

*XXII. The Years Following The First World War*

either by putrefaction or by heating  
in metallurgy, its state of sexual maturity  
theoretically speaking, the complexity  
of the subject

had to interrupt this work  
he did not publish  
opposite sides of the world

have not abandoned the problem  
the carcasses are simply thrown  
sex, condition, maturity and so on  
and his team of workers

not become sticky and never congeals  
'everything but the squeal'  
as yet insurmountable  
the last word has not been said, however

[considerable and worldwide importance]

the point of view of the dangers  
(a little abusively) 'pure' research  
the artificial nature of any line drawn  
between 'pure' and 'applied'

surely a fitting remark on which to end

**The Life of  
Haifisch**

**Scott  
MacLeod**

San Francisco-based writer SCOTT MACLEOD is also a visual and performance artist. He has received the Adeline Kent Award given yearly by the Arts Committee of the San Francisco Art Institute to an “underappreciated mid-career visual artist.” MacLeod is the curator of The Imagined Gallery and the editor & publisher of *Der Heidenlärmer* and other journals of The Institute for Study and Application, Kohoutenberg. He has performed and exhibited extensively in San Francisco, Europe, and the former USSR.

Scott MacLeod’s first novel *Anne Frank in Jerusalem* was published by Ex Nihilo Press in 1999. A chapbook *ãauditoruimaã* was published by Potes & Poets in 2000.

poetry © 1999, 2002 Scott MacLeod; all rights reserved.  
cover photographs by Emilio Morandi.  
other content © 1999, 2002 Broken Boulder Press.

first printing, November 1999  
second printing, March 2002

set in Adobe Garamond

ISBN 1-929598-05-X

Broken Boulder Press  
P. O. Box 6305  
Santa Barbara, CA, 93160  
USA

[www.brokenboulder.com](http://www.brokenboulder.com)

## *XXI. Turkish And Our Word Chagrin*

a rather whimsical product prone to all  
the exigencies and fluctuations of fashion  
a very thick dermis, in other  
words merely grinding them away  
closely juxtaposed, sometimes overlapping  
superior to the latter in strength and suppleness  
there is no question of being able to cleave it  
[“and one then obtains”]  
rather bizarre appearance, has been  
the object of considerable research  
in the United States with a view  
to its use commercially

of their original hardness,  
nothing remains

*XX. Our Ancestors*

this outlook has changed little  
up to the present day  
reputation for easing hardness  
those who feared  
having to submit  
the child from  
nocturnal evils  
fear of 'powders' being used  
the illusory nature  
of such ideas, leisure  
to indulge

extreme caution must be exercised  
mostly a trial of brute strength  
cannot often be arranged  
tend to lounge at the surface  
nothing to indicate their presence  
try to attract them, pierced with holes  
oblivious (then perhaps we should  
drop the subject—it may have been  
the culprit) beyond the empirical  
and artisan stage, little appreciated  
for a number of reasons

there is something ironical, but this  
reputation is not immutable, leaving permanent  
indentations in the skin, swordsmen a good purchase  
on their weapons

*I. The Chimaeras*

remnants of this outlook are still  
apparent. descent and convergence  
become entwined in an  
in an inextricable manner.

same difficulties arise.  
each system has its strong  
and its weak  
points. a drop in the  
ocean compared with  
a series of descending cusps.

cylindrical,  
snake-like  
deep water.

are not rare, harmless  
unless. inflate the belly.  
a hopelessly-entangled  
briar beneath  
diversity of sizes.

## *II. Earlier Times*

analogies spring quickly to mind, theoretical  
impossibility of an animal body snugly  
during bursts of speed.  
should the necessity arise.

wholly at the bottom, massive, heavy,  
combined with the greatest possible rigidity,  
the problem seems to have been solved by  
must swim to avoid  
sinking, regarding the idea  
of reversal, concealed to the extent  
of being invisible, more akin in shape  
to a malleable substance  
unlimited in its application,  
quite extraordinary shape  
has always awed men, suggestive,  
unduly impressed by the grotesque.

