

Quetzal and Noah's Ark

The Urth list — 8 messages, 6 voices, 24 Nov 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3601>

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.

Don Doggett — 24 Nov 2002, 20:56

Hi everyone,

All this discussion about Quetzal and his place on the Whorl got me digging around on Google and, while I didn't find quite what I was looking for (mythic references to a stowaway snake) I found some things far more interesting. I'm not sure how relevant they are but they are certainly interesting. Here's a sample:

"THE RESTORATION UNDERWAY: EVIDENCE OF CHAOS

Legends of Central America subsequently refer to Noah as Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent that sailed off into the East where the rising sun ate him up. That is, as the sun arose Noah's Ark disappeared over the eastern horizon without them, leaving the people behind in the midst of earthquakes, tidal waves, and chaos as the earth continued to convulse and ocean bottoms sank to swallow up the flood waters. The restoration was now indeed underway.

Note: Noah had absolutely no control over his great raft of a city. Therefore, when a portion of the Atlantic Ocean bottom, for example, sank, the waves and currents created easily sucked Noah's great raft along Eastward like a cork in a stream. However, those left behind in the Americas knew that Noah had a way with GOD; so, they blamed Noah for leaving without them. Thus, the name Quetzalcoatl, the feathered serpent. "

This is from www.geocities.com/WallStreet/Floor/7845/BRIANSANNES/mountararat.html It's a Mormon site and I don't have much use for Mormon biblical scholarship but it doesn't seem like dubious scholarship ever stopped Wolfe from exploring an interesting/entertaining idea.

This next site is interesting for it's relevance to Crush's Quetzal/Dionysus theory. Not only does it tie these two together but it also ties them both into Noah and Hindu mythology. What?! It's www.viewzone.com/noah.story.html

The third one I found of interest was www.mexconnect.com/mex_/travel/jblack/jbnahua2.html This one is cool because of the reference to the importance of maize. Curious, considering the importance of corn in SS.

I found all of these by entering "Noah's ark" and "Quetzal" or "Quetzalcoatl" in the search engine and there are tons more pages which I don't have the time or inclination to sift through. But have fun.

Don

Alice K. Turner — 25 Nov 2002, 01:40 · follows Don Doggett

Don:

Thanks very much for those sites. I couldn't reach the first one, but found the second

fascinating (Noah and Hindu mythology) and also remarkably well written (considering the norm on the web). Third (maize) also interesting.

-alga

William Ansley — 25 Nov 2002, 03:06 · follows Alice K. Turner

Don:

Thanks very much for those sites. I couldn't reach the first one, but found the second fascinating (Noah and Hindu mythology) and also remarkably well written (considering the norm on the web). Third (maize) also interesting.

-alga

The correct URL is:

<http://www.geocities.com/WallStreet/Floor/7845/BRIANSANNEX/mountararat.html>

(This URL also points to the same page:

<http://www.geocities.com/brianshouse/BRIANSANNEX/mountararat.html>)

This is the one that was actually given:

www.geocities.com/WallStreet/Floor/7845/BRIANSANNES/mountararat.html

A request to everyone who posts a URL. Please copy and paste it from your browser to the email message, if at all possible, to avoid typos like this. And please include the entire URL with the http:// prefix. Many email clients will make a complete URL into a clickable link, but it doesn't work (at least in mine) unless the URL is complete.

William Ansley

--

James Wynn — 25 Nov 2002, 15:53 · follows William Ansley

Very nice find, Don! Particularly (as one would suppose my reaction) the link on Dyaus-Nahusha. Personally, I would never have imagined a linkage between Quetzalcoatl's little raft and Noah's ark, however, the flags for Genesis 6 were quite obvious in the various morphings of the word "chem" as "shem" and "Ham".

Of course, from a certain interview (James Jordan's I think) we know that Wolfe believes that the Old World and New World cultures are **directly** linked.

This also (possibly) clears up a nagging question for me as to why Wolfe chose to embody Quetzalcoatl and Dionysus in a single character. I had finally decided it was because of the "horned" asps of Egypt but that seemed tenuous even for me. ;-)

However, the graphic of Quetzalcoatl on his raft at www.viewzone.com/noah.story.html (on a raft with two snakes) only stirs up another frustrating question - it has always seemed to me there ought to be

two serpents on the Whorl (two serpents on the Sun disk of Thebes, on the alchemist's Tau Cross, given by Athor to Ranpo in the Egyptian drawing that includes the god Chem, etc.).

