

Tzadkiel's ship

The Urth list — 21 messages, 10 voices, 28 Nov 2007

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4936>

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Tony Ellis — 28 Nov 2007, 14:10

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

The ship on Sev's tomb *is* Tzadkiel's ship; at one point, it is implied that there is only one ship of this sort in the Universe.

And Jeff Wilson:

Do you have a cite supporting this? A bas relief of the Tzadkiel (polygon cross-section, with masts on all sides) would not really resemble a single water vessel.

Ah, but it doesn't have to resemble a water vessel, does it? In TBotNS, the word 'ship' is used interchangeably for sailing vessels and spacecraft. A ship on a coat of arms could be either.

The fact that we're told this armorial ship is 'a ship volant' is a punning clue that in this case, it's probably a spaceship. Since Tzadkiel's ship plays such a key role in Severian's life, it seems a pretty safe bet that it's meant to be Tzad's.

The whole "The Captain says there is only one ship" business, on the other hand, has never made much sense to me, as we've been told of at least two different (space)ships previously. The idea that humanity forged their great space empire solely by hitching a lift on someone else's spacecraft doesn't exactly sound plausible, either.

Matthew King — 28 Nov 2007, 14:52 · in reply to Tony Ellis

On Nov 28, 2007, at 8:10 AM, Tony Ellis wrote:

The whole "The Captain says there is only one ship" business, on the other hand, has never made much sense to me...

This suggests to me that the ship represents the catholic church. Having thought that, I was sure that Nutria must have said something similar, and I found this in the archives:

<http://www.urth.net/whorl/archives/v0006/0361.shtml>

matthew at calmeilles.co.uk — 28 Nov 2007, 15:53 · in reply to Tony Ellis

tonyellis69 at btopenworld.com wrote:

The whole "The Captain says there is only one ship" business, on the other hand, has never made much sense to me, as we've been told of at least two different (space)ships previously. The idea that humanity forged their great space empire solely by hitching a lift on someone else's spacecraft doesn't exactly sound plausible, either.

Undoubtedly there are other types of space ship. First (in narrative sequence) are the golden age of SF style ships the hulks of which form Severian's Matachin tower, the Witches tower and presumably the other "towers" of the Citadel - which is itself referred to as the "old spaceport" at one point.

Then there are the ships by which Typhon returned to Urth - which might be
Second is the ship that the Heirodules descend to Baldander's tower in although I seem to recall some doubt that this was a really a space ship. Was it not implied at some point that it was a fake, or at most a tender from Tad's ship?

My take is that humanity undoubtedly made its empire "teeming among the stars" with ships that we'd deem (in SFnal terms) as very conventional while Tad's ship is a fantastic object being able not only to travel the corridors of time but also pass the boundaries of Briah.

Given the isolation of Urth from the galaxy it's quite possible that not only is Tad's ship unique in making the voyage between universes (and passing itself many, many times in doing so) but is also the only ship seen in Urth's skies for many generations. Not a ship but The Ship.

Matthew

Andy Robertson — 28 Nov 2007, 16:08 · in reply to Tony Ellis

Tony Ellis writes:

The whole "The Captain says there is only one ship" business, on the other hand, has never made much sense to me, as we've been told of at least two different (space)ships previously. The idea that humanity forged their great space empire solely by hitching a lift on someone else's spacecraft doesn't exactly sound plausible, either.

While not disagreeing with previous responses, I want to point out that the Ship may be (in its own timeline) older than Briah but may still have its origin in Briah, because of its ability to travel back and forth in time.

Indeed it may have started as an ordinary "space ship" of human manufacture and been slowly worked to its currevnt stature through many subjective eternitie.

- hartshorn

Jeff Wilson — 28 Nov 2007, 20:41 · in reply to Tony Ellis

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

The fact that we're told this armorial ship is 'a ship volant' is a punning clue that in this case, it's probably a spaceship. Since Tzadkiel's ship plays such a key role in Severian's life, it seems a pretty safe bet that it's meant to be Tzad's.