(appropriate qualities of speed and ferocity)

## *XIX. Dates, Names And Places*

the most circumstantial  
stories leave large  
areas of baffling  
uncertainty  
undulations  
across a cabbage  
leaf, all this is plainly  
of little intrinsic importance  
more than mere chance  
or coincidence it threatens  
to become a habit, feeds not for  
nourishment but to destroy  
caught sight  
the help of people  
who hastened  
her cries, some of these  
extravagant ideas  
made their way  
around the world  
'first hand information  
from an irrefutable source'

let us close this dossier  
of 'stories'

can arise, become enlarged, prosper and  
finally pass into the realm of accepted facts

*XVIII. Myths And Legends*

marked predilection for young  
maidens, our greatest tragic  
literature, a certain spirit of justice  
which fixes him peacefully  
with his red [*sic*] eye

behavior seems a little different

men who had taken on this form,  
usually after death, as much a desire  
not to remain for too long in the company  
of a supernatural being. in this  
period of fanaticism  
it was wise to take  
certain precautions

the comparison between *before*  
and *after* is quite striking . . . .

constantly engaged in handling  
the numerous things  
indispensable to daily  
life, he could not say  
that it had failed  
too mild for some of the  
naïveties and errors  
the literary  
and journalistic counterparts . . . .  
showing a remarkable  
vitality and tenacity

a master of language,  
can perhaps ignore such details

black butter, or would you rather have  
kerosene, each part of the body seems  
precarious position in an element  
in which he cannot breathe, abandoning it  
as a gasping corpse—surely a unique feat!

*III. The Undoubted Elegance Of Its Enormous*

an angle of attack  
which produces lift  
for the most part  
rather drab.

Then the rain stops.

The umbrellas are folded away  
and from high above, Trafalgar Square  
would have a quite different appearance

(there being a *neurohumor* causing  
contraction and another  
causing dispersion)

#### *IV. A Little Anatomy*

in some cases and quite easily cut with a knife  
yellowish white and opaque against the bluish  
classic exercise . . . all students, bent forward  
and are swollen.

(progression from the jawless)

removes the very foundation of the accepted,  
although difficulties arise, the most obvious  
are the teeth together with about 700 lb. of mucus.  
the skin of water  
surrounding the body.  
these vortices rather like roller pegs.  
quite characteristic of the teeth that made them.

lying near.

the articulation.

in a careless manner.

one can inflict.

on oneself gashes.

of almost.

surgical.

precision.

as a result of purely mechanical damage, easily shed,  
attributed solely to the strains imposed on them  
while the prey was being seized, to whom I express  
my sincere gratitude. flesh is, in fact, noticeably dry.  
a feeding inhibition of mating males  
suggesting a large period of starvation  
the exact form of which varies.

#### *XVII. This Curious Method*

potions for damping down love  
obvious and exceptional  
interesting to note . . . magic  
attributes . . . all the action  
of a brake, slowing down and creating  
an obstacle to advance. there is an  
enormous but invisible  
propitiatory ceremony  
and giving the exact impression  
that an irresistible force had taken hold  
detained by some miracle or charm  
the places that were particularly prone to it  
a series of experiments, then regained its  
freedom to maneuver, a set of circumstances  
which would be quite inexplicable  
not in its power to rid  
itself of these 'passengers'

*XVI. Pilots And Remoras*

as blind people were once led by children  
travelers astonished and arrested  
in a thousand ways at the surface  
something picturesque, even a little  
fabulous, *the natural affection*  
*between certain animals*, also,  
local conditions must play a part

in the adult, such an  
attraction may reach  
almost absurd lengths

the whole having much the appearance  
of a venetian blind\*

does not voluntarily release its hold  
(the mouths or branchial chambers)  
can adhere with considerable force  
buckle on a small metal collar or  
pass . . . through an eye of wire  
held in place by whipping  
inserting a small round peg  
of wood to prevent the wound  
from closing up . . . passing  
through a small cord  
to form a ring . . .  
when the fishermen whistle  
in a special soft manner

\* this is a most remarkable example of the way in which  
one body part can become specialized to fulfill quite another  
function, although what possible selection advantages the  
early stages in this evolution would have conferred on their  
owners is difficult to imagine.

*V. It Is Here The Foetus Develops*

the problem.  
the two evolved.

and often after the male  
has survived a dangerous and bloody  
battle . . . they float in this constrained position  
which must to them be full of charm

and such is the force of their active passion,  
which is aflame even in the midst of water and whose  
heat penetrates even to the most abysmal depths

which at other times would be so formidable  
to one another and . . . seek to devour each other  
if they were pressed by violent hunger,  
are now softened and surrender . . .

mingling without fear their murderous weapons

. . . expose themselves to receive it rather than be  
separated, and not ceasing to defend with fury  
the object of their passionate enjoyment.

*VI. When The Observers Left The Dock*

the female remaining passive  
and the male making a gentle  
rhythmic motion  
with the hind part  
of its body.

(inclined to search for food right away)

she had *seen* it, with her own eyes!

