disaster scenarios. I am personally favorable to environmental awareness and protection. I am, for example, troubled and even scandalized by environmental abuse in the region of France where I live. But I refuse to be manipulated by scare tactics. A few years ago it was proposed to build a small a toxic-waste treatment plant about 5 miles from my house. The proposed site was chosen for reasons that had everything to do with local politics and nothing to do with ecology or even common sense; a strip of floodable wetland in the valley of a minor tributary to the river Vienne. Eventually the plant was built, and has functioned very well, so that those who ignored the alarmism of its opponents (as opposed to those who had a measured opposition on the merits) have been vindicated.* The plant produces neither noise nor bad smell. It is built by the side of the road, a techoshed behind a sightly row of trees, and operates in public

*In France local government is largely financed by business taxes (property taxes are low, thanks to the only recent emergence of a broad middle class—starting in the 50s and 60s). Townships, therefore, try to attract businesses onto their territories. Meanwhile there is a countervailing, and sensible, policy of industrial zones, informed by ecological considerations. But towns which benefit from industrial zones are stingy about sharing resultant revenue with adjacent townships, many of them quite minor. A grotesque example is the vast revenue of the tiny town of Avoine, just north west of Chinon, thanks to the nuclear power-plant. Ironically this plant is called ‘Chinon’, which gives an idea of the relative real importance of Avoine. An insignificant village, it spends its money on absurd municipal decorations (contemporary art ‘fountains’ and such, done and re-done every few years) and extravagantly luxurious infrastructures (pools with wave machines, etc.). Meanwhile useful and important projects. . .

(continued on page 5)

view. Downstream the Negrón flows through the property of some Dutch friends of mine, who have never noticed any pollution; the water is clear and full of life. Not only does this factory cause no pollution, by its nature it reduces it.

What a contrast to the local pig-factory dominating the region, an operation covering many acres, for fattening 14,000 porkers. It is a noisy, malodorous installation; its daylight water-pistol irrigation of feed-corn fields drains the local water-table which damages the local traditional stone buildings by deforming the clay-rich ground through dry-out. It makes liberal use of chemical fertilizer and pesticide, polluting water, killing bees and starving local birds. Along with the subsidized pork (for the pigs cost more to raise than their market value) it produces tons of urine and feces daily. This throwback to the techno-industrial enthusiasm of another era is a genuine ecological menace, but I have never heard any complaints. Such pig-factories are particularly popular in Brittany, and not only make much of that province smell poorly, but agricultural run-off into the ocean, to which they importantly contribute, is now causing a scourge of toxic algae on Atlantic beaches.

This lack of balance, at both national and international levels, does not reassure us regarding the sincerity and competence of eco-doom sayers. But it should not disqualify their argument as such. They still might be correct on the essential issue. But, whatever the truth or gravity of the technical question, the fundamental problem is political.

On Cadwal the Agents of Araminta Station are global hegemonists. They are confronted by three opposing but over-lapping opponents. The Peefers are leftist ideologues who wish to depose the Agents and take control. Under cover of self-proclaimed tolerance and generosity they hope to profit by exploiting the forbidden fruits of Cadwal's resources. The sentiment behind this is natural enough, and no different from Bold Lion's discontent at the interdiction on crystal prospecting. The Omphaw also wishes to destroy the Agents' hegemony. She will transform the resultant anarchy into an unabashed tyranny, wiping away all pretence at nature conservancy. Finally there are the supernumerary Agents. Smonny, the Omphaw, was one. Not all of these, of course, turn to tyranny. Some turn to Peeferism, but most accept their fate, of banishment, with philosophy. Still, they constitute a pressure group whose claims, in the end, got more satisfaction than those of the Yips or the Peefers, with the ultimate loosening of Charter strictures.

for adjacent local areas, often as close to the plant as Avoine itself, remain unfunded. Chinon is no example: it hogs the revenues of its little industrial zone. So several small towns near Chinon but got together to create a common industrial zone, the centerpiece of which is the treatment plant in question. The zone designated is a floodable area on the 'Negrón', a minor stream-valley in the upper part of which I live. Though the new factory is perfectly safe and well managed it would have been more sensible, in order to preserve greater areas of uninterrupted wet-land, to have put in Chinon's industrial zone. But then Chinon would have to share its revenues locally.

