The Vance Phile

Issue 6 **Parm Press** **Parmentier@IowaSP.Physics.UIowa.edu** **September, 1995**

Hello, Vance Fans:

First off, I did not have an easy time getting enough material to put together this issue. For me to continue with *The Phile* as frequently as every six months I'll need to be getting more articles or reprint rights from folks. Things will be especially tight for the next year, as I will be running a con in October 1996 and won't have as much time for begging. If you can help, please do. I'd especially like line art for use as illustrations.

Now to good news: Hans Verkuil informs me that the Dutch translation of ***Nightlamp*** (***Nachtlamp***) is announced as due out at the end of the year from Meulenhoff. He also told me that the 150,000 word manuscript got to the translator in late August, so I think it will be later than that.

I found out from Underwood Books that they are working on a US edition which might be out before the end of the year. No other information was available from them (like expected price). Going by usual track records for small press publishers, I'd not expect this edition before late February or early March, they have too many variables outside of their control, and I've found they're a very optimistic bunch. The arrival of the ***Nightlamp*** manuscript has delayed the appearance of ***The Laughing Magician*** which I mentioned last issue. Basically all work was stopped on ***TLM*** as soon as ***Nightlamp*** arrived. I'd wait until next year before asking Tim about either. We can probably expect a Tor hardcover to appear in the summer or fall of 1996, this according to Patrick Neilsen Hayden on the Net.

Chuck Miller is coming out with the first hardcover edition of ***To Live Forever*** since its original appearance in 1956! It is listed in his latest catalog as being an October book, so let's all give him a call and order a copy.

In honor of the latest edition of ***Emphyrio*** last spring by Chuck Miller, Leon J. Janzen's *Elusive Volumes* article is on that wonderful story. I also have a smaller review of ***Emphyrio*** by Neil Newton. I hope everyone likes the two different, but insightful, treatments of this Vance classic.

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Also in the review category is a reprint of a review of ***Lyonesse*** done by Thomas M. Egan back in 1983.

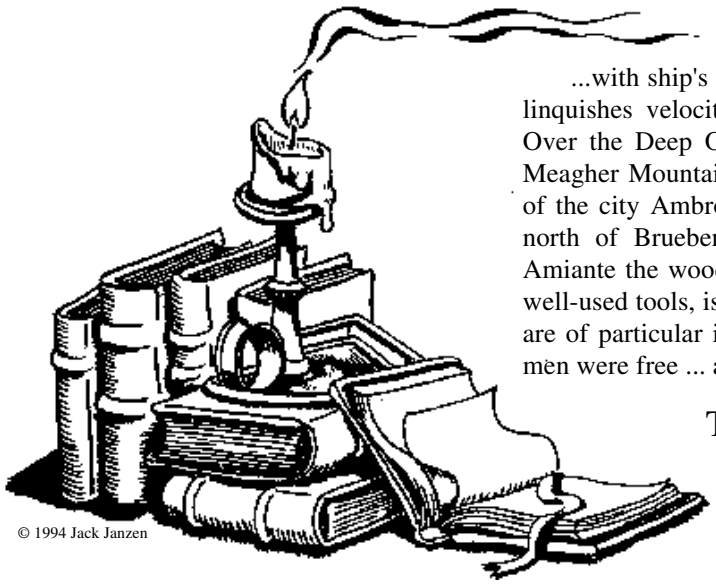
Jerry Hewett chimes in with another edition of *After the Fact*, and I've included commentary on the inventory of the Vance collection at Boston University by Martha Koester which first appeared in the Vance fanzine *Honor to Finuka. HtoF* saw four issues printed from 1979 to 1981.

I've been looking around for authors who have admitted to being heavily influenced by, or whose style of writing brings to mind, Vance. So far the list includes Robert Silverberg, Gene Wolfe, Matt Hughes, Michael Shea, Daniel Keyes Moran, M.A. Foster and Alexander Jablokov.

Robert Silverberg's book ***Lord Valentine's Castle*** could easily be on Big Planet, I've gotten comments on similarity of narrative on that one from more than one source. Gene Wolfe has said that the ***Book of Gold*** mentioned by Serverian in *The Book of New Sun* is ***The Dying Earth***. Shea has written directly in the world of Vance's Dying Earth. Matt Hughes book ***Fools Errant*** (what I've read of it) I liken to a mix of Vance and Pratchett: either Vance on nitrous oxide, or Pratchett with a big thesaurus (unfortunately, it's only available in Canada). Jerry Hewett finds Jablokov's ***Carve the Sky*** to seem heavily Vanceish. I can't quite see that one, though I did enjoy that book tremendously. M.A. Foster dedicated one of the stories in ***Owl Time*** to Vance.

One last thing I'd like to mention is that I will no longer be doing the smaller sized printed issues. They require too much extra effort on my part. I will only be doing 8.5 x 11 sized printed issues priced at $1.50US for US/Canada and $2.00US (or $1.50US in non-US Vance editions) elsewhere.

As usual, I hope you enjoy the results of my efforts. □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...with ship's coils still warm and with propulsors humming, the craft relinquishes velocity over the surface of the world Halma, rotating below. Over the Deep Ocean, past the coast of Fortinone and the barrier of the Meagher Mountains, the spaceboat settles at last within the quaint antiquity of the city Ambroy. A few minutes away by Overtrend, on Undle Square north of Brueben Precinct is found the narrow four-story workshop of Amiante the woodcarver. On his workbench, among a clutter of select and well-used tools, is found an odd, unordered folio of ancient documents. Two are of particular import: The Great Charter of Ambroy, from a time when men were free ... and the legend of Emphyrio, one of the very rarest of...

