
EXTANT

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#10

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VIE PROJECT UP-DATES

VOLUME '14BIS'

As of mid-January all three EQ texts have at last been composed. The final text, *Strange She Hasn't Written* (previously published as *The 4 Johns*), is currently in CRT and PP. A special group of Imps, under 'legendary locator' Hans van der Veeke, has done yeoman's work on a text boasting 2,392 notes. They are: Mike Dennison, Donna Adams (VIE volunteer #1) and Joel Hedlund. Hans reports that all three caught errors in each other work, leaving a total of only 4 outstanding problems, subsequently resolved by Chuck King, Rob Friefeld and Tim Stretton, responsible for TI. This TI job, as has been mentioned (see EXTANT #8), was one of the toughest of all. I have by no means reviewed all 2,392 notes but it seems that VIE standards were steadily up-held in the face of multitudinous temptations and traps proffered by the source material. It is, sadly, impossible to return to Vance's actual final intentions in the case of this text, but the new VIE version, created at a cost of hundreds and hundreds of man-hours, nourished by 5 years of accumulated VIE experience, probably takes us 90% of the way.

That said, I am not perfectly happy with the TI work, for reasons of formality, because the proper notation protocol

was not respected. This specifies that text proposed for replacement be specifically cited in the note itself, not merely highlighted in the text and referenced with the end-note marker. The reasons for this are many. First of all highlighting is not a fully stable feature across all work platforms, a weakness which the international VIE work teams have frequently had to cope with. Next, the relation of an end-note markers position to the text feature it references is unavoidably fluid and vague; when textual problems are multi-layered and imbricated this problem is compounded. I have spent many hours repairing end-notes in many texts I have worked on, since the need for this tedious procedure was never fully understood throughout the TI team. The result for *Strange She Hasn't Written*, is that the cor-bf does not respect the reversability principle stipulated by the Master Plan. To undo, or even to study, any implemented TI proposition it becomes necessary to return to earlier v-texts, but these all have different end-note structures because, at each iteration of the v-text, notes are added or subtracted.

I have insisted that the *Strange She Hasn't Written* TI team participate in PP since they are best placed to notice missing text or confused implementation of their directives due to their faulty procedure.

With luck volume '14bis' will be in print no later than February, and delivered in March. Spare us a thought as we continue to slog, unpaid, in the muddy trenches.

EXTRA VIE BOOK-SETS AND SPARE VOLUMES

The VIE holds a few extra sets, and some spare books. I am not sure what the disposition of these will be. I have been urging those who control these sets to expedite their distribution among those who subscribed too late.

In addition to these sets, there various other extra sets, and extra individual volume. These are either held by individuals, such as myself, who purchased extra sets. I have 4 extra sets I will eventually put on sale, but I am not alone. There are 3 types of VIE sets. The first type might be called the 'first printing': it includes 22 'Wave 1' volumes printed by 'Sfera', and 22 'Wave 2' volumes printed by 'Areagroup'. There are about 500 sets of this type in existence. Then there is the second printing, of which there are about 100, all of which are printed by 'Zones'. These three designations, Sfera, Areagroup and Zones, are only administrative differences: in fact the same people printed and bound most of the books: all the books were printed by Globalprint. All Sfera and Areagroup volumes, and some Zones volumes, were bound by Torriani, but many Zones volumes, because of the Torriani strike, were bound

in smaller binderies in Colognio Italy.

In spite of our two test volumes (*Coup de Grace and Other Stories*, and *Languages of Pao and The Dragon Masters*) as the project went forward the volumes continually increased in quality, though the improvements are all subtle. In some of the Sfera volumes the print is not as dark as it might be, and the spines are not as rounded. Thus the Zones volumes tend to be the most satisfying over-all, though in fact many Sfera and Areagroup volumes are indistinguishable in quality from the best Zones volumes.

Finally, there is a third category of book set: these are hybrid sets made from left-over Sfera, Areagroup and Zones volumes, sometimes including damaged reject volumes which have been repaired. I am not sure how many of these sets there are exactly, probably less than 15. There were some leftover limitation sheets, which were included in the volume 44 of these sets, and marked with EX ('extra') numbers, starting at 'EX1'. These will be put for sale, probably on E-bay, though sale could probably be arranged through EXTANT (see contact addresses at the end of this issue). Most of these sets are in Italy.

The remaining extra volumes will also probably be put up for sale on E-bay, or might be sold directly. EXTANT, in this case, might serving as a clearing house.



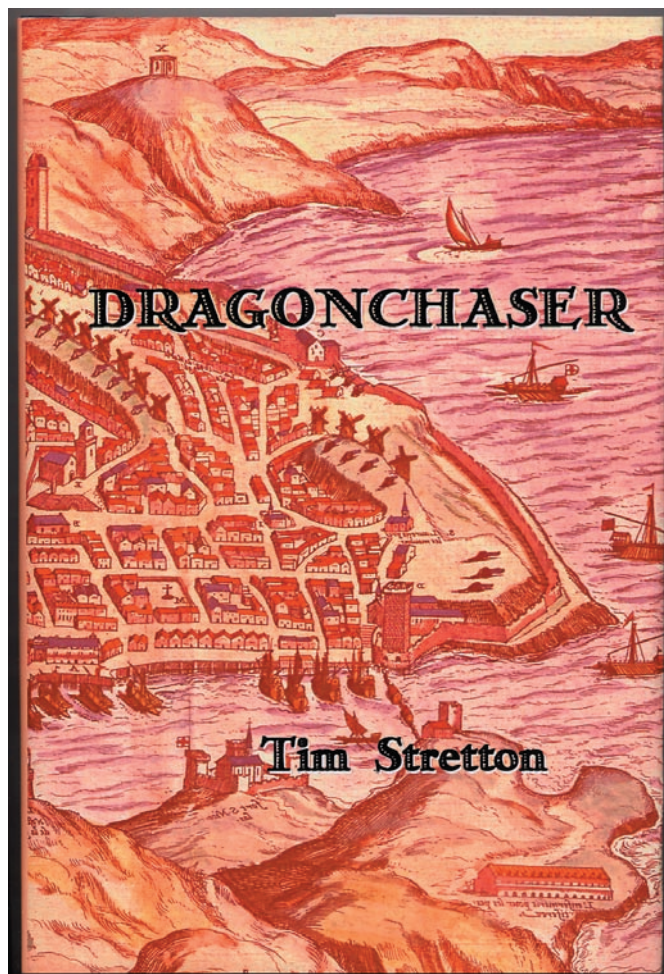
GALLEY RACING AND MERMAIDS

If the self-respecting reviewer could bring himself to use the phrase as 'a thrilling yarn of intrigue, adventure and romance', he might, with both economy and exactitude, summarize Tim Stretton's new novel *Dragonchaser*. But such a reviewer, lacking this option, inconveniently must resort to circumlocution, and there is no way neatly to encapsulate the multi-layered ballet which Stretton has concocted.

Captain Mirko Ascalon, renegade of the redoubtable Garganet navy, catches a dragon by the tail, even several at once. Most prominent among them is *Dragonchaser* herself, a racing galley unbeaten for many seasons. Popular enthusiasm for *Dragonchaser* is the lever by which the unscrupulous grandee, the Peremptor of Paladria, Geidrus of House Luz, maintains his popularity among

the unenfranchised great-unwashed and, thanks to this precarious sporting supremacy, holds his post. So when the ambitious Bartazan of Bartazan House offers the obscure and impecunious Ascalon the captaincy of the Bartazan galley, *Serendipity*, the forthright seaman finds himself in the eye of a political storm he lacks both the local culture and devious personality to confront.

Unlike *Dragonchaser*, *Serendipity* is not at the top of her form. Her crew is a heterogeneous set of discouraged slaves. Her helmsman owes his position to nepotism. And yet, to humble the House of Luz and avenge himself upon his enemies, Bartazan requires that Ascalon beat



Dragonchaser in the Margariad, the great annual race. As winner popular sentiment would tilt in Bartazan's favor, generating pressures certain grand electors could not resist. Ascalon understands none of this, and the proud and rigid Bartazan allows no scope for those adjustments without which a win in the Margariad is impossible. As determined as he is naive, Ascalon eventually takes a flexible approach. But he is not alone in his efforts to influence the outcome of the Margariad, and most of the others care nothing for sport. Indeed, Paladria is rife with plots, spies, and blade-wielding lurkers. The spies sometimes take seductive forms, but here Ascalon turns out to have an advantage

when his straightforwardness strikes a forgotten chord in their cynical breasts. With one thing, and then another, Captain Ascalon's professional, and also his personal life, become terribly complicated.

If it is not untrue to say that the mood and action of *Dragonchaser* has something in common with works of Jack Vance such as *Cugel the Clever* on the one hand, or *Tschai* on the other, this does not close the question. If a sinister aura of magic, 'the Old Craft', hangs over Paladria, if a brutal and enervating religion poisons the Paladrian spirit, if the story is leavened with constant flashes of humor, *Dragonchaser* is as much a contemporary novel of sentimental psychology as an exotic machiavellian gavotte.

Ascalon must learn both the winds and currents of the Bay of Paladria as well as the mysterious and treacherous flows of Paladrian politics, but in the end he is confronted with the greatest problem of all; the conundrum of his own personality. Stretton endows his characters with a power of introspection, an interest in the movements of their own souls, which has nothing vancian, but it is an aspect of inspiration which carries its own conviction:

"I didn't have to tell you this," she said, her voice throbbing with emotion. "The easiest and best thing for me would just be to let you fall in love with her. And of course you would; she's young, she's beautiful, she's charming — how could you resist her? I could just let it happen, and she'd break your heart and I wouldn't care and none of it would matter and I'd just move on to wrecking other people's lives and tell myself that it's all for the best . . ."