This sort of foolishness, of course, is endemic to political relations. The same unwillingness to cooperate has a similar effect on, for example, music education. In previous years, when local music education cooperation was better, there was a regional student orchestra—now a memory. With each local school in a xenophobic huddle-position, none of them is currently doing well.

The argument of the Peefers, in its essential expression, is opposite to the argument of the eco-hegemonists; man is more important than plants and animals. The latter, in the final analysis, should be sacrificed to the former. However, like the eco-hegemonists, the Peefers also warn of a looming world disaster, a disaster which will destroy the world of Araminta Station.

But the Agents, even if they run an ecological hegemony, like the democratic government that will not sign the Kyoto agreement, they are not tyrants. They rule sternly, they put the interests of animals and plants higher than the interests of man, but unlike their opponents they cleave to truth and the rule of law.

The defense of the rule of law on Cadwal hinged on a galactic paper-chase: possession of the Charter and control of the Naturalist Society. But winning these rhetorical prizes did not spare Araminta Station the trouble of a planetary war. So why did they bother? The lost paper chase forced the Peefers into the position of revolutionaries, obliged to invoke allegedly higher principles to break the old law in order to create a new one. And the Agents could not appeal to a higher law without delegitimizing the law they defended.

But this is only part of the reason the Agents did not assert their planetary possession with naked force—expelling the Yips without ceremony and repressing Peeferism without squeamishness. As defenders of the law in place—by interest as well as conviction—in the absence of possession of the Charter and legitimate control of the Naturalist Society, they would not only have had an appearance of illegitimacy but may have failed to sustain the moral energy which only the legitimacy of the rule of law can give to people who do not nourish tyrannical lusts. The ultimate difference between the Agents and their enemies, therefore, is not the philosophy and governmental systems they stand for, but their character.

Still, even if the Agents have good characters—by which I mean genuine dislike of lies and cruelty, allied to real-world competence—can we not, with the cynics, argue that the rule of law is only a polished facade? Is not, as Vance seems to suggest in *The Domains of Koryphon*, all possession and control really based on naked power? The lesson of *The Domains of Koryphon*, however, is not that naked power rules. The outkers may have gained their land by ruse and force; time and generations of good management and a demonstrably benefic influence on the blues, give them a luster of real legitimacy—to say nothing of the poor 'governance' of those they displaced. Rule of law is not a travesty, a civilized mask for naked power. It is, in its way, an aspect, a channel, a projection, of good character and actual goodness. If ownership must be enforced, in the last instance, by ability to defend and keep what one has, that the Outkers do it in ways, and in favor of principles, which are morally and intellectually defensible, gives them a moral energy lacked by the blues and their ideological supporters (the Redemptionist, the SFS and the SEE). The 'authenticity' claims of American Indian tribes, when successful, are quickly frittered away in gambling operations which do nothing to restore their internal pride, outward respect,

or fundamental well-being, to say nothing of a positive contribution to the life of the world. Good use of what one has is part of a true title of ownership.

What is the pertinence of all this to our current situation? The Agents are incorruptible guardians of Cadwal; this is exactly the guise in which our would be eco-hegemonists present themselves. Gorbachev, Gore, Clinton, Ted Turner, the various European green-party leaders might not all be hypocritical would-be tyrants. Some may genuinely believe that human life is menaced in the mid or short-term by human ecological irresponsibility, and that 'world governance' is the only hope. Their denunciation of greed-driven industry heedlessly destroying the air and water upon which human and other life depends may be sincere, rather than populist hysteria-mongering. I do not doubt that some people are eager to make money at any cost to the environment or by any violation of the rights and aspirations of people, but that all or even a majority of business-men are so low and crass I cannot credit. There may be an inherent 'logic' to so called 'capitalism' (which is what else than investing, buying, producing and selling?) which feeds the profit motive, but business-men do more than count up gold coin in closed rooms. They notoriously work with other people of all kinds, and may have more opportunity, and even motivation, than their cerebral accusers, to be aware of, and sympathetic to, their needs and aspirations of people. Such things as the Ford Foundation suggest that at least some capitalists have more than a cash-register in their heads. Furthermore the government power and social programs dear to the eco-hegemonist depend on a vigorous economy. If president Chaves of Venezuela did not have petro-dollars to buy popularity he would either be democratically replaced by a more sensible person or be forced to nakedly tyrannical action in all areas. So unless one proposes a rejection of today's society in favor of return to a 19th century rurality where 90% of the population works the land with hand-tools, there must be at least compromise with the contemporary economic-industrial system; but the failure of controlled economies to sustain themselves is a fact the eco-hegemonists (many of whom regret the failure of Communist Russia) still refuse to confront.

