
COSMOPOLIS

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EQ Volume Update

by Chuck King, TI Wallah

First, a brief recap of the story of the Vance/Ellery Queen texts: in the sixties, Jack Vance wrote three work-for-hire mysteries that were published as Ellery Queen mysteries, with the following titles: *The Four Johns*, *The Madman Theory*, and *A Room to Die In*. Jack disowned the stories, on the basis that they had been substantially edited by the Ellery Queen people, and there were (we thought) no surviving copies of his own versions.

In 2003, however, while doing TI work on *The Killing Machine* at the Mugar Library in Boston, I noticed pages from a story I recognized as *The Four Johns* on the back of one of Jack's handwritten manuscripts. In those days Jack wrote initial drafts of his stories in longhand, and for that purpose used whatever paper was handy, including the backs of typescripts of earlier stories. The Mugar index lists what's on the front of each manuscript, but there is not (so far) an index of what's on the *back* of those manuscripts. Having some free time, I looked at the other handwritten manuscripts in the Mugar materials, in hopes of finding more treasures. It turns out that there were a number of pages from *The Four Johns*, as well as some pages from *The Madman Theory*. In fact, combining the newly-discovered materials with another fragment at the Mugar that we already knew about, we now had most of a manuscript of *The Four Johns*.

In light of this information, VIE management approached the Vances and got approval to produce restored versions of the Ellery Queen stories. Since this all happened long after the format of the VIE was determined, they are being offered as a separate supplemental volume.

In March I returned to the Mugar Library to get copies of the source material for the Ellery Queen texts, and (after a delay due to moving) I am now into textual integrity work on *The Four Johns*.

The extent of changes made to the texts was not understated. In many instances, sentences and even entire paragraphs have been substantially re-written. Here is a representative example:

MS:

Mervyn Gray would have contradicted each of her judgments, had he been aware of them, dourly but emphatically. He was a teaching assistant, not a student. He felt not at all confident of survival. Two days ago he had been poisoned, yesterday a bullet had missed his head by inches. Tomorrow, if his anonymous enemy were to be believed—and Mervyn believed him—Mervyn would be killed.

Published version:

The waitress was wrong on all counts. Mervyn Gray was not a student; he was a teaching assistant. And he felt not at all confident of survival. Two days ago he had been almost poisoned; yesterday a bullet had missed his head by inches; tomorrow, if his unidentified enemy was to be believed—and Mervyn believed him—Mervyn would be dead.

The changes here include common editorial changes to Jack's work: 'correcting' his comma-splice, smoothing out perceived abrupt sentences. But in some instances the changes are simply substituting words preferred by the Ellery Queen editor to Jack's choice of language. Here's another example:

MS:

To no avail. He slumped back in the seat, reached for his cup, and at last took note that the coffee was cold. He signaled the waitress but she failed to see him. Mervyn felt no rancor. He closed his eyes. The lids felt stiff and harsh; he raised them. *Which?* Good lord, he thought, had the question become compulsive?

Published version:

But he had to shake his buzzing head. He reached for his cup, and at last took note that the coffee was cold. He drank it anyway, and closed his eyes. The lids felt stiff and harsh; he raised them. *Which?*

Pervasive substantive changes present a particularly thorny TI problem. In other cases, it has sometimes been clear that editors from a particular publisher tended to make certain kinds of changes to Jack's writing: changing 'which' to 'that', for instance, or regularly breaking up compound sentences into multiple shorter sentences. In

such a case, one can extrapolate that a certain construction in another text was the result of editorial intervention. So, from familiarity with the manuscript of *The Killing Machine*, when reviewing *The Star King* (for which there is no manuscript evidence) we can propose with some confidence that in certain constructions, if the book says 'which', Jack probably actually wrote 'that'.

In the Ellery Queen texts, however, there is no doubt that Jack's words have been changed, but the changes are so great and sweeping that it is impossible to say with any authority what they were changed from. So, it may be difficult to extrapolate from the sections we have to restore the sections we don't have. It is still early in the process to say for sure, but whatever the final result, the VIE versions of *The Four Johns* and *The Madman Theory* (to be published under Jack's preferred titles, *Strange She Hasn't Written* and *The Man Who Walks Behind*) will be closer to what Jack intended than any heretofore available.

As noted above, we have the majority of the text of *The Four Johns* in MS form, in chunks covering the entire length of the book. (It may be an interesting exercise for the reader, to try to determine which of the text is Jack's, restored from the MS, and which is the Ellery Queen editor's recasting.) Of *The Madman Theory*, we have a shorter segment, covering approximately the final 20 pages or so of the story. We have no MS evidence for *A Room to Die In* (VIE title: *Death of a Solitary Chess Player*); it remains to be determined to what extent we can extrapolate from the other texts to return it (or aspects of it) to Jack's preferred form.

As I write this, orders are still being taken for the Ellery Queen volume through the VIE web site (www.vanceintegral.com).



On Reaching the End of the Road

by Tim Stretton

When Dave Reitsema asked me to write a valedictory article for *Cosmopolis*, I was in something of a quandary. Having exhausted my ingenuity in writing the history of the VIE for Volume 44, I wasn't sure whether I had anything left to say. But as I cast my mind back over the six years I've been involved with the project, what I remember isn't the process or the Master Plan. My

thoughts are more impressionistic than that, and mostly centred on people and places. Below is a rather more stream-of-consciousness take on the VIE than you will read in Volume 44.