The unrelenting multi-faceted intrigue comes into focus at the races leading up to the Margariad, which Stretton makes as exciting as a match of hussade or hadaul. But a major aspect in the fabric of the narrative is the humor, which is of certain vancian cast:

"Do you know the residence of the Lady Catzendrall?"
The driver, with a dark saturnine face and a great beak of a nose, sniffed thoughtfully.
"She lives at Darklings, the House Drall estate."
"Take me there — and smartly."
"This rattlejack knows but one speed, having but a single pacer to draw it. You may call it 'smartly', you may call it 'tardy', but our speed never varies."
Mirko sighed. He could do without a philosopher at the reins, but the rattlejack trade seemed to attract them.
[. . .]
A wood of high manzipar trees loomed on the left. "We're here", said the driver. "This is Darklings."
"I don't see any estate."
"That's why it's called Darklings. Do you think Koopendrall is keen to have every idle sightseer in Paladria riding a rattlejack past his house? That path in the woods leads you where you want to go. I take it you have an appointment?"
"Of a sort," said Mirko.
"I'll wait here. You won't be long if you don't have an

appointment, and I could do with the fare for the return journey."

"Suit yourself," said Mirko, pressing a valut-piece into his hand.

"Don't blame me if you're here all night."

"The fee is one valut twenty."

Mirko shrugged. "Consider the twenty minim deduction a loquacity tax," he said before striding off into the manzipar wood.

I am looking forward to Stretton's future work.



CONTINUITY SLIP

by Till Noever

Ever had this argument with your Significant Other?

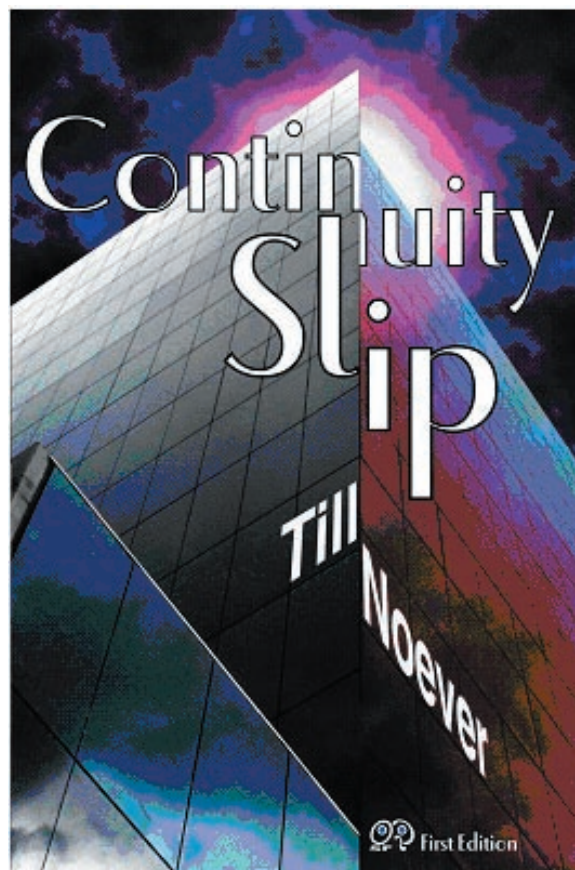
"I said this!"

"No! You said that."

"But I remember clearly saying this. In fact, it was when we went there to visit them."

"We never went there to visit them! So, there . . ."

Of course, we all know it's got to do with memory, which is a fluid thing that can't be trusted. People are different, have different points of view, and



Imagination Inflation reigns supreme at all levels of human consciousness and discourse.

But what if that weren't all there's to it?

Continuity Slip takes issue with the notion that we all just remember things differently; sometimes drastically so. What if there are physical reasons why we are sometimes certain beyond a doubt that we did, indeed, say this and not that? And what if you ended up in a situation where it's not just about arguments about basically trivial issues with your Significant Other? What if you saved a life—but only the person you saved remembers it? Or if you're suddenly accused of murdering someone you didn't even know existed?

Part love-story, part mystery, part science-fiction, Continuity Slip takes you into a world that is at once familiar and yet provides none of the certainties we all count on when conducting our daily lives.

Like *Seladiënna*, you can find *Continuity Slip* on my website, www.owlglass.com. Links to purchase the books are provided.

Happy reading.



THE VANCIAN PERSPECTIVE

There is much fuss about influences upon Vance's work which obsessively returns to writers Vance takes no interest in, and stubbornly ignores the main points.* So the other night, watching the Fred Astaire classic *Shall we Dance?*, I was delighted to note a clear vancian source. Fred plays a classical danseur who wants to combine jazz with ballet. His impresario, the genial Edward Everett Horton, is firmly opposed. On the transatlantic steamer which this high-society takes from Paris to New York, Fred escapes to the boiler room where the black sailors have a jug-band. Shades of *Space Opera*!

In another old movie I had the luck to discover, I stumbled on another source, which may be direct, or represent a now forgotten and unknown genre. In a wonderful Joe E. Brown movie from the 1930 (I believe it is *Molly and Me*, but I'm not sure), Brown, like Buster Keaton, was initially a burlesque acrobat, is bullied into a routine with a thuggish troop who might be the model for

* These 'main points', on a literary level, are three: P. G. Wodehouse, Geoffrey Farnol and L. Frank Baum. In the contemporary 'sci-fi/fantasy' world, however, these writers lack chic to a fatal degree, dooming any broader understanding of Vance's literary foundation.

† See, however, 'The Pulpish Plot', EXTANT #9, page 3, where I detail Vance's influence on E. C. Tubb.

the Futin Putos (see *Ports of Call/Lurulu*).

However, equally interesting to me is the influence Vance himself has exerted, and I do not mean upon other writers.† Any great artist exerts an influence on individual, and eventually collective mentalities. For example; anyone familiar with the paintings of Cezzan cannot visit Provence without feeling they are walking around in one of his paintings. Venice, in the same way, looks to visitors less like whatever it really looks like than a painting by Caneletto—for those happy enough to be familiar with that painter's masterworks. Other painters, and great ones, have left us views of these places. Van Gogh's views of Provence are well known as Cezzans, and, to say nothing of Turner and Ziem, depictions of Venice occur even in the paintings of no less a local master than Carpaccio. The visions of these artists are notably different from those of Cezzan and Caneletto, and their works are conceded by aesthetic authorities to be of the first rank. But, for whatever reason, their visions of these two places have not seized the collective imagination. So, though by no means the only vision possible, the visions of Cezzan and Caneletto have imposed themselves upon us.

Another example of this phenomenon are modes in feminine beauty. The spiritual and gracile belles of 16 century Europe, exemplified in the sculpture of Celini, and the paintings of Pintoriccio and the school of Fontainebleau, are notably different from the earthy and robust maidens preferred by Rubens and the 17th century generally. In the 18th century the feminine ideal was different again, emphasizing finesse and vivacity as exemplified in the paintings of Longi and Watteau, whose aesthetics preceded such real-life exemplars of their taste as Madame de Pompadour—immortalized by the painter Boucher and the sculptor Falconet. It is difficult to picture, in the roll of mistress of an 18th century salon, a woman of the tall, narrow headed, slim and long armed but wide-haunched 16th century type, or a large, plump and bouncy red-cheeked 17th century damsel. Instead we instinctively imagine a creature narrow of waist, small of breast, lively of movement, with an alert nose and twinkling eye. Yet there were certainly many rubenesque women in 18th century Paris, and petite Wateaesques maidens in 17th century Amsterdam. As today, it was a question of fashion. In the 1950s the American feminine ideal was a taut, robust creature of abundant blond hair and thrusting conical bosom. 30 years later the feminine ideal had become a noseless anorexic with bad posture, short scraggly dark hair, pulpy lips and large glazed eyes.

Such preferences begin as the vision some artist. But the hold on our minds by artistic visions is not limited to the visual. In *Northanger Abby* Jane Austen's young heroine has a view of the world deformed by her enthusiasm for Gothic novels. These deformations cause her to perceive certain things around her in a way that sometimes corresponds poorly to reality, which provided the arch Jane Austin with her theme.

And I, as a Vance enthusiast, occasionally note how my own view of things is influenced by that writer. I had one such experience in my recent reading of Churchill's masterpiece, *Marlborough, His Life and Times*, when I came to the English

diplomatic approach to Charles XII, king of Sweden, in 1707, which Marlborough conducted for Queen Anne:

*The interest for our purpose which attaches to the details of the meeting is Marlborough's personal demeanor and management. When he arrived at Altranstädt from his tiring journey though Hanover he went to see Count Piper, who was a kind of Prime Minister to Charles XII. The Count, for reasons which are not worth examining, sent out word to say that he was engaged, and kept Marlborough in his coach waiting half an hour behind his appointment. Then the Swede, having asserted his dignity, came down the steps of his house to the gate to receive Queen Anne's envoy. Marlborough got of the coach at the same moment and, putting on his hat, walked past Count Piper without recognizing or saluting him, and turned aside on the grass "as if to make water". After a delay more protracted than would have seemed necessary he came back into the path, and with courtly gestures and ceremonious phrasing began his embassy. Count Piper meanwhile had stood embarrassed in the roadway.**

The style has nothing vancian, but the event, and Churchill's way of relishing it, is redolent of Vance, as I guess other Vance readers may agree.

Another example involves the cello, an instrument I began to study about 5 years ago. One reason I wanted to play the cello was to get closer to those astonishing monuments of musical wonder, the suites of Bach, playing which is the great privilege and reward for cellists of all levels of competence. But any field is a universe unto itself, filled with mysteries, special labors and special rewards. Cello students come into contact with a musical literature forgotten or unknown by the rest of the world, which is true of all instrumental students. In the case of the cello there are such composers as Breval and Romberg, once celebrated musicians of the late-18th and early 19th century, or the late 19th century Viennese composer David Popper. Their sonatas, concertos and etudes have an important place in cello pedagogy, to such an extent that, for example, a portrait of David Popper graces the wall of that temple of cello virtuosity, the class of Janos Starker at Indiana University at Bloomington. Popper's music, like that of Breval and Romberg, apart from its technical usefulness, exerts its own wonderful charm. I consider myself lucky to have encountered it though I had no idea it lay in wait for me. These three composers are by no means the only strange creatures encountered by the cello student. Among others is a certain Dotzauer. I first come across this name in the introduction to a book of exercises which used excerpts from his etudes, as well as those of other composers, none of which were individually identified. The introduction to this book explained that Dotzauer's exercises were useful but too long and not

* Book Two, Harap & C. Ltd. second edition of the 2 volume version, 1949, p223.

musically interesting enough to be given in full.†

I had therefore worked at snippets of Dotzauer without being able to identify them. A few months ago I set out to procure a book of etudes which had been recommended to me. I could not find it, but did come across Dotzauer's *Second Book of Etudes*. On a whim I bought them. By such a hazard I discovered the musical world of Dotzauer, and I have fallen under the spell of its special charm. I think I can see why Dotzauer's etudes are denounced as too long and not musical enough, but I cannot agree. His etudes are indeed remarkable—a collection of unexpected tricks the nature of which I will try to hint at in a section below—but, apart from his magical pedagogy, what attaches me to this composer is his musical personality. I find these allegedly boring etudes to be sheer enchantment.

