

Cyber Cozen

Science-Fiction Newsletter

Vol. XII, No. 4; April, 2000



פסח שמח וכשר!

Have a Happy and Kosher Passover!

Apologies to Gal Haimovich – Gal wrote last month's review of the book **The Red Tape War** but I credited it to someone else. **Sorry, Gal!** I suggest, however, to all readers: If you send me material for **CyberCozen**, be sure to put your name *in* the file. That will make it harder for me to make mistakes.



נוסטלגיה: בחזרה אל "בוקי" שבועון הקומיקס המתורגם לעברית [1967-1970]

מאת: אלון איצקוביץ

לסיפור העצוב הזה יש גם סוף קצת שמח יותר. בשנת 76 הוצעו למכירה בדוכני עיתונים בתל אביב שאריות במלאי גדול של **בוקי** שלא נמכרו בזמנו. קהל הקוראים כבר היה יותר מוכן מהקהל שלפני שנים אחדות והסתער בלהט על מלאי החוברות המדהימות שנמכרו "על המשקל" במחיר סמלי. אספן קומיקס לא היה קונה אחת, אלא עשרות של חוברות בכל פעם ואם היה מאורגן, היה מנהל רישום חוסרים קבוע בתקווה להשלים את האוסף. גם היום, לאחר 30 שנה, עדיין ינסו ביאוש מספר אספנים וותיקים לחפש שאריות משבועון זה.

המסע לעבר אל **בוקי** הוא מסע מופלא. דרך האינדקס שהכנתי ודוגמאות מתוכו (אפשר להשיג **מאלון איצקוביץ**) תוכלו לגלות מעט מתופעה זו שנעלמה. שבועון שכזה לא היה כמותו וספק אם יהיה לו שווה ערך אי פעם.

בוקי היה גם מועדון קוראים, שחילק פרסים, הנחות והקרנות מיוחדות ב"בית ציוני אמריקה" במחיר של 80 אגורות. העיתון, דרך אגב, נמכר בזמנו 50 אגורות ומאוחר יותר בלירה אחת.

עותק של **בוקי** קיים בספריה הלאומית בירושלים, לכל המעוניינים. (המשך בעמוד 2)

מעשה במיליונר בן 60 מדרום אמריקה [כנראה המדובר ב. אורבך] שאהב מאוד קומיקס ורצה להביא אל הקהל הישראלי סיפורים מצויירים. באותה תקופה הייתה ספרות שכזו רק באנגלית, פרט לשני ניסיונות כושלים בעברית, "תא פלא" ו"נמרוד" שהוציאו מספר גיליונות ונעלמו.

המיליונר רכש זכויות מעיתוני קומיקס שונים אך לא הבין בעסקי הדפוס, הוא כשל בביצוע הדפוס ופנה לבית הדפוס "רמה" אשר שחט אותו במחיר גרם לו והפסדים. מאוחר יותר עבר לדפוס "כרמלי" בו קיבל הצעה טובה יותר.

בשבועון **בוקי** פורסמו מגוון רחב של סיפורי קומיקס. בעל העיתון רכש זכויות **מקינג פיצ'ר סינדקייט** וכך יכול היה לפרסם את **פלאש גורדון** ועוד סיפורים שהיו מפורסמים בזמנו. הוא שילם זכויות על כל סיפור שהוציא לאור. ההפסדים הכספיים היו איומים. במהלך שלוש שנים שרד בקושי. אשר **דיקשטיין**, שהיה המאייר של כמה סיפורים והגרפיקאי של **בוקי** עבד באווירה של חשש, שמא לא יהיה בשבוע הבא עוד עיתון.

כשהתבקש אשר לרטש קסדות של חיילים נאציים מסיפורי קומיקס של מלחמת העולם השנייה, הבין שזה הסוף. שבועון **בוקי** [אשר נקרא כך על שם הגיבור באק רוג'רס] סיים את ימיו בחוברת 170.

The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

Meetings (in Hebrew) on *Science and Science Fiction*

Next lecture: **Thurs., 27.4.00, 20:00: "Relativity: from clock to train, paradoxes again".**

Lecturer: **Dr. Gali Granek**, from the Center for the History & Philosophy of Science, Technology & Medicine, The Hebrew University, Jerusalem.

Meetings are held in **Beit Ariela**, 25 Shaul HaMelech, Tel Aviv at 8 p.m.

Join the Society, go to its meetings! Call 03-528-3803 or 03-604-4959



01.01.01

The end is also the beginning..