But thanks (grrr) to Roy's excoriating (excruciating) picking apart of my textual reading, I can no longer accept that Tussah is an inhume. Freed from that misapprehension I have been able resolve several thematic puzzles on my mental shelf. Don's revelations continue the trend that builds the case against two serpents on the Whorl for after all there is only one Noah, one Dionysus, one serpent in the Garden.

So, I don't know. Thematically, there is less and less need for two serpents but the symbolic penchant ever increases. Very frustrating.

-- Crush

James Jordan — 25 Nov 2002, 23:46 · follows James Wynn

God said to Noah, "Build me an ark."

Typhon said to Quetzal, "build me an ark." I don't think so. No reason to think Quetzal was on location.

So how's this? Typhon took over Piaton and directed him to build an ark. God wanted a human being, made of flesh, to build the Ark. Typhon needed a body so that he/he could build his ark. Neat, but I don't think so. The analogy breaks down too quickly.

Typhon is both God and Noah. Noah went on the ark with his wife and sons and their wives.

Typhon goes on his ark as Pas, with with and family. That's the parallel and analogy.

We'll get farther recognizing that Noah's Ark is a traditional symbol of the Church, a place where the whole old creation is preserved for a new creation to come. Common enough, and surely part of Wolfe's background (unlike some weird Mormon website). Starcrosser should be compared and contrasted with the Ship that carried Severian to Yesod. Everything "spiritual" about Typhon's ark is an inversion, a negative image, of the Church, since idolatry is a main theme, really THE main theme, of the Long Sun quartet. Starcrosser is an anti-ark that the Outsider decides to invade and save because of His love for human beings. The Outsider converts the Plan of Pas into HIS plan, and subverts the "plan" of Quetzal into His own larger Plan. Typhon is just an unwitting pawn in the Outsider's huge purpose -- just as Satan is just a pawn in the purpose of the Biblical God.

That's the Big Picture, folks.

Nutria

Adam Stephanides — 27 Nov 2002, 03:33 · follows James Jordan

on 11/25/02 5:46 PM, James Jordan at jbjordan4 at cox.net wrote:

Starcrosser is an anti-ark that the

Outsider decides to invade and save because of His love for human beings.

The Outsider converts the Plan of Pas into HIS plan, and subverts the "plan" of Quetzal into His own larger Plan. Typhon is just an unwitting pawn in the Outsider's huge purpose

And that is? If the Outsider loves human beings so much, why doesn't He stop the Hierogrammates from killing almost all of them? And if He's concerned with the salvation of the people on the Whorl, why doesn't He tell Silk to spread the Good News of His uniqueness and omnipotence, rather than telling him to "save the manteion"? I'm not trying to be facetious, but it does seem that His ways in LS/SS are particularly mysterious.

No doubt everything that happens in the books is ultimately part of the Outsider's plan. But the same would be true if Silk had never been enlightened, or if the colonists had been left to rot aboard the Whorl forever. So it's not clear to me how "the Outsider's plan" can be used as a touchstone for interpreting the books.

--Adam

James Jordan — 27 Nov 2002, 16:53 · follows Adam Stephanides

At 09:33 PM 11/26/2002, you wrote:
on 11/25/02 5:46 PM, James Jordan at jbjordan4 at cox.net wrote:

Starcrosser is an anti-ark that the Outsider decides to invade and save because of His love for human beings. The Outsider converts the Plan of Pas into HIS plan, and subverts the "plan" of Quetzal into His own larger Plan. Typhon is just an unwitting pawn in the Outsider's huge purpose

And that is? If the Outsider loves human beings so much, why doesn't He stop the Hierogrammates from killing almost all of them?

The Increate's love for humanity is "tough love." Hard times and death are part of how He loves humanity and brings humanity to maturity. That's not modern "love" but it is basic to a Christian understanding of "love." Whether you agree or not, that's going to be Wolfe's perspective.

And if He's concerned with the salvation of the people on the Whorl, why doesn't He tell Silk to spread the Good News of His uniqueness and omnipotence, rather than telling him to "save the manteion"?

Saving the manteion is a metonymy, part for the whole. And of course, modern Christian novelists usually write about salvation obliquely and symbolically, not in an outright fashion in the way earlier writers did

-- and Wolfe is clearly in the modern category here.

