

...belated response...

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 23 Jan 2003

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ArchD'Ikon Zibethicus — 23 Jan 2003, 01:20

Sorry...hard to _get at_ the computer these days...

Spectacled Bear:

I don't know whether Mr. Wolfe's works fit neatly within a single framework.

From my reading of them, I would guess that he is indulging in >speculative fiction

I think this is a very important thing to remember. "Speculative >fiction" and "framework" do not sit well together. "If Rules are a Framework for the Mind, Why Should the Mind not Climb Right Out? writes the Sage of Dissolution" - to quote another story with a confusing timeline!

Ryan:

I have also been of the mind for a long time that an artist's(read: person's) work is not necessarily the living embodiment of their >beliefs and thoughts... except in a round-a-bout philosophical >way. "It's his so it must represent his thoughts even if not >intended...."

Sometimes we say things we regret. Sometimes we write things we don't believe. Sometimes we don't know what we believe. Sometimes we need >100 more words to finish a story, ANY 100. Sometimes something looks >pretty so we use it.

Well, I suppose the points that I was making are neatly encapsulated by the above quotations. I think, also, that an author's religion or lack thereof may well, as Blattid also said, "have a powerful influence on their decision-making process -- including, but not limited to, their creative decisions", but I ask those of us who have a 'fixed' religious belief and who write either professionally or for 'mere' amusement

- do _you_ sit down at the desk and sharpen the quill with your theology uppermost in your mind? Or a worthwhile story which will pester you until it is extruded? Or both?

If your intention is to write about religion per se, you are perpetuating a work of theology or theaology. It _is_, of course, possible to create a fiction for religious ends, implicitly or explicitly, but I would hesitate to affirm that this has been Mr. Wolfe's intention. Ultimately, however, in BOTLS, he has explicitly affirmed the validity of the Christian vision by including Palm Sunday in Pa. Silk's enlightenment.

However, many authors write fictions to warn against developments which trouble them. Others simply explore ideas...it's not a hard and fast process, IMHO...and I would think that a 'religious author' _could_ imagine a situation where their religion is ultimately defeated or invalidated, but it would require unusual intellectual honesty to write it...

Blattid:

For those who do like CW, may I recommend (if you do not already know his work) Tim Powers? The closest living writer to "carrying on the Williams tradition," except that he is, in my humble, a better prose stylist than Williams ever managed to be. Williams was a fine poet, but in the writing of fiction ...

Never heard of him, but, *sieur*, on the strength of your recommendation (bows), I will keep the proverbial eye out...I wouldn't, incidentally, categorise CW as one of the authors I read for style...bit clunky at times, to be sure...more an ideas man...kinda like Hodgson...tho' it's surely time I re-read CW...perhaps I'll put him on the kids' bedtime reading list...prob'ly the only way I'll get time in the next decade, if Goddess spares me that long...

Nutria's example of ghosts comes to mind--Russell Kirk and Gene Wolfe can believe in ghosts and be quite orthodox Catholics. As could G. K. Chesterton. And I suspect R. A. Lafferty was both about as orthodox as you get and believed what most people (and most Catholics) would call six impossible things before breakfast.

One of Lafferty's characters on ghosts (very roughly): "You think it's silly to believe in ghosts? Boy, you should see some of the things the ghosts believe in!"

*

Pan was also the only god to have actually died, according to somebody-or-other.

Plutarch?

BTW - my memory's about as bad as *Latro's*, but wasn't he supposed to be Aeneas, and the series the story of his adventures pre-Rome? Did I read that somewhere, a Wolfe I/V perhaps, or am I finally losing it for real?

->Zx<-

Consciousness will always be one degree above comprehensibility.
- G.C.H. Ehrensvard

The main thing isn't knowing whether you're right or wrong. That really doesn't matter... The main thing is to keep people from bothering you... The rest is eyewash...
- Louis-Ferdinand Celine