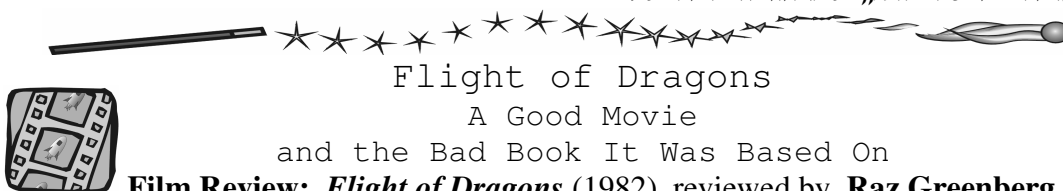
www.armageddoncon.org

בוקי: קצת על הסיפורים המרכזיים והדמויות....

סדרת **האקסמן** המפורסמת פורסמה **בבוקי** תחת השם "הבלתי מנוצחים". כחלק מהבלבולים הקבועים פורסם הסיפור "נגד הסטיגלים" מאמצע הסיפור ובחברת מאוחרת יותר פורסמה ההתחלה.

סופרמן, איש העטלף, פלאש גורדון
הפאנטום היו דמויות מפורסמות מאוד באותה תקופה. דמויות מפורסמות של חברת **מאוול איש הפלדה** **תנור** [שזכה לתרגום המבריק **רשף**] היוו להיט ללא ספק לא פחות מסיפורי **באק רוג'רס** ו**גיימס בונד** [שנקרא **דיק שון**]. הדמות אולי המרתקת מכולן היא דמותו של **העכביש**, אנטי גיבור ופושע לשעבר, הנלחם בעולם של מדע בדיוני ויצורי פנטזיה משני צורה, רובוטים ושאר מוטנטים מופלאים. מקורו של **העכביש** נראה בחוברת בריטית **וולקן** שמאחוריה יוצרו של

סופרמן, ג'רי סיגל.
 בנוסף לגיבורים העצמאיים, פורסמו גם סיפורי הרפתקאות, עיבודים ליצירות קלאסיות של ז'ול ורן, וולס דיומא.
 היו גם סיפורי חלל קצרים שהפתיעו במקוריות וכן. דרך אגב, הסיפור האחרון של **איש הפלדה** "מותו של טוני סטארק" [נגד המנדריין] לא זכה לסיום של ממש. לסיפור "רשף נגד איש האבן" יש סיפור המשך בו איש האבן מוחזר לחיים בטעות, בעקבות ניסיון של עובדי מוזיאון להציגו לראווה ואז רשף משתמש בעמוד תאורה להמס אותו ללבה בשילוב כוחה של המקבת הקסומה שלו.
 נותר לי רק לאחל לכם מסע מופלא....

**Film Review: *Flight of Dragons* (1982), reviewed by Raz Greenberg**

If you thought there's no such thing as a good fantasy movie, if your idea of animated films begins and ends with Disney, and above all, if you thought James Earl Jones did his best role as a villain (Darth Vader) in the *Star Wars* films – then you probably missed this movie at the last ICON convention and will have to wait until the next time they screen it on Channel 1 (but don't get your hopes up). Even today, 12 years after I first saw it, this film remains the only American animated science fiction/fantasy film that I think can compete with the Japanese animated features of the genre.

The film takes place in a fantasy world whose inhabitants seem to moving away from magic to logic and science. A council of four magicians (brothers) tries to find a solution for this problem. While the good wizard Carolinus suggests founding a separate magical heaven that'll keep inspiring humans, the evil wizard Ommadon is sure that the solution is the destruction of humanity. To stop Ommadon, Carolinus recruits Peter Dickinson, a 20th century scientist who has abandoned his studies to dream about dragons. But something goes wrong in this trip to fantasy land: soon after arriving there, Dickinson finds himself having to adapt to becoming a dragon himself. And he constantly has to settle his own inner conflict: though he prefers the magical land, he knows logic is stronger....

What's really nice about the script is the fact that it works on almost all levels: it is innocent and has an excellent legend quality for kids, and at the same time it has sophisticated themes only adults can appreciate.

Originally made in 1982 by four directors (two American, two Japanese) the film still looks superb. From its opening sequence (accompanied by a wonderful theme song by Don McLean) through the amusing scenes in which Peter learns how to be a dragon, to the epic battle sequences, the words "stunningly beautiful" keep coming to mind. The quality of the animation could compete with today's computer animated features.

