

Since 1998, when the John Wyndham Archive first became available to researchers at the University of Liverpool's Sydney Jones Library, it has been possible to learn much that is both illuminating and startling about the man (sometimes dubbed 'the Invisible Man of Science Fiction') and his work. Here I shall focus on the evidence that, for a period, Wyndham's breakthrough novel, *The Day of the Triffids* (1951), was envisaged as the central volume of a future-history trilogy, the final volume of which involved the recovery of information about a catastrophic exchange of nuclear weapons between Russia and the USA which might be understood as constituting World War III. JBH, to initialise the names *John Wyndham Parkes Lucas Beynon Harris* used in his daily life, was born in 1902 or 1903 and had teenage memories of the Great War. He served as an Army Signaller during World War II and for the rest of his life—he died in 1969—anticipated the Cold War that ensued suddenly becoming very hot when the atomic bombing scenario of Hiroshima and Nagasaki would replay itself, in magnified form, as World War III. JBH explained to the SF historian Sam Moskowitz, how it was that the first and second world wars became confused in his mind: 'I had spent much of my school days expecting in due course to be in the Kaiser's war' and 'could not get rid of the feeling that *that* was my war, and now I had somehow got into the wrong one.'<sup>1</sup> The 'flashes of *déjà-vu*' he experienced should be paired with the pre-cognitive flashes of a likely World War III that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki provided.

A poem entitled 'Hiroshima' by 'John Beynon' appeared (apparently for the first time), with a following page translation into Spanish, in the July 1973 issue of the Spanish SF magazine *Nueva Dimensión* (which had published a Wyndham special issue the preceding August):

hiroshima  
you are a beautiful girl making love  
out of her skin

hiroshima  
you are the desert of the black rain  
and on your river live the dead

hiroshima  
you are a hiding in folded arms  
when our eyes shake hands with the sun

hiroshima  
you are the contour of a man  
burnt into the steps of a bank

hiroshima

<sup>1</sup> David Ketterer, ed. '[Sam Moskowitz] Questions and [John Wyndham] Answers: The Life and Works of John Wyndham.' *The New York Review of Science Fiction* 16 (March 2004), p. 9. On 12 January 1964, Sam Moskowitz, preparing to write a 'profile' of JBH for *Amazing Stories*, mailed him a list of 30 questions. Here JBH is responding to Moskowitz's question 21 about his time and duties in the Army.

you are the rising cloud  
we wear in our head and cannot leave on the chair  
when we climb into bed

hiroshima

The '(1967)' date appended to the poem is presumably that of composition.<sup>2</sup>

But is 'John Beynon,' the author of 'Hiroshima,' in fact JBH? Most of his pre-*Triffids* stories and novels were published under the 'John Beynon' combination of his six names. Among 18 notes and extracts from notebooks in the University of Liverpool Archive (Wyndham 8/3/1) is a small page on which this brief poem appears:

Hiroshima. Aug 6 1945

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Ghosts of a ~~million~~ myriad million men at arms,  
Sleep well!

Nor massy armies march at wars alarms.

Alexander, ^Caesar, ^Genghis Khan, Napoleon,  
Bismarck, Clausewitz.

Like John Beynon's 'Hiroshima,' this notebook draft, almost certainly written shortly after the bombs were dropped, imitates the Japanese Haiku style. It seems reasonable to conclude that we are not dealing with a coincidence here, that JBH had more than one go at a Hiroshima poem, and that the foreign published 'Hiroshima,' which concludes with the new impossibility of sleeping well, is indeed his work.

It was the Great War that inspired a no longer extant 'scientific romance' that JBH wrote when he was 13: 'It incorporated every known instrument of war and some unknown (including a flying armoured car and a device for shooting large fish hooks and lines at Zeppelins).'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> John Beynon, 'Hiroshima'. *Nueva Dimensión*, no. 48 (July 1973), pp. 16-17. The '1967' date appended to the poem is presumably that of composition; I have come across no evidence that the poem was published before 1973.] There is no evidence in the Archive that JBH published any of his poems during his lifetime. *Nueva Dimensión* probably acquired the poem from British editor, anthologist, and agent Ted Carnell who dealt with Spanish publishers. A Hungarian translation of it by Görgy Végh appeared in the no. 9, 1974 issue of the Hungarian fanzine *Galaktika Antológia*. Presumably that translation derived from the English text in *Nueva Dimensión*. The poem may owe something to the 1958 film *Hiroshima Mon Amour*. I am indebted to Jerry Määttä for this suggestion and his careful reading of this essay.

<sup>3</sup> See the correspondence file Wyndham 11/2/2 which includes a carbon copy of the brief typed biography that JBH prepared for Theodore Stanhope Sprigg, the editor of *Fantasy: Thrilling Science Fiction*. It was used in the Contributor's column of *Fantasy*, no. 1 (July 1938), p. 128. That issue contained the 'John Beynon' story 'Beyond the Screen.' JBH refers to his same schoolboy story in answering Moskowitz's question 10 (see note 1 above).

This early interest in innovative weapons continued with JBH's 'The Third Vibrator' (*Wonder Stories*, May 1933) which is about a device that disorganises matter (in the unpublished 'Secret Weapon', probably written in 1946, a Martian version is called the 'eminator'). In JBH's 'Spheres of Hell' (*Wonder Stories*, October 1933), published under John Beynon's own title 'The Puff-Ball Menace' in 1938, mailed seeds of a poisonous plant are the weapon used in a covert war. Beynon's 'Beyond the Screen' (*Fantasy: A Magazine of Thrilling Science Fiction*, July 1938) was retitled 'Judson's Annihilator' the following year for its destructive defensive weapon. John Beynon's 'The Trojan Beam' (*Fantasy*, March 1939) is titled for a magnetic device used for aiming meteors. In *Plan for Chaos*, the novel essentially written in 1948-49 but first published very posthumously, as by John Wyndham, in 2009, the weapons aboard military satellites are central to the title's war plan.<sup>4</sup> As we shall see, those satellites were carried over into a revised holograph manuscript of *The Day of the Triffids*. In May of the year in which *Triffids* was published (1951), in John Wyndham's 'And the Walls Came Tumbling Down' (*Startling Stories*) sound waves are the weapon; they destroy glass aliens. The series of imaginative weapons continues in the years after *Triffids* but my concern here is with what relates to the future history trilogy that was two thirds written and essentially conceptualised by the time *Triffids* was published.

In this series, 'The Puff-Ball Menace' is of especial interest because two aspects of its frame story anticipate *Plan for Chaos*, and its main story--the framed story--anticipates *The Day of the Triffids* in theme, plot, location, and the two central characters. The frame story opens in the non-located principality of Ghangistan. Its Prince Khordah tells his councillors that 'small nations' are 'dust in the wind' (158).<sup>5</sup> They are at the mercy of Westerners. But an old councillor announces that his nephew has a plan. In the central story--the five chapters entitled 'The Mysterious Growths,' 'The Rash,' 'The Danger Increases,' 'Fighting the Menace,' and 'The

<sup>4</sup> See John Wyndham, *Plan for Chaos*. ed. David Ketterer and Andy Sawyer, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009. Parenthetical page references to my 'Introduction: A Ground-Breaking Cloned Nazi Thriller' are to this edition. The slightly corrected text of the Penguin paperback, with an 'Introduction by Christopher Priest,' was published in 2010. Parenthetical page references to *Plan for Chaos* are to both the Liverpool University Press and then Penguin editions, e.g., '(37/5)'. At the end of the Penguin edition, in a 'Note on the Text,' interested readers are referred to Ketterer, 'The Corrected and Expanded Introduction to *Plan for Chaos*.' An also longer version of my Introduction figures as Chapter 9 of my completed *Trouble with Triffids: The Life and Fiction of John Wyndham*. Material from chapters 5, 8, and 11 of this full-scale biography is also spliced into this 'Wyndham's World War III' essay. An early (and wrong in respect to the Waimori fragments) shorter version of Chapter 8 appeared as Ketterer, 'The Genesis of the Triffids' in *The New York Review of Science Fiction* 16 (March 2004), 11-14. A much shorter, early version of Chapter 11 appeared as Ketterer, 'John Wyndham: The Facts of Life Sextet,' in David Seed, ed. *A Companion to Science Fiction*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2003, pp. 375-388.