In my enthusiasm I wanted to learn more about the man. On the web I learned that Justus Johann Friedrich Dotzauer was born in 1783, that he was a student of Johann Christian Kittel, who was the last pupil of J.S.Bach. Dotzauer studied double-bass, French horn and



Detail of a view of Venice in the Queen's collection, taken from Canaletto, Abrams, 1989

clarinet, as well as the cello. Ludwig Spohr, another little known but important musician of the day, spoke highly of Dotzauer, and is said to have emphasized the 'peculiar purity' of Dotzauer's 'intonation' and his 'perfection of technique'. Dotzauer was also in contact with musicians who have retained full celebrity, such as Carl Maria von Weber, Richard Wagner and Hector Berlioz. The latter appreciated

† In the web page from which I will quote below, the following opinion is given: 'As justly stated by Eckhardt, Dotzauer's methods do not contain interesting enough material in the musical respect, but because of their methodic and pedagogical qualities were quite popular for many successive decades. Many re-editions by Schroder, Salter, Becker and Klingenberg*, as well as translations attest to their pedagogical value and popularity even in the present century. The merits of Dotzauer's many etudes lie in their exceptionally varied technique, in their pedagogic rationality and in the different degrees of difficulty—from elementary exercises to the most difficult virtuoso etudes.

* This is the edition I have.

Dotzauer in these terms: "... the excellent professor Dotzauer." Dotzauer's contemporaries credited his playing with "great solidity and fascinating sweetness", a "combination of power of tone with nobility and gracefulness of style." He was teacher to such musicians as Schubert. As a composer he wrote an opera, masses, symphonies, chamber music, nine concertos for cello, three concertinos, a double concerto, sonatas, fantasias, variations and divertimenti. He died in Dresden in 1860. So much I have summarized from a web page devoted to him. The author of this page goes on write the following, and here is where I was plunged into a vancian vision:*

Dotzauer considered tonal power and purity extremely important. He was concerned that sound be warm, with vibrato (he calls it tremolo). In the spirit of the time he, like Romberg, made limited use of vibrato, but wrote that, with long notes, it produced a sweet impression: "While overcoming the most difficult passages seems to be a brilliant achievement, infinitely superior is the merit of producing a beautiful tone and the ability to play melodiously; the sound of the noblest instrument approaching the human voice remains an incontestable example and model for every musician."

Dotzauer not only has praise for the right approach, he had censure for the wrong:

"A musician, who, as they used to say, does not leave a single note undistorted, who frames simple and quiet singing with embellishments and plays either with harmonics, or pizzicato, or ponticello, either up the fingerboard, or down, torturing the ear with different strokes . . . such a musician is a bad performer, who has no notion of beautiful simplicity. He vulgarly insults good taste."

Who cannot think of Valdemar Kutte or Frolitz? †



* The writer, certainly not an anglophone, uses a flawed style which I have discreetly corrected.

† From, of course, *The Book of Dreams* and *Durdane*, respectively.

A MUSICAL INTERLUDE

He spoke in a kind of wonder. "I've just learned something. There's nothing human beings make so beautiful as musical instruments!"

THE HOUSE ON LILY STREET, VIE VOL. #11, PAGE 118.

Not so much thumb there. What of the rattle-box? Do you think it's there for show?"

"No sir. I hurt my elbow somewhat today."

"Well then, why scratch aimlessly at the khitan? Let's hear a tune on the wood-horn."

Etzwane looked dubiously at the instrument, which was tied together with string. "I've never had the sleight of it."

"What?" Frolitz gaped in disbelieving shock. "Well then, learn it! The tringolet, the clarion, the tippie as well. We are musicians in this troupe, not, like Feld and his scamping cronies, a set of theorizing dilettantes. Here, take this wood-horn; go play scales . . ."

DURDANE, VIE VOL. #27, PAGE 86.



I not only find the musicality of the mysterious Dotzauer strangely delightful, his etudes are likewise unlike any others I know. Normally an etude is a piece which presents a particular instrumental problem. In the case of a string instrument this could be a matter of bowing or fingering, of rhythm or dynamics, of legato or staccato, and so on. Dotzauer's etudes can be tricky, and sometimes quite difficult, but they are not necessarily designed to help the student though the usual process of musical weight-lifting, the deliberate erection of barriers to be crossed by the application of enhanced dexterity. Dotzauer has so constructed his etudes that simply playing them (or learning to play them well, of course), without any particular effort beyond that, brings one closer to the instrument. They are less technical problems than a sort of cello-player's tonic. Dotzauer is not a trainer of dancing monkeys or jugglers of eggs, he is one of those special teachers who imparts enthusiasm less than information, or like an inspired cartographer whose maps offer an unprecedented understanding of a territory. How does he do such a thing in an etude? How is it communicated from a page of musical notation, written down centuries ago?

This topic is difficult to discuss, perhaps even *rébarbatif*, as one may say in French, but in my enthusiasm for the subject I will attempt a hint at one way Dotzauer performs his special trick, using an illustration from his etude #38.

Those so inclined may study the following diagrams; the paragraphs below provide related information.

The cello has 4 strings, tuned 5 notes apart. As a results the same notes may be played in several places on the instrument. The 4 strings of the cello are the low C string, followed by G, D and A. These 4 notes may be played on

the 'open' string. All others cannot be played without the left hand on the strings. The sound of the open strings is somewhat different from the fingered notes but, with the exception of low C, they may be played on the other stings, which is one of the ways a cello's 'sound color' may be varied.

Were the cello to use 3 or 5 strings, or were its strings to be tuned 4 or 6 notes apart, the instrumental-mechanical problems would be quite different. The present configuration, however, has many advantages. It is certainly the best compromise between two totally heterogeneous but crucial elements of instrumental music: the structure of music itself, from a theoretical angle, and human anatomy.

A cello is fingered by a system of positions. When the hand is as high up the neck of the cello as it can go it is said to be in the 'first position'.^{*} The positions are determined by the thumb which, touching the underside of the neck, stabilizes the hand. Another aspect of fingering is 'extensions'. (See Figure 3.) This involves a stretch between the first finger and the others, so that, either, the first finger moves upward or the thumb and the other three fingers move downward. So much for basic mechanics.

Etude #38 presents no particular difficulty. With its constant rhythm, repeated notes and, for the most part, short intervals between sequential notes, it is even particularly easy. But it is so designed that, seduced by its musical charm, the student is lured into closer association with his instrument. There is no sense of technical challenge, no sense one is being trained; just, as the French can say, a *delice mysterieux*. Dotzauer has designed this etude not only to help the student master the crucial business of position changes but to bring him into deeper intimacy with each position; which is to say, the notes available to the hand in each one, as well as their relations. By relations I do not mean their theoretical musical relations, that one is a 5th or an octave higher than another, but how they relate to the cello as an object, to the arm, hand and fingers of the player, as guided by the ear, such that change from position to position, a fundamental of the instrument, becomes etched into the corporal memory, which leads to greater powers of sight-reading and improvisation, and thus of musical expression itself. All this without the student needing to be being aware he is moving swiftly toward this result! Of course, working at any music will eventually have the same effect. Dotzauer's, however, is a broad, straight and smooth boulevard to cello mastery, which certainly explains his persistent popularity in that esoteric domain.



^{*} There is also the 'demi-position', with the 2d finger playing B on the A string.

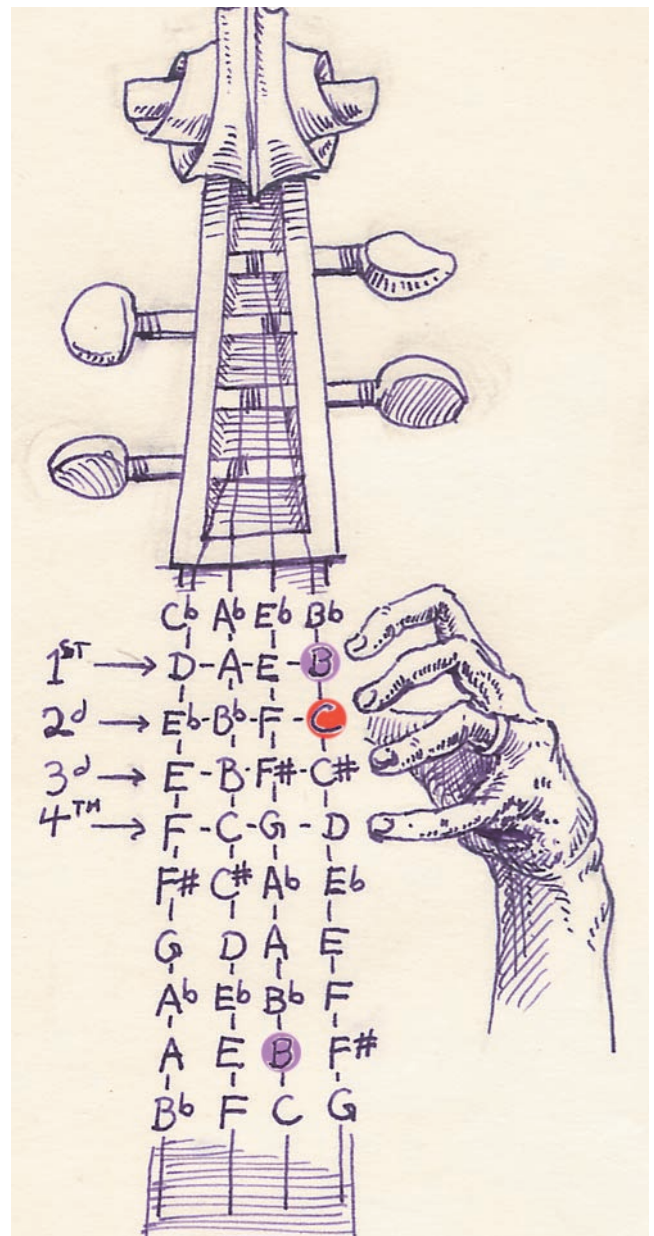


Figure 1: 'First Position', and the notes, with the fingers in the normal, on non 'extended' stance. The disposition of the violin class of instruments allows playing of more than 2 octaves in First Position alone (more than 5 octaves can be squeezed out of the cello). Low C is played on the open string (the string to the left), D can then be played by the 1st finger, E by the 3d, and F with the 4th. (The 2d finger might play Eb, which is not included in the C major scale). G can then be played with the second open string, with A, B and C fingered as on the previous string, to complete the first octave.