Volant means flying, but could figuratively mean the ship is depicted moving swiftly under sail power, vide The Flying Dutchman.

Jeff Wilson — 28 Nov 2007, 21:12 · in reply to Tony Ellis

"Tony Ellis" <tonyellis69 at btopenworld.com>

And Jeff Wilson:

Do you have a cite supporting this? A bas relief of the Tzadkiel (polygon cross-section, with masts on all sides) would not really resemble a single water vessel.

Ah, but it doesn't have to resemble a water vessel, does it? In TBotNS, the word 'ship' is used interchangeably for sailing vessels and spacecraft. A ship on a coat of arms could be either.

But it has to visually resemble *some* kind of ship to be recognizable as such, and...

The whole "The Captain says there is only one ship" business, on the other hand, has never made much sense to me, as we've been told of at least two different (space)ships previously. The idea that humanity forged their great space empire solely by hitching a lift on someone else's spacecraft doesn't exactly sound plausible, either.

Apparently, there is only one capital-s Ship, distinguished from other, lesser ships by its Inire-mirror sails that propel it through the void and between Briah and Yesod. These sails resemble conventional rigging, but sprout from all outer surfaces of The Ship, so that a picture of The Ship would look more like a bottle-brush than a sailing vessel, or any of the other airborne or spaceborne craft described. Severian-the-Autarch might still call such a picture "a ship" in his writing of the incident, but the actions and thoughts he attributes to Severian-the-boy are consistent with seeing a drawing resembling watercraft visible nearby or in books and art available to him.

Tony Ellis — 28 Nov 2007, 21:37 · follows Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson wrote:

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

The fact that we're told this armorial ship is 'a ship volant' is a punning clue that in this case, it's probably a spaceship.

I'm not sure Dan'I would thank you for putting my words in his mouth :-)

Volant means flying, but could figuratively mean the ship is depicted moving swiftly under sail power, vide The Flying Dutchman.

The ship is on a coat of arms, and volant has a special meaning in heraldry: 'depicted as in flight'. Or even 'with wings spread as in flight', I see after a little Googling.

For all I know Wolfe had in mind a sailing ship with bird wings on it. Or a 'conventional' spaceship with wings and booster rockets. I don't think it matters. In a book where a deliberate ambiguity is created between sailing ships and spaceships, and where the whole story is leading up to an all-important space journey the hero will make, I think it's a pretty good bet that for 'ship volant' on his coat of arms we're supposed to read 'spaceship'.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 28 Nov 2007, 21:51 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Nov 28, 2007 12:41 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

The fact that we're told this armorial ship is 'a ship volant' is a punning clue that in this case, it's probably a spaceship. Since Tzadkiel's ship plays such a key role in Severian's life, it seems a pretty safe bet that it's meant to be Tzad's.

Volant means flying, but could figuratively mean the ship is depicted moving swiftly under sail power, vide The Flying Dutchman.

Actually, that wasn't me, but I agree with what was said. "Volant" in heraldry most definitely *does* mean "flying," and is not to be taken figuratively - indeed, none of the descriptive terms in heraldry are to be taken figuratively, as they are intended to instruct an artist exactly how to paint the arms. If the ship were in water, it would be "natant."

There is no reasonable question that the ship in question is a spaceship. I think it quite clear that (this being Sev's tomb, or one of them), it is Tzadkiel's ship, but I can see some room for debate - i.e., it *could* be a ship of the sort in the Citadel, a sign of Autarchial (or pre-Autarchial) power.

(If the old "Sev is Typhon's son/clone/etc." theories still have any adherents, btw, this would be a minor point in favor, modulo the suggestion that the ship on the tomb is one of those Typhon once commanded.)

Cheers.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes, writer, trainer, bon vivant

<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

<http://www.danehyoakes.com>

I am miserable, he is miserable,

We are miserable.

Can't we have a party? Would he rather have a party?