THE ELUSIVE VOLUMES OF JACK VANCE

by Leon J. Janzen

Young Ghyl Tarvoke, one of Jack Vance's familiar yet uncommon central characters, must grow to manhood within City Ambroy's monopolistic and conservative Guild System. In the novel ***Emphyrio***, Ghyl leaps for Finuka at the temple, learns the exacting woodcarving trade from his father Amiante, envies the separate and superior Lords, and increasingly defies Guild doctrine. Through this he becomes at last the classic Vancian rebel who first questions, then topples thousands of years of tradition.

The authorities of Ambroy offer little payment, but place much emphasis, on artistry and personal skill. The hardworking Scriveners, Lute-makers, Wood-carvers and other craftsmen are forbidden any short-cuts, duplications, printing or mass production of any kind. Agents from the Guild may visit at any moment, inspecting the workplace for something as small as the impression of a clamp or other illegal device which might speed the work of the artisan. Like the "citizens" of Orwell's 1984, the "recipients" of Ambroy's welfare benefits are held in bondage through their poverty. Forced to walk everywhere, unable to afford electric light after sundown, they must hoard vouchers for simple food with little left for pleasure. The questioning of authority is "irregulationary" and "duping" is noncuperative. The Welfare Agents, Guild-Masters and Thought Police monitor everyone's actions and their judgments are most conservative. Thus the people of Ambroy, dependent on authority for their every meal, remain fearful of rehabilitation or "expulsion" and dare no open criticism. This somber story becomes one first of discovery, then vengeance, as those in power become targets both obvious and deserving.

As events unfold for Ghyl and his father, layers of repressive (and very Vancian) rules and restrictions accumulate until young Tarvoke's environment becomes both claustrophobic and explosive. Ghyl Tarvoke is influenced as a child by Holkerwoyd's puppet performance of the Emphyrio legend, by the mysterious documents in Amiante's possession, and by his contact (at key points in his life) with the remote and wealthy Lords. He learns of his father's resentment of the Lords (who extract 1.18 percent of Ambroy's commerce) and sees his father's quiet resistance to the many strictures of life in Ambroy. Amiante has become resigned to the small number of vouchers paid him by the Thurible Collective (for his exquisite "Acme quality" hand-carved screens), but to Ghyl it seems both unfair and puzzling. Often he would ask himself, "What then was wrong? Where was truth? What course would Emphyrio have taken?"

The story advances, and daily life is made intriguing, by the details of Ambroy's interconnected religious and economic systems but camouflaged within are Vance's elements of mystery. Throughout is the question of legendary hero Emphyrio's life and death ... and (in the book's main theme) pursuit of the solution to this riddle causes Ghyl Tarvoke to relive the legend he clarifies. As he proceeds, questions arise about Ghyl's father Amiante, about the Lords high above in their aeries, about the role of the Historical Institute, and (with increasing imperative) where goes the vast wealth of Ambroy? Jack Vance amply satisfies the difficulties of Ghyl and the people of Ambroy, with solutions found on mythical Earth and in a heroic act in the distant past.

In this novel, Vance uses a plot device much like the reappearing stone obelisk (which materializes and alters events) in Stanley Kubrick's motion picture ***2001***. First, Holkerwoyd the puppetmaster (with Amiante's help) presents to Ghyl the Emphyrio myth, then sends the boy from the tent after pronouncing him "fey." From that time Ghyl is groomed as an "outsider." He is made increasingly different from the submissive workers of Ambroy through a series of coincidental encounters with Sonjaly (a beautiful member of the Lords upper class), and by problems only an Emphyrio might resolve. He even revisits Holkerwoyd years later, during a sojourn on ancient planet Earth. Ghyl's "outsider" status is augmented when his "noncup" friends attempt "Emphyrio's" election to the office of City Mayor, when he participates in a space-bound kidnapping of

Lords, and when the Guild grants him the final fate for those who corrupt their system ... that of being "expelled into the first two inches of Bauredel."

The immensity of Ghyl's eventual action is predicted by Indoctrinator Honson Ospude, in a special class for irremedial students: "Regulation is the single frail barrier between savagery and welfare; break down the barrier and you destroy not only yourselves but all else besides." In ***Emphyrio*** (and in other Jack Vance works) the hero does just that. A rigidly structured society's great strength is the uniform conformity of individual members. In Vance stories, citizens who live in rhythm with their community are powerless, but if a single individual steps outside tradition, every door swings ajar. (This recurring theme may be why Vance's books seem to appeal, not to the largest reading audiences, but to persons somewhat apart, scattered across the science fiction landscape). In the novel's rapid conclusion, Ghyl Tarvoke refuses to accept his fate like all the others "expelled" over the centuries and thus escapes his death. Once he frees himself from all the bindings of tradition, financial independence, freedom, and final knowledge are his.

The June, 1969, edition of *Fantastic* acclaimed ***Emphyrio*** "Jack Vance's Greatest New Novel." In an expressive introduction, the editor warned, "this is a story that will impress its shape upon you." The 1969 clothbound first edition, issued by Doubleday & Co., has been alarmingly difficult to find for years. The dust jacket illustration (by Paul Covington) is black line on dark green showing a room modestly furnished, with stone flooring and ancient pillars. This moody attempt at reflecting the story's dark emotion was repeated by Dell Books for their paperback first in 1970. Artist Jeff Jones (who also illustrated the two issues of Fantastic) provided the image of an agonized naked man (Emphyrio? Ghyl Tarvoke?), floating vulnerably through space. Vance fans in this country would then wait nearly ten years for the next paperback edition, by DAW Books in 1979. It had a more conventional cover painting ... the drama of Ghyl Tarvoke's impending, mechanized expulsion into Bauredel. The most beautiful edition of ***Emphyrio*** has just been released in hardback by publisher Chuck F. Miller. Numbered and signed by Jack Vance, the jacket by Ned Dameron captures and conveys the illicit bliss found when Lords and Ladies join with commoners at the County Ball.

