

Clones of the Long Sun

The Urth list — 8 messages, 4 voices, 06 Sep 2003

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James Wynn — 06 Sep 2003, 19:07

As I see it, the chief benefit of the Typhon Clone explanation originally put forward by Don is the number of narrative puzzles it answers, and that it explains many of Wolfe's literary choices.

If you never wondered why Silk was invited to by the Mainframe operators to be scanned and merged with Pas.... or if it doesn't seem odd to you that Kypris, Echidna, and Scylla would back as Calde' an obscure augur of the poorest mantaeon in a Whorl-city that has relinquished proper worship (human sacrifice... or if it is not striking to you that Silk has a "typhonic" beard (reddish-blond) as Grave's (an important Wolfe source) called it in "King Jesus"... or if any significance to Silk sharing in many of the same archetypal references as Pas and Typhon fly right by you...

...well, then recognizing that Silk is a clone of Typhon would only convolute things for you. If those bits seem peculiar or significant then Silk-as-Typhon's-clone clears up a lot of things.

The danger as I see it is that there are a lot merging and confabulating of identities in the Long Sun and it is too easy to try to resolve them all with one more clone. Wolfe has shown himself too clever to over-use a single method let alone such an obvious one. First he has bios merging with chems, and then separately he has chems merging with bios. He has a boy merging with his teacher. He has Mainframe gods merging in various ways with humanity, and according to Silk, one of them merging identities with the real God. He has an alien monster merging self-interest with the best attributes of humanity to the point that he became a saintly old man sacrificing his life to guide his people to Green so they can be food so his race can further internalize humanity. In the NS we have people merging with an alien monster by being devoured and people merging with people through eating them (once again self-interest merged with altruism as the beast gave its life to protect its food/family). In tFHoC we have clones, yes, but we also have alien "abos" becoming and replacing humans (has anyone pointed out that VRT and Number 5 share dreams as though they are twins?).

I'm not sure yet why or how Auk is Silk or Severian. But I doubt it will be only another clone. It will be some new method or a clever twist on some method already used.

-- Crush

James Jordan — 06 Sep 2003, 22:31 · follows James Wynn

At 02:07 PM 9/6/2003, Crush wrote:

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If you never wondered why Silk was invited to by the Mainframe operators to be scanned and merged with Pas....

I'm not anticlone, but my own guess when I read the books, which I'll offer for rebuttal, is that Silk is a son of Typhon. In Mainframe, Goodpas, Silk, and Kypris form a model of the Trinity, with Kypris as Love (and Love is the Holy Spirit in Augustinian theology). And it appears to me that Silk as a son of Pas would just as well account for the other things you listed, though perhaps not for everything that Don or someone else might point out:

or if it doesn't seem odd to you that Kypris, Echidna, and Scylla would back as Calde' an obscure augur of the poorest mantaeon in a Whorl-city that has relinquished proper worship (human sacrifice...

sure, Silk is the son. Biblically, the Father intends to make the Son into the king, not to be king Himself; and:

or if it is not striking to you that Silk has a "typhonic" beard (reddish-blond) as Grave's (an important Wolfe source) called it in "King Jesus"...

sure, Silk is Jesus, and hence son, and:

or if any significance to Silk sharing in many of the same archetypal references as Pas and Typhon fly right by you...

would a father-son relationship account for these? If Wolfe had in mind that the Trinity is One as well as Three, the identity of archetypes could be accounted for that way, perhaps.

The danger as I see it is that there are a lot merging and confabulating of identities in the Long Sun and it is too easy to try to resolve them all with one more clone.

Yes. That's been my reservation also.

Wolfe has shown himself too clever to over-use a single method let alone such an obvious one. First he has bios merging with chems, and then separately he has chems merging with bios. He has a boy merging with his teacher. He has Mainframe gods merging in various ways with humanity, and according to Silk, one of them merging identities with the real God.

Don't recall this, unless you're thinking of the Outsider as linked to someone in Mainframe. Who? I thought the whole point was that the Outsider is ... outside.

He has an alien monster merging self-interest with the best attributes of humanity to the point that he became a saintly old man sacrificing his life to guide his people to Green so they can be food so his race can further internalize humanity.

Very interesting spin on Q. I like it.

In the NS we have people merging with an alien monster by being devoured and people merging with people through eating them (once again self-interest merged with altruism as the beast gave its life to protect its food/family).

All of which is not to mention simple thematic parallels that may not indicate any kind of physical/psychical merging; and the possibility that the Outsider's Spirit is creating bonds and "mergings."

FWIW

Nutria

On Saturday, September 6, 2003, at 03:31 PM, James Jordan wrote:
At 02:07 PM 9/6/2003, Crush wrote:

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Yes, but (according to orthodoxy) the Father and the Son are the same. As I pointed out, by making Silk a clone of Typhon he is both Typhon (genetically) and his son ("born" through the action of the original). And Pas is the (un)holy spirit - also the same.

