

The Blue Urth Theory

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 22 Dec 2002

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ArchD'Ikon Zibethicus — 22 Dec 2002, 09:33

Quoth Mr. Lackey:

Be that as it may, the mass of textual evidence against Blue being Urth/Ushas overwhelms the theory that it is.

Well, I myself am an adherent of neither theory. I have an open mind, and am open to discussion. Dogmatism troubles me in excessive quantities, tho'...and I have called for greater use of textual elements in discussion, so I'm glad that you did use texts.

Proponents of the Blue=Urth/Ushas theory have also claimed that the Neighbors were far-future descendents of the people who repopulated Urth after it became Ushas.

I suggested this as a possibility for the purposes of accounting for all the plot elements in a way satisfactory to the Blue Urth Theory.

Where the Green Man fits into that evolution, I don't know.

Well, to be fair to Blue Urth Theorists, I have just gone over COC (BTW - is there a list of standard abbreviations?) Ch. III, 'The Showman's Tent', and have been unable to find a statement from the Green Man to the effect that he actually comes from Urth. What he does say is: "I am a free man, come from your own future to explore your age." (p. 27, Arrow p/back.) He also says that his sun is much brighter, but that he has no idea whether it is the New Sun or not... If I was desperately trying to defend the Blue Urth Theory, I could observe that this increase of brightness could be attributable to an origin on an entirely different world with a different, brighter sun, rather than the New Sun. We know now that Typhon sent colonisers out on the Whorl; is there any statement anywhere that the Whorl was the only ship sent out? What about other states and empires in the whole, vast history of Urth? Why couldn't the Ascians have forced their own surplus population into space?

And, in any case, does the Green Man ever stipulate exactly where in the future he does come from? And, if not, why couldn't he come from Urth or Blue (if the two are different) or wherever, in a period after the time of HornSilk?

"I've been thinking about it, and about the City of the Inhum on Green. Those were ruins left by the Neighbors' ancient race; these were left by ours, I believe--we are as ancient as they, or nearly." > (IG), 315)

I don't quite understand how this quote can be used to make a case that "At any rate, the text contradicts the theory that the Neighbors were some future evolutionary stage of humanity on Blushas."

I am not at all convinced that "the Neighbors were some future evolutionary stage of humanity on Blushas", myself, but I fail to see how that text can be used as evidence against the Theory, if only because this is only the conjecture of HornSilkIncanto (HSI). HSI may not be in full possession of the facts, as are many of the characters in Mr. Wolfe's divers works, including Severian himself.

As I said in an earlier posting, I believe that Mr. Wolfe places all the necessary elements to an adequate comprehension of his work within the work itself, but I don't believe that the conjecture of a character within the work is necessarily adequate evidence in its own right, as his all-too-human characters are often mistaken or hasty in drawing conclusions, as are we all...

I find it more evidential that the Neighbours themselves told Horn (OBW Ch. 11, 'The Land of Fires' p.271) "From this whorl we sprang...[t]here are rocks and rivers, trees and islands here that have been famous among us for many thousands of years." Now if we can only agree on exactly _where_ it was that these words were spoken (if they were)...

->Zx<-

<snip the sig!>

Chris — 22 Dec 2002, 10:45 · follows ArchD'Ikon Zibethicus

IMHO, there is never a problem of not having enough clues; the problem is, rather, that the given set of clues can produce a nearly infinite number of internally consistent hypotheses.

There are two ways of approaching the text, then. The first is to attempt to divine the author's intent. This is virtually impossible without the author's help, no matter **how** many clues he has provided in the text, because of the multitude of theories that can be spawned. On the other hand, this is an entertaining enough challenge to be worth doing.

The second possibility is to, as a reader, come up with a reading of the text that is as aesthetically pleasing (to you) as you can. In this sense we are in some way pushing each other to come up with more beautiful interpretations in consistency, form, and symmetry among other things - and in this context, what the author **meant** has little if anything to do with matters. One can look for the simplest explanation, but depending on your taste this won't always be the best.

In either case, I have always found the statement that "there are enough clues" to be somewhat mocking. Of **course** there are enough clues.

I can't speak for anyone else, but I tend to look at things from the second perspective, which lends itself well to tolerance of many different interpretations. My main **personal** reason for not favoring the Blushas theory is that it seems thematically unwieldy, and seems to require a sort of deus ex machina to work. Other people may well not share my tastes in this matter, though.

Regards,

Chris - wondering if "Cheese" is a valid Vironese name.

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