The novel ***Emphyrio*** is rich in the marvelous modes of people and their customs which we look for from Jack Vance. The city does have those who choose not to be "recipients" ... the "noncups" ... but they too are careful lest their "charge become high" and are merely rebels within the system. At the temple, the ceremonial "leapings" by recipients to their god Finuka seem silly at first, but on reflection the laborious physically repetitive activities pressed by the priesthood match life in Ambroy exactly. Full scope is here for Vance's sardonic dialogue: "...a pimple on the tongue of Honson Ospude, sore feet for all the Guide Leapers: may they try the Double Sincere EightNine Swing, fall flat and slide to rest with their noses upon Animal Corruption!" Vance quantifies the vast amount of wealth purloined, and the painful degree that craftsmen are abused, with this definition of Halma's exported products: "In Fortinone, we live or die by trade, and we guarantee hand-crafted wares. Duplicating, molding, casting — all are prohibited. We make no two objects alike, and the guild delegates enforce the rule."

Emphyrio is a dark novel, with even its triumphs self-cancelling. As with most of Vance's best stories, it's not really about aliens, creatures or demons, but about the hopes, anguish, revenge and occasional successes of human beings ... told within the most completely delineated other-world environments ever to see print. Ambroy's people are barely sentient, working endlessly, receiving little but calm assurance from their leaders who tell them: "The path of life is well-trod; the wisest and best have erected guideposts, bridges and warning signals ... so then: look to your welfare agent, to your guild delegate, to your Guide Leaper; follow their instructions. And you will lead a life of placid content." Vance increases our perception of the size and sadness of their loss as Ghyl uncovers ever larger, more astonishing evils surrounding life in Ambroy. The artists of Ambroy work out their existence in a system where "duping" is bad and quality must always be high, while their work is rewarded cheaply. This, for example, becomes an atrocity when it is discovered that Ambroy's products are reproduced ("duped") and sold on many planets, with the originals treasured beyond price in museums.

A particular sadness, throughout the story, is the life of Ghyl's father, Amiante. Resolute but broken, occasionally defiant, Amiante makes a final stand against authority through his son, and in his belief in the Great Charter of Ambroy. When he is gone, Ghyl laments: "Poor innocent Amiante ... he had trusted the magic of words: a sentence on one of his ancient bits of paper." Left behind, confiscated by the Guild, is Amiante's final hand-carved screen. When the novel runs its course, the new Emphyrio discovers truth and the City is free. His friends offer him his father's final creative work, found among the treasures of Ambroy. "Sell it with the rest" is Ghyl's reply. "It brings me melancholy thoughts." □

COMING ATTRACTIONS:

I've gotten permission to reprint Annemarie van Ewijck's article from the Dutch collection ***Vancextasy***, titled: *The Master Illusionist.*

She has agreed to translate it to English for the fanzine so that we unfortunates who don't speak Dutch can enjoy it too. No guarantee it will appear next issue, since she's hard at work translating ***Nightlamp*** right now.

I'll be doing a reprise issue for the English language bibliography, also including articles relating to books, collecting, compiling bibliographies, and the *Vance Phile* itself.

AFTER THE FACT! An ongoing Bibliographical Update for

Update #2

The Work of Jack Vance

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The latest Locus Readers Poll results are in -- and, much to my surprise, the bibliography placed *sixth* out of the 61 titles nominated! But to put things in their proper perspective; the first place nonfiction work, ***I. Asimov: A Memoir***, received nearly seven times as many first place votes as ***TWoJV***.

Also received a (the?) very nice review in the June 1995 edition of Locus from Russell Letson, and must sheepishly acknowledge his discovery of some pretty blatant errors in the Secondary Sources section of the bibliography. I not only mistakenly identified the Levack and Underwood edition of ***Fantasms*** as an "English language only" bibliography, but I might have screwed up the title as well!

I distinctly remembered the first sentence from the introduction ("This work attempts to provide a complete listing of the English language writings of Jack Vance [...]"), but completely spaced the entries for translated editions scattered throughout the rest of the bibliography. And the title for entry M47 on page 231 should probably be ***Fantasms: A Jack Vance Bibliography***, not ***Fantasms: A Bibliography of the Literature of Jack Vance***. The latter wording appears on the title page, the former appears on the spine and cover, and I usually go with the cover title when identifying a publication in the bibliography.

Russell also mentions that there are errors in the page citations for the Taplinger edition of ***Jack Vance*** (entry M74, page 235), but I've checked and rechecked this entry and I *still* can't figure out what he's referring to!

The pagination listed in the bibliography agrees with my hardcover edition of ***JV***, but there could be some discrepancies between the Taplinger hardcover and trade paperback editions that I'm unaware of, since I have donated my copies of the trade paperback edition to other Vance collectors around the world.

All in all Russell said some *very* flattering things about ***TWoJV***, and I must confess that I was inordinately pleased to find a review of the bibliography in Locus ("I have arrived!" he shouts, basking in his fifteen minutes of fame :-). I should be grateful that he didn't run across any of the sections containing major gaffs, like the ones covered in this edition of *After the Fact!...*

As usual, I'm always on the lookout for any relevant information and assistance regarding this project. Correspondence should be addressed to:

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CIS: 75267,1726

Please remember to let me know how you want your name to appear in the introduction to the next edition (credit and acknowledgments always cheerfully given!), and an address where I can contact you if further clarification is required!

Jerry H. 16SEP95

Minor Infractions

The Gilgamesh Award

The following is from Phil Stephensen-Payne, regarding the spelling of awards presented to Jack in 1988 and 1989:

(entries J7/J8): The name of this award seems to be thoroughly confusing. I know that the official reference source (Mallett /Reginald) labels them the "Gilgames" awards (with an acute accent on the 'e'). However, as far as I am aware, the awards are actually originated by a bookstore in BARCELONA and I have a copy of the issue of their fanzine which announces the results of the 1988 awards. In this, the bookshop, the fanzine, and the award are all clearly titled "Gigamesh" (with no accents). The fanzine itself has hundreds of accented characters in other places, so this can't simply be a transliteration error caused by being unable to include an e acute.

