

extra-textual material

The Urth list — 5 messages, 4 voices, 11 Mar 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3892>

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maa32 — 11 Mar 2003, 18:15

I am very interested in the possibility that Silk is a clone of Typhon (or Malrubius) and that Severian and Ymar are genetically related. However, I think ascribing too much weight to details in "King Jesus" might be potentially misleading. Has Wolfe even read it? Myths tend to survive in fragments that are often changed and undergo misprision - perhaps the creative misreadings of these old ideas experienced something resembling convergent evolution, and the archetypal figures simply resemble each other since they are spawned from a common source instead of from a direct progression from Graves to Wolfe

Obviously a historical text like Soldier in the Mist can be better understood with the real historical documents in hand - like Herodutus, who I believe Wolfe mentions in his dedication. However, the Sun books are not truly historical works - (but they are still mythical, if that makes any sense).

If Wolfe had inscribed "for Robert Graves" or given some other direct evidence that he had been toying with the ideas of King Jesus explicitly, then we could gladly make the comparison and use the earlier work to make intertextual interpretations possible, perhaps even likely.

Which is not to say that the relationships you see aren't really there - it's just that I don't think we can make use of one novel to make definitive claims on the interpretation of another without careful consideration. Remember that Wolfe is, first and foremost, a writer - and a writer needs to write an interesting, creative story more than he needs to look up ways to rip off descriptions from an earlier writer. Remember that somewhere in there Wolfe creates new things - some of his descriptions are made up on the spot, or else he is simply enacting the task of Pierre Menard, rewriting the story of the man whose very life has become a dream of the stories that he reads.

Marc Aramini

James Wynn — 11 Mar 2003, 18:48 · follows maa32

Marc queries:

However, I think ascribing too much weight to details in "King Jesus" might be potentially misleading. Has Wolfe even read it?

Crush responds:

I'd say Don has found the smoking gun that Wolfe HAS read 'King Jesus': That is, the color of Silk's and Jesus' beard being explicitly referred in 'King Jesus' as 'Typhonic'. There are plenty of textual clues associating Silk with Jesus.

Don has not only associated Silk with Typhon but provided an explanation for the mystery of why Silk was ****encouraged**** to have himself scanned into the Mainframe and attached to Pas. That Silk is a ****clone**** of Typhon is problematic - considering how Wolfe has presented clones in tFHOC it is yet to be shown that Wolfe would consider a doner-clone relationship to be a

father-son relationship. He would more likely consider clones to be essentially the same person. But a father-son model would definitely parallel that in 'King Jesus'.

Now, if Silk were the son of Typhon and Echidna, it would fit thematically since there are even more clues associating Silk with Hephaestus, the Maker God; which brings us back to Jesus, The Word, who made all things and without him nothing was made (John 1:3).

The question of whether Severian is an heir of Typhon is IMO much less well established. That, in 'King Jesus', Jesus was the son of Herod who was into the worship of Set is not the same as Jesus being a son of Set. There's ****something**** there but it could be that only that Wolfe is sipping from this particular well of Graves' rather than swimming in it.

-- Crush

Lisa Schaffer-Doggett — 12 Mar 2003, 06:19 · follows James Wynn

On Tuesday, March 11, 2003, at 10:15 AM, maa32 wrote:
I am very interested in the possibility that Silk is a clone of Typhon (or Malrubius) and that Severian and Ymar are genetically related. However, I think ascribing too much weight to details in "King Jesus" might be potentially misleading. Has Wolfe even read it? Myths tend to survive in fragments that are often changed and undergo misprision - perhaps the creative misreadings of these old ideas experienced something resembling convergent evolution, and the archetypal figures simply resemble each other since they are spawned from a common source instead of from a direct progression from Graves to Wolfe

Don replies:

Though I've been guilty of relying too heavily on Graves for my arguments in the past, I think that these latest claims are based pretty solidly on clues within the text themselves (typhonic beard notwithstanding.) However, I personally think that Wolfe has read KJ.

Lisa Schaffer-Doggett — 12 Mar 2003, 06:29 · follows Lisa Schaffer-Doggett

On Tuesday, March 11, 2003, at 10:48 AM, James Wynn wrote:
The question of whether Severian is an heir of Typhon is IMO much less well established. That, in 'King Jesus', Jesus was the son of Herod who was into the worship of Set is not the same as Jesus being a son of Set. There's ****something**** there but it could be that only that Wolfe is sipping from this particular well of Graves' rather than swimming in it.

Aw contrail mon friar,

My assertion that Severian is the son of Typhon has very little to do with the KJ parallel. I think the story of Frog establishes pretty well the identity of Ymar as the son of Typhon and there are way too many parallels between Severian and Ymar for me to think that they are anything but

the same person (genetically). Btw, I should have pointed out that in KJ, Herod tries to position himself as an incarnation of Set/Typhon, going so far as to wear the golden ass mask of Dora in the Holy of Holies. But the KJ reference was only a minor reference to the thematic strength of my argument. It was never meant to carry the whole thing.

Don

Josh Geller — 12 Mar 2003, 06:34 · follows Lisa Schaffer-Doggett

On Tue, 11 Mar 2003, Lisa Schaffer-Doggett wrote:

Don replies:

Though I've been guilty of relying too heavily on Graves for my arguments in the past, I think that these latest claims are based pretty solidly on clues within the text themselves (typhonic beard notwithstanding.) However, I personally think that Wolfe has read KJ.

I would be shocked if he hadn't.

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