<sup>5</sup> John Beynon's 'The Puff Ball Menace' was first published in the US as 'Spheres of Hell,' *Wonder Stories* 5 (October 1933), pp. 231-39; and in the UK as 'The Puff Ball Menace,' *Tales of Wonder*, no. 3 (Summer 1938), pp. 51-67. Because it is so clearly the seed story of *The Day of the Triffids*, JBH did not reprint it in any of the collections of his stories published during his lifetime. The version cited here is in *Wanderers of Time* ([London: Coronet, 1973]), pp. 135-158.

Attack on the Wind'—it becomes apparent that the nephew's plan involves mailing seeds of deadly parasitical yellow puff-balls (which would become yellow-headed triffids) to England where JBH's central story is set. The rash caused by the puff-balls (when they burst and their infecting spores are carried far and wide by the wind) is quickly fatal. Clearly, the frame story can be described as a plan for world chaos by a secret enemy like the plan described in *Plan for Chaos* (albeit the title plan is very different).

The main story focuses on Ralph Waite and his girlfriend Dorothy Forbes. In *The Day of the Triffids* they become the narrator Bill Masen and his girlfriend Josella Playton and, like them, Ralph and Dorothy are separated for much of the story. In both cases, the girlfriend is an idealised combination of the two women JBH thought about marrying, his beautiful first cousin Dorothy Joan Parkes and his fellow writer, the also attractive Mary [Molly] Cathcart Borer.<sup>6</sup> ('Forbes' combines bits of Borer and Parkes.) At one point, Ralph leaves London to rescue Dorothy from the puff-ball threat in Cornwall (it seems the seeds have been mailed to Devon and Cornwall). Flame throwers are deployed against the puff-balls and the south-west of England is cut off from the remainder by a trench filled with flaming oil and wood. The idea is to prevent a westerly gale from carrying the seeds eastwards to London and elsewhere. 'The Puff-Ball Menace' concludes with an 'Envoi' which returns the reader to the frame setting of Ghangistan. The plan has failed because the puff-ball stock 'did not breed true.' After two or three generations the puff-balls were no longer parasites. 'There are other means,' promises the nephew (158). He has other plans for chaos. As in much of JBH's fiction, the threat is only provisionally contained; it will return in some sequel form or other.

### ***The Day of the Triffids: As in 1948***

In 1946, JBH wanted to return to publishing English novels in England after achieving a pre-war reputation in the American pulp magazines, particularly Hugo Gernsback's *Wonder Stories*. He had suppressed his first UK novel, John B. Harris's *The Curse of the Burdens* (1927), the ending of which he was forced to botch. But he was happier with his next three pre-war novels--*The Secret People* (1935), *Foul Play Suspected* (1935), and *Planet Plane* (1936, later re-published as *Stowaway to Mars*)—all first issued by the UK publisher George Newnes. *The Day of the Triffids*, probably begun in 1946, and *Project for Pistols*, a spy thriller about Nazi cells in post-war London drafted in 1947 and revised in 'March 1948' with 64 'addenda' pages (Wyndham 2/3/2) were both aimed at British publication.

In early 1948 (perhaps just prior to his March *Project for Pistols* revisions), JBH had completed a holograph draft of *The Day of the Triffids*, sent it to his typist, and then had second thoughts:

<sup>6</sup> For further information about JBH's two Mrs Rights, see the online corrected and expanded text of my Introduction to the first edition of *Plan for Chaos* or see pages 22-25 and the page 25 note 32 in that edition.

I knew the ending was no good, so I told the typist to lay off for a bit while I thought of another. About eighteen months later I remembered that it was still lying there unfinished, and managed to contrive a conclusion--of a sort.<sup>7</sup>

JBH does not let on here that during that eighteen months break he had written another novel--a covert prequel or prologue to *Triffids* (analogous to the 'Puff Ball Menace's' frame story) originally entitled *Fury of Creation*--and that that novel (later retitled *Plan for Chaos*) contributed a new element that would consequently figure in both the opening and concluding chapters of *Triffids*--military artificial satellites. The fascinating largely holograph *Triffids* draft that survives in the Archive as Wyndham 1/3/1 combines original (pre-March?) 1948 English-terms text (with words like 'flat', 'pavement', and 'lorry') and the eighteen months later American-terms text (with words like 'apartment', 'sidewalk', and 'truck'). Despairing of becoming an author of English novels in England because *Project for Pistols* had failed to find a UK publisher, at some post-March point in 1948, JBH wrote *Fury/Plan* for American publication and then worked on a revised *Triffids* for American publication.

It is important, however, to be aware of two subtextual aspects that are also present in the Americanised revision from which the American January-February *Collier's* and March 1951 Doubleday published texts and the British August 1951 Michael Joseph published text of *Triffids* all derived: the triffid as a Nazi and the triffid as a *vagina dentata*. Thereby triffids and Nazism are both associated with a fear of female sexuality.

A direct reference to World War II appears in *Triffids'* opening chapter, 'The End Begins'. At one point the sighted narrator Bill Masen in the land of the suddenly blinded spots a pub named *The Alamein Arms*: 'There was a board bearing a reputed likeness of Viscount Montgomery hanging from a bracket, and below, one of the doors stood open' (21).<sup>8</sup> JBH is signalling here that his chapter title derives from Churchill's famous rousing comment following the German defeat at the Second Battle of El Alamein: 'Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end, but it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.' For *Triffids'* early readers, 'Evacuation,' the title of *Triffids'* central seventh chapter, would have evoked the evacuation from Dunkirk. Indeed the impact of *The Day of the Triffids* has much to do with this historical subtext. *Triffids* is about the invasion of England by a foreign vegetable; World War II, like its predecessor, was about the possible invasion of England by 'krauts,' German for 'cabbages' or 'weeds' among other things and a derogatory term since 1918 for Germans, especially German soldiers. Sauerkraut--cabbage fermented with salt--is of course the well-

known German sidedish. At one point triffids are described as 'a pretty odd lot of cabbages' (49). It should also be noted that, during the 1944 Operation Goodwood, the tall hedgerows of Normandy would have been as threatening to JBH and the allied invading forces as massed triffids because of the German forces they concealed.

A fear of female sexuality in *Triffids* is introduced when Bill recalls his seeing, for the first time, 'the curious, funnel-like formation at the top of the triffid's stem' and 'the tightly-wrapped whorl within.' His father lifted him, as a young boy, 'to look inside' (38). The primal scene here is of two males, the one engendered by the other, looking into an image of the *vagina dentata*. That whorl can unfurl and lash out, becoming 'a slender stinging weapon ten feet long' (42). The reader should note the subtle and surely deliberate metonymic means whereby JBH equips the triffid's funnel with teeth. Bill's father peers at the half-grown triffid

*through his horn-rimmed glasses, fingering its stalk, and blowing gently through his gingery moustache as was his habit when thoughtful. He inspected the straight stem, and the woody bole from which it sprang. . . . Then he peered into the curious, funnel-like formation at the top of the stem, still puffing reflectively but inconclusively through his moustache. I remember the first time he lifted me up to look inside that conical cup and see the tightly-wrapped whorl within. It looked not unlike the new, close-rolled frond of a fern, emerging a couple of inches from a sticky mess in the base of the cup. I did not touch it, but I knew the stuff must be sticky because there were flies and other small insects struggling in it. (37-38)*

The teeth here are metonymically transferred from the pubically-moustached mouth of the father (to which attention is oddly and conspicuously drawn) to the 'mouth' of the triffid. During my ellipsis Bill's father peers at the triffid with a 'not very penetrative attention,' an instinctive reaction when dealing with the *vagina dentata*. As for the relation between something 'penetrative' and the triffids' stem tapping upright 'sticks', it should be noted that they were originally a penis-like 'six inches' (replaced by 'small') in length. These sticks 'might have something to do with the reproductive system . . .' (44). Triffids can be rendered harmless (and indeed killed) by a form of castration--cutting off their heads. Spring-operating guns have been developed for this purpose. Shooting 'spinning discs, crosses, or small boomerangs of thin steel', they are 'capable of slicing a triffid stem neatly at twenty-five feet if they hit it' (43-44). But understanding the triffid head as an image of the *vagina dentata*, it is hard not to understand the sliced stem as appertaining to a penis rather than a triffid.