Were the cello to have 5 strings (as some of its ancestor's had), the hand must strain to bridge all 5 strings. If this were compensated by placing the strings closer together they would then be too crowded for convenient manipulation. Older instruments, such as the viol, solve this problem with wide spacing and frets, which do not allow the expressive range of the modern instrument. Were the strings tuned 6 notes apart a scale could not be played while conveniently remaining in First Position. If they were tuned closer together the instruments current range could only be maintained by adding strings or lengthening the neck but, like the width of the fingerboard, the length of the neck is currently optimal.

Middle C is marked in red; in First Position the B below middle C, marked in violet, is played by the first finger. This same note may be played on the D string, but only from a higher position.

13 14 15

16 17 18

Measures 13 through 18, of Etude #38 of Dotzauer. The numbers in the score above the note corresponds to the finger with which the note should be played. The long horizontal lines above the measures indicate that fingers not playing notes may be held down on the strings, to stabilize the hand. Stability is crucial to 'intonation', which is playing notes correctly in tune.

Figure 2

FIGURE 2:

The hand in First Position, the second finger plays the first three notes of measure 13 (on the D and A strings). The last two notes played, prior to the change of positions required by the rest of the measure, is C. And this will be the second note played in the new position (figure 3), where it will be repeated 12 times. Dotzauer uses the sound of this note as an element of aural stability between the two positions.

FIGURE 3:

The hand, guided by the second finger, now moves up a whole step to D (a half step would give C#, see Figure 1). This is second position, but with an extension of the first finger, which remains on the famous C. Dotzauer now uses a whole raft of notes available to the second position, on both the D and A strings. This sort of sequence is something rarely encountered in normal music: the deliberate utilization of such a long sequence of notes all available from one of the higher positions. Hand and ear are stabilized by the repeated C, while the 2d and 4th fingers hustle back and fourth between the D and A stings. At the end of the 14th measure Dotzauer throws a curve ball, a problem to which he gives much play in other etudes: the hand must be shifted down into 3d position to play F with the 4th finger on the A string, and then pop back to C where the 1st finger has been for so long. This is another stabilizing exercise since any error of arm movement and the C sounds false. For someone with a large hand, such as myself, this passage may be accomplished with a 'double extension' rather than an actual position change, a solution Dotzauer does not permit in other cases.

Figure 3

Measures 15 through 17; the hand is now in 4th position and plays a total of 6 different available notes:

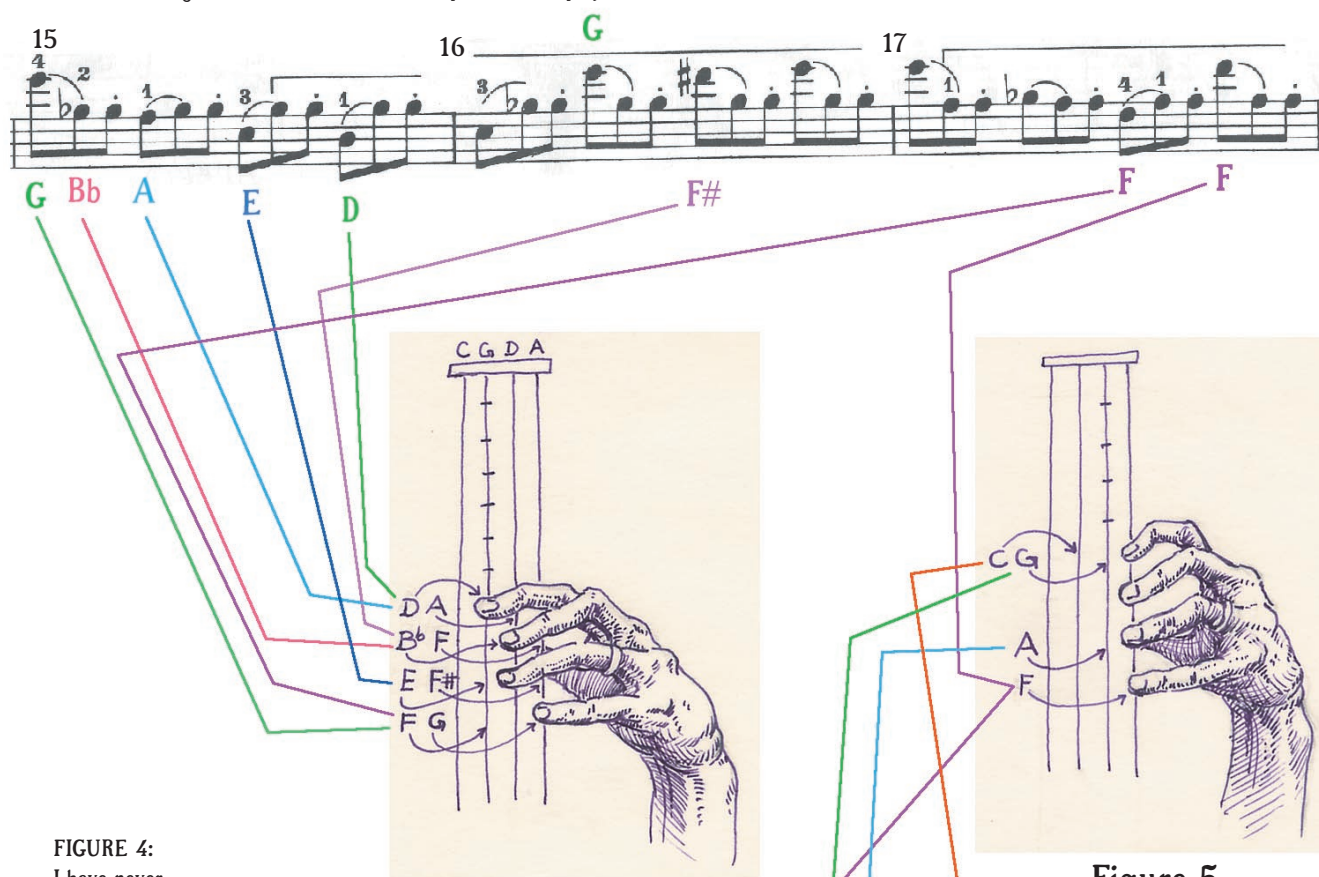


FIGURE 4:

I have never encountered so many notes, played on 3 different strings, including several 'accidentals', in such a maintained position. Depending on an individual's hand shape certain intervals can require special effort; in my own case the 3d finger resists holding a just position between the 2d and 4th, but wanders toward the former. The F# which, so far up the neck, is particularly close to the 4th finger's G, is difficult for me but the context of the etude helps isolate the problem.

Figure 4

Figure 5



FIGURE 5:

In the 17th measure the hand moves to the 3d position. The A, previously played by the 1st finger, is now played by the 3d.

POLITICS AS USUAL

AROUND THE WEB

Allow me to recommend the web-site of Victor Hanson Davis:

<http://victorhanson.com/>

Davis is a classicist and military historian, a specialist of my favorite book: The Peloponnesian War by Thucydides. Davis's view is moderate but realistic. In addition to being a classicist, professor and writer, he is a farmer, which would please the Elders of the Institute: he has not lost contact with the dirt. As a farmer in

California he has front-line views about immigration, where his typical rejection of both left and right is particularly notable; he fustigates both multi-culturalists and greedy employers. Though Davis is no knee-jerk Bush supporter he does favor the idealistic 'Bush doctrine' of promoting democracy. He recommends what he calls the 'tragic view', a grandiloquent term for recognizing that wars must sometimes be fought and, when they are, soldiers will be killed. In a recent article he wrote of a 'third way' which rejects both 'chauvinistic saber rattling or studied pacifism', and consists in:

. . . the promise of muscular democratic government that does not apologize for 2,500 years of civilization and is willing to defend it from the enemies of liberalism . . .

His writing style is sober and effective, though not without occasional flashes of wit. He adds one or two article each week.

Another site, particularly for francophones — though anglophones will find it useful as well — is:

resiliencetv.fr

This new site, launched by the fearless Lucien Samir Oulahbib, features constantly up-dated of links to interesting commentary on the truly important events and issues of the day. The tone is philosophical, and the perspective is what in Europe is called 'liberal' (favoring a roll-back of socialism) and rejects anti-Americanism without renouncing a critical attitude. Proponents of Liberalism in France are courageous because it is the buzz-word for the worst of the worst; 'savage Capitalism American-style'. A flock of symbolic birds decorates this site, from the brush of yours truly.

A VIEW FROM FRANCE

Well folks, things are getting worse and worse. The Iranian mullahs are eager to start WW3 by vaporizing Israel as soon as they get their bomb. But, if we don't all croak from bird flue first, the designated target, and their friends, will not allow things to get that far. So, unless the unexpected happens; ho for another preventive war! It will begin with aerial obliteration of the Iranian facilities. Depending on how the Mullahs like that, we'll take it from there.* I can already hear the squawk from the crypto-pro-Islamist-pacifist-anti-Western-multiculturalists, and its making my ears hurt by anticipation. The 'culture wars' were never anything like this! Live ammunition changes everything.

As for those who still fail to understand that Israel's neighbors have been trying to obliterate her since 1948, and will continue to try to do so until they are definitively cowed — or they achieve their genocidal end — I am not sure what to think any more. Previously their attitude seemed both 'stupid' and 'mean'. Now it seems more like 'criminal blindness'.

