

The irrigation of Lune

The Urth list — 23 messages, 9 voices, 01 Mar 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3003>

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Andy Robertson — 01 Mar 2002, 07:43

----- Original Message -----

From: "Jeff Wilson" <jwilson at io.com>

No. During the Apollo program, the measured amount of gas surrounding the moon remained fairly constant, despite each landing adding an amount of gaseous exhaust equal to the original natural contents.

I will chase this up :-)

That would require "adding" the mass of Mars, at least.

So?

I don't see why it is necessary to limit things to Terran technology.

"That was before they got it irrigated" as old Rudesind says. The word "irrigated" was what made me think of dumping volatiles on the surface - giant comets from the Oort and so forth. "Irrigated" does not sound like transcendent Hierodule tech. It sounds like a lot of ice being dumped on the Moon.

Father Inire's gardens
the various magic mirrors
The Ship
The Atrium of Time
Master Ash's house
Hildegren's wrestling match
Severian discovering his own ancient tomb
the pool in Yesod
Severian whispering in his own ear

But - and this is crucial - none of these works are of planetforming scale.

The equation of BOTNS is

planetforming works of the Hierodules = redemptive hand of god

This is after all explicit in the very title of the sequence!

Lune has no ****spiritual**** weight.

That is why the Hierdoules can not be involved in the irrigation of Lune.

Besides, we know that it was Typhon who wounded the sun from his speech with Severian. The conclusion is that human attempts to influence the solar system are behind it. ****Human**** tech put the black hole in the center of the sun. To terraform Lune is small peas beside that.

Heinlein's "Orphans" is set in a morally indifferent universe and its wonders appeal to the authority of science to justify suspension of

disbelief.

Yes, and the Whorl is a metatextual reference to it as well as to the countless O'Neill's that have graced SF. It is a ship built by Men and does not fly through Time or past the walls of the Universe.

hartshorn

Timothy Reilly — 02 Mar 2002, 03:16 · follows Andy Robertson

Andy Robertson wrote:

Besides, we know that it was Typhon who wounded the sun from his speech with Severian. The conclusion is that human attempts to influence the solar system are behind it. ****Human**** tech put the black hole in the center of the sun.

Are you sure? What part of which speech do you have in mind?

Tim

Jeff Wilson — 02 Mar 2002, 06:37 · follows Timothy Reilly

From: "Andy Robertson" <andywrobertson at clara.co.uk>

----- Original Message -----

From: "Jeff Wilson" <jwilson at io.com>

No. During the Apollo program, the measured amount of gas surrounding the moon remained fairly constant, despite each landing adding an amount of gaseous exhaust equal to the original natural contents.

I will chase this up :-)

That would require "adding" the mass of Mars, at least.

So?

So it makes it pointless to build the moon to the size of Mars when you already have a Mars-sized body, namely Mars.

I don't see why it is necessary to limit things to Terran technology.

"That was before they got it irrigated" as old Rudesind says. The word "irrigated" was what made me think of dumping volatiles on the surface - giant comets from the Oort and so forth. "Irrigated" does not sound like transcendent Hierodule tech. It sounds like a lot of ice being dumped on the Moon.

Rudesind and others of his society can't be expected to be cognizant of what else besides mere irrigation would be required to cover the moon with forest. After whatever other modifications it would take to keep an atmosphere in place, yes it would have to be irrigated. And while it does not sound like something of ineffable, recall that Father Inire's Gardens allow a confluence of Gyll and the Lake of Birds; for all we know he diverted a tributary of the Brook Madregot to water Green/Lune.

In addition, this sort of sweeping up and piling of asteroids would relieve the metal scarcity problem supposedly caused by all the ships and ordnance leaving Urth, never or seldom to return.

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But - and this is crucial - none of these works are of planetforming scale.

The Yesod planet most certainly is; it's either an artificial planet or one so heavily modified it might as well be. It also seems to have normal gravity despite its interior being machinery with access spaces, rather than solid rock.

Lune has no ****spiritual**** weight.

That is why the Hierdoules can not be involved in the irrigation of Lune.

I don't follow you. They seem to be involved in numerous other unspiritual undertakings, like trafficking with Baldanders.

Besides, we know that it was Typhon who wounded the sun from his speech with Severian. The conclusion is that human attempts to influence the solar system are behind it. ****Human**** tech put the black hole in the center of the sun.

perhaps, he may have had help from Dark Lords / Great Beasts / whatever.