It is, of course, pretty much inevitable that a good many of the details that make up JBH's description of a triffid would suggest both female and male sexual organs. For example, it ejaculates: its 'white seeds shot into the air like steam' (50). And triffids have 'shaggy', hairy boles (40). Could the case I am making for the dominance of female sexuality simply be accidental? The build-up of evidence suggests not. Note how easily those shaggy

<sup>7</sup> See Ketterer, ed., 'Questions and Answers': p. 9. The quotation is from JBH's answer to Moskowitz's question 20 regarding what he was writing between 1937 and 1950.

<sup>8</sup> Page references for *The Day of the Triffids* are to the Penguin paperback first published in 1954. The differently paginated 2001 Penguin Modern Classics edition corrects a number of errors which appeared in previous reprintings of the 1954 edition.

'boles' can become 'holes[.]' Indeed, for forty-seven years, every Penguin copy of *The Day of the Triffids* included that very compositor's slip. When Bill encounters a mature triffid at Josella's father's home, 'close beside its damp shaggy hole lay the body of an elderly man clad in a bright silk dressing-gown' (76). Symbolically and metonymically, Josella's dead father here is the victim of a 'damp shaggy hole.' The monster in the 1979 film *Alien* and its successors is similarly ambisexual but there also it is the threat of female sexuality which dominates. The sticky mess from which the triffid whorl emerges traps insects like a spider's web and so the deadly sexuality of the female spider is linked to the triffid threat. When triffids later 'loiter suggestively' (223), readers might appropriately view them as female prostitutes.

### **Plan for Chaos (1948-49, 1951)**

When JBH embarked on *Fury of Creation*, probably in the latter half of 1948, he was embarking on a story in which the fear of an ultimate Nazi victory and of female sexuality, implicit in *Triffids*, were overt and central elements. He completed a first version in 1949 and later completed revisions (in response to American agent Frederik Pohl's reactions) by 10 September 1951. The Nazi threat in *Fury* is female-led and itself largely female. In effect, the original title (inferable from JBH's correspondence with Pohl)--taken from the line 'Vitality in women is a blind fury of creation' in Act I of George Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman*--might be understood in the novel itself as linked to a Nazi *vagina dentata*.<sup>9</sup> The novel survives as variously hand-corrected two-part 421-page ribbon and carbon typescripts (Wyndham 2/4/1/1-2 and 2/4/2/1-2.) The ribbon typescript is entitled *Plan for Chaos*, JBH's final choice of title when he conceived of the novel as the opening volume of a future history trilogy. It was to be a John Wyndham novel like *Triffids*. But the carbon typescript has this new tipped-in title page: '*Fury of Creation* by John Lucas.' Probably JBH decided on re-using this original vaguer and broader title when he knew that he would never write the third volume of his projected trilogy but wanted to convey some sense of the arc of its overall conception.

Briefly, this is the plot. Johnny Farthing, the news photographer narrator is a mild-mannered Englishman in an American city, presumably New York.<sup>10</sup> Johnny is puzzled and disturbed by the fact that the face and build of an American woman whose picture he had taken after her fatal apparent accident resembles the picture of a French woman (an apparent suicide) in a French magazine, and that both these women resemble his blonde first cousin Freda Darl whom he expects to marry. In Chapter 2 we learn something of Johnny's Swedish, English, and American backgrounds, and of

<sup>9</sup> The Shaw line is quoted in *Plan for Chaos*, p. 249/217.

<sup>10</sup> JBH, it should be noted, was an accomplished photographer. Andy Sawyer informed me (on 22 February 2010) of a possible relationship between the name 'Johnny Farthing' and that of 'Johnny Dollar' of the long running CBS radio serial *Yours Truly, Johnny Dollar* which first broadcast on 14 January 1949. Dollar is a hard boiled Freelance Insurance Investigator. It is just possible that JBH became aware of this very popular US fictional character in 1949.

his Uncle Nils' opposition to the marriage. Uncle Nils, the brother of Johnny's and Freda's Aunt Marta, is Freda's father by his second wife. He changed Dahl to Darl. Uncle Nils and Aunt Marta are presumably Johnny's mother's siblings rather than his father's. At not quite eight years old, the fair-haired Marta Dahl 'was a golden child' (45/13). She went to school in Germany and fell under Hitler's sway. Renouncing her Swedish nationality, she became Fraulein Gerda Daele, a fanatic Nazi, 'a Fury' (46/14). 'She had been, according to witnesses, some part at least of those last days in the historic bunker in Berlin . . . any one of three or four unidentifiable bodies might have been hers' (47/15). Chapter 2 concludes with Freda showing Johnny a photograph of a third dead woman who resembles herself. So now there are 'four women with the same face--and three of them sudden deaths' (48/16). Clearly, there are connections to be drawn between the dangers of consanguinity, the creation of duplicates (clones?), and the deaths of three duplicates.

Soon an attempt is made on Freda's life but Johnny saves her. And it seems that Johnny has a double too. His investigations seem to have attracted the attentions of a group of Germans including a woman he had previously seen in another photograph--a 'Tall, blonde, statuesque type' (56/25) who also resembles Freda. In Chapter 5 we learn that her name is Antonia Hander and that she works for the 'I.S.D.R.A.C.', the 'Inter-State Department for Radio-Activity Control' (63/30)--this is the first hint that *Plan* might be SF. She is also described as a 'Fury' (68/36). In a confrontation it appears that Freda is shot dead, but no, it is only another duplicate, one of eight racked up so far. Before long, as the confusing action heats up, Johnny is hustled into a big black car by a number of Germans (one of them another double for him) and transferred to a plane. He is flown with identicals of both sexes (i.e., copies of Freda and himself) to an unknown destination and transferred once more, this time to what looks like a flying saucer. We are not in Kansas anymore! The 'saucer' is forced to make an emergency landing after an (American?) enemy shell damages the vehicle.

The 'saucer' (note not yet 'flying saucer') episodes indicate that this novel must have been, at least in large part, composed after late June or early July 1947 following the American pilot Kenneth Arnold's sighting of what would later be termed UFOs and his likening them to saucers skimmed on water. The supposed crashed saucer Roswell incident occurred in July 1947. JBH's uncomfortable saucers are of terrestrial origin. There is evidence that, in 1944, Nazi Germany was in fact producing prototype vertical takeoff flying discs (which are not rendered useless by bombed runways) at the Skoda factory near Prague. A rescue second 'saucer' conveys Johnny and the rest from the rocky-gully-amidst-mountains emergency landing site to a further unknown destination, this one characterized by tropical vegetation. Johnny escapes but he's captured again and re-united with Freda. They find themselves in a society where everybody has a number (anticipative of that mid-1960s, Patrick McGoochan TV serial, *The Prisoner*). Part 1 then ends with Johnny expecting to see the Mother.

After the multiple mysteries and confusions of Part 1, it

is a relief to embark upon the explanations which make up a good deal of Part 2. Johnny is brought into the presence of the Mother who sits beneath a portrait of Hitler. As the reader will no doubt have guessed, the Mother turns out to be Johnny's Aunt Marta Dahl, now named Gerda Daele, whose ambition is to build up a new Germany. She is the Mother of the New Germany (based somewhere tropical or sub-tropical). Her followers—'my children' (159/127)—are all brothers and sisters, all members of one giant family, 'the most powerful family that has ever existed' (208/176). Her plan for chaos is to use orbiting satellites armed with atomic warheads to fool Russia and America into thinking the one country is attacking the other: 'we have acquired enough information to enable us to drop any one of five hundred satellites at least, out of fifteen hundred whose orbits we have charted, with a fair degree of accuracy' (156/124). The expected result is that World War III will ensue and America and Russia will wipe each other out.<sup>11</sup>

When the Mother outlines her planned World War III, JBH's cloned-Nazis prototype of Ira Levin's *The Boys from Brazil* (1976) meets his fooling-the-USA-and-Russia-into-nuclear-war prototype of Tom Clancy's *The Sum of All Fears* (1991). In Clancy's novel it is Arab terrorists who are responsible for exploding a small nuclear device at the Denver, Colorado, stadium during the Super Bowl with the expectation that Russia will be blamed. In the 2002 film version, an Austrian neo-Nazi is responsible and so the parallel with *Plan* is increased. It should be noted at this point that Aunt Marta is a supervillain like Sax Rohmer's Dr. Fu Manchu or Ian Fleming's Dr. No. More importantly, she appears to be the first female number one villain in the history of SF prior to 1948], and a figure who is responsible for the mass production of cloned human beings.