(even now, one hesitates  
to reject any of Aristotle's observations:

"thus...secure from chasing foes,  
within their widen'd mouths their young enclose")

follows exactly the same course  
such as results from a struggling  
which, when pressed, ooze  
as if trying to arise from the depths  
which catches the eye  
or again their true nature has not been recognized  
certainly suggestive  
substances of an irritating nature  
is a well-developed system  
snakes this cannot be done  
helplessly about, subjects  
[or seems boundless and thinks nothing]  
do not possess it  
time destroys the ability

[the men in a small boat  
operated the sound production]

as was previously thought  
[not an interrupted flow]  
operate to seal the mouth  
over the entire lower surfaces  
of the body and head,  
a shadow under the body, evidence  
not sufficient to warrant the claim

*XV. Difficult Systematic Description of Greece*

in spite of their reputed ferocity

not merely chance visitors  
for this does sometimes happen

a very clear description  
of eggs and young

its connection, true status  
no inconvenience to themselves  
the first is fortunately  
rare, but the second  
is abundant

they admit, however  
leaving room for controversy  
are known to drink frequently  
and abundantly

problems which in some cases  
remain as yet untackled

*XIV. South African Medical Journal*

to be sure, danger undoubtedly exists, for we have proof of it . . . believed the risk to be no more than that of being bitten by a dog in the streets of Paris . . . motor cars, motor cycles, bathing which culminates in drowning . . . rabid dogs (before Pasteur), runaway horses . . . narcotics, air or rail traffic . . . which are larger and blacker . . . although having the same shape, nothing to fear since the dogs come from the sea . . . a small male specimen\* . . . (is the Paris specimen merely a freak?)

\* specimens are usually kept in the larger museums where they are accessible for study since they stand as the ultimate reference to the identity of a species. their occasional loss or destruction can pose difficult systematic problems.

*VII. A Widespread And Popular Notion*

how absurd this idea is  
often more swift or agile  
with an air of seeming infinite regret

at first sight the idea seems good  
feeding on members of their own species  
not always...the chance

partly devoured  
seems to be a contradiction but  
was still perfectly visible

a young woman whose left arm was taken off by  
the sharp edges of the drum  
“in the entrails of this monster”

one may witness the sudden release of a kind of collective fury.

“...pieces of ray, blood and  
sediment. I quickly returned  
to the safety of the boat.”

VIII. *Guare*

*O que tu es horrible  
et abhominable!  
Je ne te peux veoir,  
tant tu es ideux et détestable...*

. . . . .

our felucca is  
moored at some  
distance from  
the shore  
off the . . .  
station at ghardaqa  
whose grey  
buildings stand out

sharply against the  
yellow of the  
sand. small waves  
lap against the  
sides of the  
boat; all around  
us the Red Sea  
sparkles in the  
sunshine:

deep blue paling to silver.

the "red sea" can in fact  
be very blue indeed.

XIII. *Log Of The Daisy*

this organ did not cease its contracting and dilating

if you want to get on in life, distrust dogs  
from the front

conserves his heat and finally derives  
psychological comfort

horses from the rear

nevertheless, over the years, the results  
. . . not very convincing

and women from all sides

form a tight circle and face outward

shorten your sails when the wind rises

deliberately grabs, injures or in some other way provokes

look out for squalls

*remember that the likelihood . . . being stuck by lightning*

and give a wide berth to headlands

has become an almost universal phobia

*XII. Report From Kraljevica*

it would be most interesting to know  
how they start, to understand  
that the greatest danger is  
*at the surface*  
in a horizontal position  
is much less at risk  
satisfied that he  
had been proven right

tragic circumstances, not yet  
been definitely isolated  
thrust of your knife,  
neither more nor less

(. . . you trail along holding  
your breath and when the  
opportunity  
arises, you slit  
open its belly.

on the face  
of it,  
this is  
child's  
play . . . )

*IX. Anomysterieux*

on the horizon,  
to the northeast

sprawls its desolate bulk

. . . . .

. . . . .

. . . . .

transparent and without equal.

*X. Return of the Lookout*

biting eagerly and greedily  
suddenly spring to life

the effect of this one word  
coupled with a slight tightening  
of the jaw, is infallible

the female passengers  
shudder, the men look  
bravely out across the sea

. . . . .

devour [it]  
without . . . hesitation

*XI. The Whitest Parts Of The Body*

such daring against men  
with a throat so big  
separated by a hundred years  
full of misfortune: the bloody  
flux. taken by a fit of madness  
prone to eating human flesh  
and measured, in due course,  
by naturalists

in older individuals it almost  
disappears, rather forbidding,  
even repulsive [it is a  
pelagic species] just as  
troublesome in other  
parts of the world

(smashed or upset and their occupants  
cast into the water)

in a state of sexual activity  
are more irritable, more aggressive  
*but this only attracted more*

and hood of shining white

it carries out terrible ravages  
lost, and usually permanently  
lost, amongst whom, wringing her hands  
and crying out  
to heaven,  
was the girl's mother