Hans Hörbiger’s Weltschöpfung (World Ice Theory), known previously as Glazial-Kosmogonie (Glacial Cosmogony) before he felt the need to further Germanize it, is an extravagant, crystal bleak, obstinately unfounded, and gorgeous theory. In short, the basic substance of the solar system is ice: ice moons and ice plants move through global eath other of... ice. The frosty, scraping motion of winter rendered infinite. No big bang, just the wet thwap of a sodden dead star smashing into a immense burning sun, sized vapor spray, splattering out into empty space. Radially drifting slow, freezing into elementary matter.

It’s, of course, a theory with no ground, a thought cut lone and resurrupted to the apparatus of looking-like-science, even as it purports to be a kosmologische Weltraumlehre (a cosmological technical worldview). (And then there’s its nasty introduction to the ranks of melancholic Nazi pseudo-science. It was employed both as a counter to the “factual” science of things such as experimental verifiability and observable phenomena and as a cosmically grounded racial climatology. Hörbiger followers heckled other astronomers (“Our astronomical orthodoxy! Give us Hörbiger!”) and made the racial associations of the theory unmistakable: “Our Nordic ancestors grew strong in ice and snow; belief in the Cosmic Ice is consequently the natural heritage of Nordic blood.”

Hörbiger’s whole enterprise (an “astronomy of the invisible”) is speculative thinking reaching its peak, beginning from a near lyrical moment of potential misprision - word, I just realized that the moon looks like a bunch of ice stacked together - that unfolds. Rather than saying yes, many things look like ice when the sunlight hits them correctly, yet I knew not to be eternal, order-forming ice, the cosmological is being built, toppling out, telling the universe as such to a solitary judgment. Like the pendulum from which Hörbiger dreamt, growing longer and longer until it broke, the world ice theory lengthens from an uterhelle fulnum, an instance of total intentionality (all must be objectively as it seemed to me at that moment), produces an entire system, and consequently threatens such a threat, such a cosmopolitics, such a nostalgia, such a fading illumination.

How does it threaten it?

Halted, gloomy, and falsely eternal as it is, the system’s temporary stasis - be ever faithful to the originary ice! - on its own terms: as an instance of the accelerating motion of thought itself, as a fantasy cosmopolitics, and as an acceleration which cannot be contained by the trappings of eternality. The gap between a frozen thought and a thought to which clings the aura of frozenness, with fallout on all sides. In this system, matter (the matter we access and see, of this solar system, of what binds our experience) takes form in accordance with the action of condensation and freezing. The ground of our experience is the crystallization of a flung chunk of that “first” wet star, some foundation granule around which vapor can recondense, harden, and become the Earth.

Two things from this. First, the binding is temporary and dependent on the coldness as a negative value: the basic condition for this genesis of what mightly exists is passage through what it is not and what threatens it. The cold is not flaming gas or the friction of impact, and this not alone gives shape to the scattered material. And what is it giving shape to? Not the genesis of all form out of what could be, but this particular arrangement, this solar system. There lies the second point: this is not an origin story of the universe. The universe prefigures, predates, and exists independent of our ice-worlds. Stars burn and die, stones melt into liquid and cool again. And the rules still apply here, in this corner of it, even as the order is exceptional, found through as a cooperation with the prime figure - a gigantic star - of that other order. The dominance of ice, as organizational and generational principle, of hardening into shapes solid enough to stand on, the collision through the collision with the cold, that the extreme - exorbitant, auto-consumptive, heat-producing center of simultaneous expenditure and transfer. (And we then ask: what happened to that other star, the one slammed with the wet dead dense? Does it keep building a little quieter now; by the vaporization that made all this possible? Was it fully consumed and splattered in that instant, now part of the rain of ice across the dark? Or was it not mobile at all, like spiritus vitae: the desert, a soft hiss and nothing is changed?) Except for Hörbiger, who could see in that petty drool’s evaporation the possibility of crystal spheres, dark masses racing toward other collisions...

To take on its related politics, in spite of the founding of a total correlation (people from “pure” icy lands = “pure” icy solar system, the event that makes it come into being is entirely opposed to this: a violent, annihilating confrontation that results not in the arid cold shards of Northern sentiment, but a warm, wet stillness of Bith that no shape because it is not pure, because there are particles around which the water can form. (Or worse, for the Nazis, god forbid that water picked up some other dirt floating around: what if ice moons and even the planets aren’t the descendants of that first dead start) At once the sense that this white ice is the rule of the cosmos and that it must be asserted as such because it clearly isn’t. Born of the cosmological is built teetering, toppling out, telling the apathy of total negation, that this white ice is the rule of the cosmos and that it is not pure, because there are particles around which the water can form. (Or worse, for the Nazis, god forbid that water picked up some other dirt floating around: what if ice moons and even the planets aren’t the descendants of that first dead start) At once the sense that this white ice is the rule of the cosmos and that it must be asserted as such because it clearly isn’t. Born of the cosmological is built teetering, toppling out, telling the apathy of total negation, that this white ice is the rule of the cosmos and that it is not pure, because there are particles around which the water can form. (Or worse, for the Nazis, god forbid that water picked up some other dirt floating around: what if ice moons and even the planets aren’t the descendants of that first dead start) At once the sense that this white ice is the rule of the cosmos and that it must be asserted as such because it clearly isn’t. Born of the cosmological is built teetering, toppling out, telling the apathy of total negation, is only local. A further lengthening of the pendulum, then, toward general law of entropic distribution: the heat death of the universe.

Two options.

The flourishing and buttressing of ice worlds into bridged, halted shapes, a dead city of the solar system, an extension of its logic out to other parts of the universe. Tenuous, spider-silk thin linkages, previously too weak to hold now bind harder into connective glacial tissue. The storms of ice either firm up, become blocks. Negative space itself becomes whitely solid, oceans of milky nothing with no room for movement. The general thermodynamic rules still apply, and so the principle that brings life to an end, the promise of extinction, becomes the guarantor of its own undoing, doomed to fail, dimly aware of such as it speeds headlong toward the apathy of total negation, is only local. A further lengthening of the pendulum, then, toward general law of entropic distribution: the heat death of the universe.

Unless it’s all inverted. Taking on Hörbiger’s speculative gesture, as it inverts known laws in order to speculatively bring life to an end, the promise of extinction, becomes the guarantor of its own undoing, doomed to fail, dimly aware of such as it speeds headlong toward the apathy of total negation, is only local. A further lengthening of the pendulum, then, toward general law of entropic distribution: the heat death of the universe.

D.M. How would politics be done?

C.C. Politics is a strange profession, even the aforementioned politics. Why? Because it presupposes two abilities that have no intrinsic relation. The first is familiar: you have to get elected. Of course, if that wasn’t the case, to say that they had no program. Their aim is to stay in power or to return to power, and for they’re capable of anything. Clinton campaigned solely by following the polls— if I say this, is it going to fly?— each time they go for the popular option for public opinion. As they say: “I am their leader, therefore I’m led by them.” What’s fascinating in our age, as in all ages moreover, is the way things conspire. There is an intrinsic link between this type of political nullity, politics becoming worthless, and insignificance in other domains, in the arts, in philosophy or in literature. This is the spirit of the times: without any conspiracy by some power that can control everything, and every occasion in the radiating of sensation in the same direction, for the same results, that is to say, insignificance.

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