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 28 Nov 2007, 22:24 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Nov 28, 2007 1:12 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Severian-the-Autarch might

still call such a picture "a ship" in his writing of the incident, but the actions and thoughts he attributes to Severian-the-boy are consistent with seeing a drawing resembling watercraft visible nearby or in books and art available to him.

But we are given to understand that people of Sev's time don't even distinguish between riverine craft, pelagic craft, and cosmic craft - they are all "ships" to these people, and you might "sail" to Lune as easily as to Bes Pelargic.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes, writer, trainer, bon vivant

<http://www.livejournal.com/users/sturgeonslawyer>

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I am miserable, he is miserable,

We are miserable.

Can't we have a party? Would he rather have a party?

Jeff Wilson — 29 Nov 2007, 00:06 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On Nov 28, 2007 1:12 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Severian-the-Autarch might

still call such a picture "a ship" in his writing of the incident, but the actions and thoughts he attributes to Severian-the-boy are consistent with seeing a drawing resembling watercraft visible nearby or in books and art available to him.

But we are given to understand that people of Sev's time don't even distinguish between riverine craft, pelagic craft, and cosmic craft - they are all "ships" to these people, and you might "sail" to Lune as easily as to Bes Pelargic.

Then the ship on the tomb could be a picture of any thing remotely resembling a non-wheeled vehicle?

Mark Millman — 29 Nov 2007, 01:14 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Dear Mr. Wilson:

On Wednesday 28 November 2007, you wrote:

earlier, you'd written:

Severian-the-Autarch might still call such a picture "a ship" in his writing of the incident, but the actions and thoughts he attributes to Severian-the-boy are consistent with seeing a drawing resembling watercraft visible nearby or in books and art available to him.

But we are given to understand that people of Sev's time don't even distinguish between riverine craft, pelagic craft, and cosmic craft - they are all "ships" to these people, and you might "sail" to Lune as easily as to Bes Pelargic.

Then the ship on the tomb could be a picture of any thing remotely resembling a non-wheeled vehicle?

No; it's unlikely, for example, that the vehicle in question is a flyer, as Severian distinguishes those quite clearly from ships.

I suspect that "ship volant" is meant, in this case, to imply that the ship bears a full spread of sail or something close to it, so it's also unlikely to be an oared ship, such as the thalamegus (I believe) that Severian encounters on Gyll.

Heraldic art, as you're no doubt aware, is not remarkable for its subtlety. It seems very likely that the sails are prominently featured, and in such a way that the result does not resemble a bottle-brush. Whether or not they obscure the hull is another question; but it may not be a relevant one.

Recall also that the torturers' apprentices are relatively well educated, and that Severian possesses an unusually tenacious memory. By the time he encounters the tomb, or at least by the time from which he recounts the memory, he may well have seen, and having seen will remember, images of spacegoing ships.

Best,

Mark Millman

brunians at brunians.org — 29 Nov 2007, 02:29 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I picture it as a polygonal hull with masts on all sides.

On Nov 28, 2007 1:12 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Severian-the-Autarch might still call such a picture "a ship" in his writing of the incident, but the actions and thoughts he attributes to Severian-the-boy are consistent with

seeing a drawing resembling watercraft visible nearby or in books and art available to him.

But we are given to understand that people of Sev's time don't even distinguish between riverine craft, pelagic craft, and cosmic craft - they are all "ships" to these people, and you might "sail" to Lune as easily as to Bes Pelargic.

Then the ship on the tomb could be a picture of any thing remotely resembling a non-wheeled vehicle?

Jeff Wilson — 29 Nov 2007, 04:53 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

On Nov 28, 2007 12:41 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com
<mailto:jwilson at io.com>> wrote:

> Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

> The fact that we're told this armorial ship is 'a ship volant' is a
> punning clue that in this case, it's probably a spaceship. Since
> Tzadkiel's ship plays such a key role in Severian's life, it seems a
> pretty safe bet that it's meant to be Tzad's.

Volant means flying, but could figuratively mean the ship is depicted moving swiftly under sail power, vide The Flying Dutchman.