It appears, as Chapter 11 proceeds, that the oldest clones are aged 'nearly twenty-eight now' (174/142). At last the reader can figure out the exact date: 1945 (the end of World War II in Europe) + 28 = 1973. But many of the female clones are unhappy because they want children: 'What our Aunt Marta has done is construct a marvellous machine--and leave out the safety valve' (175/143). She has overlooked the power of nature: 'It's what makes the dandelion split the paving stone' (175/143). It is now apparent that the identical women found dead in Part 1 of the novel were rebels and that they were all murdered. They escaped Aunt Marta's New Germany because they wished to find mates and have children. The post-menopausal Aunt Marta now plans on solving this problem by arranging for Johnny

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<sup>11</sup> It should be observed that *Plan* shares the theme of an engineered conflict with JBH's first publication after the war, 'The Living Lies' by John Beynon, the lead story in the second issue of the British magazine *New Worlds* 1.ii (October 1945), pp. 2-20. This story was written just before the war. In the final archived example of JBH's early correspondence, a letter of 11 July 1939 to his recently acquired American agent, Otis Adelbert Kline, he encloses a typescript of 'The Living Lies' with a comment about its being related to the current situation. The story horrifically gains in tragic impact because of the intervening war. Containing one reference to anti-semitism, it is about a failed attempt to expose the way in which colour differences (white, black, red, and green) have been artificially created among the originally all-white colonists of Venus in order to create divisions and to financially benefit a white élite.

and Freda to marry and that from his sperm and her eggs produce a multitude of identical beings, including more males in batches of 512 (an improvement on 96 in Huxley's *Brave New World*). One way or another, Aunt Marta will ensure that her brave new German society will remain all in the family.

In Chapter 12, it is emphasized that Aunt Marta's society is a matriarchy rather like the society of ants that JBH will describe in 'Consider Her Ways' (1956). The women have the power. Thinking of her upcoming role, Freda refers to herself as a 'potential queen bee' (186/154), the apex of a society like 'the beehive, or the termitary' (186/154). The nuclear family--something JBH never seems to have been much in favour of probably because of his parents' failed marriage--will become extinct: 'You stimulate the zygote . . . and you split the foundations of human life' (187/155). But the title of this chapter, 'Hideous Dream' (from 'Like a phantasma, or a hideous dream' in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* 2.i.65) refers not just to this termitary society; it refers also to Aunt Marta's scheme for instigating World War III, her 'Plan for chaos' (185/153), the phrase which provides the novel's second title. But is *Plan* finally a novel about the danger of inbred families or is JBH's underlying theme the battle of the sexes?

The three chapters which follow build up to the introduction of the male scientist who has made the Mother's termitary society possible but who has had a change of mind about the desirability of her New Germany. And that is not the only source of dissension. Indeed, such sources now multiply. For example, Freda makes it clear that she is as strong a woman as Aunt Marta. The Mother has called a general meeting to announce the wedding of Johnny and Freda. But at that meeting the women become hysterical when they realize that their prospective husbands (the children of Johnny and Freda) will not be available until they are about fifty years old. Then, following a series of explosions, everyone finds themselves locked in the assembly hall and a man enters with a machine gun. He is a stranger--someone with a different face--apparently that of the older JBH (see the description on 207/175). It is the sympathetically presented genetic scientist Eidermann, whose Eidermann Process has produced the clones, and whose enlightened aim, as a rival leader, is world unity, not a New Germany, and that is why he has now taken control and heads what is called the Council of Scientists (as distinct from politicians). Among the women, Eidermann would seem to have the support of the [breakaway] group led by Mista while a group led by Ulrich is eager to start the Mother's world war. Suddenly, the Mother is shot but survives, unlike Eidermann who is shot dead (or so it seems). From now on the plot becomes increasingly convoluted displaying the kinds of surprising but rational twists that are a feature of JBH's work.

Five chapters remain. In Chapter 16, Johnny comments, with deep irony, 'Just one big happy family' (220/188) and a doctor, who expresses JBH's faith in rationalism, supplies the cod psycho-analysis. The Mother, he claims, is finished, made mad by psychic conflict. After the day when World War III breaks out, she will lose her children. In the next chapter the Mother dies and the

doctor suggests that Freda now impersonate the Mother to maintain some semblance of order. This she does in furtherance of the doctor's ultimate plan that he, Johnny, and Freda escape in one of the saucers. They land in Australia, are taken for Martians, and the doctor is shot dead.

In the last chapter, 'Finality?', the setting is once more America and the theme underlined seems to be the frightening power of women. In Washington for official questioning, Johnny speculates on the possibility of a 'monosexual race' (260/228) of women, a possible consequence of cloning, cloning presumably in the strict, asexual biological sense; men would be redundant. Ominously perhaps, Freda, Johnny's soon-to-be wife, seems to have taken the final initiative. She is in favour of the Eidermann process and, having taken his scientific records, she passes them on to Johnny and the Australian authorities take them from him. The novel ends with Johnny's vow to regularly read the Australian newspapers for word of any '[M]ultiplets' (263/231). But this 'ending' is undermined by the question mark that is part of the title of this last chapter.

In the above summary I have omitted the clues that *Plan for Chaos* is a covert prequel or prologue to *The Day of the Triffids*. Near the end of *Plan* and part of its very effective expanding climax, there are three brief clues which indicate (in JBH's typically understated way) its full interpenetration with *Triffids*. The first clue is this first reference to the mysterious '*paramecium reticulata*' in answer to Johnny's asking where the German Headquarters are:

*You've seen the forest outside? Well, now, there's only one part of the world where you can find the paramecium reticulata growing wild, isn't there? (247/215).*

The speaker here, the German doctor, clearly assumes that Johnny is familiar with the actual species although perhaps not with its Greek-Latin name. Johnny makes it clear that he has no knowledge of what part of the world the doctor is referring to. He has only been able to narrow his location to somewhere in the tropics or sub-tropics. In *The Day of the Triffids*, the first reports of triffids walking come from 'places in the neighbourhood of the equator' (39). In *Plan*, a few pages on, there is a follow up exchange with a Pentagon official about what a *paramecium reticulata* is (something to do with an unknown microscopic organism) and 'the Tropics or sub-Tropics' location (258/226). Presumably the term *paramecium reticulata* is the invention of a Nazi scientist in that location and not known in relation to triffids or anything else outside that location. It may reasonably be assumed that Johnny in fact does not know the local technical term for triffids, a term which includes the microscopic animal thing--the paramecium--that has turned some genetically modified plant into a triffid. Only his being at the secret location may have led Johnny to suspect that it is one part of the world where triffids grow wild. The third clue is the plant related revelation that 'the photo-synthesis' records have disappeared (262/230). As in *Triffids*, food production is a major concern. A photosynthetic food application in *Plan* is described as 'a pale green, pâté-like substance'

(165/133; 170/138). Triffids are valued for their cheap, high grade, edible oil. Is the green substance some kind of triffid paste?

The combined term '*paramecium reticulata*' does not exist in our world. Clearly what is being implied is that Eidermann (not shot dead after all?) and his team of scientists are responsible for some kind of genetic modification, an animal-plant hybrid that Johnny recognises as triffids (after all, he has his sight at the time of *Plan* but perhaps not at the later time of *Triffids*). So, just as the satellites were carried over into *Triffids*, those animal-plants were carried over into *Plan*.

