

UotNS

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 08 Feb 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/2563>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

akt — 08 Feb 2001, 21:28

From D'I D-O:

Perhaps this is part of what makes UotNS unsatisfactory by comparison? It's hardly a _bad_ book; indeed, by the standards of almost any other writer, it would be a masterpiece. But the things and relations in URTH don't reflect each other the way they do in NS proper. (This is also true of LS, and appears to be true of SS, but LS & SS have their own, quite different, structures ...)

-- all of which is not to say that URTH doesn't have its own (and quite different) structural integrity: it does. But because of its status as a pendant to NS, the reader expects and, more, wants to find those reflections, and finds only their echoes.

I have never, ever understood this PoV, though I have heard it voiced again and again. There seems (to me) to be a political, or perhaps religious, anger against this book, a feeling that its existence betrays the True Canon (maybe the way the Jews feel about the New Testament tacked onto the Hebrew Bible). Myself, I adore UotNS, marveled at first reading, and would feel the series sadly diminished without it. The visuals are incomparable--the giant starship where Sev leaps from deck to deck protected by his necklace, the transformations of Zak, the stateroom of the hierodules, the burst of the New Sun, the undines leaping in the waves, also the great, bloody undine crawling into the throne room--what an image!--and the phantasmagoria of images from his past judging Sev's life. And much more. Moreover, there seems to me a valid attempt to elucidate the philosophy behind the series. Is this too blatant for some? Not for me; I welcomed it. I liked the biblical parallels, I didn't find them corny at all. I liked the time-travel hocus-pocus with Burgundofara, though I didn't begin to try to make sense of it. In fact, I think it is my favorite book of the five--I realize that's an opinion, not a lucid argument. But I am constantly dismayed by the denigration of this book. Or perhaps I should say again that I don't quite understand it, and the emotion that seems to lurk behind it.

-alga