CHINON

Over the course of the project, I spent nearly a month spread over four visits at Chateau de St Louand. We got through a lot of work, but we also had a lot of fun. GM2 in September 2002 was perhaps the best of all: since hardly any of the work required a computer, we were able to do most of our labours in the chateau grounds. Paul and Genevieve's matchless hospitality provided the backdrop for many new friendships. There are too many to mention individually, but most of my photographs seem to feature Alun Hughes and Steve Sherman lurking somewhere. I even made friends with Negrillon, Paul's black cat, who also crops up in a disproportionate number of photographs.

Many of the best memories have only the most tenuous connection with our work. There were late evenings—and indeed early mornings—pleasantly befuddled by a single malt. There was a surreal trip to the supermarket with Andreas Irle where he bought up the entire stock of Chevres cheese (I confess to hoping he tripped over with them so I could ask: "Andreas, why do you lie among the cheeses?"). Then again there was the hilarious discovery that Adobe Acrobat had a "read aloud" facility. If you haven't heard:

In the high branches of a cottonwood stands a tall
hippie. He jeers at Dusty Rhodes, and to make his
feelings absolutely clear he urinates toward the barge:
a perfect half-parabola sparkling in the sunlight.
Somebody calls out in rapture: "Oh please! Do it again!"

read by Acrobat (a delivery best described as 'deadpan'), then you haven't really experienced Jack Vance. Maybe you had to be there . . .

Another time we were seized by an enthusiasm for Jane Austen (a partiality shared by many Vance readers) and read aloud our favourite passages; without, on this occasion, the assistance of Adobe Acrobat.

That's before we touch on the food. France is the home of gastronomy, but our meals were simple, wholesome fare: crisp fresh bread, plentiful meats, cheeses of every description, tomatoes straight from the vine, washed down with the wine of the house. It was like eating in a Vance novel every day.

OAKLAND AND JACK

I was also lucky enough to make two visits to the Vances in Oakland. It could not have been more different from Chinon: ten minutes from the Vances' house found us in metropolitan Berkeley. I remember my first experience of breakfast American-style with John Schwab, Bob Lacovara, Joel Hedlund, Jesse Polhemus and Alun Hughes; plates piled high with every imaginable form of starch. Then there was lunch in a Japanese restaurant—every dish delicious, and none identifiable. Less felicitous was a subsequent morning in a copy shop, running four copiers simultaneously, reproducing every Vance manuscript we could find to take home for TI work. (I still have my setting copy of *Wyst*, with editorial depredations shamelessly scrawled throughout. To this day, I grit my teeth at the buffoon on DAW's staff who, in 1974, thought 'amusement' and 'bemusement' were interchangeable).

And of course I got to meet Jack, twice. On the first visit, we were there for a week and enjoyed a cocktail hour most days. One of my most cherished VIE memories is Jack playing his banjo for us. Many great writers fall short as human beings; but Jack, who welcomed a gaggle of enthusiastic strangers into his home, is not one of them. And no mention of the Vances' hospitality would be complete without mention of Norma, John and Tammy, who put up with us all not once, but twice.

CLS

The *Cosmopolis Literary Supplement* flourished over 29 issues between August 2000 and February 2004, and I seemed to have something published in most of them. This was a benefit of the VIE I had never expected! Serialising my work in the CLS was a great thrill: a captive audience of Vance readers, who might appreciate how I was trying to write. OK, so I didn't get paid, but you can't have everything. . .

The CLS had an important part in my development as a writer. The favourable reception for *The Zael Inheritance* which ran from August 2000 to April 2002 was part of the spur to write *Dragonchaser* (March 2003–February 2004). Steve Sherman read an early draft of the latter and provided advice and encouragement; CLS editor Till Noever lent his support throughout, and the attentive proof-reading of Malcolm Bowers was also much appreciated. If either of these novels is ever published, some of the credit will be due to VIE volunteers. For those who are interested, my website www.dragonchaser.net is

designed to showcase my writing, and has news, excerpts and maps from the latest revision of the novel.

When I signed up for the VIE, in August 1999, my volunteer enthusiasm shone bright. I would proof-read one book and get my name in the credits; flushed with benignancy towards the project and its managers, if they asked nicely I might even do a second. It soon became apparent that, not only were there no texts to proofread at this stage, there were no managers either. So to while away the time until there was something to proofread, I volunteered to do some digitising. And so it began . . .

I wouldn't have missed it for the world.



VIE Library Donations

by Dave Reitsema

A major impetus in the formation of the Vance Integral Edition was the desire to place the complete works of Jack Vance in libraries throughout the world. The initial goal was to place complete sets in 40–50 libraries. Initial funding for the VIE was made and premised on the VIE achieving this goal.

One of the many enigmas surrounding Jack Vance is defining his work. Is it 'fiction'? 'Science fiction'? 'Mystery'? While this is being sorted out, it is terribly important that Vance's work be preserved in a proper and accurate format. And it is important that it be available to those who want access to it. This has been one of the VIE's major purposes.

As the VIE completes its work it has begun shipping sets to libraries. Here is the list of libraries to which sets have been shipped to date:

British Library
National Library of Wales
Boston University Library
MIT Libraries
Syracuse University Library
UC Berkeley Library
UC Riverside Library
University of Kansas
University of Washington Library
Toronto Public Library
University of Calgary Library
UHI Millennium Institute

Cambridge University Library
University of Leeds Library
University of Liverpool Library
Cal State Fullerton
Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Royal Dutch Library)
Library of Congress

No doubt volunteers will wonder what if any response will be forthcoming from these libraries. The following letter was recently received:

Hello to all

I am delighted to have received the second consignment of the VIE. Could I thank you on behalf of the Science Fiction Foundation and the University of Liverpool for such a generous donation.