Changes should be made to entries for 1987 and 1988 on page xxi, and to entries J7 and J8 on page 222.

Other minor stuff

Many thanks to the following folks for tips on typographical errors and flat-out fubars: Gregg Parmentier, Phil Stephensen-Payne, and Hans Verkuil.

De Talen de Pao (entry A8f on page 22) should read ***De Talen van Pao***, and has at least two separate printings.

The second edition of ***The Killing Machine*** from Underwood-Miller (entry A17mb) should be changed from #42-0 to #51-X.

Numerous repeated misspellings of *Lawaai* throughout the bibliography. The general rule of thumb to be used is, if you come across this you can safely assume that Jerry misspelled it.

Four people have now come up with a date on or around January 1970 for the Ace Books paperback edition of ***The Fox Valley Murders***, so the date for entry A24b on page 58 needs to be changed from 1969? to January 1970. Might as well change A24c/A24d to A24b/A24c while you're at it, and change A24b to A24d.

Vance wrote an introduction for Terry Dowling's novel ***Blue Tyson***, published by Aphelion in 1991. If there were room on the page, this would be entry D22 on page 213.

Just received a catalog from Chris Ryan of Alphanor Books, and discovered a Stephen Fabian portfolio titled ***The Crystal of a Hundred Dreams***. It was published by Underwood-Miller in 1979, and contains the illustrations from the U-M editions of ***The Seventeen Virgins*** and ***The Bagful of Dreams***. Without a firm date of issue I'm guessing that it would fit in somewhere around entry M65.

Major Screwups

(A26) "The Eyes of the Overworld"

I currently have enough errata for ***The Eyes of the Overworld*** to add at least another two pages worth of entries to the bibliography, even though I'm still missing detailed information regarding the British and Spanish editions listed below. Special thanks to Gregg Parmentier, Francisco Romero Royo, Phil Stephensen-Payne, Tim Underwood, Hans Verkuil, and to Mark Diller for his translation of the Greek edition listed below.

c. Strike the following from the NOTES section: "Later repriced at £1.95 (1985)."

cb. London: Granada #12127-6, 1975, paper. [British]

cc. London: Granada #12127-6, 1985, paper. [British]

cd. London: Grafton #12127-6, 1986, paper. [British]

COLLATION: p. 10 unnumbered + 214, as follows: about the author, p. [1]; other titles, p. [2]; title page, p. [3]; Grafton Books / A Division of the Collins Publishing Group / [publishers address, 1 line] / Published by Grafton Books 1972 / Reprinted 1975, 1985, 1986 / [acknowledgments, 6 lines] / ISBN 0-583-12127-6 / Printed and bound in Great Britain by / Collins Glasgow / Set in Times / [publishers statement, 14 lines] /, p. [4]; text, p. 5-[219]; blank, p. [220]; other Panther titles, p. [221-223]; order form p. [224].

BINDING: 17.75 x 11 cms, with cover art by Geoff Taylor. Issued at £1.95.

db. as: ***De Ogen van de Overwereld***. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff SF80, 1980, paper. [Dutch]
NOTES: Translated by Mark Carpentier Alting. ISBN 90-290-1154-8.

dc. as: ***De Ogen van de Overwereld***. Amsterdam: Meulenhoff SF80, 1982, paper. [Dutch]
NOTES: Translated by Mark Carpentier Alting. ISBN 90-290-0338-3.

h. Cross-references to ***Fantasy and Science Fiction by Jack Vance*** and ***Fantasms: A Jack Vance Bibliography*** should be changed to (M44) and (M47), respectively.

i. CONTENTS: [replacement of double asterisks for "The Cave in the Forest" (B83, p. 182-197); "The Manse of Iucounu" (B84, p. 198-220)].

COLLATION: [publishers statement, 5 lines], strike "[i.e., 5-224]".

j. as: ***Los ojos del sobremundo***. Barcelona: Ultramar Editores, December 1986, paper. [Spanish]
NOTES: Translated by Domingo Santos. ISBN 84-7386-417-4.

jb. as: ***Los ojos del sobremundo***. Barcelona: Ultramar Editores, November 1989, paper. [Spanish]

k. as: ***Ta Matia tou Avwtepou Koouou*** (?). Athens: Printa A.E., Edition Space E.P.E., 1991, paper. [Greek]

CONTENTS: Translators prologue (p. 9-12); "The Overworld" (B77, p. 13-62); "The Mountains of Magnatz" (B78, p. 63-104); "The Sorcerer Pharesm" (B81, p. 105-146); "The Pilgrims" (B82, p. 147-208); "The Manse of Iucounu" (B84, p. 209-256); Bibliography (p. 257-?).

COLLATION: unknown number of pages: title page, p. [1]; SCIENTIFIC / FANTASY / TITLE OF THE ORIGINAL: / JACK VANCE, The Eyes of the Overworld / (c) 1953 by Jack Vance / (c) 1991 Edition Space E.P.E. / The world's only Greek-language edition. / PRINTED IN GREECE / [publishers statement, 3 lines] / Translator: Thomas Mastakoures / [publishers address, 3 lines], p. [2]; table of contents, p. [3]; blank, p. [4]; text, pp. 9-[?].

BINDING: 18.5 x 11.5 cms, with cover art by ____. Issued at 1000 Ll.

NOTES: Translated by Thomas Mastakoures. "Cil" (B86) and "The Cave in the Forest" (B83) were omitted from this edition.

On the Coasts of Legend, the Dreams of Yesteryear?

by Thomas M. Egan

First printed Thursday, April 28, 1983 in the Glendale Register.

