

One Ship: reply

The Urth list — 9 messages, 7 voices, 16 Aug 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4165>

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Ashley Crill — 16 Aug 2003, 08:36

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On Saturday, August 16, 2003, at 01:36 AM, Ashley Crill wrote:

One point in favor. :)

This is correct but it's a corrupt symbolism.

Neutral point. : /

The BotNS has considerable evidence that genetically engineered animals predate Typhon's rule. In addition there's the smilodon in UotNS when Severian is imprisoned by Typhon. One point against. :(

Second point slightly in favor. :)

-Why do you believe the Whorl travels slower than the speed of light? I don't see this indicated anywhere. Arguments about the date when the Whorl was launched and when Typhon reigned don't apply if the Whorl travels as fast as Tzadkiel's ship.

I'm not qualified to debate this but I think the general consensus is that the Whorl was a sub light speed ship. But I personally think it somehow attained light speed or greater at some point. Still, a major second point against. :(

-The Chrasmologic Writings contain French and Latin because, A: Its a religious writing. B: It was written and the Whorl was launched far before Severian's time. Also, Latin is extant in Severian's day, along with Greek and Spanish.

It certainly exists in the Library.

-Chems wouldn't be found on Urth at all if they were invented on board the Ship. Reference Sidero's claims concerning this. Jonas was an exception, and he clearly came from the Ship rather than Urth.

There were many robots on Urth according to the story in the Wonders of Urth and Sky. They rounded us up and stuck us in the Matrix until John Connor came along and saved us.

James Jordan — 16 Aug 2003, 14:53 · follows Lisa Schaffer-Doggett

At 04:03 AM 8/16/2003, Don replied to:

On Saturday, August 16, 2003, at 01:36 AM, Ashley Crill wrote:

Anyway, I didn't intend the 'One Ship' idea to be particularly convincing. Its one of those fond oddball ideas that would be almost impossible to prove correct or incorrect. I also didn't take the Captain's statement about one ship as literal, though I didn't make that clear in my original message. The Captain seems to be speaking in some sort of poetical sense concerning the ideal of 'shiphood'. The strongest suggestion of this whole theory seems to be the fact that Gunnie has no idea what Cargo the Ship carries. She indicates that the Crew doesn't have access to the cargo holds at all, yet such holds must be unimaginably huge.

One point in favor. :)

-I agree with the the symbolic idea of the Ship as the Church. Its very plain. I might point out, however, that the Whorl carries the same symbology, only its 'heavenly destination' is Blue/Green rather than Yesod.

This is correct but it's a corrupt symbolism.

I think this might even be "two points in favor of parallelism." Sure Tzadkiel's ship is the only one of its kind, though archetypally related to all other ships. And what can the Cargo be but "souls being carried to heaven" in some SF sense, within the construct of the epic.

Satan is God's ape, said Luther, and doubtless many before and after him. Typhon is the Pancreator's ape. His ship also carries souls to his future hell, where he will somehow rule (as Pas, or as a revived Typhon, depending on where you think the Whorl is going).

Tzadkiel's Ship is the archetype. Whorl is one of countless ectypes, and in this case a wicked ectype, a slave ship.

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It certainly exists in the Library.

Are these languages extant? Don't forget Wolfe's ur-note at the very beginning of the whole cycle, that he has translated Severian's manuscript in ways that 20th century readers can identify with. The appearance of Latin, French, Spanish, Arabic, etc. need mean no more than that Wolfe has assigned these languages to correspond to various languages of the far "future"

(in whatever sense Urth is "future" to us). I'm not sure we can make anything out of the appearance of these languages in these books. All three of these epics are books that Wolfe has graciously translated for us.

Nutria

Roy C. Lackey — 16 Aug 2003, 17:53 · follows James Jordan

Ashley Crill wrote:

-Its true that Jonas and Sidero differ in ways from the Chems of the Whorl, but there are a variety of Chems that are constructed differently and serve different purposes. Contrast Maytera Marble with a Talos.<<

I assume that you meant a "Talus", not Dr. Talos. First of all, a talus is not a chem. A chem operates on nuclear power; a talus on fish oil. (EXODUS, 53) Second, taluses were made on the _Whorl_; chems were made on Urth. (ibid.)

-Chems wouldn't be found on Urth at all if they were invented on board the Ship. Reference Sidero's claims concerning this.<<

See above. Also, Hammerstone mentioned to Silk that chems were being stockpiled "for maybe twenty years" on Urth before being placed aboard the _Whorl_. (LAKE, ch. 9)

-Roy

matthew.malthouse — 18 Aug 2003, 08:58 · follows Roy C. Lackey

On 16/08/2003 09:36:33 "Ashley Crill" wrote:

-The Chrasologic Writings contain French and Latin because, A: Its a religious writing. B: It was written and the Whorl was launched far before Severian's time.