To terraform Lune is small peas beside that.

So which is it? Small peas, or beyond the scope of anything I could list? The alteration of gravity could be easy for the hierodules, and there's already an example of an area of the Palace that has zero gravity permanently or at least at will, and almost every appearance of hierodules and the other ilk of Yesod features some kind of bending of the rules of time and space.

Heinlein's "Orphans" is set in a morally indifferent universe and its wonders appeal to the authority of science to justify suspension of disbelief.

Yes, and the Whorl is a metatextual reference to it as well as to the countless O'Neill's that have graced SF. It is a ship built by Men and does not fly through Time or past the walls of the Universe.

Have you not read Planet Of The Apes or seen the original film?

The Whorl doesn't need any special qualities to travel through a warp in space and time any more than anyone visiting the Botanical Gardens do. If the servants of the Increate put it there, it's there for the Whorl to go through, with no more trouble than the old man's raft had reaching the location just right for Severian to fall in and find Dorcas.

Jeff Wilson
How Am I Posting? 1-800-555-6789
"If your SecOp can see you, so can the enemy." -Cpt Law

--

Andy Robertson — 02 Mar 2002, 08:59 · follows Jeff Wilson

----- Original Message -----

From: "Jeff Wilson" <jwilson at io.com>
So it makes it pointless to build the moon to the size of Mars when you

already have a Mars-sized body, namely Mars.

My position is this.

In TBOTNS there are three levels of technology:

1) the "medaeval" or blacksmith level, to which most of the world has been relegated by resource poverty:

2) the "terran" level, which humanity still has mastery of, but only the rich have the resources to use

3) the "galactic" level, which has always been beyond human control, and corresponds to "magic" in a thematic sense.

This seems pretty sound, because Wolfe actually spells it out.

The problem is that we can not adduce constraints from "real science" in Wolfe's work even at level 2). Wolfe is very cavalier about such things.

Now, the Whorl is a product, perhaps the ultimate product, of level 2). The Ship is a product of level 3).

Therefore the Whorl will not be doing the numinous things the Ship does. I can't *prove* it does not move through time, but there is no real hint of it doing so.

Is Lune a product of level 2) or 3)?

My argument is that it "feels" like a product of level 2).

I freely admit that this is based on the way the characters in TBOTNS talk and speak about it, not on abstract considerations.

There is no awe addressed to Lune, nothing holy or remarkable about it. It is just a place.

"Port of Lune".

hartshorn

Andy Robertson — 02 Mar 2002, 09:04 · follows Andy Robertson

----- Original Message -----

From: "Timothy Reilly" <treilly at ozemail.com.au>

Are you sure? What part of which speech do you have in mind?

The bit in SOTL where Typhon and Severian are speaking. "My astronomers had told me that this sun's activity would decay slowly . . . They were wrong . . . " clearly implies that the astronomers and Typhon knew what was going on at the sun's core and therefore had a part in it.

Jeff Wilson — 03 Mar 2002, 04:17 · follows Andy Robertson

From: "Andy Robertson" <andywrobertson at clara.co.uk>

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This seems pretty sound, because Wolfe actually spells it out.

I'm with you so far,

The problem is that we can not adduce constraints from "real science" in Wolfe's work even at level 2). Wolfe is very cavalier about such things.

No kidding. Some times he is even *gasp* mistaken!

Now, the Whorl is a product, perhaps the ultimate product, of level 2). The Ship is a product of level 3).

Therefore the Whorl will not be doing the numinous things the Ship does. I can't *prove* it does not move through time, but there is no real hint of it doing so.

The Whorl doesn't need to do anything "numinous," only to be subject to the plans of the Increate. I am sure you will agree that it is, like everything else in Briah? Can that plan not include a space warp that returns the Whorl unknowingly to Urth?

I have already gone over various other occurrences of this theme in Sun books. This sort of unknowing return, on the part of the traveler or those who remained, appears in the Bible, Greek myth, classic SF, and even other Wolfe books.

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"Port of Lune".

Why would the work of the hierodules necessarily have to be revered, when they themselves are referred to in such glowing terms as "cacogens"? Urthlings could just lump it in with Skuld and Verthandi as worlds they see in the sky, but not necessarily terribly important.

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"Port of Lune".

Why would the work of the hierodules necessarily have to be revered, when they themselves are referred to in such glowing terms as "cacogens"? Urthlings could just lump it in with Skuld and Verthandi as worlds they see in the sky, but not necessarily terribly important.

