

(no subject)

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 16 Oct 1998

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Michael Straight — 16 Oct 1998, 13:19

On Fri, 16 Oct 1998, Kevin J. Maroney wrote:

At 08:47 AM 10/16/98 -0400, Rostrum wrote:

Memory.

"Memory" doesn't seem to me to be a theme, but a subject matter (just as, say, time-travel is a subject matter).

"All of life is a fragmentary memory, even as we are living it" would be a theme.

I didn't mean that as literally as you took it (although I was rewarded with a thoughtful and interesting response).

I meant that many of Wolfe's themes involve the necessity of uncovering a past that has been lost or replaced with lies (Long Sun), that we have forgotten who we really are (Soldier, Forlesen and many other short stories), that there might be redemption in remembering (Peace).

Wolfe is more varied. Yes, memory features prominently in _The Book of the New Sun_ and the _Soldier_ novels (and in so many smaller works) but in very different ways; I would say that its role in _The Book of the Long Sun_ is, while certainly not absent, much less central and not in a thematic continuum with either of those.

Yes they differ, but we were asked to sum up Wolfe in a single theme, and for me "memory" describes a lot of Wolfe's different themes.

-Rostrum