It is reasonable to conclude that triffids/*paramecium reticulata* are native to a particular forested region on Earth (a setting transferred, in a holograph insert, from *Plan* to Venus in the accidental *Collier's* triffids- from-Venus version of] *Triffids*--briefly intended by JBH for sf-addicted American readers--] and not vice versa) and Germans, not Russians as implied early on in *Triffids*, were the true originators of triffids. What is ultimately implied by the three apparently throwaway clues in *Plan* is a further plan (possibly a utopian one) that eventuates (perhaps in a disastrously botched form) in *Triffids*. *Plan*, then, with its rampant loose ends, is ultimately revealed to be a covert prequel (or prologue) to *The Day of the Triffids*, a prequel (or prologue) that allows for and encourages a startling whole new reading of that classic novel.

It should be recalled in this regard, that 'The Puff Ball Menace,' the 1933 seed of *Triffids* (see endnote 5), is also the essential seed of *Plan for Chaos*. Its frame narrative is set in a small un-located principality where the puffball-seeds-plan-for-chaos to destroy the Western world is developed. As in *Plan*, a secret enemy has a plan for chaos. The plan eventually fails but, in the closing frame, it is revealed that the nephew of the 'ancient' (i.e., a family member) who came up with the puff ball plan has other plans for chaos as well. The German conspirators of *Plan for Chaos* also have a variety of plans.

### ***The Day of the Triffids: The 1949-50 Revision***

Among the plans for chaos in *Plan* are bacterial and chemical warfare. This (like the later dropped Venus scenario) is linked to the discussion of satellite weapons, that element which most obviously knits *Plan* to *Triffids*. In the following table which details the narrative order parts (1-11) and the composition order stages of nine parts (A-I) of the largely holograph MS of *The Day of the Triffids*, the two discussions of satellite weapons in *The Day of the Triffids* (see Penguin pages 28-29 of insert 25-37 and 245-48) were inserted as the US words text of stage H (part 5) and stage I (part 8):

1. 'Foreword' – a further future frame of four paragraphs (later dropped) on one holograph page (US text).
2. Two-paragraph holograph page replacing first two-and-a-bit paragraphs on typed p. 1 (Penguin p. 7 up to 'hospital.') (US text).
- [3. Missing holograph pp. 1-36 (Penguin pp. 7-24). Stage A (UK text).]

4. **Typed pages of ch. 1 (Penguin pp. 7-24). Stage E (US text).**
5. **Fifteen-page holograph insert (up to 'world.' on Penguin p. 37). Stage H (US text).**
6. **Typed pages of remainder of ch. 2 and all of original ch. 3 (up to 'instinct was.' on Penguin p. 63). Stage F (US text).**
7. Holograph pp. 64-307A (up to 'myth?' on Penguin p. 245). Stage B (UK text).
8. **Three-page holograph insert (up to 'mess' on Penguin p. 248). Stage I (US text).**
9. Holograph pp. 308-29 (322-29 deleted) (up to 'asked.' on Penguin p. 258). Stage C (UK text).
- [10. Missing holograph pp. 330-3??. Stage D (UK text).]
11. **Replacement holograph pp. 329A-345 (up to Penguin last p., 272). Stage G (US text).**

Parts 3, 7, 9, and 10 above--the pre-*Plan for Chaos*, no artificial satellites[, all English terms,] version of *Triffids*--was written before a date in the first half of 1948; the remaining material which [has American alternative terms] is bolded--the post-*Plan* revised *Triffids* with *Plan*'s artificial satellites--was written in 1949 after eighteen or more months had passed.

In both *Plan* and *Triffids*, in addition to, or as alternatives to, atomic warheads, some of the satellites are equipped with radioactive dusts, fungi, viruses, and bacteria. The *Triffids* reference to these additional weapons appears in the typescript used by both Doubleday and Michael Joseph. There was a first, now lost, triffids-from-Venus complete US typescript of *Day of the Triffids* (used by *Collier's*) and a surviving revised complete US typescript with the original terrestrial triffids (used by Doubleday and Michael Joseph). In the second typescript, and perhaps the earlier one, occurs this disquieting first of two new sentences in what also originated in the same three insert pages context of Bill's suggestion that something aboard one or more of those satellites might have caused the mass blindness: 'And there was that plague, too: it wasn't typhoid, you know. . .' (Penguin page 247). This mystery is not raised in relation to the military satellites anywhere else in *Triffids*. It is now raised for the only time in an insert sentence (in what originated as the three page holograph insert involving those satellites) that was written after JBH had completed a first version of *Plan*.

Readers of *Triffids* alone will now suddenly suspect that both blindness and the plague were caused by satellite weapons; human beings are somehow responsible for both catastrophes. Readers of *Triffids* who have now also read *Plan for Chaos* will link germ/chemical warfare in both novels with the *paramecium reticulata* references in *Plan* and suspect that cloned Nazis were responsible, deliberately or accidentally, for mass blindness, the accompanying plague, and the triffids. Perhaps the Germans took advantage of the comet trail as a smokescreen. In the final complete typescript added sentence which directly follows the 'wasn't typhoid' one, Bill finds it 'just the wrong side of coincidence . . . to believe that out of all the thousands of years in which a destructive comet could arrive, it happens to do so just a few years after we have succeeded in establishing satellite weapons . . .' (Wyndham 1/3/3 and 1/3/2, and Penguin pages 247-48). Here, at the final typescript

stage (and perhaps the missing preceding one), in two new key sentences, one following the other, Bill can be understood as voicing for the first time the suspicion that everything that has happened could be part of an enemy plan. However, that idea first appeared in a similarly phrased cancelled passage on the preceding-holograph-typescript page 18, i.e., at what I designate above as composition stage F6. JBH, in writing that typed-pages-preceding-the-holograph passage, cancelling it, and then shifting it to the typescript of Chapter 15, would have had in mind the enemy identified in *Plan for Chaos*. The triffids, the plague, and mass blindness may now all be understood--if plans were successfully executed--as preliminary to, or alternative to, Aunt Marta's nuclear plan for chaos.

### ***The World Beyond Waimori* → *Crying for the Moon* → *The Chrysalids***

There is evidence, in the form of two untitled holograph fragments (Wyndham 7/1/10 and 7/2/5) also written, like *Plan*, in relation to *Triffids*, that JBH projected a centuries-later sequel to *Triffids*, probably around the time he wrote the later dropped 'Foreword' to *Triffids*. They tell how the natives of the remote Pacific island of Waimori were not affected by the 1976 comet--the green trailed comet of *Triffids* that is not year-dated in *Triffids*--because the ash and smoke from the island's erupting volcano screened the islanders from the display. In the 7/1/10 fragment set in 2001, a white anthropologist on the island, claiming to replace mythology with the facts, establishes the idea (minus any mention of artificial satellites) that the comet caused irrationality and bellicosity in the parts of the world where it was visible (a simplified, metaphorical translation of the actual mass blindness caused). In the [false start] 7/2/5 fragment, at a date more than 300 years after the comet's appearance, Lui, one of the Waimorians, the hybrid descendant of a native woman and Lewis Brent, a white American (the sole Westerner on the island for more than twenty years before the comet), leaves behind his nineteen year old girlfriend Lallua and sets out with some companions, to discover what has actually happened to the rest of the apparently (nuclear?) devastated world. As an example of increased irritability after the 1976 comet in this first written fragment, mention is made of an 'incipient clash between Russia & America' (holograph page 19). It is clear, then, that in the early years following World War II, JBH envisioned the Cold War stretching decades into the future. Both fragments indicate that *Triffids* begins in 1976, three years after the events of *Plan*, and that, had JBH not abandoned the Waimori novel (ultimately because *Plan* was not published), *Plan* would have been the opening loose-ended volume not of a pair of novels but of a future history trilogy (concluding, presumably, with a follow-up to the secret history outlined in *Plan* entwined with the intermediate world history). Would *The World Beyond Waimori*, or just *Beyond Waimori*, have been an appropriate title for the sequel?<sup>12</sup> Certainly *Fury of*

<sup>12</sup> There is one place in the world actually named Waimori; it is in East Timor. If that was indeed the name source for JBH's island, he would have researched East Timor as the secret location for the Mother's Headquarters. The eastern part of East Timor includes the Iralataro tropical dry forest area (transferred briefly to Venus in the first *Triffids* typescript?) that is sparsely inhabited and home to unique plants and

*Creation* is an appropriate title for the trilogy as a whole.