Hmmm. A fair point, but I still disagree.

I have said all I justly can. I think we must now accept that our interpretation of the text differs, and leave it there.

hartshorn

Timothy Reilly — 04 Mar 2002, 04:03 · follows Andy Robertson

----- Original Message -----

From: "Timothy Reilly" <treilly at ozemail.com.au>

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The bit in SOTL where Typhon and Severian are speaking. "My astronomers had told me that this sun's activity would decay slowly . . They were wrong . . ." clearly implies that the astronomers and Typhon knew what was going on at the sun's core and therefore had a part in it.

No - this certainly doesn't follow logically. Astronomers today think they know what's happening at the sun's core, but can hardly be said to have contributed to it! I've always read the words as naturally meaning only what they say, that Typhon's advisers were aware that the sun's activity was declining, but underestimated how fast. Nor on my reading is there any possible motivation for Typhon putting a black hole at the sun's core - it hardly helps him. He's an evil tyrant, but shows no inclination to destroy all human kind (himself included).

Roy C. Lackey — 04 Mar 2002, 07:09 · follows Timothy Reilly

----- Original Message -----

From: "Timothy Reilly" <treilly at ozemail.com.au>

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I agree. Not only is there no apparent motivation; I doubt that Typhon had the ability. Technology on Urth in Typhon's day was considerably more advanced than in Severian's, but was but a shadow of what mean-old, nasty-old Man possessed in its heyday of galaxy hopping and creating new life forms. The sun's decline led to crop failures, riots, and revolt. Things were

so bad that Typhon's cronies left the planet, taking all available transport, and left Typhon besieged on his mountain.

Who is responsible for the black hole in the sun is an important plot point, it seems to me, because it bears directly on the ultimate goal of the Urth Cycle; the pretext for, and the coming of, the New Sun. If Man, in his presumptive arrogance, caused the wounding of the sun, that is one thing. If agents of the Increate caused it, as retribution, that is something else entirely. I have always adhered to the latter view, and I think the weight of evidence from the fifth volume of the series supports that view.

-Roy

Michael Straight — 04 Mar 2002, 13:02 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On Mon, 4 Mar 2002, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

The bit in SOTL where Typhon and Severian are speaking. "My astronomers had told me that this sun's activity would decay slowly . . . They were wrong . . . " clearly implies that the astronomers and Typhon knew what was going on at the sun's core and therefore had a part in it.

I read this to mean that Typhon's astronomers hadn't even detected the black hole's effects, that they were telling him about the sun's normal life-cycle as a star, until it was too late.

Who is responsible for the black hole in the sun is an important plot point, it seems to me, because it bears directly on the ultimate goal of the Urth Cycle; the pretext for, and the coming of, the New Sun. If Man, in his presumptive arrogance, caused the wounding of the sun, that is one thing. If agents of the Increate caused it, as retribution, that is something else entirely. I have always adhered to the latter view, and I think the weight of evidence from the fifth volume of the series supports that view.

You've left out the third option, which I think is the correct one, that the wounding of the sun was caused by extraterrestrial enemies of Man, Abaia and Erebus, who swim between the stars (and whose sister, I believe, is the Mother on Blue).

-Rostrum

Andy Robertson — 04 Mar 2002, 13:07 · follows Michael Straight

----- Original Message -----

From: "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net>
declining, but underestimated how fast. Nor on my reading is there any possible motivation for Typhon putting a black hole at the sun's core - it hardly helps him. He's an evil tyrant, but shows no inclination to destroy all human kind (himself included).

A point here: I have a background in astrophysics and cosmology, and I know that it would be quite "easy" to create a black hole and drop it into the sun. It is not too far beyond our own technology today. I mean only a thousand years or so. The *theory* is simple.

On the other hand, cancelling out the black hole with a White Fountain is a million times harder. I have no idea how we would go about it even in principle.

I have always assumed that the sun was wounded by Typhon.

The idea that it was in fact done by Abia and her cohorts is an interesting one:

Perhaps Typhon had it done *in alliance with* her? The idea of Typhon allying with these forces for revenge, or simply as a sort of Sampson strategy, is compelling.

hartshorn

Roy C. Lackey — 04 Mar 2002, 21:59 · follows Andy Robertson

Rostrum quoted me and wrote:

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Cycle; the pretext for, and the coming of, the New Sun. If Man, in his presumptive arrogance, caused the wounding of the sun, that is one thing.