Consider that Horn's "Book of Silk," which has the contour of the gospel narrative + the book of Acts + at the end the book of Revelation, does indeed show the deeper meaning of what "saving the manteion" entails. And, saving this particular people of Viron (=Israel) becomes a "gospel" to all the settlers on Blue (and Green eventually). "Saving the manteion" expands to saving the people physically from the dying Whorl before it descends into hellish darkness and then expands to spiritual salvation through the "Book of Silk" as its readers learn who the real God is.

I'm not trying to be facetious, but it does seem that His ways in LS/SS are particularly mysterious.

Granted!

No doubt everything that happens in the books is ultimately part of the Outsider's plan. But the same would be true if Silk had never been enlightened, or if the colonists had been left to rot aboard the Whorl forever. So it's not clear to me how "the Outsider's plan" can be used as a touchstone for interpreting the books.

Maybe not. But it seems to me that the whole notion of "plan" is basic to the books. A plan by a pseudo-god (Pas) implies a greater plan by the True God. Our gradual discovery of what the Plan of Pas is implies that we are also to think about this Greater Plan also. From page 1 in LS, the Outsider is a "player" in the narrative, doing something specific in the narrative (though behind the scenes, as the Ruler says in "Westwind"). We are invited to consider that specific plan.

That's my reasoning, sound or not!

Nutria

--Adam

--

Adam Stephanides — 30 Nov 2002, 04:11 · follows James Jordan

On Wed, 27 Nov 2002 10:53:25 -0600 James Jordan <jbjordan4 at cox.net> wrote:

The Increate's love for humanity is
"tough love." Hard times and
death are part of how He loves humanity and
brings humanity to maturity.
That's not modern "love" but it is basic to a
Christian understanding of
"love." Whether you agree or not, that's going
to be Wolfe's perspective.

Rather than argue religion, I'll stick to the books and ask why, if the Outsider's "love" for humanity is compatible with letting most of the people on Urth die, He doesn't also let the people on the Whorl die. What's so special about them?

Consider that Horn's "Book of Silk,"
which has the contour of the
gospel narrative + the book of Acts + at the
end the book of Revelation,
does indeed show the deeper meaning of what
"saving the manteion" entails.
And, saving this particular people of Viron
(=Israel) becomes a "gospel" to
all the settlers on Blue (and Green
eventually). "Saving the manteion"
expands to saving the people physically from
the dying Whorl before it
descends into hellish darkness and then expands
to spiritual salvation
through the "Book of Silk" as its readers learn
who the real God is.

I don't see that anybody has been spiritually saved by the end of the Short Sun books, except perhaps Silk. Silk himself has only "graduated" to monotheism, which alone is not sufficient for salvation according to Catholic teaching, afaik. And Horn, who wrote the "Book of Silk," hasn't even gotten that far by the start of "Blue": he still thinks that the "gods" of Mainframe are gods of the same order as the Outsider, though he thinks the Outsider has been underemphasized. And while some of the colonists have begun to worship Silk, there are no indications of an increase in Outsider-worship as a result of reading the Book of Silk, iirc. Of course, this might all be part of a long-term plan on the Outsider's part to bring the colonists' descendants to salvation, but there's no evidence for this in the books.

Maybe not. But it seems to me that the
whole notion of "plan" is
basic to the books. A plan by a pseudo-god
(Pas) implies a greater plan by
the True God. Our gradual discovery of what the
Plan of Pas is implies that
we are also to think about this Greater Plan
also. From page 1 in LS, the
Outsider is a "player" in the narrative, doing
something specific in the
narrative (though behind the scenes, as the

Ruler says in "Westwind"). We
are invited to consider that specific plan.
That's my reasoning, sound or not!

Fair enough, but on the evidence of the books themselves it's very hard to see what the Outsider's plan is. Of course, Wolfe's point may be precisely that the Outsider's plans are incomprehensible to humans.

After writing the above, it occurred to me that it might be argued that the Outsider's plan is to save the inhum through the colonists. I would disagree, though. In my reading of the books, the inhum have no souls of their own; the intelligent inhum, as beasts with human souls, are (in Wolfe's eyes) monstrous parodies of humanity, and for them to devolve back to beastdom would be best for them as well as for the colonists. Of course, not everyone will agree with this reading, but in any case I see no indication by the end of RttW that the inhum are on the road to salvation (even a long and winding one).

--Adam