An attentive reader of the published *Triffids* alone might well suspect that the artificial satellite material was a late insertion. While adding to the story it is not essential to it. No such satellites figure in the film version, the two television versions, or in the three comic strip versions. In the novel, they simply add the possibility, or even probability, that human beings are as responsible for the mass blindness phenomenon in *Triffids* as for the triffids themselves. The artificial satellites are only essential to *Triffids* considered as the central volume of a future-history trilogy. The concluding three centuries hence, proto-*Chrysalids* novel that I have entitled *Beyond Waimori* would have included the discovery of a backstory about World War III, the result of *Plan*'s satellites with nuclear warheads being accidentally or deliberately 'dropped' in the latter part of the twentieth century.

Unfortunately there is no way of proving exactly when the Waimori fragments were written; they lack a composition date. And because there is no mention in those fragments of mass blindness or of triffids, it could be argued (as I thought before noticing the implications of the *paramecium* reticulate references in *Plan*) that they pertain to a quite different comet story that preceded *The Day of the Triffids*. My current conviction that the Waimori fragments were written alongside or shortly after *Triffids* is supported by at least six arguments.

(1) Louis or Lewis Brent, the white recluse who had lived on Waimori for more than twenty years before the eruption, is an American. This is an indication that JBH aimed this novel, along with *Plan* and the revised *Triffids*, at a US publisher. It was by 1948 that he despaired of finding an English publisher for his fiction and hence the important American character makes it most likely that the fragments were written during the period 1948-51.

(2) The Waimori fragments can be understood as an elaboration of the paragraph in *Day of the Triffids* (on Penguin page 245) in which Josella expresses her notion of the need for an incentive-providing myth for any descendants. The false myth promulgated by 'The Book' in the fragments is paralleled by the cruel and limited doctrines enshrined in the book *Repentances* in *The Chrysalids*.

(3) The fragments constitute the opening moves of what might be considered the generic SF plot--the 'pocket universe' story of 'conceptual breakthrough' or 'philosophical apocalypse.' An old misconception of reality is to be replaced by a true understanding. If the hybrid Lui is to discover that The Book is right, that the comet did magically increase world tensions (in surely too simplistic even semi-plagiaristic contrast to the magical benevolent comet of Wells's novel) and bring

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creatures. Northern Australia is the nearest land mass to East Timor. This would be consistent with the fleeing saucer's landing in Australia in Chapter 19 of *Plan*. If these speculations are correct, it would follow that *Plan* and the Waimori fragments were written around the same time or that those fragments were written shortly after the completion of *Plan*.

about World War III, then so what? That is not much in the way of revelation. And JBH preferred logical explanations to magical ones. But perhaps of most relevance here are the hints in the fragments that JBH is ironically undercutting blind faith in The Book.

(4) Several passages in the Waimori fragments appear to build on details in, or add to the information in, *Triffids* and therefore appear to be written later than *Triffids*. For example, this passage in *Triffids*, with its reference to Hampstead Heath, is quite specific to London: They say thousands of people are out in the parks and on the Heath watching it all. And on all the flat roofs you can see people standing and looking up (Penguin page 13).

A corresponding passage in the first written of the Waimori fragments reads as a generalised paraphrase of the *Triffids* passage:

*Even in the cities where the night sky goes customarily unnoticed the green streaks in the country. Open spaces & flat roofs were crowded with watchers. And they had plenty to watch. The display was continuous & spectacular. The sky was never devoid of morning green sparks and at such times as several large meteors fell simultaneously the glow was bright enough to bathe the countryside for miles around in an unearthly green glow half-light. (Wyndham 7/2/5, p. 16)*

Here JBH is referring to open spaces and flat roofs all over the world. As for additional information in the Waimori fragments, the comet there is described as parabolic and so 'it will not return to us' (Wyndham 7/2/5, p. 14). Further examples of specific information about the comet are present only in the Waimori fragments. Thus there is no mention in the published or early typescript texts of *Triffids* of 'certain unknown elements among the metallic vapours composing it' (Wyndham 7/1/10, p. 5), or its oblique angle of approach.

And also not in *Triffids* is any mention of the fact that the meteorite shower following Earth's passage through the tail of any comet always occurs over several days. In the first written Waimori fragment, the green flashes caused by the falling meteors 'continued for a week' (Wyndham 7/2/5, p. 17). In the later written one, this becomes just 'Three nights' (Wyndham 7/1/10, p. 8). In *Triffids*, the majority of Earth's human population is blinded as, apparently, the result of one night's witnessing of the meteor shower. This could be interpreted as proof that it was the collision of one or more meteors with one or more artificial satellites and the release of some kind of militarily engineered virus which caused mass blindness over just one night. After all, if the meteors were the true cause (and unless maximal intensity was a factor), Masen and others would have been rendered blind on the second night of the shower. Perhaps what is involved here is a plot difficulty in *Triffids* that JBH simply side-stepped. Perhaps the sequel to both *Plan* and *Triffids* would have revealed that one of the Nazi factions from *Plan* arranged a plan for chaos whereby some artificial satellite virus release was deliberately

made to coincide with the first or most spectacular night of the meteor shower.

(5) The *Triffids* holograph MS begins with an insert handwritten page (my table Part 1) describing, in a further-future frame, the provenance of narrator Bill Masen's account:

The editor<sup>s</sup> wishes to make it clear that the following account is the personal story of one man involved in disaster, and the opinions expressed are his personal views. . . .

William Masen was not a person of any importance in the pre-catastrophe world. . . .

To us a great deal that was taken for granted in 20<sup>th</sup> century civilization must seem fantastic. . . .

It is hoped that this account, as a supplement to documented history, will serve to give the reader a more sympathetic comprehension of the period it covers. (Wyndham 1/3/1)

Clearly, something of twentieth-century pre-catastrophe humanity has survived into the unspecified post-catastrophe century of the editors. This twenty-first-or-later-century *Triffids* frame allows for the Waimori sequel's developing a future history that follows from both *Plan* and *Triffids*. The catastrophe the editors refer to could be understood as that initiated by the triffid 'supplement' and climaxed by the nuclear exchanges of World War III.

(6) The clinching line of argument depends upon dates: the superseded 1965 comet date in the table Part 4 typescript section preceding the holograph MS of *Triffids* and the 1976 comet date in the Waimori fragments. *Triffids* begins famously with this line: 'When a day that you happen to know is Wednesday starts off by sounding like Sunday, there is something seriously wrong somewhere.' In the initial *Triffid* typescript pages, the narrator is first introduced to a triffid when he was a child 'in 1949 or early 1950' (a deleted detail on typescript insert page 14A). The date for the comet mass blindness aftermath on the initial *Triffid* typescript page 7 (changed from 31) is 'Tuesday, 8 August' '1965' corrected to 'Wednesday, 8 May' '1965'. Since 8 August 1965 was a Sunday and 8 May 1965 was a Saturday, JBH miscalculated first by four days and then by three days. In picking on the year 1976 for the comet in the Waimori fragments (a further-future setting made necessary by the artificial satellites imported from *Plan* into *Triffids*—and by the linked soon-discarded Venus explanation in *Triffids*) JBH picked on a year eleven years on from 1965 (nine years plus two leap years). This meant that a particular day date in 1965 would recur in 1976. Moreover, the 1976 date is consistent with Masen being aged 3 when first introduced to a triffid when his father lifted him up to look into the funnel-like (and *vagina dentate* like) head of a half-grown triffid .

According to the Waimori fragments, it was 'On the night of May 19<sup>th</sup> [1976] that Earth met the comet debris' on page 6 in Wyndham 7/1/10 (set in 2001) and the following morning is 19 October 1976 on page 16 in

Wyndham 7/2/5 (set over three centuries in the post 1976 future). However, the later time-set fragment was written before the earlier time-set fragment. The 19 October 1976 date (perhaps a mythological adjustment encouraged by the 'fall' of the meteorites) preceded the 19 May 1976 correction. Sentences with corrections in Wyndham 7/2/5 are repeated without the corrections in Wyndham 7/1/10. (The fact that 'Lewis' Brent is corrected to 'Louis' Brent in Wyndham 7/2/5 but appears as 'Lewis' Brent in Wyndham 7/1/10 implies that Lewis Brent was settled on as his final name). 19 October 1976 was a Tuesday not a Wednesday but 19 May 1976, JBH's final choice if the Waimori fragments were *not* written before *Triffids*, was indeed a Wednesday albeit not the *Triffids* Wednesday on the night of which Earth met the comet debris and the green meteor showers ensued. That would have happened on a Thursday in 1976. Nevertheless, the 8 August, 8 May, 19 October, 19 May sequence of dates increasingly approaches the required Wednesday. Would a critical editor of *The Day of the Triffids* be justified in correcting the 7 May Tuesday date (Penguin page 12) and the 8 May Wednesday date (Penguin page 8) in that novel to 19 and 20 May?