Jack Vance started his career with the award-winning novella "The Dying Earth," in 1950, exploring the glory and tragedy of the last days of old future Earth seen in the mythic glow of ancient magic and human frailty. After all his books of science-fantasy since that time (and two "Hugo" and one "Nebula" award in addition, for the high excellence he has given that field) he has returned to his original theme — but this time he situates his dying world in the ELDER ISLES of the Atlantic, near Europe. The ancient Greeks and Romans spoke of them, and medieval chroniclers identified them with "Hy-Brasill." All spoke of a civilization of vast wealth and strange folkways. Legendary beasts and magic lay here. Vance takes this as his basis to make a strangely beautiful tale of medieval romance and chivalry — and perennial human weakness in character and deed.

"Lyonesse" is one of the kingdoms medieval chroniclers spoke of in this group of lands and states (supposedly lost in the great upheavals of the Ocean), and Vance carefully sets out his situation of war and intrigue in a fine prose of rich imagery and fine wit. Cynicism is here among all characters, high and low, but nothing can corrode the imagination of ***Lyonesse*** as it celebrates even in the sorrows of life the potential of the human spirit. Heroes are not musclemen filled with the "macho" elan, but courage and common sense move as partners — even when tested by failure and death.

Vance inspires his novel with a substratum of Celtic myth and folklore; the ancient gods of Nature have not been ousted by Christianity (although missionaries have come over the centuries, and maintain a modest presence in the novel). Trolls and elves and fairy folk work their mischief among each other and the human population. But magic is not allowed to overwhelm the human character. There is the supreme question of ambition here — what are the highest goals of our life and how far will we all go to gain them?

The King of fierce Lyonesse wants to unify all of the Elder Isles under his own throne. When force fails use the marriage bed, so he thinks in Machiavellian fashion. His daughter Suldrun, teaches his scheme otherwise. Exile is her portion but in turn is the key to the saving of another protagonist — one Prince Aillas of a nearby kingdom. Love is bittersweet here, as the author brings in betrayal and murder — and a child who will turn the tables on a world of gorgeous legend. Thrills are here in the battles and struggles with men and monster alike, but the human characters and their repartee with Fate and life-situations make this book a fine addition to any library or small private collection.

Revenge and humor are balanced to create reader interest in the variety of characters — none of them allowed to be mere wooden stocksymbols. Some of the best scenes are small and spare — the fine imagery of the wanderer Glynnis and her comrade Druhn (Aillas's son) as they meet the medicine show of one Dr. Fielius and his conjuring tricks on a gullible public. Then there is the duel of wits with the Fairy Folk. Vance knows when not to say too much, and how to prod our souls with the cruelty and yet joy that magic-people can give to others. Above all, in his explorations of varied characters, he respects the course of logic in situations. His plot is complicated but reasonable in its interjoining situations and testings of characters. Dialogue is imitation medieval but never tedious, and the author makes his backgrounds always concrete in detail and culture.

The reader will find this book like an ancient forest — so many side trails of adventure and strange folk, so many possible paths, and endless names to remember. Yet well worth the traveling. He will find more than a good weekend of leisure reading. Perhaps some of the questions he traverses will linger — as he returns to reread, again and again. □

Jack Vance and the Hero

Neil Newton

Most of us have wondered, at one time or another, what the appeal of Jack Vance's work is. It would seem that what has been said of him has been said a thousand times. That the content of his praises seem repetitious, that the same strengths of his works are cited again and again by enthusiastic readers is a tribute to the consistency of his talent. That Vance is an excellent story-teller, a builder of cultures so complex and detailed that one could almost see him as a cultural anthropologist reporting on worlds that have never existed, all this is obvious. That he is a master of exposing the weaknesses and the vagaries of the human psyche is a matter of record. That he is a satirist par excellence, that he masterfully creates characters that display a realistically equal measure of empathy and, as he himself might put it, "mordancy," to those of us who read his novels and short stories this is no revelation.

It might be said that the device that draws us into the worlds that Vance creates are his heroes. Certainly, his heroes are complex and, far from being unassailable supermen, are complicated beings, not easily grasped in a single reading, but that can be said of other writers as well. There is an extra human dimension that makes these heroes and heroines a breed apart: despite the fact that they often bring about decisive change in the world around them, their motivations are elusive, as much to themselves as to the reader. Through Vance's pen we witness a magical and unexpected transformation of characters that are seemingly unambitious into dynamic individuals at the crux of a fundamental change. Though they would be the last to think of themselves as pivotal in deciding the fates of others, the world around them seems to initiate changes that tap internal resources that aren't obvious. Like the heroes of ancient myth, the final, unavoidable, and sometimes tragic confrontation with their own nature is what makes them

truly heroic. Even the resolute and effective Kirth Gersen continually finds himself wondering as to his ultimate goals and must continually trust to his instincts, rather than his intellect, to furnish him with reasons to continue his quest.

We find an excellent Vancian hero in Ghyl Tarvoke. Tarvoke, the protagonist in ***Emphyrio***, spends his young years on the city of Ambroy on the Planet Halma. In creating Ambroy, Vance surpasses himself in developing a realistic cultural background for his characters. Unlike many other Jack Vance books where some sense of conflict and confrontation dominate the story from the outset, ***Emphyrio*** is a thoughtful and relatively quiet story; the true "action" comes much closer to the end of the book. This gives Vance the opportunity to describe a culture in minute, painstaking detail, bringing to light the most mundane facets of life in Ambroy and managing to make them fascinating nonetheless. Using Ghyl as a vehicle to describe his culture, Vance chronicles the small day to day details of a young boy's life and his evolution as a person, the conflicts of an adolescent as he surmounts the painful obstacles of socialization and, finally, the angry coming of age of a young man whose culture has failed him.