Actually, that wasn't me, but I agree with what was said. "Volant" in heraldry most definitely **does** mean "flying," and is not to be taken figuratively - indeed, none of the descriptive terms in heraldry are to be taken figuratively, as they are intended to instruct an artist exactly how to paint the arms. If the ship were in water, it would be "natant."

If "ship" can come to include "rockets and four masters and magical space time machines that traffic with other universes" over millenia, why must "volant" remain fixed in stone? If you insist on strictly historical heraldry, "a ship volant" is as meaningless a device as "a serpent rampant"; you can't draw it because historical ships have no wings any more than historical serpents had feet.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Mark Millman — 29 Nov 2007, 05:09 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Dear Mr. Wilson:

On Saturday 28 November 2007, you wrote:
Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:

Actually, that wasn't me, but I agree with what was said. "Volant" in heraldry most definitely **does** mean "flying," and is not to be taken figuratively - indeed, none of the descriptive terms in heraldry are to be taken figuratively, as

they are intended to instruct an artist exactly how to paint the arms. If the ship were in water, it would be "natant."

If "ship" can come to include "rockets and four masters and magical space time machines that traffic with other universes" over millenia, why must "volant" remain fixed in stone? If you insist on strictly historical heraldry, "a ship volant" is as meaningless a device as "a serpent rampant"; you can't draw it because historical ships have no wings any more than historical serpents had feet.

Not so; a ship volant would show no waterline, while a ship natant would.

Best,

Mark Millman

Jeff Wilson — 29 Nov 2007, 05:31 · in reply to Mark Millman

Mark Millman wrote:

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Heraldic art, as you're no doubt aware, is not remarkable for its subtlety.

Rather, it is subtle about different things than non-heraldic illustration. The relative position of heraldic animals' body parts, for example, conveys considerable information, comparable with or greater than the appearance of the overall animal itself.

It seems very likely that the sails are prominently featured, and in such a way that the result does not resemble a bottle-brush. Whether or not they obscure the hull is another question; but it may not be a relevant one.

Recall also that the torturers' apprentices are relatively well educated, and that Severian possesses an unusually tenacious memory. By the time he encounters the tomb, or at least by the time from which he recounts the memory, he may well have seen, and having seen will remember, images of spacegoing ships.

But the Tzadkiel would be radically different in plan from other spacegoing ships. The statement that "there's only one Ship" would support this. The outer portion would more closely resemble the deck and masts of a seagoing ship, or rather several seagoing ships bundled with keels together.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

matthew at calmeilles.co.uk — 29 Nov 2007, 10:44 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

jwilson at io.com wrote:

historical heraldry, "a ship volant" is as meaningless a device as "a serpent rampant";

Vide Poe, E A. ;-)

Matthew

Stanislaus — 29 Nov 2007, 17:16 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Remember that heraldry works by symbolism. In good heraldry you don't use naturalistic depictions. The whole idea is to have a picture which can be adequately described by words, so that any particular reproduction of it (by an artist working only from the description) would be identifiable. In heraldry it is the description which is important. A particular picture painted by a particular artist has no independent meaning, and any rendering, provided it follows the rules, is as good as another.

If you use one word to mean both sea and spaceships, you would use only one symbol to mean both - simply because your painter would have no idea which one you meant. If "ship volant" is a standard heraldic description (and it looks like it) it would be depicted in a standard manner - as a "heraldic ship" (probably some kind of sailing ship).

Eg, that is why you have heraldic animals - they often started as inaccurate descriptions of normal animals and got codified. Eg heraldic panther:

<http://www.crwflags.com/fotw/flags/at-st.html>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panther_\(legendary_creature\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panther_(legendary_creature))

"In heraldry the panther is commonly used in a form known as the Panther Incensed. In this form the panther is depicted with flames coming from its mouth and ears, representing the panther's sweet odor. "

This is taken from the symbolic description of panther in the Physiologus:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/14529/14529-h/14529-h.htm>

"Many, yea numberless, are the tribes throughout the world whose natures we can not rightly expound nor their multitudes reckon, so immense are the swarms of birds and earth-treading animals wherever water, the roaring ocean, the surge of salt billows, encompasses the smiling bosom of earth.