Don

James Wynn — 06 Sep 2003, 23:16 · follows Lisa Schaffer-Doggett

Nutria posits:

Silk is a son of Typhon.

Crush responds:

This tact has merit. There are very good thematic reasons which you have not mentioned for Silk to be a son of Typhon and (the original) Echidna. But your theory seems to be that he's the son of Kypris. There are arguments with this theory, but I can quickly come up with responses to them as well. The most tangible problem is that yours is more cumbersome than the Typhon-clone theory. Still, I wonder if there's any suggestion of it in Lemur's account of Typhon's family to Silk and Crane...

Nutria said:

Don't recall [one of the Mainframe gods merging identities with the real God] unless you're thinking of the Outsider as linked to someone in

Mainframe. Who? I thought the whole point was that the Outsider is ... outside.

Crush responds:

Silk says that Kypris has in a sense *become* the Outsider. If she were erased, then in time Thelxie would become Him. Silk says that Pike was enlightened; that he was promised help for the mantaeon. It would take some work to lay out an elaborate proof of this but I assert that this occurred during or before his sacrifice of the "rabbit that he himself had bought." Well, who receives sacrifices of rabbits? Kypris, of course. The sacrifice occurred after his coupling with Rose.

This is another mark for your theory since it would make Silk, in a sense, the son of the Outsider -- at least, having been *made* a son of the Outsider.

Nutria said:

All of which is not to mention simple thematic parallels that may not indicate any kind of physical/psychical merging; and the possibility that the Outsider's Spirit is creating bonds and "mergings."

I was once inclined to presume that Wolfe's thematic parrallels were primarily of "spiritual" or "thematic" value. I've been convinced otherwise during the last year. I don't think Wolfe works that way. Sometimes he has little jokes, but they are truely *little* jokes.

-- Crush

Lisa Schaffer-Doggett — 06 Sep 2003, 23:16 · follows James Wynn

On Saturday, September 6, 2003, at 12:07 PM, James Wynn wrote:
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or if any significance to Silk sharing in many of the same archetypal references as Pas and Typhon fly right by you...

...well, then recognizing that Silk is a clone of Typhon would only convolute things for you. If those bits seem peculiar or significant then Silk-as-Typhon's-clone clears up a lot of things.

Yes, I think it really is hard to ignore.

The danger as I see it is that there are a lot merging and confabulating of identities in the Long Sun and it is too easy to try to resolve them all with one more clone. Wolfe has shown himself too clever to over-use a single method let alone such an obvious one.

I agree with this but I do believe that in addition to Silk, it makes perfect sense for Typhon to have placed his family on the Whorl in embryonic form, considering that he took the time to have the nasty buggers uploaded as gods in the first place. Whether GW has taken the narrative time to have them all in tBotLS is another matter. Regardless, that would only be their secondary identity, just as Silk is not really the Typhon that Severian meets. I think that Wolfe's work defies simple reductionism: Silk may be Typhon but he is still Silk, just as we all carry many metaphors throughout our existence. Even if there were only ten actual characters in the entire cycle (something I don't believe) and every other character was a clone or copy of these

ten it would only be one level of a very rich narrative. The real onion is in it's layers.

Don

Lisa Schaffer-Doggett — 06 Sep 2003, 23:29 · follows Lisa Schaffer-Doggett

On Saturday, September 6, 2003, at 04:16 PM, James Wynn wrote:
I was once inclined to presume that Wolfe's thematic parrallels were primarily of "spiritual" or "thematic" value. I've been convinced otherwise during the last year. I don't think Wolfe works that way. Sometimes he has little jokes, but they are truely *little* jokes.

-- Crush

Like the moon being made of green cheese in tBotNS.

irrelevantly yours

Don

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 08 Sep 2003, 13:33 · follows Lisa Schaffer-Doggett

Don D. wrote:
Yes, but (according to orthodoxy) the Father and the Son are the same.

Well, it's a little more complex than that. They are One, but not The Same. That is, they are distinct persons who share a single substance, being, and Godhead. I'm not prepared to explain all that right now, but that's the actual orthodox Catholic - and, I'm pretty sure, the orthodox Orthodox - position.

--Dan'I

Don Doggett — 09 Sep 2003, 01:15 · follows Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

On Monday, September 8, 2003, at 06:33 AM, Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:
Don D. wrote:

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--Dan'I

Let me rephrase and hopefully not bumble:

They are different aspects but the Son is God, not of a lesser order and there are not two Gods, or three including the Holy Spirit. It's God as the Father, God as the Son, and God as Love, but always the big G. Not Zeus, Apollo, and Eros(first one to my mind) though I guess GW is tying all gods to the Godhead (isn't that CS Lewis' argument? Paganism paving the way?). But that's the analogy I was shooting for and the only way I can see that working in the corporeal world is

through Pas, Typhon and Silk having the same base identity.

Don