In describing Ambroy, Vance paints a rather oppressive picture of life in a seemingly benign yet inherently oppressive environment. Though comfortable, existence in Ambroy is dreary and mindless. There is no poverty, hunger or unemployment but the citizens of Ambroy do, indeed, "live by bread alone." There are few thoughts of travel, personal growth and discovery; in Ghyl's world such things are considered mere fripperies, the musings of a willful and selfish child. All inhabitants are expected to enter a career in a pre-defined set of trades and to espouse a religious dogma that is a strait-jacket binding its celebrants to the prevailing culture without thought for nurturing the spirit. The entire stability of Ambroy rests on such orthodoxy, enforced by grim "Welfare agents" who seemingly act for the public good by maintaining the status quo. The lion's share of Ambroy's income derives from a small group of highly skilled artisans who produce high quality artwork to an appreciative market off-planet. In keeping with the dreariness of Ambroy, the compensation for their work is minuscule, the excuse being that an over-paid artist is likely to skimp on quality. Ghyl's father, Amiante, though unorthodox and erratic in output, is one the best examples of Ambroy's creative talent. At the top rung of Ambroy's social and economic hierarchy are the Lords, a pampered aristocracy who receive 1.18 per cent of all the output of Ambroy's millions of artisans and workers. Though a seemingly paltry return on their substantial investment in Ambroy's infrastructure, comprising all of the major services, it seems that the actual income per lord is vast and daunting, a sum far beyond anyone's means to spend. This fact is the basis of the typical Vancian conspiracy that makes his books so entertaining. Ghyl's life, as well as his father's, reflects the oppressiveness of Ambroy. For Amiante each day is spent in the mindless pursuit of "vouchers" that provide him with necessities.

Ghyl spends much of his time wandering, daydreaming and doing his best avoid the welfare agents, whose main ambition for him is that he attend regular services at the "Finukan Temple." These agents regard both Tarvokes as willful and "irregulationary" and blame Amiante for the deficiencies in Ghyl's behavior. A brooding and elusive man, Amiante clearly seeks something greater than a work-a-day life that gains him nothing but a barely adequate living. There are hints of a previous existence in which Amiante has engaged in great deeds that never quite came to fruition; a time when he could have, perhaps, helped to lighten the load of drudgery that plagues the average citizen of Ambroy. Though quiet and not disposed toward emotion, he nonetheless imbues Ghyl with a sense of dissatisfaction and a intense yearning for the truth of their existence. Ghyl, like most of Vance's popular heroes, is basically fairminded and inherently not prone to confrontation for its own sake. Often, throughout the book he resists "unorthodoxy" in himself and finds it disturbing in others. Despite this, our young hero finds himself strangely at odds with the establishment of Ambroy time and again, though, it seems, never of his own volition. It is only after years of suffering, when all that is dear to him is stripped away, that he finally begin to embrace revolutionary ideas. It is almost as if the stresses of living in such an arbitrary environment have shaped him beyond his control.

Above all looms the image of Emphyrio, a hero of Ambroy legend that inspires both Ghyl and his father. Like both of them, Emphyrio was obsessed with truth, regardless of the consequences and without concern for personal comfort. For Ghyl the truth of Emphyrio and the truth of his own existence become inextricably bound and the pursuit of both becomes an undeniable quest which leads almost his undoing. As in all of Vance's novels where conspiracy is a major plot element, the final revelation of the truth is earth-shaking. The real origins of Ambroy's social system and the source of the Lord's disturbingly vast wealth is, from the reader's point of view, all the more heinous for its seeming banality. It is the fact that the evil of Ambroy is fueled by the tacit cooperation of its inhabitants that makes it all the more disturbing.

It might be said that Emphyrio is an everyman tale for the modern man or woman, an attempt to unravel the origin of our ordinary work-a-day existence where enlightenment is a dream and the pursuit personal truth a fool's errand. Ghyl Tarvoke presents us with a picture of ourselves: a man who stumbles through his existence day by dreary day and eventually is forced to face his own destiny. Herein lies the essence of a true hero, the kind that Vance so easily creates: someone who, despite a desire for quietude, is forced, though a number of unexpected circumstances, to facilitate a change, a metamorphosis that is inherent in the social structure and in himself. For any Vancian protagonist, be it Kirth Gersen or Sklar Hast of the novel "Blue World," the outcome is unimportant since there is no choice but to seek his own personal truth. It is this that makes the Vancian hero so accessible and so appealing to his readers. □

On the Boston University Jack Vance collection, by Martha K. Koester
© 1981, Martha K. Koester

Editor's note: While the BU inventory has been published in print at least twice that I know of (*Honor to Finuka* #2 and ***The Work of Jack Vance***), Boston University's position is that the inventory is copyright by them and cannot be copied on the Internet. I find this position asinine and I think they don't have a legal leg to stand on, but I'm not prepared for any legal battle. What I am doing here is giving the commentary about parts of the collection as reported by Martha K. Koester in Issue #2 of Honor to Finuka, dated November 1979. Anyone who wants a printed copy of the inventory, send me $0.60 to cover printing and postage ($0.80 outside the US/Canada), and I'll snail you one.

I've corrected spelling mistakes I found, deleted small bits which didn't relate well with the collection, and added some notes.

In March of 1979 I went off to Boston for a job interview. While I was there, I stopped by to look at Boston University's Jack Vance collection for a few hours. The collection is not as accessible as it might be — one needs some sort of academic credentials to set foot inside the library [ed. — this might have changed since 1979]. Fortunately, I had a freshly minted Ph.D. at the time, and I didn't bother to tell them that it was in biochemistry rather than comparative literature. As a result, I was able to spend a few hours looking over twenty boxes of manuscripts, letters, rejection slips, etc. [...]