There is another vision, a techno-eco-utopia in which we continue to benefit from technological advance, with all its comfort and speed, but in harmony with the environment. This world is a sort of park where everyone lives in small houses roofed with solar panels. But how do the people get to the shopping mall to buy vitamin pills and sanitary napkins? Where are the mines, factories, transportation infra-structures and concentrations of workers assembling the robots who will assemble the cell phones, or launching the broadcast satellites to keep this neo-rural population indoctrinated against the temptation of mucking-up the place with cross-country motor-bikes or diverting rivers to fill swimming-pools? The real choices include 1) unchecked development, 2) a return to primitive conditions, or 3) a moderated, more eco-conscious but still 'developmental' path. The latter has no resemblance to a utopian park-future. It would be much like the situation of today, with

ongoing urbanism and heavy metallurgical, chemical and manufacturing industries, as well as individual transportation (cars) and global communication technologies which structure and drive so much of our current situation. The difference between choices 3 and 1 would only be a higher degree of ecological consciousness, but this is already partially developed, at least in the 1st world.

By naming the eco-hegemonists I am not proposing a conspiracy theory. I am not claiming these people are working behind closed doors, making un-holy alliances and quietly seizing power. I am responding to what they are doing and saying in public.

The current bid of the United Nations, supported by the European Union, to take control of the Internet, is not obviously driven by an eco-hegemonic agenda, but it runs in the same direction: toward global governance. The European Union is currently seeking to digest the governments of 26 nations in the acid of its belly. And EU extremists, though they use the UN to relay their anti-Americanism (mostly for reasons of internal national politics), see the EU as node of an eventual global authority.

Human technological advance has made the world a single theater. ICBMs, and satellite observation and communication technology, reduce international war to a mere problem of tactics, and the Pax Americana reigning on the high seas has turned the globe into a single market zone. So the technical basis of global governance—the ability to observe and control the whole world from a single point—are in place.

It is not fear of an occult conspiracy, but the sheer logic of our situation which prompts vigilance.

How does the story of determined resistance by the eco-hegemonist Agents of Araminta Station to the Peefers and Yips, help us understand our situation? First, as already indicated, the Earth, like Cadwal, is potentially in a situation of global hegemony; the technological structures await only a political development. The technical arm of the Cadwal hegemony was only Bureau B's handful of air-cars and projacs; these advantages, in the situation of Cadwal, made the Agents masters of Cadwal, just as the American navy, ICBMs, and observation and communication satellites, reduce the earth to a globe, which it is imaginable, from a technical point of view, to control totally. The crucial analogy is political.

The political struggle on Cadwal was not over whether or not there would be hegemony, or a single global authority. The Naturalist and Peefers never tried to wrest control of Throy from Araminta Station to set up a separate regional authority, and the efforts of the Yips to colonize the Marmion foreshore were never a bid to create an autonomous enclave there but a provocation aimed at destabilizing and challenging Araminta Station's hegemony. The de facto autonomy of Yipton, including satellites like the secret submarine base or the recreational center on Thurben Island, rested on the flimsy foundation of the irresponsibility and negligence of the Agents. Against Araminta Station's position there were only two possibilities: invasion by an army of blood-thirsty Yips to create a power vacuum which would

be instantly and totally filled by the Omphaw, and the Peefer strategy to take power by political means. But the Peefer political maneuver depended on the Yips. Without controlling them directly the Peefers channeled the Yip menace in their own favor. The Yips, as human beings and as the majority, had a right to live in the wide spaces of Deucas. If this right were not respected the Yips, said the Peefers, would spill over onto the continent and live in a way that would destroy Cadwal's ecology.

The Peefer plan was to open Deucas to the Yips in a controlled and ecologically correct manner. Deucas would first be organized into domains. The Yips would then be progressively transferred to these domains, as their development required. This controlled displacement would defuse the Yip menace by integrating them into an apartheid system, certainly more advantageous than life on Lutwen atoll, but which would keep control, dominance, and irresponsible destruction of the planet, and its eco-system, out of their reach. The domains would generate wealth which would reinforce Peefer control. The new power, much greater than anything the Agents wielded, would then be used to deport ecologically supernumerary Yips, useless in the domains.

