

Religion in the BotNS

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 12 Mar 1998

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C R Culver — 12 Mar 1998, 03:16

Said Peter S:

The part where he goes through Thrax holding the Claw aloft recalls `I am the light of the world' <

This section is hard for me to interpret religiously, because Severian does release the floodgates, killing the prisoners in the jacal. That is, IMHO, not in any way Christlike.

Continues Peter:

I'm sure there must be other such. I hope someone can wax lyrical on the relationship of the Pancreator, Increate <

I notice 'Pancreator' is used historically, in God's role as Creator, and Increate is used in the present, explaining a God who watches, remotely, though.

One interesting thing I did notice is Severian's reviving of Miles. The word Miles is Latin for soldier (actually, it is nominative or accusative plural), but it also can mean "thousand." How many people are in a Roman legion? A thousand, or some variation of it? Thus, Severian was able to revive Jonas, but casting out his demons (that is, his personal demons, or his pain over not having Jolenta), just as Christ, in Luke, drove the demons out of the man who identified himself as Legion. I'm pretty much thinking out loud right now, so don't take this too seriously.

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"Ignorance, that light of fools steers a wayward path"

-Brendan Perry

Peter Stephenson — 12 Mar 1998, 09:08 · follows C R Culver

C R Culver wrote:

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This section is hard for me to interpret religiously, because Severian does release the floodgates, killing the prisoners in the jacal. That is, IMHO, not in any way Christlike.

Even if this isn't what happens in this particular episode, it's certainly striking how quickly Severian `falls off' in any episode where he is somehow fleetingly put up against Christ... In the first example I hazarded, which looked a bit like Christ before Pilate, the chapter ends with Severian demonstrating his torturing skills on one of the soldiers (at the lochage's suggestion, it should be said). In the last, he ends up by killing Typhon/Piaton (though if he's somehow the Devil in this episode then my weak theology has run out of exegetic steam). These sort of

references seem like little pieces in a mosaic, which is a suitably Byzantine image.

(Which reminds me I've been meaning to ask about some possible relationships between Wolfe and Yeats...)

Peter