



Science-Fiction Fanzine

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The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

מועדון הקריאה של חודש מרס יעסוק באסופת הסיפורים "היה יהיה 4".
 המועדון יתקיים במוצאי שבת, 22 במרס, בשעה 20:00 ב"קפה גרג", ויצמן 2, ת"א. מנחה: [דפנה קירש](#)
 לצורך היערכות למספר המשתתפים, יש להירשם מראש דרך הדוא"ל של המנחה.
 רצוי להביא למפגש עותק של הספר.
 הכניסה חופשית ואינה כרוכה בתשלום, בחברות באגודה או בהגעה למפגשים נוספים.
 מועדון חודש אפריל יעסוק בספרו של גרג איגן "ההסגר".
 לקבלת עדכונים שוטפים על מפגשי מועדון הקריאה ברחבי הארץ ניתן להצטרף לרשימת התפוצה או לדף
[האגודה בפייסבוק](#).

More Society information is available (in Hebrew) at the Society's site: <http://www.sf-f.org.il>

Letter to the Editor

Greetings, Aharon---

Re "The End of Civilization As We Know It," I just wanted to comment that everyone should read Miller's *A Canticle for Leibovitz*. It presents a believable, well thought-out future world -- but, aside from that, it's just so heart-breakingly well written.

And it was my father's favorite book -- well, perhaps second to Elmer Davis's *Giant Killer* (a historical novel about the Biblical Joab) -- and what better recommendation could there be? *Sei gezunt, Devra Kunin*

Anshey haMaagal: Hizdamnut Shniya [People of the Circle: 2nd Chance] by Nathaniel Botwinik

Reviewed by Leybl Botwinik

Book 1 of the Hebrew series of books: Anshey haMaagal / 256 pages

Steimatsky Books, Nov.2013

Cover: On a black background, a large golden ring with a piece broken off (showing an inner turquoise cross-section), forming what now looks like a large "C". The cover design is also the author's.

About the Author: Nathaniel Botwinik is a 21 year old Hebrew writer, born in Israel. This is his first book.

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The new Hebrew language book "Anshey Hamaagal: Second Chance" is an original science fiction/fantasy novel told in part by a young man, David Green, caught up in intrigues not of his

making. The first thing we learn is that he has a unique but perplexing power: Once a year, exactly on his birthday, he becomes invisible – and only for 24 hours.

Before he delves into the story of his search for the reasons why this happens to him, he takes us back to before he was born, and recounts his own mother's adventures – which may or may not be the root of his 'situation'.

His mother, Elena Green (born Elena Brown, from a well-founded British family), is an archaeologist specializing in the North American Indian tribes. Her research takes her and a specially organized team of experts from England to the USA on the quest of a mysterious heretofore-unknown tribe coined "*Tribe of the Disappearing Indians*". Why is it called that?

"Ah yes. Quite! Good that you should ask. This may be one of the great mysteries of all time – and we are at the edge of fathoming its import... The tribe is named so, because of a special and unique trait. They seem to have a strange way of setting up their homes. They would arrive somewhere, build habitats of stable and long-standing construction – solid constructs, cabins, huts, etc. Once completed – in about one year's time, they would pack up and vanish overnight – abandoning everything but their most personal belongings... as if marking their passage.

"The professor paused, partly for effect, but most likely because the mystery excited him too, and then continued:

"In a short time, they are discovered to be somewhere else on the continent, rebuilding, resettling, and then again disappearing within the year – or so the legend goes. Surely something to look into, since this phenomenal and strange mannerism is unheard of amongst nomadic tribes who would normally set up temporary camps and then

gather just about everything up and transport it with them – generally leaving no sign of their passing. This is completely unheard of, outstanding, and a mystery in and of itself!"

The archeology team – sponsored by a mysterious company called "Chance" – together with David's mother playing a leading role in the expedition, manages to track down the tribe. Unfortunately, they are at odds in extracting any useful data. Only Elena manages to return to England with any information or artifact of value – which she keeps hidden from the trip's sponsors.

When David grows up and decides to seek out the root of his power, a cross-continent odyssey begins and he finds himself at the center of a power struggle between three groups of people with extraordinary powers, each with its own secret agenda, trying to snatch his powers for themselves – they are all "anshey hamaagal" [people of the circle].

As the story unfolds, other unique characters are introduced into the tale. They are all somehow interconnected, and David must find out what his role in the entire situation is, how his uniqueness came about, and why everyone is after him.

The book, as mentioned, is in Hebrew, and is the first in a series. An English translation is being worked on, and the first few chapters will be available soon (via the Facebook site). In addition to this story, Nathaniel is presently working on an expanded series of interconnected stories dealing with one of the more unique characters of the book that he hopes will be a major success in the SF/Fantasy genre. Good luck to him.

NOTE: The original name of the book in Hebrew, before publication, was to be the very long "*Anshey haNetsakh: Khipus Akharey Shevet haIndianim haNeelmim*" – "*The*

Forever People: Search for the Tribe of the Disappearing Indians". The subtitle was shortened and modified primarily because Internet searches kept bringing up hits about the 'vanishing culture' and 'disappearing' Amerindian (North American Indian). The main part of the title, for the people with extra-ordinary power, was changed, because there was a concern that people would mistakenly connect the story to the TV show "Highlander" that was dubbed in Hebrew "Ish haNetsakh". Interestingly enough, after dispensing with the "Amerindian connection" in the title, it cropped up again, in that the new name whose equivalent is "People of the Circle" kept appearing in Internet hits as relating to Amerindian tribes... (One can't escape destiny, it seems...). For the moment, the main English title will remain as "The Forever People" – but that may change at some point in time.

