

Thoughts;Realism;Devine

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 30 Apr 1999

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Roy C. Lackey — 30 Apr 1999, 03:40

Re: Jonathan Laidlow's "thoughts on Nigel price's response" post:

I resent being pigeonholed or painted with a broad brush, even indirectly. I wasn't in school in the '70's and never heard of "classic realism". Fortunately, I wasn't there in the '90's either, and shudder to think that my children were. For any of those who might have wondered why Wolfe, from time to time, raises his slingshot against the ivied halls of Academe, I recommend the above post.

David Duffy wrote:

Part of the rules of the game is that both the allegory and the surface story must be completely self-consistent, especially if one is creating puzzles. Wolfe does bother to make up plausible reasons for what happens.

So we are allowed to argue about androids -- I think Jonas is made of highly advanced light materials, but is not hollow. The Ship of UotNS is not the only vehicle that has ever undertaken star travel (we have the Whorl as one counterexample), and Jonas's knowledge seems to date him to a much earlier period (perhaps conventional relativistic processes have brought him so far forward in time). If he is the Tin Man, who's the Cowardly Lion? (And has anyone mentioned _Of Mice and Men_ re Baldanders and the Dr?)<<

And Potto wrote:

Our discussion of the religious or non-religious nature of Wolfe's work has certainly become complexly and compulsively interesting.

Noting Jonathan Laidlow's comments on TBOTNS as a text not to be taken too concretely or literally: I don't quite agree. To reiterate something I've said before: although Wolfe's subject matter is primarily religious and so symbolic or non-literal, he does play a vast, subtle game of clues. Wolfe's God is in the subtle, precise, insinuated details of his work; deciphering those details is crucial to a proper, complex understanding of that work. When Robert Borski engages in close, literal literary detective work, or when people debate the precise nature of Jonas' and Sidero's physical character, they are doing precisely what Wolfe intends: drawing out the myriad details out of which the shape of God can be discerned.<<

To both of you: As an unbeliever, all I can say is--thank God!

I am to be allowed to continue to unravel the Wolfean knots, despite the would-be Alexanders.

Oh, and Ori, I sympathize with you. My reading of the _New Sun_ seems to be pretty much in accord with yours, but the religious aspects of Wolfe's works are too numerous to be ignored. But I learned many years ago that religious arguments are fruitless. Believers believe because what they believe cannot be proven, else it would not be a matter of faith.

Roy