

passion play and the weight of evidence

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 04 Dec 2002

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maa32 — 04 Dec 2002, 14:35

My best explanation for the cleansing of the sewers is that it is a passion play that re-enacts the story of the conciliator, just as eschatology and genesis was a passion play that foretold how the events of Urth of the New Sun would run, passed on from Canog's book. It is distorted, but valid thematically, and it serves as a message from the vanished people to Horn about how the planet reached its current condition - a necessary flood.

Also, if a ship has the ability to reach back in time, like the ship Severian takes by moving through space in UOTNS, then can't Silk in his astral travel go through the same "white hole" or whatever to go back in time in his travels? There you go: he travels far enough away to pass through that dying/gestating black/white hole, and the red light he seeks is through that barrier. Since he travels with light, of course he is drawn to the spiritual birth of the New Sun.

Here are some more parallels that we should consider:

In the second chapter of OBW, they talk of the silver mines that have been found, probably where the special ring of Silkhorn was found or forged. Could this be the mine of Saltus where that ancient "thing" was sleeping that Severian woke up? Could the ring that allows resonance with the vanished people be a product of that ancient (perhaps vegetative or scientifically experimental but forgotten by Urth) awareness (remember that Hide can see the Vanished person on a tree floating where none previously was to be seen at the end of RTTW when he peers through the ring)?

The underwater wall that surrounds the huge city Seawrack speaks of: evidence of a flood.

The ability of Green to affect the tide at its closest.

The statement by Krait that the most obvious truths are the ones that are paradoxical or impossible: how can Urth be Blue if the narrator is in both places? A pretty big paradox, eh?

This great statement, which I leave to all of you:

From chapter 2 of OBW:

They see the whorl, but with the eyes of potatoes.

No offense, of course.

Trees on the moon. A flood. Meetings with a man known to cross through time freely, a man who in one of his travels met Typhon.

The importance of plant hybridization to the text.

I'm done. I'm satisfied. Let me just say this: Wolfe won't tell me whether my ideas are wrong

about Urth being Blue, but he just avoids the question and is otherwise very, very friendly to me. I think he is proud of hiding Urth as Blue: remember what remora said at the beginning of OBW: everything was revealed in the long sun whorl, but that in the short sun everything is hidden and obscured. I argue that the biggest vanishing act is that done to Urth: while it is still a big huge blue planet with a green satellite (that most thought would be Urth at first, but where then disappointed when it was revealed that it was contiguous with the beginning of the New Sun text), Wolfe has managed to hide it from us. At least some of us.

Marc Aramini