If

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And hartshorn wrote:

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Revenge for what? Typhon didn't want to pull the Temple down; he wanted to create a new empire with Urth, the ancestral home of mankind, as its symbolic center. He would have been cutting his own throat to ally himself with any party bent on the future of ice.

"I have told you that I was autarch on many worlds. I shall be autarch again, and this time on many more. This world, the most ancient of all, I made my capital. That was an error, because I lingered too long when disaster came. By the time I would have escaped, escape was no longer open to me . . ."

The Red Sun wasn't part of his plans.

As for Abaia & Co. being responsible for the black hole: if they were, then it was only a symbolic gesture. Man had long ago dispersed across the galaxies. Whatever happened to Urth, a used-up backwater planet, would have no impact on the species, was of no real consequence for Man, at least in this iteration of the universe. Urth's only importance, even for the Increate, was symbolic. If Abaia & Co. were responsible for the wounding of the sun, then they were unwitting agents of the Increate, who were doing His bidding, whether they would or no. The entire purpose, in Wolfe's universe, of the wounding of the sun, of Sev's sham trial, and the

coming of the New Sun, was to satisfy the whims of the Increate. As Tzadkiel told Sev:

"Or if you wish to put it another way, you have already passed your testing, which was an examination of the future you will create. You are the New Sun. You will be returned to your Urth, and the White Fountain will go with you. The death agonies of the world you know will be offered to the Increate. And they will be indescribable--continents will flounder, as has been said. Much that is beautiful will perish, and with it most of your race; but your home will be reborn."

-Roy

Michael Straight — 05 Mar 2002, 00:43 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On Mon, 4 Mar 2002, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

As for Abaia & Co. being responsible for the black hole: if they were, then it was only a symbolic gesture.

Yet they continue to act against the Autarchy and to try to prevent Severian from bringing the New Sun.

If Abaia & Co. were responsible for the wounding of the sun, then they were unwitting agents of the Increate, who were doing His bidding, whether they would or no. The entire purpose, in Wolfe's universe, of the wounding of the sun, of Sev's sham trial, and the coming of the New Sun, was to satisfy the whims of the Increate.

Here we get into deep philosophical/theological waters. This is like saying that the Romans didn't really crucify Jesus, or if they did they were the unwitting agents of God, who were doing his will whether they would or no. The entire purpose, on this reading, of the crucifixion and the resurrection was to satisfy the whims of God.

And there are certainly people who read the New Testament that way.

But there is also the reading that the crucifixion was an evil act committed by the Romans et. al. for which they bear guilt and responsibility, yet God twisted and turned that evil thing and brought good out of it. I submit this is probably the closer to the sense Wolfe intends, that the dying sun is a bad thing, caused by the evil of Abaia et. al., and probably also in some sense the result of humanity's own sins coming home to roost, yet the Increate takes this and turns it to his own purposes.

How much all this ultimately boils down to satisfying the whims of the Increate depends on one's views of divine foreknowledge, omnipotence, predestination, determinism, free will, etc.

-Rostrum

Andy Robertson — 05 Mar 2002, 18:47 · follows Michael Straight

----- Original Message -----

From: "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net>

To: <urth at urth.net>

"I have told you that I was autarch on many worlds. I shall be autarch again, and this time on many more. This world, the most ancient of all, I made my capital. That was an error, because I lingered too long when disaster came. By the time I would have escaped, escape was no longer open to me . . ."

The Red Sun wasn't part of his plans.

As gracefully as possible, I yeild to you & the majority of the list on this point. You have convinced me that Typhon did not kill the Sun.

harshorn

matthew.malthouse — 06 Mar 2002, 11:17 · follows Andy Robertson

On 02/03/2002 06:37:36 Jeff Wilson wrote:

From: "Andy Robertson" <andywrobertson at clara.co.uk>

Rudesind and others of his society can't be expected to be cognizant of what else besides mere irrigation would be required to cover the moon with forest. After whatever other modifications it would take to keep an atmosphere in place, yes it would have to be irrigated. And while it does not sound like something of ineffable, recall that Father Inire's Gardens allow a confluence of Gyll and the Lake of Birds; for all we know he diverted a tributary of the Brook Madregot to water Green/Lune.

In addition, this sort of sweeping up and piling of asteroids would relieve the metal scarcity problem supposedly caused by all the ships and ordnance leaving Urth, never or seldom to return.

