

Qabbalah

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 05 Jan 2003

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James Jordan — 05 Jan 2003, 00:28

Chris,

I once tried to run up speculations about the series of worlds in the Qabbalah, since Wolfe refers to Yesod and Briah. But I asked him directly about this in my interview, and he said that he had just plucked these names from the Q without intending anything further, without intending a larger spin on the Q universe. I concluded that trying to find the sephiroth in these books was, well if you'll pardon me, barking up the wrong tree.

Which is not to dismiss ALL your mooted analogies.

FWIW.

Nutria

At 01:24 PM 12/31/2002, you wrote:

Speaking of myth, I have been toying with an idea which I am hoping someone can put me on the right track with (or off the wrong one). The Learned Ones of this list have certainly seen a lot, and I would be surprised if someone hadn't already pursued this in more detail.

I am thinking that *one* way to describe what's going on is that the nature of Yesod is that it is a world of *myths*, and not just a world with myths, but essentially it is the mythical realm and follows mythical rules. It is also one of four distinct stages of creation, of which our physical world is also one. If one traces from the Creator to Creation, just one step short of the physical world is Yetzirah; an "Ur-Earth". Qabbalistically, there are four worlds of creation, starting from Atzilut (which is Nothingness), closest to the creator. The next rung down is *Briah*, whose focus is bringing Something from Nothingness, and whose associated archangel does happen to be Tzadkiel (also associated with Chesed, the sefirot of "Mercy" or giving, which is appropriate). Next down is the world of Yetzirah, the world of Forms (Something from Something) - this is where one might say the myths go to play. I believe this is the stage where the New Sun series takes place; perhaps you could say it is an alternate way of telling the same story that is our universe... The use of the term Yesod (which is the sefirot of "Foundation") could refer to the fact that Yetzirah can be said to correspond to 6 of the lower sefirot taken together, the lowest of which (low being in the direction of creation, away from creator) is Yesod. The world as we know it in our physical sense is Assiah (Completion) and is associated with Malkhut, the "lowest" Sefirot of all (this is a vast oversimplification).

There are numerous things that would seem to go along with an interpretation like this. Talos' play may be a very big hint toward how to look at the overall story.

Another thing which I may pursue in an unrelated (or related way) is the association of Severian with Sammael - the angel often associated with Geburah ("Severity") and I guess you would say the counter-part or

counter-balance to Tzadkiel. While these two angels are in opposing spheres, it's important not to read any antagonism into the relationship: the two form a thesis/antithesis pair that is necessary for the process of synthesis. A point of note is that in qabbalah each persistent, named angel is associated with a star - exactly *one* star per angel. The terms in which this was described to me reminded me very heavily of the association of the Conciliator with his New Sun.

If I use this framework, I am as yet uncertain whether to say the Long Sun books take place in Yetzirah or Assiah. Either seems possible. It's maintained by mystics that it's possible for a person in this world to temporarily translate his consciousness to the world of Yetzirah (though no higher than that? not sure about that), which would make it possible for Silk to talk to Severian even from a different realm. An interesting side effect of this is that if that's how the communication takes place, then the difference in time and distance between Silk and Severian becomes completely irrelevant.

I have far more to learn on both of these subjects before I can really do much useful with it - that is, if I'm not running down a blind alley.

Chris

Roy claims that Typhon knows very little about the conciliator or about flooding. However, he hints at several things in his appearance in Sword of the Lictor. He claims that water brings new life and rebirth. He understands

the role of the conciliator and his identity, promising Severian that if he kneels before him, the Conciliator come again will also kneel before him. And

what does Severian see when he looks out the eyes of Typhon? A vast plain of water. This is what Typhon sees from his mountain, with his false eyes.

As for the idea of the Conciliator was not unknown in Typhon's time - the conciliator was a rewriting of christology - an echo of the promise of a savior that MUST have been extant if Buzz Aldron was extant in that distant future. The conciliator became meshed with Christ in myth- and of course Typhon knew about that, since he is an allegory of Satan. He is re-enacting the temptation scene - he knows everything about the conciliator and his mission. Even if there was no need for a sun before the age of Typhon, there was still need of a spiritual salvation with which the conciliator became associated. Come now. How can the memory of Buzz Aldron outlive the memory of Christ? You really believe that Typhon, the satan figure of the text of New Sun, is ignorant of the role of the savior figure? He might, after all, have had access to the book of Canog that Dr. Talos must have perused to write

Eschatology and Genesis. And the whole secret of the future is of course in that text, composed from notes Severian revealed at the time when he meets Typhon in the past and is incarcerated. If Typhon lived even another year or two, he might have seen that text, with its gnostic eschatology and genesis ripe for his analysis. He might have even tried to use it when he took all the

other writings of ready-made religions and made his whorl. (if the whorl was already sent, then he still had an immense storehouse of myths that would become inseparable from the story of the Conciliator, who, before the publication of Urth of the New Sun, seemed to be homologous with Jesus Christ.

Could Sappho and Aurelius outlive the documents of Christ in someplace like Buenos Aires?).

Marc Aramini

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