Then there's Maury Laws' heroic music, and a wonderful gallery of voice talents doing a superb job: Harry Morgan (TV's *M*A*S*H*) as Carolinus, John Ritter (*Three's Company*) as Peter Dickinson, doing a better job than all his live-action roles put together, and above all: James Earl Jones as Ommadon – let's just say that if you thought he made Darth Vader a really bad guy, than you haven't heard nothing yet....

It's a shame that the American directors of this film, Jules Buss and Arthur Rankin, did not make anything significant in the years that followed this film. They continued working on animation, with some of their works (most notably the "Silverhawks" TV show and last year's flop animated movie *The King and I*) even being shown in Israel, but nothing that came close to the level of this film. The two other Japanese directors, Katsuhisa Yamada and Fumihiko Takayama, however, had better luck: With the success of anime (Japanese animated) films and TV shows in the west, they became known to western audience as directors of such classics as *Outlanders* and *Bubblegum Crisis*.



Book Review: *The Dragon and the George* by Gordon R. Dickson (1976), 279

pages

Gordon R. Dickson's novel *The Dragon and the George* is one of the two books the film *Flight of Dragons* was based on (the other book, *Flight of Dragons*, by Peter Dickenson, which gave the film its title, was actually a non-fiction book which tried to explain dragons in a scientific way). However, considering how much of the book made it into the film (the plot was largely altered but many of the characters, situations and even dialogue exist in both the film and the book) it's amazing to see that what we have here is a rare case in which "The film is better than the book".

The plot's basically a "be careful at what you wish" story. The hero, Jim Eckert, is a medieval history graduate, stuck at the lower end of the academic food chain, waiting for a promotion that's not likely to come. His girlfriend, Angie works as a lab assistant for a repulsive boss who keeps trying to steal her from him. And if that isn't bad enough, it seems that very soon both Eckert and Angie will have no place to live. So, when everything seems to go wrong for him, Eckert silently wishes he lived in the medieval times he has studied, where things were much simpler. Shortly after, through a very unlikely chain of events, he gets exactly what he asked for, only to find out that medieval times are no picnic either.

That was the first part in the book that made me roll my eyes in disbelief, and it had nothing to do with the likeliness of such occurrence. It is simple logic. Would anyone who has deeply studied the medieval era seriously consider it an ideal era to live in? It takes all kinds, I guess....

However, for Eckert it's really not a problem, since he wasn't transferred into the real medieval era. He was transferred into a *Dungeons and Dragons* world, filled with

knights, princesses, magicians and dragons, a world that has very little to do with what the real medieval era was like. While most novelists of the genre work their way around this gap by giving the reader many details about what their fantasy world looks like and how it works, Dickson's picture of this world is incredibly shallow. There are hardly any descriptions of what the surroundings look like, let alone why they exist. Characters, for the most part, share this shallowness: almost all of them are stereotypes of typical fantasy heroes found in other books, without the slightest attempt to change them somewhat, to make things interesting.

What does keep the book interesting, and entertaining for its first half, is the fact that Eckert wasn't transferred into this world in his own body – he finds himself in the body of a dragon. Dickson makes the most of this tragic-comical situation, using sharp, clever, and funny dialogue. Alas, in the second half of the book, he apparently had had enough of this, and the book returns to look like a *Dungeons and Dragons* game – one run by a particularly bad dungeon master. Unlikely plot twists, even less likely situations, bad dialogue and plenty of over-detailed battles. And the happy ending - which I'm sure was written when Dickson was in a hurry somewhere – is not only annoying, but also throws the book's "moral lesson" out the window (from a "be careful at what you wish" story it becomes a "you're right about what you wish, you just have to work hard for it" story).

Despite that, the book is not a bad way to spend a weekend. But it's definitely not a must read. Which is a shame, since the movie based on it is something I consider to be a must see.

Commentary: *Flight of Dragons* – an anti-Semitic movie? By Aharon Sheer

When we showed *Flight of Dragons* at my house recently, Adi Avnit (who brought the film) told us that when the film was shown on Israeli TV five years ago, a viewer called the station and complained that the film is anti-Semitic. Israeli TV immediately stopped the showing (after only the first half-hour) and switched to something else. Adi claimed that the film had never been shown again on Israeli TV, but in fact Eitan Chaimovitch says he saw it (the whole film) on Israeli TV a year ago, so that, at least, is not true.

Why would anyone think the film is anti-Semitic? First of all, the Green Wizard, Carolinus, has a big long Jewish looking nose. Second, he has a sparkling design on his chest, which has the faint shape of a Star of David from time to time. On the other hand, Carolinus is one of the two heroes! (So maybe it was an Arab who called and complained that they were showing a movie with a Jewish hero?)