I wish you the best of luck in the project.

All best wishes

Andy Sawyer
Science Fiction Librarian
Special Collections and Archives
University of Liverpool Library
PO Box 123, Liverpool L69 3DA, UK.

Course Director, MA in Science Fiction Studies. http://www.liv.ac.uk/english/pdf/ScienceFictionStudies_MA.pdf.
Reviews Editor: Foundation: The International Review of Science Fiction
<http://www.sf-foundation.org/publications/foundation.html>.
The Science Fiction Hub: <http://www.sfhub.ac.uk/>. The Science Fiction Foundation: <http://www.sf-foundation.org/>

There are additional libraries that will receive sets in the coming months. The VIE is proud of having completed this goal with integrity and professionalism founded, solely and amazingly, on the efforts of 100's of lay volunteers. To have published 44 volumes with a minimal budget and using only unpaid volunteers is a staggering and unprecedented achievement. Each volunteer was vital to this accomplishment. Each volunteer should be justly proud of their contribution and involvement!



Requiem for the CLS

Dave Reitsema asked me to 'do a final piece about the *Cosmopolis Literary Supplement*'—in the spirit of laying it to rest I guess, together with the soon-to-be-history *Cosmopolis*. I was wondering what I could say that I haven't already said in my usually-brief editorials. Let me see if I can put some stray thoughts together one last time.

When I took over the editorship of the *CLS*, it was with misgiving. After all, Tim Stretton and I produced the lion's share of its contents—sometimes making the *CLS* into the '*Tim and Till Magazine*', so to speak. I sensed a definite conflict of interest here, which was never resolved, mainly because it couldn't be. Still, I really wanted to keep the *CLS* alive, and so there was my rationale, as much as there could be. Besides, people seemed to enjoy it, sometimes considerably more than the often contentious *Cosmopolis*. Chalk one up for story-telling.

Of course, that's what the *CLS* was all about: telling stories; wrapping up views of life, the universe and everything into a cocoon of fiction; asking the right questions, preferably in such a way that the readers don't even know that the questions are being asked—until it is too late, and the seed is firmly planted inside the brain somewhere; subtly, and sometimes not-so-subtly, influencing everything one thinks. That is the cognitive effect of 'narrative': it threads itself through a number of areas of the brain, creating new, or reinforcing existing, pathways of thought.

Here in New Zealand—if you'll allow me this unexpected digression!—millions of acres of hillside are permanently terraced because one day a group of sheep walked *this* way but not *that*; and then—because of whatever causes another group of sheep to do what the first one did—more sheep treaded the same path, and another and another, and soon the rain running down the hillside was diverted by the track and that in turn reshaped other aspects of the slope, and that again suddenly made other sheep go *that* way and not *this*, and . . . You can see where this goes.

The cognitive effect of received narrative is the neural equivalent of what that first group of sheep did to the hillside; treading where their fancy and contingency took them—with effects that are quite impossible to foresee, though in hindsight it often appears that they should have been predictable; but always only in hindsight. 'Narrative' is much more powerful than 'argument' in creating such tracks, mainly because the recipient's resistance to 'story' is usually low or non-existent; and if a story is told well, it's not just not resisted, but received and accepted with a wide-open, eager mind. A good author can take advantage

of this and influence the life-philosophy and world-view of his or her readership with a tiny fraction of the words it would take a philosopher to accomplish the same thing. A spoonful of sugar and all that.

I recently re-read *The Dying Earth* and *The Last Castle*. Philosophers of all kinds of persuasions have spent hundreds of thousands—maybe millions—of words trying to express the philosophical concepts (ethical, practical, political) contained in these two short volumes. The tomes filled with the cogitations of these folks leave me, as they always have, with a weary sense of blah-blah-blah. Ask me to quote anything from any of the dozens of books I've read on related topics, and I couldn't oblige. Yet every story from *The Dying Earth* is firmly etched into my consciousness and will remain there as a testimony to the power of narrative.

When from the hundreds of volunteers and other 'Cosmopolites' only a comparative few came forward with submissions, I was surprised. Among Vanciacs, I thought, surely we would find a significant proportion of those who were sufficiently under-the-influence of this master story-teller to be compelled to write themselves. But repeated solicitations and urgings produced none of the hoped-for cornucopia; and I sat down and thought about it some more. Apathy and fear, I told myself, can only account for some of the laggard response. After all, Vanciacs are an unusual group of people: hardy, stalwart, perceptive, fearless, decisive (well, most of them; I hope . . .). Hardly the kind to which to apply the rules valid for just about everybody else, right? But what else could there be? Were there perfectly good stories with a distinct Vance-influence out there, that just never made it to my computer, because those who had written them were too reluctant to submit them? Or was it just that the requirements appeared too stringent? Is writing in the shadow of Jack really too intimidating, just because he casts such a large shadow?

The problem is real. I notice the same phenomenon among many of my fellow martial arts practitioners, especially those at the more 'advanced' levels; in other words, people of whom I would have expected better. Often, when referring to someone with a skill far superior to their own, I hear them mutter complaints. "How depressing," they say. "It makes us look so [insignificant, incompetent, stupid, clumsy . . .]." Like it were something bad, depressing, off-putting or generally discouraging that there are people who have perfected a craft, skill or art to levels far superior to their own. If there weren't, what else would we have to aspire to? If we measure ourselves only

against those who are our equals or inferiors, how can we ever hope to grow?