Out of curiosity does anyone have near to hand an estimate of the mass of the solar system, what proportion of that would be in the small bodies and what proportion of those metals?

Following the thought logically, rather than with literary intent, mining / collecting metals in near space would seem an obvious move once space flight was available. It doesn't seem unreasonable to assume that this had been done.

Hence my curiosity about quantity because that and usage rates might suggest timescales.

Matthew

matthew.malthouse — 06 Mar 2002, 11:54 · follows matthew.malthouse

On 04/03/2002 07:09:45 Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Who is responsible for the black hole in the sun is an important plot point,

it seems to me, because it bears directly on the ultimate goal of the Urth

Cycle; the pretext for, and the coming of, the New Sun. If Man, in his presumptive arrogance, caused the wounding of the sun, that is one thing.

If

agents of the Increate caused it, as retribution, that is something else entirely. I have always adhered to the latter view, and I think the weight

of evidence from the fifth volume of the series supports that view.

Why "Retribution"?

The Increate's servants seem to be looking for - or even forcing - some sort of redemption in Man. If they are responsible for the wounding of the sun (a view I favour) I'd be more inclined to see it as a stimulus or goad pushing towards that goal.

Matthew

Andy Robertson — 06 Mar 2002, 10:48 · follows matthew.malthouse

----- Original Message -----

From: <matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk>

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Out of curiosity does anyone have near to hand an estimate of the mass of the solar system, what proportion of that would be in the small bodies and what proportion of those metals?

The total mass in the asteroid belt is less than that of the Moon. Of the order of 10% is metal mostly iron/nickel IIRC, the rest is silica slag.

In the Oort Cloud (beyond Neptune) there could be almost any amount

"Shortage of metal" is not in fact very probable.

Metal is not used up except in tiny quantities by atomic reactions and stuff, and the very small amounts that leave in spaceships.

So it is really a matter of the energy to gather it together and refine it.

But I remember some interviews with Wolfe where he says that copper and even iron are "running out" . . . either he has the wrong idea or he is taking large artistic license.

hartshorn

matthew.malthouse — 06 Mar 2002, 13:14 · follows Andy Robertson

On 06/03/2002 10:48:40 Andy Robertson wrote:

Metal is not used up except in tiny quantities by atomic reactions and stuff, and the very small amounts that leave in spaceships.

So it is really a matter of the energy to gather it together and refine it.

But I remember some interviews with Wolfe where he says that copper and even iron are "running out" . . . either he has the wrong idea or he is taking large artistic license.

Perhaps the word "Accessible" should be in there? The Commonwealth of Severian's time has access to space flight but only as provided for them, not to do with as they will. The the long inhabitation having exhausted the metals extracted as ores "mining" becomes the recovery and recycling operation of Saltus.

Urth cannot be literally exhausted of metals because part of the promise of the New Sun is a renewal and we see that achieved by the upheavals that "drown continents" etc.

Matthew

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 06 Mar 2002, 16:40 · follows matthew.malthouse

Roy wrote:

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And Matthew responded:

Why "Retribution"?

The Increate's servants seem to be looking for - or even forcing - some sort of redemption in Man. If they are responsible for the wounding of the sun (a view I favour) I'd be more inclined to see it as a stimulus or goad pushing towards that goal.

I may be wrong, but I seem to recall a passage -- and it's about time for my periodic rereading of tBotNS (which will probably wind up being a period rereading of the whole Sun metaseries) -- in which Severian reports being told that the wounding of the Sun is part of a larger plan to isolate humanity until we are matured or redeemed or repentant or, well, whatever, enough to be allowed to go out and play with the rest of the galaxy. Does anyone else recall this, or am I dreaming it?

Roy C. Lackey — 07 Mar 2002, 06:49 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

From: matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk <matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk>

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Precisely. You have just restated my case. Redemption and retribution come to the same thing in this case. As I quoted before:

"The death agonies of the world you know will be offered to the Increate."

If that isn't retribution, I'll shoot my dictionary! As to "why" the Increate should regard the deaths of millions, many, many generations removed from the presumed offences of their ancestors as desirable, only the Increate knows.

-Roy

matthew.malthouse — 07 Mar 2002, 10:37 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On 07/03/2002 06:49:06 Roy C. Lackey wrote:

From: matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk <matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk>

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I think that's why I didn't like the word: the punitive aspect was strongest in my mind and my dictionary emphasises 'deserved' which I cannot see.