I was able to xerox some items, but others are restricted. The general rule is that if something is already in print (or has been aired), it may be xeroxed. Letters or items which have not been previously published belong either to Jack Vance (or to publishers or other people) and may not be xeroxed without the prior permission of Mr. Vance, which I did not have at the time. I regret that, because there is a lot of interesting stuff in the correspondence. I particularly enjoyed reading JV's exchanges with John Campbell, who always seemed to have a bone to pick concerning the plausibility of either the astronomy or the social structures in JV's novels or stories. I think that Campbell was often a bit too dogmatic myself. From the standpoint of the completist, another interesting (though unxeroxable) item is an early work under the pseudonym Jan Dublays entitled *End of the Moon Chase*. It was never published, probably because the story isn't very good. It would probably be encouraging for beginning writers who like Vance's older work to look at it, though, if they could get inside the library. I probably won't ever get around to asking Vance what he thinks about the story. That would be too much like Kirth Gersen asking Viole Falushe what he thought of the Cosmopolis article — a foregone conclusion, to say the least.

Also in the collection are 23 scripts that Vance wrote for the Captain Video TV series in the early fifties. I xeroxed only one, the first one in the series. That was a mistake. I should have gotten one of the later ones, because Vance got tired of the job, and got into satirizing the series. This eventually got heavy-handed enough for a TV producer to notice, and Vance was subsequently fired. The script I did get was interesting to read though, if only because of the challenge involved in trying to find some trace of the Jack Vance we all know an love. About the only trace I could find was the names of some of the villains, i.e. Amberlin and Viollay. Since the good guys all had predetermined names, the bad guys all got to have interesting Vance-type names (although admittedly "Tug the Thug" is a bit cloddy). The dialogue usually goes something like this —

HANE: I still say this is a sad comedown for a self-respecting pirate. My business is blasting open freighter hulls, killing, looting and now I have to sneak around back alleys planting sleep-bombs.

RATCHET: When you joined the Cosmic Crime Syndicate, you understood that you might be required to act at the discretion of your operations chief."

HANE: But I'm a pirate, not a sniveling sneak!

And so forth. Oh well, all's fair in love, war, and paying the rent. One day I'll get around to reading the last one in the series.

[...] I very much enjoyed reading the handwritten notes and typewritten synopses of the Planet of Adventure series and the Durdane series. In both, but especially in the latter, extensive changes have taken place between Vance's original conceptions of the stories and the final written version.

The basic idea of the Planet of Adventure series, that of a shipwrecked earthman on a planet with the indigenous Pnume, three alien races (the Chasch, Dirdir, and Wankh), and various mutated human types, remains the same throughout. Of the four alien races, the Pnume, the Dirdir, and the Chasch are originally described as they appear in their respective books. However, you might not recognize the Wankh as "a dire folk from the planet Akak, forever expansionist, enjoying war and the use of weapons, insensate, ruthless, insatiable in their desire for land." Their eyes were originally "large white discs each having four black pupils, which can rotate and reverse directions." Their eventual transformation to an amphibious race which is not especially interested in continuing the war with the Dirdir on Tschai adds to the series, in that it permits the unusual twist of having Reith and company disrupt the exploitation of an alien race by humans, instead of having it the other way around, as is generally the case on Tschai. In the collection there are separate synopses for the Chasch, Dirdir, and Pnume books, but the one for ***Servants of the Wankh*** is missing. Characteristics of some of the flora and fauna of Tschai are also given. Somewhere along the line the species "Waiwir" was entirely dropped. They were to have been "semi-intelligent carnivores nine feet tall with short, splayed legs, vanes of red and green membrane which they use as sonic amplifiers, and nasal tubes through which they eject a stinking, noxious fluid." The main protagonist himself undergoes several metamorphoses, from Keith Dunbar to Slade Blackburn, to Slade Wanderlin, to John Arnold Seabright, before emerging finally as Adam Reith.

The details of the plotting differ somewhat, though not drastically, from those appearing in the final version. The episode involving the Flower of Cath's rescue was a late addition. Known in outline only as the Golden Princess, she appears to be travelling on her own to some unknown destination, "wearing a complicated gown, a headdress like a pair of insect wings." Reith (still Seabright at this point, actually) purchases a map of Dadiche in order to locate his ship. After the Chasch-human war, he finds that the Pnume have apparently taken the ship, although his Pnumekin contact won't say where. Vance ends up leaving the Pnume out of these transactions in the final version, which is just as well. The impact of the final book in the series is enhanced by having the Pnume appear less frequently in the other three books.

After the first two books, the series has acquired considerable structure. ***The Dirdir*** and ***The Pnume*** therefore follow their respective synopses more closely. The outline has Reith going Dirdir hunting twice. The only other major change is in the Aila Woudiver character, who started life as Erlius, and who turns out to be a lot more vicious in the end. Originally, the Dirdir have a hand in selling Reith to the Pnume, which is actually out of character for them, and it doesn't occur in the final version. Zap 210 is originally called simply 196. I do prefer the two-syllable number to the four syllable one as a nickname. At the carnival, Reith wrestles a Grey for 50 sequins, and rewires a rigged roulette game to win 2,000 more. The final version with the colored-eel race has gained quite a bit in complexity and vividness. In the synopsis, Erlius lives long enough to betray Reith again (and Zap 210 does not get recaptured), although Reith has somehow to duplicate the adit charts. I was glad to see Woudiver get his much sooner in the final version.

The Durdane series is also outlined. The first book in the series, ***The Anome*** (also titled ***The Faceless Man***) is structured in the final version pretty much as it was originally outlined. It first appeared in *F&SF* in the issues of February and March of 1971. The section dealing with Gastel Etzwane's early life among the Chilites is expanded in the book edition. Although the plot follows pretty much the same lines as the synopsis, the names of almost all of the characters and places have been changed, i.e.,

Darre	Mur (Gastel Etzwane)
Diantian	Eathre
Chilrig	Osso Higajou
Faison	Shant
Zallisko	Garwiy
Rubril	Rhododendron Way
Feld	Frolitz.

Mur acquires a brother, a sister, and a biological father in the book version.