Another reason for the reluctance of people to come forward with their writing efforts may have been that they thought it was necessary, or expected, to be 'just like' Jack; to say things just like him, using a similar style and preferably in possession of a similarly extensive and exotic treasury of words. This, too, is misguided at best, and plain stupid at worst. Imitation might be useful for 'training' purposes, such as when a painter hones his skills and technique by repeatedly emulating the style of and treating the same subjects as his chosen 'master'. But there it has to end. Imitation can develop essential skills, but it cannot by itself call forth creativity; the latter arises from individual energy and life-experience—and, occasionally, neurological damage. If that was what stopped people from submitting it was truly unfortunate. The rest of us probably missed out on a lot of great stuff.

And then, finally, there is one other possible reason for the dearth of *CLS* submissions; a reason so simple and uncomplicated—and yet, to me, foreign and almost incomprehensible—that I failed to even consider it. It is this: *there just weren't any stories*. People had no stories to submit for no more complicated reason but that they hadn't written any.

Why hadn't they?

One would assume a higher-than-average level of literacy and appreciation of the value of the written word to exist among Vanciaks. If this is so, then apparently that does not translate into a higher-than-average output of actual 'writing'. And if that tentative conclusion is correct, then it seems to follow that the desire to write—or, to be more precise, to write stories, long or short, of whatever genre—and to follow it up by the action of doing it (an apparently difficult step, I admit, for the vast majority of people with regards to anything at all!) is not necessarily a function of an individual's level of literacy or appreciation of 'literature'; no more, I guess, than a person's tendency to, say, paint is correlated to their appreciation of the art of painting, and so on. Put like that, it becomes almost obvious, yet until I had a chance to reflect on my experience with the *CLS*, it wasn't; not to me anyway. I couldn't *imagine* not wanting to tell stories, and it was really hard to understand how anybody could feel any different about it, especially Vanciaks.

And then I remembered that there are people out there who are patently *unable* to read fiction at all. There are others that cannot abide by fiction which presupposes anything at all about the world that isn't within

the parameters of the 'scientifically verifiable'. I wonder whether there is a parallel here to people who are simply unable to *write* fiction. They enjoy reading it, and may consume it in large quantities; but get them to sit down and invent something that isn't 'real', and they freeze up. Curiously enough, however, the next moment they'll spend endless hours writing reams and reams of 'opinion pieces', all of which will ever only have a minute fraction of the emotional or intellectual impact of a good short-story or novel written about the same subject.

And then I started wondering: is this a good thing or not? What would the world be like if those currently engaged in holding forth about life, politics, religion and everything else suddenly sat down and started writing fiction? (One may argue, of course, that many of them already do. They are usually labeled 'journalists', and they're not supposed to write fiction. Ha!)

Some further cogitation followed, and I finally decided that maybe it is a good thing that the opinion-mongers of the world don't write stories. I would also like to submit by way of a tentative theory bearing further investigation, that the fact that they don't (can't, won't) actually tells us something about the value or profundity of the opinions they inflict upon us, no matter what these opinions actually are. I know this is a potentially inflammatory suggestion—but, hey, I'm just following Jack's example! I mean, in *The Dying Earth* and *The Last Castle* alone there are enough challenging, to some no doubt inflammatory, notions to rile most people for the rest of their natural lives. *The Gray Prince* (a.k.a. *The Domains of Coryphon*) has been labeled 'racist filth'; *Wyst* is the most acrid tirade against collectivism I've seen anywhere; *The Cadwal Chronicles*, despite their profoundly pro-conservationist theme, should seriously annoy just about every conservationist extant; Adam Reith is the epitome of a 'speciesist'; and Kirth Gersen is a one-man revenge machine. A more un-PC and currently-unfashionable set of themes and heroes than Jack's is hard to imagine. Inflammatory indeed!

Sometimes I wish that the *CLS* had had more of this. Overall, its contents qualified as fairly 'tame' and inoffensive—I think. Still, if people enjoyed them, that should be sufficient. Story-tellers are, above all, entertainers; and I hope that entertain we did.

'nuff said.

Till Noever

Editor, *Cosmopolis Literary Supplement*



Report from the Editor in Chief

SECOND PRINTING
AND JUNE PACKING: ALERT!

The Second Printing books, 105 full sets, Readers and Deluxe—4620 books—are being printed and bound, under the aegis of Stefania Zacco, in Milan. A group of packing volunteers is being gathered, as scheduled, for a week of work at the end of June. It includes veterans Thomas Rydbeck, Billy Webb, Jurriaan Kalkman and myself; a strong contingent of Dutch women; Wilma and Phila Bouwmeester, and Christa Jonkergouw; Misi Mladoniczky of Sweden, and 2 Americans: Vince Serrano and Craig Thomas. This is a full 10, our target team size.

Second Printing packing will have its own special challenges. We will have 44, not 22, different volumes to deal with. The books must still be divided into their respective waves because there are specific inner boxes and crates, designed by Sr. Biffi for the volumetrics of each book group.



Reader's spine leather. These are pre-cut sections for various spine-widths, awaiting further cutting. The process of cutting the hides was filmed and photographed by Brian Gharst in May.

Meanwhile complications have arisen. As mentioned in *Cosmopolis* 61 the Torriani factory is closing. This is causing a bit of what is called 'social unrest'. There have been strikes and work on VIE books has suffered delay. This may mean that not all books will be ready by the last week of June. The situation is not yet fully clear but, based on current information, the current plan is to proceed on schedule but with a reduced team, and work with books which are ready. Then we will gather a second team two weeks later, July 11-15, to finish the job. Anyone interested in packing books on these dates should contact me. The VIE, as usual, pays all expenses. I have been having e-mail trouble, so try to contact me at the following address: prhoads@club-internet.fr, paulrhoads@wanadoo.nl, emeraldofthewest@yahoo.fr. If I do not reply promptly to one address please try another.