Quote of the Month

The science quote below is from the magazine *Science*, Editors' Choice: Highlights of the recent literature:

Early Intervention by H. Jesse Smith

Anthropogenic carbon dioxide emissions from the use of fossil fuels may be the most important cause of modern global warming, but it is important to remember that humans can affect climate in other ways, such as through anthropogenic land cover change (ALCC). Agriculture and industrial activities have modified more than half of Earth's natural biomes, and ALCC has influenced global climate both through biogeophysical feedbacks, such as modification of the exchange of momentum and moisture between the land and the atmosphere and the alteration of radiative and heat fluxes; and biogeochemical ones, including emissions of greenhouse gases and aerosols from biomass burning, deforestation, and rice cultivation. He *et al.* investigate how important ALCC has been in the past, by using a climate model forced by recently compiled observational data to assess how ALCC affected climate over the preindustrial Holocene. [The **Holocene** is a geological epoch which began at the end of the Pleistocene (at 11,700 calendar years BP) and continues to the present]. They found that ALCC increased global temperatures by around 0.73°C in that interval, an amount comparable to the ~0.8°C warming that has occurred during industrial times. So it seems that early anthropogenic activity had a significant impact on climate thousands of years before the Industrial Revolution began, mostly as a result of the greenhouse gas emissions caused by activities related to farming, such as deforestation and rice cultivation.

Geophy. Res. Lett. **41**, 10.1002/2013GL058085 (2014).

Book Review by Aharon Sheer

How to Live Safely in a Science Fictional Universe by Charles Yu (2010), 234 pages

Charles Yu (born in 1976 in Los Angeles) is an Asian American writer. This is the autobiography of Charles Yu, a man whose father invented time travel. His son Charles helped his father in the family's garage lab from the age of 10 until age 17. Today (whatever that means) Charles works as a time machine

repairman. In his work he uses a TM-31.

"The base model TM-31 runs on state-of-the-art chronodiegetical technology: a six-cylinder grammar drive built on a quad-core physics engine, which features an applied temporalinguistics architecture allowing for free-form navigation

within a rendered environment, such as, for instance, a story space and, in particular, a science fictional universe.

“Or, as Mom used to say: it's a box. You get into it. You push some buttons. It takes you to other places, different times. Hit this switch for the past, pull up that lever for the future. You get out and hope the world has changed. Or at least maybe you have.” [p. 4]

“Because I work in the time travel industry, everyone assumes I must be a scientist. Which is sort of correct. I was studying for my master's in applied science fiction -- I wanted to be a structural engineer like my father -- and then the whole situation with Mom got worse, and with my dad missing I had to do what made sense, and then things got even worse, and this job came along, and I took it.

“Now I fix time machines for a living.

“To be more specific, I am a certified network technician for T-Class personal-use chronogrammatical vehicles, and an approved independent affiliate contractor for Time Warner Time, which owns and operates this universe as a spatio-temporal structure and entertainment complex zoned for retail, commercial, and residential use. The job is pretty chill for the most part, although right this moment I'm not loving it because I think my Tense Operator might be breaking down.” [p. 5]

One time Charles had to go and help someone named L Skywalker. Well, he can guess who that is, and where. But it wasn't him. It was his son Linus.

“What I don't expect is a kid. A boy opens the hatch and climbs out, pushes the hair out of his eyes.

Can't be a day older than nine. I ask him what he was doing when the machine failed, and he mumbles something about how I would never understand. I say, Try me. He looks down at his anti-gravity boots, which appear to be a couple of sizes too big, then gives me a look like, *I'm a fourth-grader, what do you want from me?*

“‘Dude,’ I say. ‘You know you can't change the past.’

“He says then what the hell is a time machine for.

“‘Not for trying to kill your father when he was your age,’ I say.

“He closes his eyes, tilts his head back, pushes air out through his nostrils in a super-dramatic way.

“‘You have no idea what it's like, man. To grow up with the freaking savior of the universe as your dad.’

“I tell him that doesn't have to be his whole story. That he can have a new beginning.

“‘For starters,’ I say, ‘change your name.’

“He opens his eyes, looks at me as seriously as a nine-year-old can, says yeah maybe, but I know he doesn't mean it. He's trapped in his whole dark-father-lost-son-galactic-monomyth thing and he doesn't know any other way.” [p. 13]

Well, maybe this gives you some idea of Yu's style, but not much about the book, which is really about Charles. Charles' mother wants him to come home more often. But his work gets in the way. So he buys his mother a time loop. She cooks a meal, Charles come in, eats and chats, and leaves. She cooks a meal, Charles comes in ...

When the current real Charles comes to visit he discovers she's been leaving the loop. She wants him to take some of his clothes that he left at home. But the clothes are old. He doesn't want

them, he doesn't need them. She tells him that they are perfectly good. Just like a mother.

Charles has thought about buying her a bigger loop. The current one is half an hour. He could get her a forty-five minute loop. But he never does.

And here's more crucial information about time travel:

"You learn a lot of things in this line of work.

"For example: If you ever see yourself coming out of a time machine, run. Run away as fast you can. Don't stop. Don't try to talk. Nothing good can come of it. It's rule number one, and it is drilled

into you on the first day of training. It should be second nature, they tell you: Don't be a smartass. Don't try anything fancy. If you see yourself coming at you, don't think, don't talk, don't do anything. Just run." [p. 19]

Of course the whole thing gets messed-up when he meets himself. It's unexpected; he doesn't have time to run. After that ... It's too late.

I enjoyed this strange book a lot. Filled with philosophy. And a strange hero telling us about his Chinese mother. And his father, who invented a time machine. (Not the only one.)

I liked it.

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