This situation is hauntingly like the current situation of the EU with respect to African migrants and the USA with respect to central and south American migrants. The Marmion foreshores of the EU and the USA are being invaded by a steady stream of Yips. The recent tactic of simultaneous rushes by hundreds of eager Africans at the border fences of the Spanish enclave Melia, on north African territory, are a suggestive presage of Smonny's planned invasion of Araminta Station.

Meanwhile, like Bureau B, the EU and the USA are, on the one hand, pushing these people back, and on the other, like Bureau D, using them as 'temporary' and 'cheep' labor.

It is true that these Yips do work which otherwise would not be done. At Araminta Station, in the absence of Yip labor, the wineries and tourist lodges would have remained plans. But this does not mean such work is 'necessary'. In fact it is generated by their presence. That there is work for newcomers is not logically related to the idea that there are not enough local people to do that work. In other words, that I could have a personal valet dressing me each morning if someone were willing to do it at a wage I could afford, does not mean that I do not enjoy the services of a valet because there are 'not enough workers' where I live. However, more people does mean at least potential new work—at least in places like America, Europe, or at Araminta Station.*

Why, it may be asked, do these Yips not do such work in their Yiptons? Some of the work done by immigrants is not our scut-work, but high-level stuff like doctoring. Is not such work needed, desperately, in the Yiptons? In *The Cadwal Chronicles* this mystery is made clear: Yipton is not merely over-crowded, it is totally corrupt. No proper business activity is possible. Little is said about it by our politically correct elites

but this matter, including sometimes formidable Yipton-like over-crowding, is the situation in the Yiptons many African and south Americans wish to escape. Furthermore as Vance, unfashionably but pertinently, observes; not all these Yips have a good attitude. It is one thing to desire greater freedom and prosperity, it is another to have the education and habits (of responsibility, work and cooperation) upon which success in the West depends.

The eco-hegemonists, once again quitting the terrain of ecology, and with unsettling exactitude, use the Peefer method. They insist that Yip pressure is ineluctable and our societies must mutate to accommodate the incursion. Whether or not, like the Peefers, they dissemble plans for personal domains on the basis of Yip labor, the eco-hegemonists are likewise multi-culturalists who favor open borders. The private domains, however, are without doubt being built—in the form of multi-national corporations, through energetic exploitation of cheep over-seas and imported labor which, in the final analysis, is arbitrage of regional differences of standard of living. The Agents also took advantage of Yip poverty; Lutwen atoll was for them not a 'source of labor' but a 'source of cheep labor'. The eco-hegemonists, while willing to reap local political advantage by decrying painful displacements in the West caused by creation of these private domains—and denouncing the processes of globalization—and whatever personal fingers they may have in the pie, they are certainly covering the operation with energetic labelling of 'fascist' and 'xenophobe' anyone who urges closing borders to cheep labor, or cheep foreign goods, or deporting illegals.

There is no stopping such labeling, but support of extant laws of trespass, however viewed by Peefer ideologues, is in fact support of the rule of law. The Agents of Araminta Station, whatever their faults, are such supporters. Their situation being desperate, the character of their action is strongly etched but, in the moment of their triumph and the consequent context of their tranquil domination of the planet, they show themselves flexible enough to multiply the area and population of Araminta Station by 10, in favor of supernumerary Agents and the less politically dangerous Naturalist of Stroma.

The tactic of Araminta Station regarding illegal immigration is clear: strong and dedicated support of the rule of law—in particular unflinching enforcement of borders and unabashed deportations, even on a massive scale, with some eventual flexibility.

But even if this clarifies an aspects of the strategy of the eco-hegemonists, does not address the menace they pose as such. *The Cadwal Chronicles* does not presents an absolutely parallel analogy to our present situation but it does evoke a situation which will eventuate once an eco-hegemony is established; an eco-hegemony will resort to the very 'fascist', or strong-arm strategies in the defense of plants and animals which the Agents in fact used. How will eco-hegemonists, so quick to call advocates of the rule of law 'fascist', behave when, once in power, they are faced with the looming dilemma which *The Chronicles* so deftly explores? It is already notorious that the energy