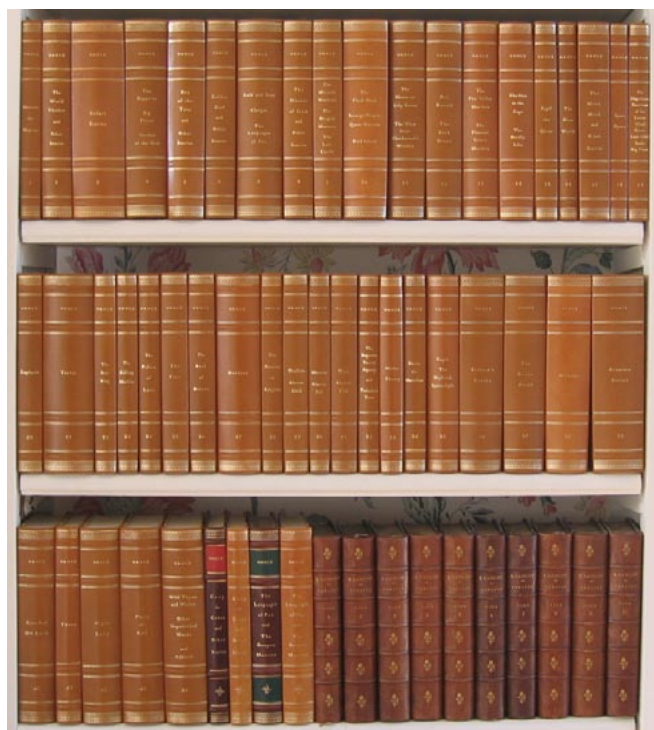
As noted with regard to printing problems in *Cosmopolis* 61, the strikes at Torriani as well as my e-mail problems are aspects of two great, and related, contemporary phenomena: the computer revolution and globalization. Torriani is in trouble because of the latter. Torriani may be one of the most prestigious binderies in the world, but it has failed to restructure for the new environment of globalization. This environment is the absence of Communist blocks clamping down on half the world, the liberty to freely buy and sell for the majority of the world population, open sea lanes guarded by the American navy, abundant cargo ships and low wages in certain countries. I don't know what Torriani might have done to meet these challenges. Perhaps re-tooling with robots and downsizing the work force to be competitive as an industrial binder, and specializing in high-end work by creating the most appropriate structures. Its current structures were adequate ten years ago. Not today. As for my e-mail, it is a mess because I lack the technical competence to cope with all the snazzy technology we are all using now. Like Visbhume or other apprentice sorcerers, I'm in over my head. I am, however, one of many 'home computer users', whose mass makes the computer revolution, and thus the VIE, possible.

The VIE project has been an adventure from the beginning, and it will be an adventure right to the end. European subscribers are lucky: they have their books! The books of 'Wave 1' American and other subscribers are printed, packed, and waiting in Milan to be shipped. The Second Printing subscriber's books are currently being made, but our packing plans have been deranged and communications are difficult. Money, naturally, is tight, and those sailing the VIE ship into harbor do so with unpaid hours of labor. Will the ship founder on the shoals unexpectedly guarding the port? If we remain staunch: No!

A CONCOURSE OF VIE VOLUMES

European 'Wave 1' subscribers, plus Billy Webb, are already in possession of their full sets.

In *Cosmopolis* #61 Jim Lee who characterizes himself as 'more the Roger Pilgham type' noted that: 'the like of Julian Hove have informed the volumes to a noticeable degree'. Since those who 'informed the volumes' were, for the most part, myself and my colleagues Joel Anderson, Andreas Irle and John Foley, I am led to wonder if I, and we, are indeed the like of Julian Hove?

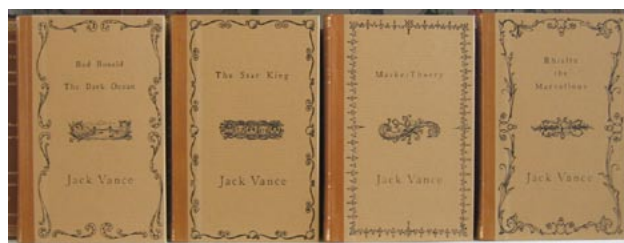


My VIE set, with Deluxe and Readers versions of the Gift and SF volumes, sharing a shelf with a 10 volume set of the plays of Eugene Labiche.

To get 'closer to the problem' (all the rage these days) Jim Lee seems to mean that Jack Vance's books are like the planets of the concourse, but that the VIE volumes are like Julian Hove's nominations. Julian Hove named the planets; and I have named the volumes, in the following style: 'Volume 1', 'Volume 2', 'Volume 3' and so on, up to 'Volume 44'. If, in the role of Roger Pilgham, Jim Lee had intercepted these nominations, he could have rejected them in disgust and, to each of the forty-four volumes he might have assigned a letter of the alphabet. This would have given the following result: 'Volume A', 'Volume B', 'Volume C' and so on, to 'Volume Z', or Hove-system Volume 26 (*Book of Dreams*), followed, presumably, by 'Volume AA', 'Volume BB', & etcetera to 'Volume RR' (*Wild Thyme and Violets*) or, perhaps, 'Volume A1', 'Volume A2, etc., or whatever occurred to Jim Lee—in his role as Roger Pilgham.

