

eponymous time travel

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 25 Mar 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3081>

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maa32 — 25 Mar 2002, 15:18

One of the biggest obstacles to my hackneyed (to the point of exhaustion) short sun interpretation is proving that Silk/Horn can move through time, and specifically proving that Rigoglio/Roger has some reason for traveling to the particular time of Severian from the far future. I have done the whole "return to the past through dreams", "my travels are dreams", "mother's song is one of time" thing, but that doesn't seem enough to rationalize why. My only other defense (previously) was that if we think the Neighbors have moved on but are still around, then have they gone through time? (it is a higher dimension, after all). If you say that Blue is not Urth, where have these neighbors gone, and why did they come back? I say it is, and that they once lived on Urth/Blue. But here is something new:

Here is an interesting quote from Chapter XIX of Shadow of the torturer: The botanic gardens: "supposing him - we turn at this corner, Severian, you may see the head of the stair, if you'll look, there where the STATUES OF THE EPONYMS stand - supposing him to have lived, he was by definition the Master of Power. Which means the transcendence of reality, and includes the negation of time. Isn't that correct?" I nodded. 'Then there is nothing to prevent him, from a position, say, of thirty thousand years ago, coming into what we call the present. Dead or not, if he ever existed, he could be around the next bend of the street or the next turn of the week.' (Shadow and Claw, 119)

Notice that this is the entrance to the Botanic Gardens, where time is negated and Isongoma and the missionaries can be seen due to the bending reflection of time (remember that Father Inires mirrors, based on reflection, can summon things from different times and places). Remember how I couldn't account for how the red light of Urth could be seen from Blue in that one chapter? doesn't that sound like the principle behind Inire's mirrors (remember that one short sun story in Endangered Species about the doll and the cat in the mirrors?) where light is reflected on itself and produces weird things? Also, remember what Rigoglio says as soon as he gets to Urth? "THE EPONYMS". I propose that the eponyms exist in a metonymic relationship to the botanic gardens - they are responsible for its time bending properties - and note how they are thrown in the middle of the discussion above about the negation of time. Wolfe likes to put two apparently unrelated things together to associate them. The eponyms may provide some precedent for the bending of time - and it is the first thing that Rigoglio says when he gets there. How else can we explain the properties of the Botanic gardens? I am saying they may have some kind of time bending property, and that this bending may be responsible for some of the light that can be seen "from a different time". Note that even though Severian and Agia can see the missionaries, only the primitive can sense them.

While this is not definitive or clear, I think it establishes a nice synchronic theme. Here are some of the points of contiguity between Shadow and the Short Sun books in which small details become important: Missing guard at the gate explained eponym statues Rudesind's explanation of the moon and its forest and its new closeness to Urth Triskelle (???) Scylla in the harbor Green Man's evolution

Anything else interesting about the eponyms in the text? I think they show up near the Vatican fountain in Claw, but I need to check for sure. Marc Aramini

Michael Andre-Driussi — 25 Mar 2002, 18:58 · follows maa32

Marc Aramini wrote:

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I nodded.

'Then there is nothing to prevent him, from a position, say, of thirty thousand

years ago, coming into what we call the present. Dead or not, if he ever existed, he could be around the next bend of the street or the next turn of the week." (Shadow and Claw, 119)

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time (remember that Father Inires mirrors, based on reflection, can summon things from different times and places).

But it is not at the entrance to the Botanic Gardens! From the stairs one can see the Botanic Gardens building, yes. But the stairs of the quote are rather long and steep and lead down to the riverside after some twists and turns. From there one somehow gets out to the island where the Gardens are located. Then one enters the building.

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first thing that Rigoglio says when he gets there. How else can we explain the properties of the Botanic gardens? I am saying they may have some kind of

time bending property, and that this bending may be responsible for some of the light that can be seen "from a different time". Note that even though Severian and Agia can see the missionaries, only the primitive can sense them.

Better to say that the location of eponyms in the text relatively near two episodes of time/space distortion seems so uncannily similar to you that you wonder at the possible linkages/personal associations. (Because the mirrors explain the time bending, rather explicitly; and there is no mention of eponyms in that explanation.)

In TBOTNS sundials show up, too. These are more straightforward, since they tell time, and when the sundials in the Atrium of Time show no time, well, we sense that the atrium is in some way outside of time, or at least, not inside mundane time.

Seems to me that real-world eponyms are not devices to tell time, but by-products of time and

culture. If the word is still in use, then the eponym remains: our busts of the eponyms would include de Sade, Quisling, Bowdler, et ali. If in a hundred years we no longer used the words sadism, quisling, and bowdlerize, then those busts would be removed, the eponyms forgotten along with their "words." (Note the memorial/funereal tinct here.)

=mantis=

Jerry Friedman — 26 Mar 2002, 17:12 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

--- Michael Andre-Driussi <mantis at siriusfiction.com> wrote: ...

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This is interesting, but my guess is that the eponyms are saints, like the eponyms of San Francisco, Marylebone, people named James, etc.

Jerry Friedman