* Arguments around this problem are often based on projected collapse of western retirement systems. But that there might not be enough future workers to support future retirees in the style to which they feel entitled changes nothing. Of course there may be 'not enough workers' to fulfil this or that plan, or hope, or possibility. This does not make doing so 'necessary' in more than a relative sense.

hunger of both China and India risks to dwarf our current ecological problems by several orders of magnitude, both technically and politically. Certain naive eco-hegemonists have placed their hopes in the famous 20 to 30 year deadline for petroleum reserve depletion. But this will only inaugurate a neo-coal era, reserves of which remain vast. Renewed exploitation of coal will probably remain cheaper, and of course be dirtier, than utopian solar power, while the electric energy available from responsible use of nuclear energy will probably remain difficult to exploit for personal transportation—the major factor in air pollution. In any case opposition to nuclear energy is a cardinal point in the ecologist credo, so it may not be a politically viable technology for an ecological tyranny.

If the world is indeed menaced by ecological disaster, the emergence of China and India threaten to make the situation politically inextricable. A quick coup, by the eco-hegemonists, might seem the most hopeful perspective. Once world control is achieved the eco-hegemony would save the planet by forcibly curtailing 3d world development and, in compensation, equitably sharing first world wealth. Meanwhile their new and stringent norms of mineral, air, water and energy management would necessitate draconian oversight of technological development. This would antagonize three quarters of the planet's population. Only the remaining quarter, net-beneficiaries of the new order—the least educated and most poverty-stricken among the world's population—would remain as an eco-hegemony power base. What other choices would the eco-hegemonists have but to recruit these gleeful savages into 'green shirt' eco-enforcement brigades?

It is easy to foresee how this scenario would quickly dry up the world's creative forces, with a consequent slide into primitivism. It is a sequence of events which might find approval among some of the Fellows of the Institute, though it is hard to see how it favors maintenance of man's basic humanity.

Even if this eco-hegemonic perspective is plausible, how, in the first place, are the eco-hegemonists going to maneuver themselves into global power? Until they gain control of the American armed forces, the world's stock of nuclear warheads, as well as satellite and internet observation and communication systems, their means are limited to propaganda. Most of these technical ingredients are currently controlled by the American government. The potential leverage of, for example, the Clintons and Ted Turner should be assessed in that light. A second Clinton presidency, in alliance with a supportive media and a disciplined European block, after shutting down the internet, talk radio and Fox News, and fanaticizing the American population with ecological alarmism, they could seek to intimidate China and India (in collusion with renascent imperial Russia under Putin) with overwhelming nuclear force. It will be no problem finding scientists to prove that a one-time nuclear holocaust in eastern Asia will pose no planetary ecological threat. Any attempt to mount a civil war in America would be quickly mastered by today's professional army. Putin and other regional dictators would be offered governorships more bloated than anything they could enjoy without support from a planetary hegemony. While these

governors indulged in sybaritic excess unprecedented in world history, the central authority would constitute itself as a priestly class of an analgesic cult of Gaia, while running ecological-social experiments on a scale Lewin Barduus never dreamed of. The nations would disappear and the peoples, slipping back into a pre-industrial state, would reconfigure as feudal groups. World affairs would stagnate at the level of petty struggle among local satraps. The common ruck, no longer a player, would scratch the earth in desperate search for sustenance.

Hopes placed in eco-hegemony are not merely futile. Eco-hegemony must be opposed by all who value liberty and human flowering. This brave resolve, however, does not address the technical aspect of the ecological problem.

Transport off Cadwal is easy; there are an infinity of possible destinations. Though subject to an eco-hegemony it is only one planet in the multitudinous Gaeian Reach—to say nothing of the Beyond. Cadwal's total population would fill only one mid-sized city on contemporary Earth. Vance never envisages a situation of absolute hegemony. Total hegemony—stunted and abhorrent—finds no place in the characteristically vancian freedom of infinity, with its relentless variety and multiplicity. If this is a positive value than the multiplicity of societies, as such, and thus of governments, should be protected and persevered on Earth. Global hegemony should be opposed less because it is an evil in itself—positive reasons can be invoked in its favor, such as efficacious centralized management of the ecological problem—but to defend variety.

Which brings us back to the ecological solution suggested at the beginning: multi-lateral studies, negotiations, agreements and cooperation. But for debate on the technical issues to be successful, it must be honest. If many governments are to agree upon, and then enforce, multi-lateral engagements, agreements must be built on a foundation of truth and mutual interest; they must be honest.