A point I have been trying to make for years is finally being made frequently in public by more skillful commentators than myself†: if the West fails to abandon its sissy

* Victor Hanson Davis, in his recent article "Tweaking the United States", writes: *As the Iranian nuclear threat continues to grow, neither the United States nor Israel are eager to be damned by the global community for sending in bombers to take out Tehran's dispersed and hard-to-find subterranean nuclear factories. Meanwhile, European diplomats will fail in their milquetoast efforts to bribe the Iranian mullahs to forgo nukes. And a peaceful revolution that leads to a new Iranian democracy renouncing such weapons remains a utopian dream.*

So, the practical and, realistically, best solution to thwarting Iran's nuclear-weapon ambitions would be for the Russians to cease selling the Iranians nuclear technology. They could demand — not just suggest — that all uranium enrichment for "peaceful" energy use be done inside Russia.

Yet for all their talk, the Russians will not do this. Besides the profits to be had from trading with the oil-rich theocracy, the Russians derive a certain satisfaction from tweaking the United States. . .

<http://victorhanson.com/articles/hanson010906.html>

† For example, Till Noever recently noted this article by Mark Steyn: THE CENTURY AHEAD, It's the Demography, Stupid (The real reason the West is in danger of extinction.) <http://www.opinionjournal.com/extra/?id=110007760>

masochism we are going down. In France it is probably too late to steer off a full-scale shooting war with the barbarian/islamist youth brigades who brought us the December riots. This *racaille** shot at the police in the last round. Next round the bullets will certainly go both ways.

And what about China? We love making money there, and buying stuff for \$6,99 that would otherwise cost \$89.99, and of course Chinese people, one at a time, in places like America, are perfectly good petits-bourgoises, and great Christians if they are lucky enough to be converted but, over there, they lack even post-Christianity to help them cooperate. Slavery remains stylish, and most of their boom is foreign owned and operated. Chinese life, to say nothing of the internal Chinese economy, still has no direction or dynamic. Will they go in for fanatic expansionism and global thuggery or, by some miracle, become sweet and kind? We can always hope.

Still, there is always the bright side; for the Left its all over but the shouting. Post-Christian Leftism will continue to pollute our minds even as pragmatism becomes the order of the day across the Western world. Society has become dangerously polarized with the political and media elites on the Left taking refuge in damnation of America, Bush or whatever or whomever else won't see things their way. But their curve is on a hopeless downward trend.

Then Catholic Church is enjoying a period of unprecedented popularity. Traditional intra-Christian virulence is largely dissipated; ecumenism has never been so advanced. Christendom may not yet be resurrected but who wants to return to post-Roman political-theocratic confusion? Despite our resolute secularity our enemies have identified us as Christendom, and this unifies us, whether we like it or not. We are like Jews; the designated enemy no matter what we do or think.

I do not mean that the majority of atheist among us will, or should, become believers. I do mean that the Christian doctrine of free-will, or respect for the human person in the context of a natural order not of man's making ought to prevail, and I hope it will and think it will. We must work our way out of the quasi-Heidiggerian rejection of universality whereby each individual becomes an Elder of the Hub controlling a private infinity, and get back to a more Augustinian view whereby each person is valued for themselves but where we exist together in a certain commonality, in a natural or supra-human universal order, where justice, as a higher principle not invented by idealist but discovered in reality, has a chance.

There is no formula that will ever make that mix of

* Untranslatable: something like 'low-life scum' or 'rascally crooks'. This word, pronounced on one occasion by the controversial Minister of the Interior, Nicolas Sarkozy, continues to be the root of the whole problem for the idiot Left. One day Sarkozy went into a tough neighborhood where the rioters were at work, and a woman leaned out her window and asked him when he would clear out that 'racaille', making her life miserable. He said he would, and reused the woman's word. That he did not back down when the Left went ballistic is too his credit. Not to his credit are his plans to introduce affirmative action. Whether you like him or not: watch him become President of France in 2007.

respect for the individual and commonality perfectly comfortable for everyone, or even for anyone. But not only is it the price we must pay to save ourselves, it is the only way to be who we really are; the scions of Greece, Rome and Jerusalem.



FROLITZ BANNED REDUX

'Frolitz has been banned, again, once and for all', wrote *axolotl* after actioning whatever virtual guillotine does the dirty job; '... he has... abused his reinstatement by engaging in personal taunts and innuendoes, and at last a *very derogatory* remark (short, concise, but derogatory all the same)...'. In case anyone is interested, and as explained in EXTANT #9, the offending remark involved the term: 'sour-puss'.

Someone has a skin of marvellous thinness, so once again that rascal 'Paul Rhoads' has been thrust into the company of the select segment of humanity—comprising 2 or 3 persons—forbidden from posting on the VanceBBS, a privilege extended to the other 1,000,000,000 internet users. Statistically the loss is so small—particularly in the non-hierarchical cyber world where one man's vancian contributions are notoriously as good as the next's—that it hardly seems worth mentioning. One can only suppose that's the world the VanceBBS moderators prefer to haunt.

In subsequent developments David B. Williams made 'A modest proposal': '... the natural extension of the VIE project would be to create the definitive Vance website.' Williams, speaking of the VIE, called it: 'a monumental work' but noted that 'by its nature it is limited in impact (though the texts themselves may live forever)' and added: '... A definite Vance website would do more to extend and promote the legacy of Jack Vance than anything else we could do.'

Even though, as E-in-C, putative 'Executive in Chife' of the whole shebang, I was not consulted, the irrepressible Dan Gunter lost no time making another *sour-puss* remark (though I don't think *axolotl* would find it *derogatory*, and certainly not *very derogatory*—nice VanceBBS posters never do anything like that, without getting banned): 'I'm not going to be involved with the VIE so long as *Paul Rhoads* is involved with it, or so long as no one involved with the VIE makes any effort to curb *his* defamatory writings. If you want to do something outside of the VIE, and without *Rhoads* being involved, then I'll help.'

Since I started the VIE, and ran it, in a certain sense at least it is 'my' project, and since no one has made any recent effort to curb my allegedly *defamatory writings*, Dan would seem to be left out of whatever David B.

Williams will do, if anything, even though, while wishing him well, I have no plans to partisipate.

Still, in my impish way, I can't resist wondering if Dan would unbend towards David's plan even if the effort to curb me, which he calles for, assuming it were made by someone involved in the VIE rather than some outsider like himself, failed? If he had that sort of mental flexibility, however, he would not be the sour-puss I derogatorilly persist in taking him for. Is it not 'very' of me?



END-OF-PROJECT CELEBRATORY GIFT

The project may, or may not, be able to offer the EQ volume to VIE managers as an end of project gift; little enough as a thank you for all the uncredited work they have done. If possible, it will be done. Personally I wish to offer each VIE manager, as well as an unfortunately but necessarily limited group of exemplary volunteers, a memento of our work together: an original print of the frontispiece etching for Volume 44 (the portrait of Jack Vance)—or another frontispiece etching of their choice. The print will be an original, signed and inscribed by the *artiste*, but will require framing at the miserable giftee's effort and expense. Those, on the list below, who wish to so avail themselves should send me their mailing address and etching choice. If any of them are uninterested, I will not mind! Printing etchings is extremely tedious work. I do, however, wish to commemorate our years of common effort with a gesture of gratitude to those who would appreciate it. Joel Anderson is prominently absent from the list below; he already owns the full set of master prints used in the books, as well as my eternal gratitude for all he has done, both for the VIE and for me personally. Otherwise, I invite the following people, or couples, to contact me:

Donna Adams	Marcel van Genderen	Joel Riedesel
Erik Arendse	Joel Hedlund	and Robin Rouch
Derek W. Benson	Alun Hughes	Errico Rescigno
Mike Berro	Andreas Irle	Bill Schaub
Richard Chandler	Damien G. Jones	Steve Sherman
Ronald A. Chernich	Jurriaan Kalkman	Tim Stretton
Deborah Cohen	R. C. Lacovara	John A. Schwab
Christian J. Corley	Karl Kellar	John Vance
Patrick Dusoulier	Charles King	Hans van der Veeke
Mike Dennison	Bob Luckin	Koen Vyverman
Andrew Edlin	Robert Melson	Russ Wilcox
Rob Friefeld	Bob Moody	Ed Winskill
John A. D. Foley	Till Noever	Dave Worden
Evert Jan de Groot	David Reitsema	Suan Hsi Yong
Brian Gharst	Jeff Ruszczyk	
Rob Gerrand	Thomas Rydbeck	



TOLERANCE

The most pressing question today concerns tolerance.

Two things seem obvious to many thoughtful people: that the root of conflict* is belief in what may be called some 'metaphysical reality', such as a creator God, and that the non-existence of any metaphysical reality is self-evident. This is essentially the positivist position, and it suffers from serious epistemological problems. The most obvious is that rejection of invisible, or metaphysical, realities is itself a 'metaphysical' position of exactly the same order as belief in a God, in reincarnation, or in flying saucers.† That weakness, however, is not the subject of this article. Positivism—in its contemporary form sometimes known as Scientism—is not going to disappear soon, or ever, no matter how many and how strong the arguments against it, so my concern here is not the critique of one belief or another, but the problem of mutual tolerance between them. This problem, however, cannot be addressed without some reference to the nature of the dominant beliefs of the day since each metaphysical outlook comes at tolerance from a different angle.

Rejection of metaphysics, which may be labeled 'philosophical materialism', is usually accompanied by atheism.‡ But atheism (in the vein of scientism) only laughs off invisible realities; it does not, because it cannot, 'prove' (in its own terms) their non-existence. The reason is this: for all its pride in human scientific progress even the most advanced scientists can only guess at, or theorize about, why the universe exists, how it was started, or what makes it go. These questions, which have perplexed the greatest minds at least since the beginning of recorded history, are waved aside by positivistic atheism on the basis of alleged insignificance. The universe, they imply, is obviously a mindless, purposeless mechanism, and our existence in it, the phenomenon of our self-consciousness in particular, is a mere mechanistic swirl of the cosmic processes, of no consequence or implication whatsoever beyond whatever we, personally or collectively, choose to make of it for ourselves. None of this need be of any concern; human problems here and now are more than enough to occupy us.