The second book in the series has a drastically different plot compared to the one of the synopsis, and was originally known as ***The Rogushkoi*** or ***Palasedra***. Darre overhears the faceless man and Jurjin talking about the Asutra early on, and they later attempt to kill him. Darre kills the faceless man instead. Then the Palasedrans request help in dealing with the Rogushkoi, and Darre visits them, ignoring Jurjin's strong pleas not to. At Caraz (here, the Palasedran capital), the vitalologists (palasedran genetic engineers) refuse to discuss their presumptive role in the creation of the Rogushkoi. Darre witnesses a Palasedran-Rogushkoi battle, which is a draw, and hears a rumor that the Rogushkoi are receiving their advanced weapons from Earth. There is an assassination attempt on Darre by a strange human, who is captured by Darre and dissected by the vitalologists. They discover a second, non-human brain inside. Jurjin escapes and runs to a spaceship in a remote valley. Darre follows her and observes man-like creatures from a distance, which Jurjin identifies as asutra. Darre takes her back to the city, where the vitalologists extract a second brain from her. When she recovers, she states that the asutra have declared war on the human race and that the Rogushkoi are biological weapons. Double-brained people such as herself and the faceless man are their observers. The book was to end with the Vitalologists synthesizing Rogushkoi females which are sterile to be turned loose in the vicinity of the Rogushkoi. In the final version which we all know, the people of Shant deal with the Rogushkoi threat. The bit about the visit to Palasedra at the end seemed tacked on as an afterthought to me. After reading the original outline, I can see where it came from. The third book in the series was not plotted when the synopsis for the other two was typed up.

I have never much cared for the plotting in the Durdane series. After reading the original synopsis, I have some appreciation of the origins of it's structural weakness, and of why the third book seems so detached from the other two. The sort of plot-it-as-you-go writing that Vance does works very poorly here, because he has no idea of where the series might end up. For his other two well-known series (The Planet of Adventure and The Demon Princes), this is not a problem. The reason for this, I think, is that the structure of each book, including its ending, is predetermined even if the plot is not written out in advance. The existence of four alien races implies four books, and the ending must involve the hero getting off the planet. Episodes can be discarded or added throughout without much effect on the structure. Similarly, five Demon Princes will get offed in five different books. So far, there is the added constraint that Gersen will wind up choosing his victim from three different possibilities [ed. this was written when only three of the books were done]. Though I am appropriately grateful that Vance has given us the glass city of Garwiy, the carefully worked out color and music symbology, the feast of the 47 repasts, and the subtle humor of Galexis-worship, I am nonetheless glad that he has given up on that particular kind of series. It's really not his thing.

There are a lot of other goodies in this collection. I was planning on describing the plot to the unwritten murder mystery ***Fat Hannah***. I won't, though, on the grounds that it might be written some day, and I don't want to go down in history as a spoiler. I'll just note that Fat Hannah is a boat, and the plot struck me as a cross between those of ***Bad Ronald*** and ***The Deadly Isles***. It looks like it has a lot of potential. Further deponent sayeth not, except get a look at this stuff sometime if you can. It will be well worth your time. □

The Vance Phile Marketplace

The Ground Rules

Here in the Marketplace I list some book stores through which SF in general, and Vance in particular, can be ordered. None of these places has paid me anything to list them here, though I have asked their permission to do so.

Vance fans who have an extra edition or so that they wish to sell, or who have Vance books, anthologies, or magazines for which they are looking, may also send me lists for this section. Please include your address for the listing, and please do not send huge lists. I don't want to become a clearing house for someone seeking profit, or a broker for large quantities of books, but I do want to help Vance fans buy and sell Vance material to each other in an informal way.

I will always state whether I have done business with anyone listed in this section, but this shouldn't be taken as a guarantee of reliability. My ideas of adequate service and quality aren't necessarily those of others. If I have had any bad experience with any dealer or individual, I will not list them. □

WISH LISTS

Stuart Nelson
560 Wheelock Pkwy W.
St. Paul, MN 55117

Big Planet	U-M	signed/#'d	1978
City of the Chasch	U-M	signed/#'d	1979
The Dirdir	U-M	signed/#'d	1980
The Dying Earth	U-M	signed/#'d	1976
The Face	U-M	signed/#'d	1980
(with *Song of the Darsh* laid in)			
The Languages of Pao	U-M	signed/#'d	1979
Servants of the Wankh	U-M	signed/#'d	1979
as Ellery Queen			
Four Men Called John	Gollancz		1976

G. E. Brain
19 Brunton Road
Kenton Bank Foot
Newcastle-Upon-Tyne
NE13 8AF
England

The Dragon Masters	Easton Press		1988
Dune	Easton Press		
(introduction by Jack Vance)			
The Green Pearl	Berkley	tpb	1986

WILL TRADE FOR NON-US EDITIONS

Gregg Parmentier

Lyonesse: Suldrun's Garden	U-M	449/500	vg-f	1983
The Book of the Sixth World Fantasy Convention				1980
	U-M		g+	
	U-M		vg+	
The Five Gold Bands	U-M	vg+ in g dj		1993
Chasch	Bluejay		g-vg	1986
Wankh	Bluejay		g-vg	1986

FOR SALE

Stuart Nelson
(address in Wish List)

The Blue World	U-M	trade	fine	$40
The Cadwal Chronicles	Tor			$65
Araminta Station			vg-f	
Ecce and Old Earth			fine	
Throy			fine	
The Dying Earth (1994)	U-M	slipcased	fine	$65
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Lost Moons	U-M	trade	fine	$27
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The Moon Moth	Dobson		near-f	$25
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hardcover

City of the Chasch	U-M
Servants of the Wankh	U-M
The Dirdir	U-M

paperback

The Eyes of the Overworld	Mayflower
Maske:Thaery	Fontana
Trullion: Alastor 2262	Grafton

Various other UK and US editions