Our ecological crisis will doubtlessly require sacrifice. That will be more likely, and eventually successful, on the basis of willing and informed consent rather than compulsion. But if ecological progress depends upon democracy, rather than tyranny, imposition of democracy, or ridding the world of tyranny, would be a pre-condition. This process, with varied success, has been going on for the last half century, under American leadership. It seems obvious, for example, that an eventual democratic government in, say, Iraq, would be more receptive to ecological cooperation than the previous regime with its dreams of regional dominance. It also seems likely that an eventually democratic China, however nationalist and aggressive, would at least be more honest and reliable than the current regime. Unlike the neo-emperors currently running the old Han empire, democratic rulers would depend upon, and thus be responsive to, an electoral base, while a loyal opposition would encourage hard work. When the population becomes a real factor in determining its own fate, it can weigh its own interests, rather than having them determined by some gun-slinging communist ideologue.

For these famous reasons, and for all their flaws,

democracy has been regarded by the wise, since Aristotle,* as superior to other possible regimes.

This conventional, or even naive, praise of democracy is not meant to hide its flaws. Unlike dictatorships, controlled by a single unified will, they can be dangerously sluggish, and democratic populations, like their fellows under tyrants, are not immune to the lure of imaginary glitter conjured by sugar-tongued rhetoricians. Still, in the final analysis, democratic people, by their personal and daily interests, are regularly recalled to awareness that the course of events weighs and depends upon them, upon their own intelligence (or discernment of which course is best for themselves and their nation) and character (or willingness to make efforts and sacrifices when necessary).

So, as it applies to the eco-hegemonists, I see the message of *Cadwal* this way: in order to make progress toward greater ecological awareness on a world scale, without destroying human flowering, we should promote democratic government, both inside and outside each nation, and weaken anti-democratic forces and their ideologies. Glawen's famous conversation with Dame Clytie suggests, also, that the current level of leftist propaganda in which we swim, like salmon trying to navigate a polluted river, may be a luxury we can no longer afford. Diminishing it, without compromising democracy, is a matter which, like rule of law, reposes on the problematic of individual character.



METAPHYSICAL SPAM:

THE BUTCH McDONALD MEMORIAL FUND

by *Matty Paris*

The Butch McDonald Memorial Fund is the perfect charity. It sets out to do nothing. It hopes for nothing. It has no intents or goals. It has no personality. It can neither succeed nor fail since it both sets out, and manages, to accomplish nothing.

Butch McDonald himself is a fiction who hardly deserves a memorial; he has never existed. In a world where memory is mostly an odium and an homage to pain, when one thinks of the legendary and celebrated Butch McDonald we all can be grateful; there is nothing to remember.

If we are asking for funds—all of your funds—even hoping you will go into debt and bankruptcy to fuel our Byzantine financial machines, we are merely requesting from you a currency which also no longer has any reality—if it ever did: *entre nous*, how real is a dollar?

*The term 'democracy' as used today—strictly speaking, 'modern democracy'—does not, as a certain line of propaganda would have it, indicate the 'regime of the demos', or 'rule by the poor', of classical Athens. Aristotle called our modern form of democracy a 'mixed regime', because all parts of society, what we call the different classes (the rich, the poor, the aristocrats, the kings) cooperate. No class excludes the others; each limits itself to partial control. The disadvantages and advantages of a mixed regime are obvious, chief among the latter being that the strength of the whole society is always mobilized.

In a sense, if you send it to us, your money will vanish utterly, much as it will, in turn, disappear from our underworld coffers into some equally imaginary lightless realm not only beyond your ken but even leagues outside our own audacious speculations, an ebon kingdom more unthinkable than gnome-ridden Zurich or the supposedly sunny Cayman Islands.

But if Butch McDonald is only a fiction, and not even an interesting one but a dense bolus of stale hamburger banalities, how real are you? How much of your apparent character is an equivocal legacy from sinister strangers?

How materially stable is the very fund itself? We are massy siphons of nothing going nowhere. We can be as imaginary as we choose in a world where even the rulers are invisible, or dead, since we are weightless vessels holding nothing, carrion monsters devouring raw credit, aery swine of the nether stars beyond the indigo Doppler-belt gobbling down emptiness. In fact, unlike you we are the perfect consumers. You probably work at some meaningless, fey labor for your income; we wait for you to contribute it to us out of some ineluctable cosmic fatigue.

