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The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 27 Jun 2001

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 27 Jun 2001, 09:55

Paul C Duggan wrote:

Wolfe is thinking of communion too, but the Vodalian alzabo feast is pretty much an anti-communion, innit?

Is it just me, or would Vodalian Alzabo Feast make a great name for a band?

And Dan Parmenter wrote:

I was similarly shot down by Dan'I when I offered a physicalist/AI treatment of the absorption of Maytera Rose into Maytera Marble,

Oh, dear... "shot down" is just too harsh. "Disagreed with," please.

Or if I did shot you down I apologize.

Dan'I preferring a straightforward "soul residing in inanimate objects" reading. Feh. Wolfe's not just a Catholic, but he's also an engineer/tech writer at heart, never forget it.

H'mmm. Some clarity here: I don't for a moment suppose that the two readings are mutually exclusive. What I do believe is that many materialists do think they are. (This is somewhat analogous to the way many conservative Christians believe that the account in Genesis and the Standard Model are mutually exclusive.)

In particular: I would say that the soulist approach is more fundamental to a clear reading of Wolfe than is the materialist approach, but that Wolfe -- partially because he is an engineer/tech writer at heart -- also likes to provide engineerish mechanisms by which the soulish events occur.

This is the guy who wrote a story ("Westwind") about people talking to God on walkie-talkies for goodness sake!

Yes, a favorite Wolfe short of mine (after "Detective of Dreams"). But I should say it's really, really important to keep in mind that the milieu of that story bears the same kind of relationship to our world that the milieu of Kafka's novels does, not the kind of relationship a standard SF universe does. The Lupiverse, I should say, is somewhere in between.

Maybe this is why some hard SF people can't stand Wolfe.

That, and the fact that his stories aren't generally about problems to be solved by technological means.

Michael Straight — 27 Jun 2001, 16:41 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

On Wed, 27 Jun 2001, Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

Maybe this is why some hard SF people can't stand Wolfe.

That, and the fact that his stories aren't generally about problems to be solved by technological means.

Except maybe "Alien Stones."

-Rostrum