

Ship Citadel

The Urth list — 8 messages, 6 voices, 06 May 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4585>

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b sharp — 06 May 2006, 04:16

Well, interesting. Roy's reference to Urth XXXV was illuminating actually in that an officer tells Severian he is being taken, "To the old port. One of the hulks there has been fitted up to hold prisoners". So perhaps the Citadel is constructed of more than one old ship. But spaceship it is, as evidence by these other passages:

Shadow III: Description of the Matachin Tower- "(for the examination room was the propulsive chamber of the original structure)".

Shadow XI: Description of Severian's new room after elevation- "because I was the most junior of the journeymen, the least desirable in the tower, a portless cubbyhole".

Urth XXXVII: Description of the port in Severian's cell (Roche's future bedchamber)- "its broad, smooth flanges, of a shaped I had never considered, had clearly been intended to hold the void at bay"

I think there are one or two more I can't find scattered in the text. I wonder if perhaps the many towers of the citadel were made from the former giant masts. Just speculation there.

-Bsharp

thalassocrat at nym.hush.com — 06 May 2006, 06:11 · follows b sharp

On Sat, 06 May 2006 14:16:34 +1000 b sharp
<bsharporflat at hotmail.com> wrote:
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Actually, I think it is very clear that the individual "towers" in the Citadel are spaceships. The Citadel itself isn't.

Duncan Truter — 06 May 2006, 11:59 · in reply to thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

there's a part where he compares his tower to other structures that were not meant to fly (to paraphrase) in one of the first four books... I can't remember :)

On 5/6/06, thalassocrat at nym.hush.com <thalassocrat at nym.hush.com> wrote:

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Rex Racer — 06 May 2006, 13:09 · in reply to thalassocrat at nym.hush.com

Yes. The supporting evidence after the bit you quite applies to individual "landers" that have
been converted to towers, landers/spaceships that were at rest on a regular old space port. The
Citadel is a collection of towers and walls, not a monolithic construct studded with other ships.

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Macronaut — 06 May 2006, 18:18 · in reply to Duncan Truter

There's also a reference in UOTNS to the Beast Tower having originally been a "Zoetic
Transport."

Macronaut

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Roy C. Lackey — 06 May 2006, 18:40 · follows Macronaut

Bsharp wrote:

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The above passages prove only that the Matachin Tower was a spaceship. More than once in the Urth cycle Severian dreams/imagines the old spaceships blasting off into space. Somewhere he speculates that, ancient as the Citadel may be, the tunnels beneath it antedate it. There is no doubt about it; most of the "towers" in the Citadel are individual spaceships.

But if you want more direct proof:

"The Citadel itself was visible now as a whole, and for all its vastness seemed a glittering flock

fluttering upon the hill, its thousand metal towers ready to leap into the air at a word." CITADEL, chapter XXXVII

And in the next chapter he went looking for Valeria from above.

"I asked the castellan for a map. After much searching he produced one, large and old, cracked in many places. It showed the curtain wall whole, but the names of the towers were not the names I knew - or that the castellan knew, for that matter - and there were towers on that map that are not in the Citadel, and towers in the Citadel that were not on that map. " I ordered a flier then, and for half a day soared among the towers. No doubt I saw the place I sought many times, but if so I did not recognize it."

The map obviously dated to a time when the Citadel was still being used as a spaceport.

-Roy

b sharp — 07 May 2006, 03:09 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Okay, some misunderstanding. I thought it was being argued that no part of the citadel was a spaceship. It seems the consensus is that only parts of it were spaceships (especially if Duncan Truter's citation can be found and it does sound familiar to me).

Roy C. Lackey — 07 May 2006, 06:11 · follows b sharp

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He must be thinking of a long paragraph in chapter XXX of CLAW, when Severian was thinking of his childhood visit to the witches' tower, where he first saw Merryn. His description of that tower shows it to be merely a tall building, after the fashion of modern skyscrapers. It lacked the solidity he was used to in his old spaceship home.

-Roy