Thank you again for your charity, even if when you give us all your lucre you are merely bountiful with a parcel of ether. Yet, in the end, and with a kind of primal desperation, we want you to send us nothing. It doesn't matter either, to you, or even to us, who we are, what our address is, what our hopes, amorous tastes and scurvy material woes might be. Perhaps yours matter even less than ours. Think it over.

We, and you, are free of all that past dross. We are ready to swallow, and atomize into, something less than the dust of nothingness itself. Since you are only able to send us an impeccably true nothingness, and though we revel in the midnight troves of our starry keeps, we never have do so. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you!

Thank you for nothing.

yours,

Butch McDonald Junior



TALKING ABOUT LURULU

ON THE VANCE-BBS

The generally luke-warm reception of *Lurulu* was evoked by newbies on the VanceBBS. Banned from posting there myself, Steve Sherman thoughtfully pointed these folk to Cosmopolis #57. Steve wrote:

I think the best critique that I have read of Ports of Call/Lurulu is that of Paul Rhoads . . . entitled 'How to Praise Lurulu' . . . I think Paul has, by comparing 'Ports of Call — Lurulu' to some of the greatest works of world literature, placed Vance in his proper context. He is not merely an exceptional and unique genre writer: he is a Writer of Greatness, who deserves to be mentioned in the context of Cervantes, Ovid, Chaucer and Swift.

As Paul is not permitted to post here (a situation to which I continue to object), I feel it my duty to offer this pointer to an article that, whatever you may think of its author, uniquely places Vance's accomplishment where it belongs in the pantheon of the world's great literature.

Patrick Dusoulrier confirmed this recommendation:

I cannot but agree with Steve: Paul's article is excellent. Complex, intricate, erudite, involuted. Well worth reading.

However, the editor of COSMOPOLIS 57 himself, Derek Benson, saw fit to make this disobliging remark:

Paul may have written some good stuff in his 'Lurulu' review (I'm not rereading it to find out) but for my money the piece is worthless, as I do not consider Mortality to be the major theme of the book(s). Not really even a minor theme either, no more so than in any of his other works. So to me, at least, Paul has missed the whole point or doesn't understand the book(s) or whatever.

It is, again, disappointing that someone with whom I shared such a productive working relationship should show himself so small-minded; for even assuming that mortality is not the major theme, might not an essay be interesting none-the-less for other reasons? Since Derek will not read it he will remain in no position to say, or whatever.

From the point of view of VIE volunteers, whose primary aim is promotion of the work of Jack Vance, is not any positive view of *Lurulu*, even those which may not be of the most value, if not worth support, at least worth not attacking gratuitously?



GRILLED DOG

More nuncupatory rhymed reaction to doings on the VanceBBS and around the VIE project.

A MAN OF SUPERIOR INTELLEGEANCE TRIPS*

*Jantiff trudged to Ballad,
No damsons dared he steal,
He huddled in a shelter
And struggled for a meal.
Wading all a-shiver
In to the icy foam,
Jantiff lugged a bucket
For percepts deep to comb.*

* The above was inspired by the following verse, published on the VanceBBS, by the superior man himself:

<i>The waitress he was handsome He wore a powder blue cape I ordered some suzette, I said "Could you please make that crepe"</i>	<i>He didn't say very much, seemed a distant sort of fella As he handed me the menu, His nails looked kinda yellor.</i>
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*So it went with Jantiff,
A hero out of Vance.
How went it then with Smartin,
A zero in a trance?
A first class flight to Lima,
A four-star Hyatt Inn,
Smartin ate off china
And nicely wiped his chin.
The percepts on the menu
Were a trifle high:
Would he try 'em, would he like 'em,
Or if he did so, why?*

*A subject for reflection
Is Smartin's fare of choice;
It is a little subject
To which he gave his voice.
Indeed we might reflect
On penny-pinching wags,
Who novelties deflect
And Lady Chance unbags;
But since he's always fart'n
his lies and slanders out,
'How Jantiffish is Smartin?'
I do not dare recount.*



MARINATION OF A BREAM

*Aesthetic abstraction: 'gallery seen'.
Gut satisfaction: 'calorie bean'.
Condemned man's reaction: 'pillory spleen'.
Leftist attraction: 'Hillary-Dean'.
Fiscal prediction: 'salary lean'.
Ghost-written fiction: 'Ellery Queen'!
Poetic emetic, pell-mellery glean;
Reaction pathetic: raillery keen?*



LETTER BAG

Reacting to Michael Parson's article in EXTANT #7, Paul Rhoads wrote:

I . . . was particularly taken with your point about the 'cult', how it weaved itself into Tchai society, and how Rieth is hounded about it. The sociological aspect, rather than the religious, is what caught my attention in particular. It seems like an amazing conception on Jack's part, and I had never made the observation.