The important point here, however, is that, given the evidence that 1965 was the original Stage A date of the comet in *Triffids* and that it was advanced at Stages G, H, and I to an unspecified but presumably mid-1970s date to allow for artificial satellites and space travel, the 1976 date for the comet in the Waimori fragments must have been determined after the 1965 dating for the comet was abandoned. Barring a most unlikely coincidence, this means (to conclude argument 6) that the Waimori fragments could not have preceded the composition of *Triffids*.

The year date of the prequel *Plan* had, of course, to precede that of the comet in *Triffids*. 1973, or possibly 1974, must have been arrived at after the at-least-notional 1976 dating of the *Triffids* comet. Presumably one reason the sequel to *Triffids* was never completed was because *Plan*, the projected basis of more than half of the sequel, was not published. Instead, that sequel was transmogrified into *The Chrysalids*.<sup>13</sup>

It is generally understood that after *Triffids*, JBH wrote *The Kraken Wakes* (1953) and then *The Chrysalids* (1955). But that was not the case. Given that the

<sup>13</sup> Part of that sequel also became an independent, incomplete, untitled and undated story or novel about the beginning of some kind of surprise (nuclear?) conflict (presumably World War III) which exists as three holograph fragments of 37, 39, and 17 pages (Wyndham 7/2/13). Inhabitants of the village of Ashling, Sussex (presumably in the vicinity of the actual West and East Ashling) are woken by a strange circle of light in the Portsmouth area followed by 'a great hard flat sound, like Almighty God cracking a whip' (page 33 of the 37 page first person version; cf. page 29 of the later 39 page third person version). The four untitled and undated holograph pages of Wyndham 7/2/4 in which a military hut disappears with the sound of 'a hard sharp clap: perhaps a whip of giant size could have given such a crack' (1) and a character comments 'Rum sort of war' (4) may be part of, or a variant of, the same story. Two untitled and undated holograph fragments (of 7 and 19 holograph pages) about an all-female world following a plague that kills men are also aspects of an independent development of the all-female world idea first raised in *Plan* (see Wyndham 7/1/2 and 7/2/12). These fragments, in turn, developed into 'Consider Her Ways' (1956).

Waimori fragments, written alongside or shortly after *Day of the Triffids*, contain elements which figure in *The Chrysalids* [(The Book and characters named Brent)]; it is possible, albeit a little misleading, to refer to those fragments as the first version of *The Chrysalids*. And so there is logic to the fact that the novel JBH began after completing *Triffids* and *Plan for Chaos* was a transmogrified version of the Waimori fragments that might more precisely be identified as the first version of *The Chrysalids*. On 15 September 1951, the month after the British publication of *Triffids*, Grace mystifyingly records in her diary that 'J told me about Crying for the Moon which should make a good new Wyndham.'. There are no other references to this title anywhere in the Wyndham Archive or in any of the Wyndham correspondence files kept elsewhere. Assuming that Grace was alluding to the title of a novel rather than of a short story, *Crying for the Moon* did not seem a particularly appropriate original title for *The Kraken Wakes*, JBH's next published novel. Fortunately, the Wyndham Archive does include fragmentary holograph evidence of *ur*-versions of *The Chrysalids* and on one of those pages is to be found the phrase 'crying for the moon' and so proof that an incomplete version of *The Chrysalids* preceded the composition of *The Kraken Wakes* (Wyndham 7/2/10, holograph page 17). Grace's first reference to *Kraken* by what seems to have been its original title, 'Things Down There,' is in her diary entry for 13 November 1952.

What survives of what I call a first phase Waimori-*Crying for the Moon* version of what became *The Chrysalids* are a character list and a series of brief chapter summaries (the 16 pages in Wyndham 7/2/11), and a holograph text of an unheaded Chapter I and a few opening pages of Chapter II (the 31 pages of Wyndham 7/2/10). In Wyndham 7/2/10, a character named Nicholas Bowen, aged about 30, comes in contact with the Blaydes family: parents Marie and Philip and their children, Ruana and Michael. There is a character named Michael in the published novel but none of those other character names recur. From the outlines of chapters I through X (VIII is missing) we learn that Nicholas, a strange 'Man from the South' (to quote the title of Chapter I) arrives in the vicinity of the Blaydes farm riding an exceptionally large horse with three similarly monstrous horses in tow. The farm is near the Badlands in a place called August, possibly once Augusta in New Jersey. The American setting of this novel suggests that JBH was still after the same large market that *Plan for Chaos* had failed to reach. There is no indication in Wyndham 7/2/10 and 7/2/11 of a Canadian setting--the Labrador of *The Chrysalids*. After being questioned by the authorities in August, Nicholas journeys north in a ship called the *Purity* with a party on board including the rebellious Ruana.<sup>14</sup> (In *Chrysalids*

<sup>14</sup> In *Plan for Chaos*, a romantic movie is described in terms of 'Purity Office' requirements (pp. 42-43 and Penguin pp. 10-11). It would appear that a cinematic code of appropriateness is being analogised with something like Nazi Aryanism and a notion of the acceptably human that JBH would describe in *The Chrysalids*. I am assuming here that the thrice mentioned in one paragraph 'Purity Office' is a version of the US Hays Office, which originally enforced the Motion Picture Production Code (1930-68), but it is not clear from JBH's syntax whether or not that authority exists within or outside the fictional world of the movie. Perhaps the confusion of fiction and reality is intentional.

the eventual journey is south.) Clearly, this modification of the Waimori-*Crying for the Moon* phase was to have been partly about the relationship between Nicholas and Ruana. When a prematurely delivered baby is discovered to have six fingers, it is killed. The main characters in this version are adults. There are no hints at telepathy, the talent characteristic of the evolved children in *Chrysalids*.

That the chapter summaries amount to a working out of the implications related to the first phase of JBH's thinking about human mutations is borne out by the holograph texts of Chapter I and the Chapter II opening bit. We learn that Nicholas comes from near Charleston and that he is 'new to the fringes' (holograph page 4). Marie Blaydes, the mother, is briefly named 'Martha.' Nicholas is looking for coal--what he calls 'black rock'--in Fringe areas. The idea is to rediscover the technology of the Old People. That is a particular ambition of Michael Blaydes although his father, Philip, tells Nicholas that 'I've told him [Michael] often enough it's like crying for the moon' (holograph page 17). That original title, then, referred to the impossible dream of recovering a lost technology (a conceivable title, it should be noted, for the abandoned Waimorian sequel to *The Day of the Triffids*). Chapter II breaks off when Nicholas goes exploring with Ruana around 'Derrington way' (holograph page 22). This Nicholas/Ruana version of *Chrysalids* is what Grace seems to be referring to in her diary entry for 3 June 1952: 'J's first part (mutations) like early L[orna] Doone'. JBH would probably have come across R. D. Blackmore's 1869 novel set in a seventeenth-century Devonshire during the brief time in 1918 he boarded at Blundell's School in Tiverton.

\* \* \*

At some point in 1952, JBH abandoned his Waimori-*Crying for the Moon* version of what became *The Chrysalids* and began *The Kraken Wakes* under the title *Things Down There*. Probably after the 1953 publication of *Kraken*, JBH worked on a post-*Crying for the Moon* version of *The Chrysalids* involving a character named David and a Labrador setting. All that survives of this version is 35 pages of holograph fragments (page numbered 70 to 94 with additions) entitled 'Peter Voon and the Island of St Barnabas' which begins, 'It was the year of David's birth that the *Indefectable* had put out from Rigo [Rigolet in Labrador]. Her master was Peter Voon . . .' (Wyndham 7/2/6, holograph page 70). This is the only reference to 'David,' probably the David Storm of *The Chrysalids*, but unlike *The Chrysalids*, David is not here the young narrator. The sea voyaging appears to be a carryover from *Crying for the Moon* and the name 'Voon' points forward to the space-exploring Troon family of *The Outward Urge*. Like *Crying* (and the Waimori fragments), this version is the account of a third person or omniscient narrator. But reversing the geography of the first version, the 'Normals' are in Labrador and the 'deviational' are to the South. Something referred to as 'the Tribulation' happened 'centuries ago' (holograph page 83).