That I can go with easily enough if I had to.

Also, Latin is extant in Severian's day, along with Greek and Spanish.

Nope. An ancient language (epitomized by the inscriptions in the Atrium of Time) presented to us as Latin not because it is Latin but because it bears a similar relationship to Severian's tongue as Latin does to ours.

There is a general assumption that writing slows the change of language and the more widespread literacy, the larger the published corpus and the more durable and disparate the means of recording the slower changes will be.

Yet it is actually rather hard to demonstrate that this is in fact the case.

Take as an example Hindustani. A language formed over half a millennium from the Sanskrit rooted languages of the mid western Deccan and the Persian of the Muhguls.

Hindustani is grammatically indistinguishable from Urdu and Hindi. Technically all three are the same language. Or were.

But starting in the late c19 and formalized at the beginning of the c20 Hindustani was divided. Urdu re-acquired words of Persian origin while de-emphasizing Sanskrit based vocabulary. Hindi delved into Sanskrit adopting words to supplant Persian vocabulary.

One single century since this was formalized a grammatically identical, lexically identical language has been split to the point where spoken Urdu (eg from TV and radio broadcasts) has only 60 percent comprehension for Hindi speakers and Hindi - made more obscure by the flowery circumlocutions of classical Sanskrit - is only 40 percent comprehensible to Urdu speakers.

Should this rate of change persist the two languages are likely to be mutually incomprehensible within another 100 years. More divergent than classical and modern Greek. English is not immune, 400 year old Shakespeare needs occasional footnotes; 600 year old Chaucer needs entire explicative texts; American English and British English differ in lexicography and usage sufficiently to require a choice between them when installing a computer! French has hallowed institutions dedicated to preserving the immutability of the language yet Rabelais can be as obscure as Shakespeare and Chretien de Troyes needs translating. Castilian and American Spanish. Arabic in variations from Morocco to Syria.

Consider then the span of time between ourselves and Severian. Consider also the upheavals that are alluded to in the history. The likelihood is that if Greek, Latin, French, Spanish English or any other current language "existed" it would be as archeological artefacts as obscure and incomprehensible as Minoan / Archaean Linear A and Linear B.

Matthew

Michael Buice — 18 Aug 2003, 15:27 · follows matthew.malthouse

On Monday, August 18, 2003, at 03:58 AM,
matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk wrote:
American English and British English differ in
lexicography and usage sufficiently to require a choice between them
when
installing a computer!

Not to mention they had to "translate" that there Harry Potter for us colonials queuing up to purchase it. :)

Michael

Chris — 18 Aug 2003, 18:33 · follows Michael Buice

Excellent points.

Another possibility that occurs to me is that Typhon might have actually revived those languages (presumably from some ancient archive or lexicon) specifically for the people on the Whorl. We do know that he fiddled with their heads/memories.

Two reasons I can think of for this, though I'm sure there could be others. One is that he revived them because the structure of whatever language they use in his day doesn't lend itself well to the kind of archaic social controls he's putting in place (sort of the reverse of the direction Orwell anticipated). This isn't out of the realm of possibility but seems kind of hokey to me, and based on what Wolfe had to say about the Ascian language, I don't think he bought into the theory that would justify that.

The second reason would be practical - by making it so that the "cargo" could no longer read or speak the current tongue, he makes it more difficult for them to subvert the mission if they

should ever gain access to controls, instruments, or - Pas forbid - an instruction manual.

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Matthew

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Ashley Crill — 19 Aug 2003, 05:41 · follows Chris

On 16/08/2003 09:36:33 "Ashley Crill" wrote:

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I know that the inscription is not Latin, but Latin did exist in Severian's Urth. How? Ultan's library. The library was collected by Typhon out of writings from the past. If ancient Greek myths and a twenty-first century painting (the Astronaut) survived until Severian's day, then I'm sure that those ancient languages survived in written form in Ultan's library. Those languages do exist in Severian's day, even if noone speaks them. They are 'dead languages' that exist only in written form.

matthew.malthouse — 19 Aug 2003, 07:01 · follows Ashley Crill

On 18/08/2003 16:27:38 Michael Buice wrote:

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matthew.malthouse at guardian.co.uk wrote:

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lexicography and usage sufficiently to require a choice between them
when
installing a computer!

Not to mention they had to "translate" that there Harry Potter for us
colonials queuing up to purchase it. :)

Yeah. Someone thought you might not know what a philosopher was. Sheesh.

Matthew