Despite the arrogance with which this position is usually expressed, despite the contempt for other opinions, and their advocates, which atheist-materialists so often display, their position might be correct. I will neither perform the simple task of indicating the rickety and shoddy nature of the foundations of such beliefs, nor will I indicate the more logically impressive foundation of certain non-materialist metaphysics. Again: my object is relations between holders of different beliefs, with regard to mutual tolerance, a

* The root of conflict is often thought to be a dynamic of violence, or the cycle: vengeance/reaction, counter-reaction. However, without denying the reality of this cycle, it is, I say, at best a secondary or psychological effect.

† Recognition of the weakness of Positivism is at the heart of existentialism, for Existentialists recognize the epistemological problems of Positivism. I will not deal with this here, except to note that Existentialism shares with Positivism rejection of what can be called natural or objective truth, or, in the case of Existentialism, of man's possibility to discover any truth beyond the confines of his present historio-cultural context.

‡ Atheism is not equivalent to materialism because it is possible to believe there is no God but not believe that the universe is limited to physical reality. An atheist might believe in some kind of life after death. Various systems of belief might be cited in illustration.

matter to which the relative believability of different ideas is not irrelevant but which is secondary for, if truth exists (and no one unwilling to contradict himself will deny it) some ideas must be better than others.* The problem of tolerance is not the problem of obliterating all beliefs but the best one, but about how holders of subjectively better and worse beliefs can get along.

The universe of Jack Vance is rife with conflicting beliefs and he offers many keys to this situation. The multitude of vancian societies manage to commerce with each other while refraining from mutual extermination. Their underlying metaphysical disagreements, however, are not abolished and can make themselves felt.

The peaceableness of the vancian universe is, in the majority of cases, founded upon separation. His societies tend to be both homogeneous and preoccupied with themselves, often thanks to tranquil possession of a separate world, continent, province, city or neighborhood. This reflects a historical phenomenon which lurks among the foundations of Vance's story making: the flight of Christian sects to the new world during the religiously troubled period of the Reformation (the emergence of Protestantism) a period which extends from the 16 though the early 18th centuries. Establishing themselves in isolated areas, these groups were able to pursue their destinies unhampered, at least for a time. Eventually proximity encroached; actual cohabitation became inevitable. Vance illustrates the dynamics and results of this process in a range of results, often observable in American social history.

Among peaceable outcomes is a general fading of primal ardors on all sides, a mixing and weakening of doctrines into a more or less syncretic, mellowed culture whose relation to its conflicted past is merely nostalgic. A good illustration would be the city Pontefract, on the Vegan world Aloysius (see *The Face*). The religious wars which once tore that place have become an amusing memory, and the domus, once a temple, and battle ground, is now a hotel.

Another less generally beneficent but still peaceable form of vancian cohabitation is when one potentially conflictual belief system self-destructs, though innate inanity, so that its adherents become a subordinate element of a wider more cosmopolitan culture. Among the most striking examples are the vegetarians of New Concept (see *The Book of Dreams*) who degenerate into semi-human ruminants useful as domestics, or the Majars (see *Marune*), who nourish the fading flame of their strange enthusiasms in a ghetto of Port Mar.

The Runes themselves are a similar case; like the Tomarcho and Fanchers (see *Trullion*) their teeth have been pulled by the Connatic and his Whelm, which retains a vigilant watch upon them, including denying them weapons and flying machines. Vance does not inform us whether such official discrimination, which in the case of the Runes does not target an ideology but a race, is the subject of indignant petitions to the Connatic. I think it safe to assume that the 5 trillion inhabitants of the Alastor Cluster, notoriously preoccupied with local affairs, accept this situation, if not with good grace, certainly with phlegm.

* Even Relativists agree; they think the doctrine of relativism is True.

The Alastor Cluster is by no means the only vancian local where such official control is exercised. The autochthonous Gomaz on Maz are supervised by the Triarchic Superintendency (see *The Dogtown Tourist Agency*). In a somewhat different register but to exactly the same effect, is The Institute's surveillance and occult control of the forces of techno-urban progress, effectuated mainly through propaganda and re-channelling of human resources, but also through sabotage and assassination (see *The Book of Dreams*).

Dominant social elements sometimes hold the rest of a population in a more or less severe form of thralldom, in the interest of supremacy or self-preservation. The Outkers of Koryphon (see *The Domains of Koryphon*) have a relationship with the barbarian 'blues' which is not necessarily malevolent but is certainly paternalistic. The Agents of Cadwal, though their Whelm is only of a few air-cars and a tiny arsenal of 'projacs', deny control of that planet to both Yips and the Naturalist from Stroma. In another configuration the humans of Halma are hoodwinked and exploited by the Damaran puppet masters (see *Emphyrio*). The Chasch, the Dirdir and the Pnumikin of Tchai, hold humans in thrall by convincing them that humans are inferior but integral parts of their own race. Chachmen believe themselves the larval form of their masters. The Dirdirmen believe themselves a parallel, or fraternal species. The Pnumikin are controlled with chemicals but also indoctrinated to admire the virtues of Pnume culture, orderliness, tranquility, a detached and studious way of life. The Wannekmen, on the other hand, have not succumbed to such inanities, and manage to manipulate and exploit their alleged masters, with various miserable human populations paying the real price.*

Moving up another notch on the scale of intolerance are societies living together in antagonism. The most spectacular example occurs in 'Ulan Dhor Ends a Dream' (see *Mizirian the Magician*) where two rival sects are so antagonistic they become congenitally incapable of seeing each other. They use the same city without being aware of their mutual presence, on condition each remains attired in red or green respectively, illustrating the axiom that hate blinds.

The situation of complete breakdown of tolerance is not one Vance frequently illustrates, probably because it lacks the interestingly fragile complexity of a multifarious society in more or less uncomfortable cohabitation with itself. War—in cases where its cause is not commercial, prestigious, or otherwise reducible to material causes—is intolerance carried to the extreme; the Other must not be allowed to exist. Vance by no means avoids war; there is war in *Lyonesse* and *Durdane*; there is the liberation of Magarak (see *Gold and Iron*) and various other examples, though war and battle cannot be said to be among his major inspirations. There are, however, instance of wars of cultural intolerance;

in addition to the suppression of the Tomarcho, and intimidated or illustrated battles of the cold war, such as in *400 Blackbirds* or *The STARK*, Vance presents cultural upheavals which eventually result in serious, if neither extensive nor long-term, armed conflict, as on Pao, Koryphon and Cadwal. But the war in *The Blue World* is not only a prolonged and total upheaval of that society, it is an existential inevitability.

In the debates which precede actual fighting a thoughtful, moderate and sober man, Gian Recargo, describes the situation this way:

"I was not an active conspirator. Initially I was of the orthodox view; then I changed my thinking. It is still changed. The so-called conspirators indeed have brought damage and loss of life to the floats. They grieve for this as much as anyone. But the damage and the deaths are inevitable, because I have come to agree with Sklar Hast. King Kragen must be killed. So let us not revile these men who by dint of great ingenuity and daring almost killed King Kragen."

CHAPTER 8

But, to say nothing of killing their monster fish, the Intercessors cannot permit the survival even of rebel ideology which cuts at the heart not only of their own power but the social structure of the floats, which has integrated the special relationship with King Kragen. The Intercessors are not alone in their more or less self-interested opposition. Many sober men agree with them. The conflicting ideologies are not merely mutually exclusive they are both plausible. But the war is absolute, for the Intercessors have the choice only between destroying the rebels or joining them—which means ceasing to be themselves. There is no middle way. There is no way to modify, to soften and ameliorate, the relation to King Kragen. There is only submission or rebellion. The Intercessors, and their numerous supporters, will not relinquish habits, fears, or privileges; all are elements of their identity. As for the rebels, as Vance makes clear, even flight to a far line of floats does not relieve them of the necessity of following out the logic of their doctrine of freedom and seeking to kill King Kragen. For, to say nothing of the Intercessors, King Kragen himself cannot tolerate their challenge. The Intercessors pretend that the rebels *plan a war of extermination upon the folk of the Old Floats*. (Chapter 13). This is like calling the American ouster of Saddam Hussein an imperial take-over; a lie which contains a grain of truth, for the rebels indeed plan to return and destroy King Kragen. The rebels use science to create a mechanical challenger, but they might also (a fear evoked in the story) have nurtured a new king kragen, perhaps under the influence of a counter-rebellion, or after losing their original revolutionary ardor.

In another register are the murderous intentions of the false Whispers (see *Wyst*), but that is not war, it is conspiracy, sabotage, assassination. There are many vancian examples of people ready to do anything to get what they want. This, I believe, is the basis of his understanding of evil; radical selfishness, or 'solipsism'. Solipsism, however, is the attitude of an individual. It does not correspond to the group-dynamic of ideological intolerance. For an individual there are personal ambitions and gratifications,

* I will not develop this idea here, but it is my view that most stories where Vance makes use of aliens take on their full relevance when the aliens are understood metaphorically, as illustrations of monstrous and grotesque cultural patterns, beliefs or habits. This technique corresponds to, but is not quite the same as, the technique of Aesope, who used different kinds of animals, of known habits and behaviors, to illustrate human characteristics. But aliens are not creatures whose habits and behaviors are known, and Vance does not use them to illustrate human traits, but to represent an approach to existence.

Vance also uses the technique in the pure Aesopian manner, but always to comic ends. In 'The Unspeakable McInch' (see 'Gadget Stories', VIE volume #3) once the golespod's anatomy and metabolism is described, the reader may anticipate its behaviors in the Aesopian manner.

the fulfillment of a personal destiny. There are individuals who take advantage of fanatic groups, as leaders or as more or less sincere participants. In *The Blue World* the chief Intercessor, Barquan Blasdel, tends to be such a man, though he is not absolutely cynical, a fact which gives that story much of its depth. Likewise King Kragan's Exemplary Corps is not staffed exclusively with idealists:

. . . it . . . was mainly comprised of those whose careers were not proceeding with celerity, or who disliked toil with unusual vehemence. The other folk of the floats regarded the Exemplars with mixed emotions.