I suspect, however, that this is not exactly what Jim Lee had in mind. He is not explicit but I imagine he feels that names like Lord Kitchener, William Gladstone, Archbishop Rollo Gore, Edythe Macdevott, Rudyard Kipling, Thomas Carlyle, William Kircudbright, Samuel B. Gorsham, Sir Robert Peet, and the like somehow accord to the aesthetics of the VIE volumes, while he, in Pilghamish manner, would rather their appearance accorded with such names as: Alphanor, Barleycorn, Chrysanthé, Diogenes, Elfland,

Fiame, Goshen, Hardacres, Image, Jezebel, Krokinole, Lyonesse, Madagascar, Nowhere, Olliphane, Pilgham, Quinine, Raratonga, Somewhere, Tantamount, Unicorn, Valisande, Walpurgis, Xion, Ys and Zacaranda—names derived from legend, myth, romance, or even Jim Lee's own whimsy. How to translate such terminological preferences into graphic facts—or 'aqua-facts' if one prefers? It can't be the leather spines Jim Lee has in mind because, unlike industrial products such as cloth, paper or plastic, these bits of mountain sheep hide display a texture of quirky individualistic characteristics impossible to generate any other way. Not only are their surfaces variegated but no two parts of the hide have the same thickness. Another feature of the covers is the frame which decorates and, to a certain extent, designates chronology. The illustration shows the last volume in each of the first three series, and the first volume in the last series, or Volumes 12, 22, 33 and 34.



The Readers cover frames. Note that this chronological system was devised when the VIE book set still projected 60 volumes. The reorganization into 44 volumes included further disturbance to strict chronological order, beyond that imposed by the short stories. In particular, *Tschai*, a third period work, was placed in position 21, prior to *Star King*, a second period work, at position 22. It would not have been a problem to use the third period cover frame for Volume 21, even if Volume 22 used the second period frame, but that is not how it went, so the frames are perhaps best considered simply decorative—or this may be looked upon as another golden opportunity to denounce VIE amateurism and incompetence.

These frames use a system of 'graphic symbolism' which attempts to accord with, or even comment upon, the character of the period in question. Then there are the lacits. There are about 20 of these, some individual to certain books, others which group up to five books, by theme or in other ways not necessarily chronological. The lacit for Volumes 43–44 may indeed be Julian Hovish, since he was a navigator and the lacit shows a planetary sphere, but a lacit like that for Volumes 32–33, with a propeller tangled in seaweed, would seem, like Roger Pilgham, to mock the pretentiousness of gallant explorers. As for the 1–15–34–35 lacit, being a satire of that visual chestnut, the classical masks of comedy and tragedy, reinterpreted as alarm and snickering, it is difficult to imagine a more irreverent and extravagantly Pilghamish solution.



Lacit for Volume 43 and 44.



Lacit for Volumes 32 and 33



Lacit for Volumes 1, 15 and 34 and 35.

As for the VIE logo, this image was defined by Jack Vance himself. Its original form was an Assyrian print, which Vance lost and asked me to recreate for him, which I did based on Assyrian iconography and Vance's own indications.

Finally, and though I do not wish to open old wounds—by which I refer to the outrage and disappointment of a few individuals who never got their own way—or to inflict new ones, I might point out once again that a distinguishing characteristic of the VIE font, Amiante, is non-homogeneity, or deliberate differences introduced into glyph elements which might be, and generally always are, identical in contemporary typography, such as the stems of the 'b' and 'd'.

In short, it is hard to see how VIE aesthetics could be more 'eccentric', 'tumbling' or 'odd-shaped', which, come to think of it, is exactly how Roger Pilgham characterizes Sir



Labiche and Voltaire.

Julian when he named a 'fragment of chondritic pumice' for him—so perhaps Jim Lee has a point.*

To comfort Jim Lee's thesis, and though I have pointed this out elsewhere, it must be confessed that certain 19th century French books, in addition to the contemporary German editions of Andreas Irle, provided inspiration for the VIE aesthetic. Both volumes illustrated here, a half leather edition in the Labiche collection from 1987, published by Calmann Lévy, and an edition of Voltaire published by Hachette, the first great publisher of books for the masses of which this is a typical example from 1857. The catalogue of Hachette titles on the back cover inspired the back cover of the VIE volumes. Like the Labiche, the cover boards are finished with paper rather than cloth or leather. The spine of the Calmann Lévy volume is leather, but the spine of the Hachette volume is cloth, with the title printed on a paper label which is glued to the spine. The front cover uses a near reproduction of the title page, inside a decorative frame, another element borrowed by the VIE.



Hachette volume, spine and front cover.

Both Voltaire and Labiche are notable comic authors, Labiche in particular. Unfortunately for Anglophones he is totally unknown outside France, though he is as celebrated there as Faydeau, and perhaps admired even more. He is the author of such imperishable works as: *'The Vivacities of Captain Tic'*, *'The 37 cents of Mr. Montaudoin'*, *'Çive Us a Hug, Folleville!'*† and *'A Man Who Burned Up a Woman'*. His work, however, is utterly untranslatable. It is worth learning French for no other reason than to read him.

YET ANOTHER TRAGIC ERROR

In *Cosmopolis* 61 I neglected to mention another disfiguration of a Wave 2 volume which, however, we were aware of in Milan: the missing apostrophe on the title page of Volume 32. This error was the fault of the VIE, and so there was nothing we could do about it.

* see VIE Volume 22, page 51, for the textual references used above.

