

The Burden of Proof

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 28 Dec 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3722>

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Jeff Veyera — 28 Dec 2002, 23:05

On Tue, 24 Dec 2002, maa32 wrote (Quoting Mean Gene):

"No, No, NO! Green is Urth."

I think this most likely means:

1. A joke. Like if Tolkien, tired of being asked for the umpteenth time whether The Ring represents The Bomb had replied, "No, no, NO! Gollum represents the Atom Bomb."

or

2. Wolfe is saying that, of the two planets, Green, with its decaying cities and ancient horrors is more like Urth than Blue is. Like one might say, if asked whether Severian is Aragorn, "No, no, NO! Severian is Gollum."

-Rostrum

It's funny how the folks most devoted to author's intent in the previous Blushas threads suddenly come up with this elaborate joke theory rather than acknowledge that Wolfe may well have proceeded from the idea of Green as Ushas.

Marc has accepted that his original theory of Blue=Ushas, which he invested an enormous amount of effort, was simply wrong in light of the response he received. I think it's telling that his detractors are so dogmatic on this point that even the author's simple, straightforward declaration somehow doesn't suffice to overturn the applecart they've constructed.

I don't have a dog in either hunt---to me it's entertaining to kick around the notions either way. But it seems to me that the burden of proof has now shifted to the opponents of Green/Ushas---Marc has provided both the missive from Mr. Wolfe and some textual support, which is more than his detractors have thus far provided.

Absent confirmation from Wolfe that he was merely joking, I think there's some work to be done to explain why Green isn't Ushas, despite the author saying it was.

In any case, making Marc out to be a naive dupe for somehow not realizing Wolfe was pulling his leg as this and previous threads have seems ridiculous and disingenuous---if you think Green CANNOT be Ushas, prove it.

Teflon

Alice K. Turner — 29 Dec 2002, 03:07 · follows Jeff Veyera

Teflon challenged:

In any case, making Marc out to be a naive dupe for somehow not realizing Wolfe was pulling his leg as this and previous threads have seems ridiculous and disingenuous---if you think Green CANNOT be Ushas, prove it.

Ordinarily I never get involved when the argument gets technical, but this one seems so obvious that I'll stick my neck out. With the coming of the New Sun came the end of an worldwide ice age. When the ice melted, the seas rose to cover vast tracts of land. Certainly they would have subsided a bit, but only a bit--this isn't like a biblical or other flood but a permanent change. From space ours is a blue planet, not green. Ushas would be a blue planet too, harking back to pre-Urth Earth. Though I don't for a moment think it is Blue.

I doubt that this conjecture would ever have come up if GW hadn't, merely as a sci-fi frill for he never makes use of it, hadn't made Lune green.

-alga (who is green)

Adam Stephanides — 29 Dec 2002, 14:58 · follows Alice K. Turner

on 12/28/02 5:05 PM, Jeff Veyera at teflon93 at cox.net wrote:
It's funny how the folks most devoted to author's intent in the previous Blushas threads suddenly come up with this elaborate joke theory rather than acknowledge that Wolfe may well have proceeded from the idea of Green as Ushas.

You seem to be under a misapprehension. The idea that Wolfe may have been joking is not a "theory" that the anti-"Greeshas" people concocted. Rather, it was introduced to the list by Marc himself, and originated with Wolfe. If I had had only Wolfe's statement that Green was Urth, I might have hypothesized that Wolfe was joking, simply because Green=Urth is so improbable and seems to contradict his earlier interview statement. Fortunately, I didn't have to.

In any case, at least one of Wolfe's statements on this topic must be false. Afaik there are three: his statement that Green is Urth; his statement that that statement was a joke (which we have at third hand, but Marc accepts it as authentic); and his interview statement regarding the destination of the Whorl, which still seems to me to argue strongly against either Blushas or Greeshas. These can't all be correct.

it seems to me that the burden of proof has now shifted to the opponents of Green/Ushas---Marc has provided both the missive from Mr. Wolfe and some textual support,

if one uses the term "textual support" very loosely

which is more than his detractors have thus far provided.

As mentioned above, Marc himself provided the "missive from Wolfe" stating that Greeshas was a joke. And all the arguments against Blue being Urth apply equally well to Green.

Absent confirmation from Wolfe that he was merely joking,

To those don't believe Wolfe's statement that he was joking, a repetition by Wolfe wouldn't settle anything. It'd just be dismissed as Wolfe "continuing the misdirection."

In any case, making Marc out to be a naive dupe

"naive dupe" is your word, not mine; but again, it was Marc who first (on the list) raised the possibility that he'd been fooled.

for somehow not realizing

Wolfe was pulling his leg as this and previous threads have seems ridiculous and disingenuous---if you think Green CANNOT be Ushas, prove it.

Clearly, no sort of proof will convince the partisans of the Green=Urth theory, since any contradiction or impossibility can be explained away by hypothesizing another ad hoc mechanism. But I will say that if Wolfe did intend Green to be Urth, then the Short Sun books are more shoddily written than I'd thought.

--Adam