CHAPTER 15

In other words, largely a passel of riff-raff. Such exploiters seek to indulge personal or perverse passions. But sincere leaders and members of such groups are ready to make sacrifices for the sake of the group, ideology or program. It is often thought that when murderous passions are idealistic or selfless they are all the more dangerous. If this is true it is because selflessness is the great social virtue. Supported and sanctioned by respectability, hate and intolerance are loosed from the shackles of shame and censure, and can blossom more easily into war. For this reason some intellectuals prefer cynicism to idealism—another issue which will not be addressed here.

Vance's interest in the coexistence of societies is, I say, rooted in aspects of American history, and seems also linked to a non-idealized historical understanding. For example it is often erroneously suggested that the original propensities of the Protestant groups which fled European religious persecution were tolerant and peaceable. The 'unhindered destiny' they pursued in their new home was mainly a matter of de facto isolation. My limited historical studies have revealed no Protestant sect, or even any pre-Reformation Christian heresy, which did not seek to eliminate, by physical force and extermination if necessary, other religious belief from whatever territory it controlled or sought to control. *Cujus regis, ejus religio** was as much a Protestant doctrine as a Catholic one. And the famous Edict de Nantes, which might suggest Catholic tolerance, was merely a truce, a pragmatic acknowledgement, in the interest of civil peace, that the public practice of Calvinism in certain cities, nominally under the French crown, but militarily held by the Huguenots, would be tolerated. By 'tolerated' they meant that, despite how miserable it all was, it would be suffered. The French Calvinists, on their side, outlawed Catholic practice in the places they controlled, and frequently slaughtered priests and nuns. There may have been sects which advocated mutual tolerance in the modern sense—which proposed peaceful and non-discriminatory cohabitation—but if so they were minor players. Neither Lutherans, and certainly not Calvinists—great experts at executing heretics even though they are the predecessors of the ideologically flabby American Presbyterians of today—were not notable for any sort of tolerance. They were what we would call 'fundamentalists', purists who demand the return to original precepts of stern and archaic virtue. The typically pragmatic, soft-edged and somewhat jaded Catholic fudging of fundamental issues was anathema to them.

* 'Such the Religion of the King, such the religion of his people'.

The alleged tolerance of Islam is likewise a silly myth. The hegemonists of the great Islamic empire mercilessly exterminated all non-believers in the poly-religious world of their day, excepting only Christians and Jews, who were allowed life at the price of inferior status. Their public worship was banned. They were allowed only certain professions. They were unprotected by civil rights. They were burdened with special taxes. Since Christians and Jews were the most advanced peoples in the conquered territories,* they provided a cadre of trained slaves for the numerically inferior Arab hegemonists. The non-Christian hoi-poli was converted to Islam by force or liquidated. Islamic 'tolerance' was, and is, of a most limited nature; it discouraged actual murder of a narrow category of persons, on condition they cooperate in a degrading form of semi-slavery.

What of the pagans? Though some were notoriously intolerant it is suggested that the Romans were tolerant because they including the deities of conquered peoples into their pantheon, eschewed xenophobia by giving conquered peoples Roman citizenship and, finally, by the Edict of Milan.(*) But the variety of pagan deities in the ancient, pre-Christian, world represented no metaphysical challenge to the Roman world-view. Pagan deities, with their roots in ancient tribal heroes or local demiurges shared the same fundamental origin as Romulus and Remus, the original Roman gods, and could be smoothly incorporated into the flexible pantheon. Pagan gods are civil or racial gods, gods of a given city or a given tribe. Their integration is as much a political act as a theological one. While pagan religions do express the ancient, natural, and previously universal belief in an invisible world where gods and other spiritual and mysterious beings and forces impinge upon the normal world, they are, most profoundly, cultural-political vessels of identity, rather than personifications of variegated metaphysical views. These identities are not necessarily incompatible as such.

This fundamental harmony among pagan religions, mirrored in the heterogeneous Hindu religion of today, explains the special place of Judaism in the pre-Christian world, and even after the advent of Christianity but prior to its replacement of paganism as the majority religion of the Roman empire. Jehovah of the old Testament has things in common with both 'God the Father' of the new testament, and the pagan tribal gods worshiped by the Canaanites and other tribes inhabiting ancient Palestine. The Jews who escaped Egypt were a tribe, and their god was inevitably the god of a people. But this particular tribal god had qualities no others had. For example many pagan gods and their hyrophants were capable of magic and miracles, but Jehovah out did them. He could not only, like them, perform simple tricks like turning sticks into snakes, he could turn rain into blood. More important, however, was an existential difference; even if these tribal gods pretended to universal powers or attributed

* The new Islamic territories, of North Africa, Europe and the East, were previously ruled by the Roman Empire which, under Constantine, had proclaimed the Edict of Milan in 313. This granted religious freedom and resulted in the ideological triumph of Christianity over paganism.

creation of the universe to themselves, their origins were lost in antiquity and confounded with the tribal identity. Jehovah, by contrast, presented himself to Abraham and offered to be his god. Jehovah is a new god. Abraham, and his descendants, are linked to him not as their existential source, their ultimate mother, but as if he were a friend, by a personal and revocable contract.* Even if Abraham's descendants, to say nothing of the Jew of today, have a tribal character, their relationship to God continues to be fundamentally like that of Abraham; rooted in an historical event, a conscious human choice, a freely made agreement. The Jews are not Jehovah's people because of some misty myth confounded and integrated in their physical origin and ageless tribal consciousness.†

Theologically inclined Romans, and members of other pagan cultures, called the Jews of antiquity 'Lovers of God'. Plato's 'unknown god', even in pre-Christian days, was sometimes linked with the Jewish god. Aside from converts to Judaism, some pagans understood, or at least sensed, the more profound nature of the Jewish religion and its dramatic difference with the pagan cults. The so called 'mystery religions', of which elegant traces remain in the ruins of Herculanium, were half-way houses between paganism and Judaism; they addressed those deeper matters which paganism, with its emphasis on the fortune of the city or the prosperity of the tribe, failed to fully address: the relation of the individual to the infinite and eternal.

There is a charming section in the novel *Thaïs*, by Anatol France, which recounts a discussion, set in Alexandria in the early days of the Christian era, between the adherents of various religions who give their views of their own and each other's beliefs. Such friendly encounters undoubtedly occurred in the luxuriantly poly-theological ancient world. Does this mean the Romans were tolerant? They may have been more so than the original Calvinists—which would be easy—or even than Moorish Islam—which is also easy—but not always, and not in the generous embracing sense in which we use the word. Rome did not hesitate to subjugate Israel or, from time to time, to slaughter Christians publicly, sometimes to punish them for failing to worship Roman gods, sometimes because they merely needed bodies for their horrific spectacles. Roman tolerance, when it operated, was more indifference than generous doctrine. If people made no trouble the practical minded Romans tended to leave them alone.

But if gratuitous Roman violence were eschewed, would not such indifference be a good model to follow today? The question, however, then becomes; how can Roman

style gratuitous violence be avoided? What threat did a few thousand non-violent Christians pose to the Rome of Domitian? What allowed the Romans, however occasionally or for whatever reasons of policy, to indulge the disgusting fancy of watching Christians (or anyone else) torn apart by wild beasts? What sort of world view allows such savage behavior, and is it unconnected with paganism? It may seem to many of us an incomprehensible degree of barbarity, but there is nothing shockingly unique about this aspect of Roman culture. Combats to the death and ritual or gratuitous murder are, still today, acceptable entertainment or practice in certain cultures, and the de-Christianized West is slipping in the same direction by clear steps. Growing public acceptance of murderous combat sports, such as Tai boxing, as well as galloping pornography, make modern Western society look more and more like ancient Rome. Our precious tolerance, likewise, looks more and more like cynical, on contemptuous, indifference, rather than some sort of embrace.

Rome eventually became Christianized. Did it change its evil ways? It may be unfortunate but it is certainly comprehensible that centuries of iron-handed pragmatism and civic religion was not instantly, or ever fully, disintegrated in the solvent of universal Christian charity, no matter how official. Mentalities do not change over night and old habits die hard. 21st century Muslims remain strangely nostalgic for the 8th century, a period generally regarded in the West as 'the dark ages' for reasons neither stupid nor biased. When the Christianized Roman empire collapsed in the 5th century Christianity did not fade and other things died hard. Provincial administrations often persisted. Local bishops were sometimes the sole civic authorities, and such bishops sometimes passed their authority down to sons. Today this would be a scandal. In the dark ages it was often not merely understandable, it was a best outcome.

Vance seems to relish such hybrid and accidental developments resulting in degrees and sorts of theocratic power. The Intercessors of the floats rival the Arbiters in authority, and manage, for a time, to get the upper hand. The Kind Folk of Lumark mingle a philosophy of universal benevolence with control of demonic forces (see *Cugel: The Skybreak Spatterlight*)*. The Monomantics (see *Cadwal*) or the Female Mystery (see *The Chasch*), are sexually based pagan style cults (like worship of Priapus or Aphrodite) in competition with legitimate civil authorities or other local agencies. Like the Muslim sect of Assassins, the old Hindoo Thugs, or the Taliban, they preach hatred, practice violence, and control small territories. Both are parodies of feminism, which also has an antique precedent: the Amazons. The Chilites of Canton Bashon (see *Durdane*) are another set of sexual fanatics, this time male, shamefully tolerated by the Anome. Etzwane loses no time putting them out of business and liberating their slaves.†

* Like the metaphoric quality of the Vance's aliens, Vance's demons are often metaphoric. In the case of Lumark they represent, or are equivalent to, technological force. Like an atomic bomb Phampoon can destroy a city. The same is true in 'Cil', the second chapter of *Cugel the Clever*.

† Another vancian precedent for Bush's non-relativistic action in Iraq.

* Finuka (see *Emphyrio*) is an interesting hybrid. Like ancient Palestinian deities such as Mammon or Baal (later demoted by Christianity to the status of demon) he never achieves more than a miserable local notoriety but, like Jehovah, he both pretends to omnipotence and, eschewing a vaporous ancestral origin, enters human history as a new god.