† Labiche is one of those writers who, like Vance once he will be discovered, has had an effect on the language. This title, *'Embrasson-Nous, Folleville!'* has become a standard phrase; a maudlin call of comradery which is not hypocritical but disguises an ulterior motive, usually some sort of desperation, less from Folleville than from the crier himself. It is used by 3rd parties to characterize such an attitude. A related but less subtle idea is expressed in the French popular song: *Tout Va Bien, Madame La Marquise*. The number of phrases that Vance will supply to the English language may be gauged by the conversation of Vance readers among themselves.

The Dogtown Tourist Agency and Freitzke's Turn

Volume 32 title page.
(Photo courtesy of Yannic Gour.)

Subscribers have three choices:

- 1: In righteous outrage and disgust they may rip such worthless books to shreds and flush them down the toilet and launch angry internet campaigns to denounce VIE amateurism, incompetence, irresponsibility and irreverence.
- 2: With a common household implement, such as a pencil or a pen, they may correct the error in the manner of scribes of old, thus participating directly in the graphic phase of the historic VIE effort.
- 3: They may ignore the situation totally as if it were unworthy of notice or even failed to exist.

One thing is clear and may be taken as established, beyond any doubt, as a matter of fact: the apostrophe missing from the title page of Volume 32 ended up on the cover of Volume 26.

The Book of Dreams

Volume 26, Readers volume cover.

How did it happen? To solve this enigma let us activate some vancian wisdom:

In solving a problem, I form and consider every conceivable premise. If each of these results in an impossible set of implications, except one, whose consequence is merely improbable: then that lone hypothesis, no matter how unprecedented, is necessarily the correct solution of the problem. — Magnus Ridolph

Volume 3, page 49

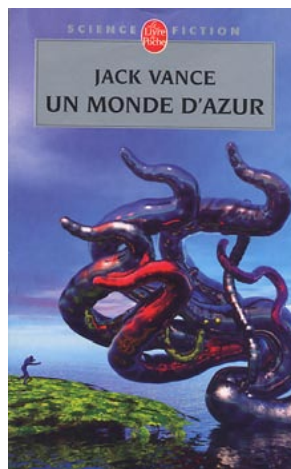
So: was insufficient glue applied to the anterior surface of the apostrophe so that it slipped from the title page of Volume 32 and drop onto the cover of Volume 26 where extra glue had seeped out from under the 's'? Or was the apostrophe pecked off the title page by a migrant bird, and then defecated, from a height of 3,000 feet, to fall

upside-down on the cover? Or did Joel Anderson and Andreas Irle (who, respectively, composed the covers and Wave 2 front matter) perpetrate this trick in cahoots with a cabal of CRT and volume-PPers?

Since the first two hypotheses result in an impossible set of implications, even though the third is unprecedented it must be correct.

The proof is now established: from the beginning the VIE has been sapped by a Fifth Column of chaotists!

A WORLD AZURE



Robert Laffont's *Press Pocket* collection, directed by Gérard Klein, is publishing a new French version of *Blue World*, based on the VIE text translation by the VIE's own Patrick Dusoulier. I have read this version not only with simple pleasure, not only with satisfaction for what seems to be a new career for our friend Patrick, but with a certain personal pride. We must congratulate

Gérard Klein for insisting that the previous translation, based on the compromised pre-VIE text, required renewal, and for choosing Patrick, so closely involved in VIE work, as the most qualified translator. The VIE, once again, is impacting positively on Jack Vance's literary fate. All volunteers and subscribers have contributed.



Letters to the Editor

To the Editor,

In *Cosmopolis* 61 in the Charles Platt interview, Jack Vance made the following statement: "In the other book I did, the theme was even less inflammatory, in fact it was so trivial as to be trite. Essentially, I said that socialism, the welfare state, is debilitating."

I was glad for David B. Williams' comments at the end of the article where he identifies the story as *Wyst: Alastor 1716*, because throughout the years reading *Cosmopolis* I have learned much about these matters included in Jack's works. When I first read the statement quoted above I thought:

It must be *Dodkin's Job*, with the massive ever-present time-consuming bureaucracy knitting the City into an Organizational unit. Socialism, if I ever saw it. But then I thought:

It must be *Big Planet*, with those sweet-sour Kirstendale aristocrat flunkies, doing their menial labor incognito so to speak, to keep their equality society functioning. Brainwashing poor Cloyville into their system, and Wailie and Motta too. And one of them serves unknown meat to our protagonist on this cannibalistic world? Evil socialists if I ever saw any. And then I thought:

It must be the *Cadwal* books, with those evil Peefers who believe in Life, Peace, and Freedom: evil socialist values all. And at the end they commit this huge mass murder or act of war against those in power whom they despise; since no one throughout history has ever committed acts of mass murder or war other than evil socialists, there you have it! The proof is in the pudding. But no, these books were written years after the interview. So then I thought:

It must be *Durdane*, with the sickly Shant society, using the oppressive torc system to coerce the population into conforming with the laws of society. Faceless Man they call him? Faceless Male Evil Socialist, rather. But then I thought:

It must be *Tschai*, with the four alien master races, enslaving men for their evil purposes; through the generations these men evolving closer to their master race as if through genetic engineering. Now this might seem like an element of Nazism, but as I have learned earlier in the pages of *Cosmopolis*, the Nazis were socialists, they're almost one and the same; so the four master races must be evil alien socialists, and the planet is infested with them! And then I thought:

It must be *The Last Castle*, with the evil Meks revolting against their human employers, acting in ant-like unison,

all individuals acting as one, thinking as one, intent on expunging the humans who are obviously not members of their group. Evil socialist alien creatures if I ever saw any. So then I thought:

Can there be more evil socialist alien creatures in Vance? See *The Miracle Workers*. Isak Comandore visiting the First Folk "reached the highly important conclusion that the First Folk are not complete individuals but components of a larger unity". And one of the First Folk replying to Hein Huss: "There are always more in the cells to replace the elements which die. But if the community becomes sick, all suffer." Socialist thinking, this? Possibly, possibly. But then I thought:

It must be *Emphyrio*, with the guilds and their economic stifling of the recipients, the Finukan Temple with its leaping and Infant Skips and Juvenile Hops, the welfare agents all named Cobol, all members of the same family; almost too many socialists to choose from here. But at the end of the story we learn that the Lords are the evil socialists because the Lords are actually . . . puppets!