On St Barnabas, to which the *Indefectable* has sailed, Voon comes across a great building called 'the Monastery' (holograph page 83) where the monks copy 'The Old People's books' (holograph page 92). Voon

plans on stealing these books. Clearly JBH had in mind a scenario anticipating *A Canticle for Leibowitz* a year or so before 1955 when Walter M. Miller began publishing that masterpiece where a monastery functions as the site for cultural survival after a nuclear war. The only trace of what might be called this *Canticle for Leibowitz* (1960) theme in the published novel is this line of dialogue: 'What would be gained if we were to build it [the world of the Old People] up again so exactly that is culminated in another Tribulation?' (79). In the Peter Voon fragment JBH seems to have still not moved beyond Phase One of his thinking about post-atomic-radiation mutants. Voon's goal, like Nicholas Bowen's and Michael Blaydes', is to recover the civilization that existed before World War III. There is still no mention of telepathy but David could be the telepath of *The Chrysalids*. It would appear that, as originally conceived, *The Chrysalids* was to be a story of reconstruction, the story that JBH had left untold at the end of *Triffids*. The original *Chrysalids* was, then, much closer to *Triffids* than to *The Midwich Cuckoos*.

A couple of years after completing *Kraken*, an invasion novel like *The Day of the Triffids*, JBH rethought the Waimori-Crying for the Moon material. Because this 1954 revision included, explicitly and perhaps for the first time, the telepathic children (apparently the result of radiation boosted evolution) who are central to *The Chrysalids*, it amounts to a distinct second phase of JBH's overall conception. Originally entitled *Much Abides*, this rethinking should be separated from the telepaths-absent Waimori-Crying for the Moon phase that can be historically linked to *The Day of the Triffids* (and to *Plan for Chaos*).

By this point it was very clear that *Plan for Chaos* was not about to find a publisher. Because the projected sequel to *The Day of the Triffids* was also a sequel to *Plan*, that project was now fully abandoned. The steps that lead from the sequel *Beyond Waimori* fragments concluded with *The Chrysalids*, seemingly a completely independent novel. *Much Abides* or *The Chrysalids* is uncoupled from any centuries-past history involving a spectacular comet, mass blindness, triffid domination, and, subsequently, World War III as the consequence of a secret Nazi plan for chaos.

What would have been *Beyond Waimori's* approximate plot? Most of JBH's novels are open-ended but, in *Plan's* case, the real ending itself (as opposed to a stop-gap ending) is essentially missing. The location of the Mother's secret headquarters has not been located. And although the Mother is dead, she has fanatical followers, like Ulrich, who are still alive. The threat her faction represents remains at PLAN's conclusion. The Mother's antagonist, Eidermann, may or may not be shot dead but members of his much more positive faction certainly survive. And then there is Freda and the hints at a female or female dominant future society.

The discarded centuries-future-set 'Foreward' of the 1949-51 revision stages of the holograph *Triffids* indicates that the ambitious concluding volume of JBH's future history trilogy would consist of documents and other records or recordings of what happened in the 1980s and 1990s and the two centuries that followed.

*Triffids* is itself a document composed by Bill Masen. *Beyond Waimori* would include some kind of explanation as to how one or more members of the secret Nazi organization leaked information about the creation of triffids as a new food source to Russia. Presumably, the motive would have been to strengthen Russia's position in the Cold War. What is speculated about in *Triffids* would be confirmed in *Beyond Waimori*; mass blindness was caused by something aboard one or more of the military satellites that was either accidentally released by the comet debris or deliberately released to coincide with the comet. Conceivably, there would be some kind of antidote to this blindness. Perhaps a still-alive Eidermann would play a significant role.

The central event would be a late twentieth-century brief but utterly catastrophic World War III involving military satellites and some deliberate or accidental version of the Mother's nuclear plan for chaos.

More than two centuries pass. Lui Brent (the main protagonist or co-protagonist with Nicholas Bowen?) and his followers, and, it may be suspected, eventually his girlfriend Lallua, and/or Lui and Lallua's *Crying for the Moon* counterparts, Nicholas and Ruana and their followers, would come to know about the horrors of the holocaust that transpired. One can further guess at other aspects of what, at the Waimori fragments stage, was never much more than a fluid amalgam. Some kind of manufactured mythology enshrined in a 'Book' would be important. Members of the Brent family and/or Blaydes family would probably figure somewhere. Is it significant amongst all these family names beginning with 'B' (like Beynon) that the names Bowen and Blaydes both suggest vintage weapons—the bow and arrow and the knife and sword? Sea voyages (something only recollected by Uncle Axel in *The Chrysalids*) would constitute an important part of the plot. Unlike the central north to south journey of *The Chrysalids*, the corresponding journey in *Beyond Waimori* would be south to north. The Earth of three centuries hence would be populated by three of the four groups of human beings that are ultimately described in *Much Abides* and *The Chrysalids*: today's humans, physical mutant humans (the result of the post-World War III radiated Earth), and a superior all female, or female dominant, society, located in Australia or New Zealand. Missing would have been the telepathic children/young people of *The Chrysalids*. Thematically, the presence of black people, Waimorians on their island and subordinate blacks in the southern USA, would make for an analogy between prejudice against mutants and racial prejudice. Over the course of *Beyond Waimori*, the competing female and male visions of the Mother and Eidermann will be tested. Apparently no longer a danger, the triffids of the twenty-third century would be major sources of food and lubrication. But like the female sexuality and the evolving natural world that they represent, the threat of fury and creative chaos would remain.

Correspondingly, account should be taken of the Shavian title *Fury of Creation*. Unlike *Plan for Chaos*, which is plot-specific to the novel so retitled, the title *Fury of Creation* announces a frightening female power theme/story arc which applies to the originally conceived trilogy as a whole. The latter title, sourced in the text and

so signalled as a theme, was JBH's original and (when publication of the covert prologue novel seemed unlikely?) final choice and its implied theme, and whatever ramifications of that theme seem relevant, should be significant aspects of the concluding *Beyond Waimori* volume. My guess would be that the 'Fury of Creation by John Lucas' title page tipped into the carbon copy of *Plan for Chaos* was added when JBH had given up on the possibility of publishing that novel and perhaps after the publication of *The Chrysalids*. He wanted to use the new title page of the bound carbon typescript of the unpublished novel as a memento of his original intention and so signal the overall theme or message of his projected trilogy.

In the concluding pages of *The Chrysalids* 'the superior variant' (196) is the apparently female dominant society (like 'a hive of bees' [200] and so insectlike and not unambiguously positive) represented by 'the Sealand woman' (179) from New Zealand who comes to rescue the uniquely powerful female very long distance telepath named Petra (and the less gifted David and Rosalind). Petra had explained early on that Zealand does not begin with an 'S' but with a 'Z', 'like the noise a bee makes' (136) Like the powerful (albeit much more advanced) Chocky, one of an indistinctly sexed (post-human?) species on a distant planet with two suns who (telepathically?) projects across a distance of light years 'her' communicating consciousness to a boy on Earth in JBH's eponymous 1963 novella and 1968 novel, the Sea[and]land woman (the queen bee or, more likely, one of the 99% of a hive's female but sterile worker bees?) combines female and male characteristics. One can, then, go quite some distance with the honey bee hive as analogous to the productive New Zealand society. It suggests a further analogy with the ant society analogy of JBH's 'Consider Her Ways', published in the year after *The Chrysalids*. Bees are related to ants. Essentially, that 'hive of bees' sentence offers a startling and possibly bleak change of perspective comparable to the conclusion of William Golding's *The Inheritors*, published in the same year as *The Chrysalids*.