† I am speaking of believing Jews only. Non-religious, or 'secularized' Jews, are like any other secularized group from this point of view—of course anti-Semites do not make this nice distinction, and treat Jews exclusively as a race or a tribe. I am also ignoring the contention that the bible story of Abraham is a myth. What matters here is that, for believing Jews, it is not myth but history. But did the Romans not regard the story of Romulus and Remus as history? Perhaps, but Romulus and Remus are in any case their ancestors. A believing Roman pagan might despise Romulus but he could not claim he was not his father. Abraham might have rejected Jehovah, and many Jews do. Jehovah, in this crucial respect at least, is a god of human freedom.

Given this antic overview of the variety, persistence and apparently congenital mutual hostility of human beliefs, given that even the Christian doctrine of universal love has occasionally developed into blatant intolerance and even war, given that modern utopianism—the rejection of all doctrine, whatever that might mean—or the somewhat romanesque (because pragmatic and indifferent) atheism-materialism upon which certain people pin their hopes, seems to favor a decline into untrammelled gratuitous violence, what hope can reasonably be held out for tolerance?

I say 'hope', not 'guarantee for successful implementation'. Life, I say, remains mysterious and man can never guarantee success in any area. That anything succeeds is probably a miracle. We can only hope, but we need not hope unreasonably.

The core of the problem, as I see it, is the business of taking things seriously. The atheist-materialist utopians believe that all metaphysical belief—excepting their own—should remain private and relative. They want to devalue belief to personal preference. They think that putting all beliefs on the same level, the level of personal truth, will pull their teeth. Everyone should accept or respect everyone else's beliefs; no one should believe that his beliefs are better than anyone else's.

The obvious problem here is that some people believe such things as that a woman should dress in a sack with eye holes, have her genitals mutilated, and be owned like a camel or a lama. The utopians can squawk all they like. They can call me 'fascist'. They can denounce me openly or behind my back in any terms they like. They can menace me and hound me. They won't make me tolerate such stuff. But that attitude cuts both ways; no matter how intolerant I, or anyone else, may be of such things, they will none-the-less be advocated and practiced by some people, and sometimes by many people. This is a problem which must be faced. Sometimes war with such people cannot be avoided, particularly when they insist on waging it upon you. Any reasonable person must be able to understand that much, and persons unable to do so must be understood as unreasonable, or stupid or, to the extent their lack of understanding facilitates intolerable acts, actually dangerous.

But there is another problem which is less obvious. If beliefs are not taken seriously they are merely mental games, and soon fade away. The Christian sects which are losing adherents and influence (notably Methodists and Presbyterians) are becoming attenuated through embrace of atheist-materialist values. Those increasing in vigor and enrollment (Baptists and Catholics) are affirming belief in God and the reality of miracles. The utopians do not fail to understand this. Their action consists of propaganda aimed at relativising all belief, and they place their hope in belief fading out.* But, as I have already suggested above, the eradication of Christian

belief in particular (to be replaced by vigorous and raging Islam or flabby atheism-materialism, which is already visibly sliding into original paganism) no matter how many arguments can be adduced of its historical incapacity to curb the wild beast in man, cannot be regarded by sober minded people as an automatic panacea. Furthermore it is obvious that the atheist-materialist utopian arguments, though advanced with vigor and authority for several centuries, and despite a certain success, have failed to triumph. Religion persists, and even spreads; the red states are rife with it. I myself, though raised in the religious nothingness preferred by the utopians, am a convert to Catholicism. Furthermore, confidence in science and technological advance has faltered. Between Chernobyl and Global Warming, technology, previously haloed in hope, has become suspect. We want our CAT scans and our Pentium IVs, but we also want what the folk of antiquity took for granted: air we can breath, water we can drink and food we can eat. The new suspicion of technology, and thus of science itself, is a return to the Natural, to something mysterious which man neither masters nor fully understands. Bill Crosby's famous question has taken on new meaning; why, indeed, is there air? We do not know. But we do know we didn't make it, and that we have got to have it. The Environmentalists want to wrest control of the world away from man, and give it back to the non-human agency which has successfully run it since whatever or whomever created it. This tendency, whatever else it may be, is a move in the direction of paganism. The cult of Gaia, an extremely antique goddess, has been literally revived.

But cannot a Gaia worshiper, though convinced man is destroying the air with fuel emissions, exterminating intelligent life (i.e. chimps, gorillas, dogs and bees) with aerosols, atomic electricity and chemical fertilizers, not watch me drive to work, use spray cans, run my power drill off the local atomic pile, and feed white pellets from a bag to my flowers, without stabbing me with a consecrated stone knife? Though I may violate all his most ardently held convictions, can he not both continue to hold them ardently, and spare the life of the foolish sinner I am? The answer is: yes. I know this because even though I drive a car and, as a resident of France, use atomic electricity, no Environmentalists have murdered me yet. Most Catholics, by the same token, who are also against abortion (as opposed to those who are not) manage to resist the temptation to murder abortionists. In fact the percentage of Catholic anti-abortionist who murder them is so tiny that a whole raft of zeros behind the decimal point would be needed to express it—at a guess something like 1 in every 3 or 4 hundred million. This may be bad for the abortionist who have been struck down but it hardly amount to a religious war, at least not on the Catholic side, though the utopians, from the Catholic perspective, have slaughtered million of innocent unborn babes.* To compound utopian guilt the West is now in a demographic crisis. If these Gaian and Catholic attitudes are not prodigies of forbearance, and a formula for mutual tolerance, what is?

Cynically wishing conviction (whatever its object)

* For the purposes of this writing I provisionally accept, as already explained, utopian logic which denies belief in anything or, what comes to same thing, claim there is nothing to believe in. For convenience I treat their belief (in a radically mechanistic and material universe) as neither belief, nor Truth (advocates of radical relativism can't blame me for that!) and just ignore the issue, as they themselves do. They may claim that their view of things (whether belief, truth, personal-truth or just obvious-fact) is based on scientific observation. As already suggested, however, they have no more idea than Albert Einstein or St. Augustine why $E=MC^2$, rather than MC^3 . Einstein may have figured out that it does but he did not manage to figure out why it does—unless the sibylline remark, that God does not play dice with the universe, is taken for such an explanation.

* Nobel prize winner Mother Teresa blamed the exaggerated violence of our times on Abortion.

into non-existence is a waste of time. The utopians can propagandize all they like; they'll certainly not fail to persuade some folk not to take anything seriously, but always others, on all sides of all questions, will continue to believe. The danger is not there. That matters sometimes escalate into war is merely inevitable. What is dangerous is that such escalation be quicker than necessary. What the utopians need to understand is that war, bad as it is, is sometimes not only unavoidable but that postponing it can occasionally be even worse. If they fail to come to this understanding—and, taking their own ideas very seriously, some certainly never will, they shall still never see their dearest wish come true: the end of war in human history. Why need they suffer for exaggerated hopes?

In *Ports of Call* Vance suggests that values can be based on conditioning or hypnotism, broadly understood.* This does not mean he thinks values are folly and illusion, and 'lurulu', despite the usual interpretation, would not seem to be some personal bliss. I do not find in Vance support of relativistic value leveling to a flat playground for the solipsistic search for personal fulfillment. Captain Maloof's quest is wistful and vague, almost shameful; it seems more about attenuation of a sense of guilt, or perhaps a longing for an impossible return to a state of primal innocence, than a program of some positive result. Such desires, which contain a suggestion of remorse, which might constitute a sort of expiation, are perhaps the most that can be hoped in the way of earthly salvation, as opposed to the heavenly variety. In regard to the latter Catholicism frankly proposes confession of sins because, according to that strange doctrine, God's omnipotence includes the power to forgive them; life can be made new by obliteration of guilt at the deepest level, if not at more superficial ones. We can ignore but cannot forget the evil we have done. We can try to compensate but cannot undo our acts. But, if we turn our hearts from sin, like the prodigal son we will be welcomed back into the fold of the blessed who live, in the Catholic phrase: 'in the loving embrace of the Father', which is better than wasting away in a trap of remorse.

The real problem is not that people disagree with each other but that they disagree with themselves, or that, rather than longing for lurulu—to say nothing of seeking forgiveness for their sins—they frantically build walls between their souls and their crimes, between reality and themselves. Ignoring the sins of others is no solution to anything, but insisting on their guilt without looking at their own is surely a way to war. I do not mean to suggest that, by blaming ourselves, we can always avoid war. I repeat, and both all of history and the whole of the future will bare me out: war cannot be avoided. Calling ourselves into question does not necessarily mean abandoning our deepest convictions, just as indulgence towards others does not necessarily mean embracing their crimes. Both these vectors have limits, but discernment and judgement are duties no wish can deflect or postpone.

Precious Hope should not be wasted. Let us hope we will show all the tolerance we would wish for ourselves, and that war will be no more frequent or savage than is necessary for honest men.

ECHOES IN THE ETHER

Paul:

As the VIE project comes to a close, more than five years after I first put my name on the VIE subscription list, let me sing its praises, and yours, and those of all the VIE volunteers. I consider it one of the most remarkable publishing feats of the past 100 years—not just for its scope, but for the attention to detail, the attempt to capture the author's original intent, the relatively short timeframe to completion (compared to most efforts to publish similar-sized "complete works"), the quality of the results, and the fact that it was entirely supported by subscription and volunteer effort.

The complete VIE occupies a place of honor in my office, and my youngest daughter, Salem (age 20), has already asked if she can have my VIE set when I'm gone; it will be a true heirloom. Last of all, praises to Jack Vance, for producing a body of work worthy of and capable of inspiring such an effort. Thanks to all and sundry for seeing this through to the end.

Bruce F. Webster

JUDGE EXTANT!

How do you rate this publication?

- 9/0 (UNDILUTED SIGNAL)
- 8/1 (SLIGHTLY IMPURE SIGNAL)
- 7/2 (SUFFICIENT SIGNAL)
- 6/3 (NOT ENOUGH SIGNAL)
- 5/4 (PERCEPTIBLY MORE SIGNAL THAN NOISE)
- 4/5 (MORE NOISE THAN SIGNAL)
- 3/6 (BARELY ENOUGH SIGNAL)
- 2/7 (VERY NOISY)
- 1/8 (MARGINALLY UNDILUTED NOISE)
- 0/9 (PURE NOISE)



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Contact EXTANT:

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

Letters and articles welcome.

* See 'How to Praise Lurulu'; *Cosmopolis* #57, page 8. This idea is burlesque of Existentialism.