I came to the end of the interview and David's naming of the story and therewith ceased my jejune lucubrations.

Derek W. Benson



To the Editor,

Like many people I was hooked on Vance by happening on one of the Dying Earth books and will be eternally grateful to the VIE for making all his books available for mere money.

To those benighted people who were too late to subscribe to the VIE, as well as to we subscribers who look for books by lesser authors, might you mention ABE Books in *Cosmopolis*? <http://www.abebooks.co.uk>. It is a searchable database of the stock of bookshops. I have just looked to see if any of my now redundant Vance paperbacks are valuable and found 250 pages each of thirty entries with prices starting at \$1 plus postage. The ability to go online and order something when you see a reference to it is invaluable.

John Edwards
Hitchin, England

[There are other good used book sites, including www.abebooks.com and www.bibliofind.com. There are still volumes available for purchase at the VIE website, and newly re-published volumes using the VIE work-product are now beginning to appear in bookstores around the world, including German and French language volumes. – Ed.]

Dear Editor!

The crates have arrived; I am looking at the Integral Edition in its totality for the first time. What a sight! The first word bubbling up is THANKS to all those who contributed to this. In a world where unsponsored cultural efforts seem to be reduced to marginal acts, the VIE makes a very favorable stance indeed.

It seems self-evident to me, that in a giant process like the making of the VIE undoubtedly was, errors, misunderstandings and ill-advised decisions are inevitable. There's enough room left to quibble, surely. The catastrophal kerning, the over-the-top introduction by Rhoads (although his fire definitely does him credit), the outrageous delivery fee (Europeans pay \$200 to get the parcels home, "normal" Italian postage amounts only to around \$60), these (to name a few) are only very slight irritations; indeed, they have become part of the magical VIE substance and are perhaps therefore lovable in their own right...

So, considering the end-result, those mistakes that happened can be said to be of minor relevance, or in other words: the success of the final product dwarfs the comparatively small dissatisfactions one can have. Yes, let's face it: this is the first Integral Edition of any SF writer that can be taken seriously, and the result is just short of a miracle. Yes, I wrote that: a miracle. Still, one cannot help but wonder where all this expertise and experience that has been collected during the past years will flow to next! After once more conveying my huge thanks to all who made this possible. I cannot suppress a suggestion. Philip K. Dick, anyone?

Marcel Koopman
Middelburg, Netherlands.



End Note

David Reitsema, Editor, *Cosmopolis*

Tim Stretton and Till Noever revisit these pages reminiscing about their early contributions to the VIE. They each made diverse contributions to the VIE. Indeed, diversity has been one of its unique qualities. The VIE possessed a diversity of skills, of talents, of levels of commitment and of enthusiasm. Both Time and Till are skilled authors in their own right, and this led to the formation of the *Cosmopolis Literary Supplement* containing their handiwork. It seemed natural to form the CLS as a

medium for the creativity and skills evident in the project and the volunteers.

There are many other examples of this energy and creativity. A few of them are Joel and Robin Riedesel's providing clothing and paraphernalia with the VIE logo and name imprints, Koen Vyverman's creation of Totality containing all(!) of the words in Vance's books, and Paul Rhoads' creation of a special font for the books. These examples do not touch on the enormous skill and effort required to locate available texts to use for the project, the creation and implementation of the rules to guide the project's editorial activities, the development of the filing system to store and protect the work product at each step of the process for each text, the design and then contracting for the printing, the maintenance of the subscriber lists and accurately filling the orders for each subscriber.

The VIE was a TEAM effort with many facets. Perhaps the hardest part of the teamwork of hundreds of gifted volunteers was the need to rein in egos which were always tempted to assert, from past successes, that they were 'right'. The VIE would never have succeeded without the willingness to find well-reasoned consensus. This willingness has been evident in every element of the project. Some early volunteers left the project simply because of their unwillingness to accept consensus. To those who persevered, the result is now truly a remarkable reward.

Being a team member requires a commitment to community and a common goal. Few volunteers are still working on this enterprise and even *Cosmopolis* is coming to an end. Volume 63 will be the last issue, although there may be a few subsequent short 'newsletters' with information about matters pertaining to winding-up such as the shipping of the second printing and the progress of the EQ volume. This ending of the VIE team will possibly result in a sense of loss of community, but it surely will leave each volunteer with the knowledge that they were part of a very significant accomplishment.

Thanks to proofreaders *Steve Sherman*, *Rob Friefeld* and *Jim Pattison* and to *Joel Anderson* for his composition work.

COSMOPOLIS SUBMISSIONS: when preparing articles for *Cosmopolis*, please refrain from fancy formatting. Send raw text. For *Cosmopolis* 63, please submit articles and letters-to-the-editor to *David Reitsema*: Editor@vanceintegral.com.

Deadline for submissions is July 10, 2005.