Note however, that the Carolinus' three wizard *brothers* do not look Jewish. The Yellow Wizard, for example, is clearly Chinese, both in dress and in facial appearance (although not in

speech). Each brother is quite different. Since scientific studies show that children usually resemble their fathers more than their mothers, perhaps the four brothers have the same mother, but different fathers. So, either Carolinus mother is Jewish (in which case all the four brother wizards are Jewish), or only Carolinus' father is in fact Jewish, and his Jewish display is due to ethnic pride and not adherence to traditional Jewish law.

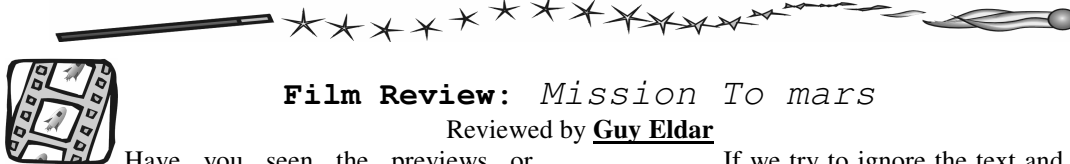
There are Jewish ideas presented. When Carolinus organizes his fight, he includes the wicked Red Wizard Ommadon, one of his three brothers, in the meeting. The others object, but he says that evil has to be included for the effort to be complete. There is a Jewish traditional idea that the Hebrew word "Tzibur" (צִיבּוּר), which means "the public", contains "Tz" for "Tzaddikim" (the righteous guys), "B" for "Boorim" (the average guys), and "R" for "Reshaim" (the bad guys). You can't have a Jewish public without all three, it won't be complete. So Carolinus is presenting a traditional Jewish idea.

Another aspect is Carolinus' idea of protecting the endangered world of magic from the world of science and logic by total separation. This corresponds to the mostly successful practice of the Ultra-Orthodox Jews in preserving their way of life by separating themselves as much as possible from the surrounding, *modern* world. This separation is presented in the film as a *good* idea; the alternative, proposed by Ommadon, is of intermixing, helping in the development of ever more powerful weapons, and thus encouraging the self-destruction of the world of technology and science at its own hands.

Another Jewish (or anti-Semitic) aspect, is that the *other* hero, Peter Dickenson, is obviously a goy, and he gets Carolinus' (Jewish?) daughter at the end of the movie – with her father's blessing! (So maybe he's Reform?)

So you see, you've got to see this movie!

חינם אין כסף! -- אלון איצקוביץ מציע אוסף של סיפורי המד"ב שהוא כתב על דיסקט. כתבו אליו, רח' פיקא 9, פתח-תקווה 49611, או טלפון 03-922-3171



Film Review: *Mission To mars*

Reviewed by **Guy Eldar**



Have you seen the previews or posters of this movie? If you have, you probably think this movie has something to do with *ID4* or *Armageddon*, or so it implies. What it should have said was "1998 – *Contact*, 2000 – *Mission to Mars*".

This film is a very American, very kitsch version of Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*. In two very long hours Director *Brian De Palma* shows us his version of the theory of the beginning of life on Earth. As you might have guessed, this has something to do with Mars...

An extreme lack of reality regarding space movement and the laws of science is displayed in this movie. Almost every scene placed in space is somehow unbelievable.

On top of the bad story line and script, the acting is not that great either. I would have expected more from stars such as *Tim Robbins* and *Gary Sinise*. If I were in their place, I'd blame the script, although a good actor has to know how to choose a good script he'd like to play.

If we try to ignore the text and story of the movie for a second (mind you, a tough thing to do), this could have been a great movie. The visual effects are some of the best ever seen on the big screen. Starting with M&Ms floating around, charting human DNA, continuing with an amazing opening sequence that includes a desert storm on Mars (makes you think this will be a great movie...), and ending with a meeting between the mission members and a computerized messenger from our creators.