As for redemption, four definitions are near synonyms for retribution while the fifth peculiarly Christian one - salvation from sin through [Jesus'] sacrifice - runs counter: those saved don't pay, the payment has been made...

I'm not making any sort of case here, just registering a distinct unease with the apparent consequences.

Matthew

Steve Strickland — 10 Mar 2002, 06:59 · follows matthew.malthouse

Is the scene with Rudesind, the only one in BOTNS in which the irrigation of Lune is discussed?

I'd always assumed--I'll admit without much thought on the subject-- that the discussion of the "irrigation of Lune" in the early part of TSOTT was sort of an oblique reference to the sun's weakening. Since the light of the moon is a reflection of the sun's light, the pale green light of the moon would have given way, I suppose, to a darker green, as the sun began to weaken. This historical fact, that over time the moon changed from pale green to darker green, became, in the folklore of a civilization whose science was declining, the afforestation of the moon, which of course would require water to make it work.

This also seems to me to be consistent with Mr. Wolfe's interest in folklore as being derivative of some truth or half-truth (in this case, that the moon had darkened required explanation).

Of course, it is also possible that through some advanced technology the moon had actually been made into a forest. Are there other references in TBOTNS to the irrigation of Lune, or its forests, that might shed more light on whether this is merely a matter of folklore arising from the weakening sun, vs. a fact of science?

Steve Strickland

----- Original Message -----

From: <matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk>
To: <urth at urth.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2002 5:17 AM
Subject: Re: (urth) Re: The irrigation of Lune

On 02/03/2002 06:37:36 Jeff Wilson wrote:

From: "Andy Robertson" <andywrobertson at clara.co.uk>

Rudesind and others of his society can't be expected to be cognizant of what else besides mere irrigation would be required to cover the moon with forest. After whatever other modifications it would take to keep an atmosphere in place, yes it would have to be irrigated. And while it does not sound like something of ineffable, recall that Father Inire's Gardens allow a confluence of Gyll and the Lake of Birds; for all we know he diverted a tributary of the Brook Madregot to water Green/Lune.

In addition, this sort of sweeping up and piling of asteroids would relieve the metal scarcity problem supposedly caused by all the ships and ordnance leaving Urth, never or seldom to return.

Out of curiosity does anyone have near to hand an estimate of the mass of the solar system, what proportion of that would be in the small bodies and what proportion of those metals?

Following the thought logically, rather than with literary intent, mining / collecting metals in near space would seem an obvious move once space flight was available. It doesn't seem unreasonable to assume that this had been done.

Hence my curiosity about quantity because that and usage rates might suggest timescales.

Matthew

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Jerry Friedman — 11 Mar 2002, 23:07 · follows Steve Strickland

--- Steve Strickland <SSTRICKLAND at satx.rr.com> wrote:
Is the scene with Rudesind, the only one in BOTNS in which the irrigation of Lune is discussed?

I'd always assumed--I'll admit without much thought on the subject-- that the discussion of the "irrigation of Lune" in the early part of TSOTT was sort of an oblique reference to the sun's weakening.

Good heavens, people keep coming up with things I never would have imagined! I may be too trusting to read Wolfe.

Since the light of the moon is a reflection of the sun's light, the pale green light of the moon would have given way, I suppose, to a darker green, as the sun began to weaken.

I don't think moonlight is green, or not in any sense that would make it darker green if the sun were dimmer. The rocks are pretty much light rock-colored, I believe.

Anyway, if we assume the forests are real, I think there's a good question of how green it would look in the light of Old Sun (reminds me of Leigh Brackett). Of course, Severian is used to seeing things by red light, but Horn and Hoof are not.

This historical fact, that over time the moon changed from pale green to darker green, became, in the folklore of a civilization whose science was declining, the afforestation of the moon, which of course would require water to make it work.

This also seems to me to be consistent with Mr. Wolfe's interest in folklore as being derivative of some truth or half-truth (in this case, that the moon had darkened required explanation).

Of course, it is also possible that through some advanced technology the moon had actually been made into a forest. Are there other references in TBOTNS to the irrigation of Lune, or its forests, that might shed more light on whether this is merely a matter of folklore arising from the weakening sun, vs. a fact of science?

...

Severian refers once or twice to "the forests of Lune", if I remember correctly, but that only tells us that he believes in them.

Jerry Friedman