Your religious point seems to be a commentary on Reith's remark about not putting a face on the unknown. This stance, however, is problematic. There seem to be several implications to a faceless unknown. Could one not say that the 'face of the unknown' might

also be called the 'shape of the unknown'? In other words what really counts is not so much the formalities or traditions which garnish it but the metaphysical conceptions which drive them or derive from them — no? Reith's definition of aetheism seems to be a sort of dieism without god.

Michael Parsons responded:

[TCHAI is] a most amazing story, and yes, I was indeed dealing with religion in its mere sociological aspect there. Adam's story is profound, even if one just looks at religious change, missionary work, in society on the terms the story presents them. I was astounded by it, and read it several times.

As to the metaphysics, and facing that realm of 'nothing' I harked back in my mind to Cosmopolis articles on Heidegger and existentialism. Mr. Vance as the guide and myth-maker for our current predicament.

Adam's point about not putting a "face" on the Cosmic Nothing is far beyond my investigation at the moment; it might be Taoist: ultimate Being, the Way, the Tao cannot be known or described? Is that atheism?

Or is he looking to formulations of an ultimate, defined human projection on to the empty and unresonating cosmos? ("God made man in His image") which on Tschai he could not describe safely? Was he just ducking the question? The Christian contrast between secret and open teaching is clear: be open and you unsheath the sword. I will have to think more about that, and don't feel I have anything useful to say at the moment. I may very easily be going well beyond the text.

So Yes I did stick largely to the (amazing) sociological elements, and then relieved religion of any truth-claims in the story by shifting Truth to the realities of hindsight, to History, that judge of us all.

In doing that I was fascinated at the same time by the IOUN stones found at the edge of nothing in Rhialto's tales, and which seem to give the wizards their power of creation: are these stones the symbolic stories, the "metaphysical conceptions" which re-create our world for us when a religion dies? which let us walk on in utter darkness? Step beyond the edge of the world? like those glowing footsteps in Foreverness that Adam trod, when he challenged the would-be finalisers of his story? Make us bearers of a new culture and new values, with power to hold the old at bay?

It all raises more speculations than I have been able to deal with. Those IOUN stones interest me greatly, though.

One further thought, which may tie in with Reith's remarks about not putting a human face on an empty cosmos: he does not see universals as embodied in particular instances, but the other way round. He does not end slavery-in-general, but frees this or that slave as occasion arises (the Flower of Cath for example). He does not try to end war-lordism in general, but destroys the Gnashers as opportunity offers; and would have been willing to go on his way and leave them, had they not kidnapped his girl. His action is concrete, particular, rooted in his interaction with the human and non-human substrata he finds around him.

People must look to their own salvation: Zap was willing to explore possibilities (the narrative several times remarks on her unexpected adaptability) Ylin-Ylan wasn't. When confronted with something indescribably disastrous, a transvaluation of their values, nor were the Dirdir: they accepted his challenge to their judgement and were beaten on their own terms, like a beetle in a trap it could never understand.

Perhaps we are shown that language has a deceptive logic embedded in it: it flatters us by describing our conduct as an instance of something universal, even though it is not.

For example "Breakfast" might be a general concept, but its meaning is written-in by a vast array of different traditional and cultural inheritances (Reith faces some tough meals as a result). How much more must that be true of "goodness"?

THE FRENCH CONNECTION

Patrick Dusoulier has all but finished the french translation of *Lurulu*, which will be published by *Fleuve Noir* in their *Rendez-vous d'ailleurs* science-fiction line. Patrick is also working on the translation of several stories never yet published in France, for *Le Béal*, who has already re-published much Vance, such as the recently re-translated *Big Planet* in its full version.



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PAUL RHOADS

Contact EXTANT:

prhoads@club-internet.fr
paulrhoads@wanadoo.nl
emeraldofthewest@yahoo.fr

Letters and articles welcome.