To sum things up, a friend of mine said that since we love SF we have to see this movie, even if it's not too good (an understatement). I say – even the greatest SF lover mustn't see this movie. Another friend of mine said (after we left the theater shocked by what we had seen), "but this is *Brian De Palma*, you know, *Thelma and Louise*". I reminded him that *G.I. Jane* was also a *Brian De Palma* film (or shall I say, disaster). Keep these words in mind if you were planning on seeing *Mission to Mars*. **My Rating: 3/10.**



News and Rumors

Collected and brought to you by **Guy Eldar**

As promised, the following paragraphs will bring you up to date on the animation genre's Fantasy films that are about to hit the screens in the near future. But before that I wish to bring you a few hot news flashes. First, a new SF series has replaced B5's *Crusade* on Saturday nights on Channel 3. I'm sorry to say I missed the first episode, so I can't tell you much about it, just that its name is *Code Name > Eternity* (שם קוד: נצח). I'm sure it'll be reviewed in the next issue. Next, Hot News from Guy Pines' TV show – *Tom Hank's* son has been officially reported as the new teenager *Anakin Skywalker* in *Star Wars' Episode 2*. The show also reported that filming would start this summer and that *Lucas* plans to make history by filming the movie with six digital video cameras instead of a regular 8mm-film camera. And finally, the trailer for the trilogy, *Lord of the Rings*, which I mentioned here in the past, has been published on the web. Over 1.6 million downloads were made on the first day. Check it out – it's worth it!

And now for Animated Fantasy. Unlike sf animation, which started to appear only in recent productions, fantasy has been a part of the animation genre from its earliest days. However, these days one can find some very interesting fantasies among the upcoming features.

I wish to open with the *Walt Disney Company*. If you saw the new *Toy Story 2* (and if you haven't – go see it now!!!) you might have caught the preview for this upcoming summer's hit – *Dinosaur*. The biggest attraction of this movie is the combination of CGI (Computer Generated Imaging) that was used to create the dinosaurs, and live action backgrounds. This combination was done in *Jurassic Park*, but it looks like this will be better, not to mention, these dinosaurs will be talking. Look for it sometime late May 2000.

I mentioned *Toy Story 2* above, the third collaboration between *Disney* and *Pixar*. The next joint venture is the film *Monsters, Inc.*

Comments, News and Rumors' facts and sites would be appreciated. Write to: eldarguy@netvision.net.il
Please subject messages as "News and Rumors".

For Comments: POB 9443, Tel Aviv 61093. Email: asheer@netvision.net.il. Tel: Aharon Sheer 08-947-1225.

Editor: **Aharon Sheer**.

Graphic Editor and Design: **Guy Eldar**.

Logo by: **Miriam Ben-Loulu**.

For mail delivery of *CyberCozen*, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; for airmail to US \$15; if Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels.

The story line seems very promising – monsters from a parallel universe are transported under our beds to capture and retrieve screams. They mustn't bring back children, but what will happen when they do?

The final title from *Disney* is *Atlantis*. Future explorers find the old mythological city underwater. The most impressive thing about this film is the cast, which includes *Michael J. Fox*, *Mark Hammill* and *Claudia Christian*. Scheduled to be released in the summer of 2001 or 2002.

Another impressive cast can be found in the production of *Disney's* biggest competition, *DreamWorks SKG*. The film is *Shrek*, and its cast includes *Mike Myers*, *Cameron Diaz*, *Eddie Murphy*, *John Lithgow* and *Linda Hunt*. It's the story of the ogre, *Shrek*, who wants to become a knight. This film is rumored to be scheduled for release this summer, but with the US Easter release of *The Road to El-Dorado* and with plasticine animation's first full length feature *Chicken Run* this summer, I can't see this movie coming out before Christmas.

Some more big names appear in a *Warner Bros.* Production. A bit like *Shrek*, it is a story of wanting to be something else, only this time the star character is *Osmosis Jones*, a white blood cell who doesn't like playing by the department rules. Cast includes *Chris Rock*, *David Hyde Pierce*, *Laurence Fishburne*, *Joel Silver*, *Brandy* and the one-and-only *William "Captain Kirk" Shatner*. Scheduled to be released on November 22nd 2000.

To create some competition, *Fox Searchlight Pictures* will be releasing *Monkeybone* two weeks earlier. With a cast including *Brendan Fraser*, *Whoopi Goldberg*, *Bridget Fonda* and others, this film tells the story of a cartoonist in a coma who has to find a way to get back to the real world.

עורך: אהרון שיר.

עורך גרפי ועיצוב: גיא אלדר.

עיצוב לוגו: מרים בן-לולו.

עבור משלוח בדואר של *CyberCozen*, הנכם מתבקשים לתרום 30 ש"ח לשנה; עבור דואר אויר לארה"ב \$15; אם אהרון שיר יכול למסור את העיתון באופן אישי, 15 ש"ח.

Copyright © 2000.

All rights reserved to specified authors and artists.
כל הזכויות שמורות למחברים וליוצרים, כפי שצוינו.