We have heard about one marvelous kind of wild beast which inhabits, in lands far off, a domain renowned among men, rejoicing there in his home amid the mountain-caves. This beast is called panther, as the learned among the children of men report in their books concerning that lonely wanderer.

He is a friend, bountiful in kindness, to every one save only the dragon; with him he always lives at enmity by means of every injury he can inflict.

He is a bewitching animal, marvelously beautiful with every color. Just as, according to men holy in spirit, Joseph's coat was variegated with hues of every shade, each shining before the sons of men brighter and more perfect than another, so does the color of this beast blaze with every diversity, gleaming in wondrous wise so clear and fair that each tint is ever lovelier than the next, glows more enchanting in its splendor, more rare, more beauteous, and more strange. He has a nature all his own, so gentle and so calm is it. Kind, attractive, and friendly, he has no thought of doing harm to any save the envenomed foe, his ancient adversary of whom I spoke. When, delighting in a feast, he has partaken of food, ever at the end of the meal he betakes himself to his resting-place, a hidden retreat among the mountain-caves; there the champion of his race, overcome by sleep, abandons himself to slumber for the space of three nights. Then the dauntless one, replenished with vigor, straightway arises from sleep when the third day has come. A melody, the most ravishing of strains, flows from the wild beast's mouth; and, following the music, there issues a fragrance from the place a fume more transporting, sweet, and strong than any odor whatever, than blossoms of plants or fruits of the forest, choicer than aught that clothes the earth with beauty. Thereupon from cities, courts, and castle-halls many companies of heroes flock along the highways of earth; the wielders of the spear press forward in hurrying throngs to that perfume and so also do animals when once the music has ceased.

Even so the Lord God, the Giver of joy, is gracious to all creatures, to every order of them, save only the dragon, the source of venom, that ancient enemy whom he bound in the abyss of torments; shackling him with fiery fetters, and loading him with dire constraints, he arose from darkness on the third day after he, the Lord of angels, the Bestower of victory, had for three

nights endured death on our behalf. That was a sweet perfume throughout the world, winsome and entrancing. "

Hello brunians,

Thursday, November 29, 2007, 3:29:05 AM, you wrote:
I picture it as a polygonal hull with masts on all sides.

.

On Nov 28, 2007 1:12 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Severian-the-Autarch might still call such a picture "a ship" in his writing of the incident, but the actions and thoughts he attributes to Severian-the-boy are consistent with seeing a drawing resembling watercraft visible nearby or in books and art available to him.

But we are given to understand that people of Sev's time don't even distinguish between riverine craft, pelagic craft, and cosmic craft - they are all "ships" to these people, and you might "sail" to Lune as easily as to Bes Pelargic.

Then the ship on the tomb could be a picture of any thing remotely resembling a non-wheeled vehicle?

Andy Robertson — 29 Nov 2007, 23:02 · in reply to Stanislaus

Stanislaus writes:

If you use one word to mean both sea and spaceships, you would use only one symbol to mean both - simply because your painter would have no idea which one you meant. If "ship volant" is a standard heraldic description (and it looks like it) it would be depicted in a standard manner - as a "heraldic ship" (probably some kind of sailing ship).

Except that on Urth "ship" typically means spaceship.

Sea ships are more commonly referred to as "boats," "vessels," etc.

(can anyone instance the contrary usage? My copy of BOTNS is not to hand.)

hartshorn

<http://www.thenightland.co.uk>

01273-488272 / 0777-214-9545

Roy C. Lackey — 30 Nov 2007, 05:52 · follows Andy Robertson

hartshorn wrote:
Except that on Urth "ship" typically means spaceship.

Sea ships are more commonly referred to as "boats," "vessels," etc.

(can anyone instance the contrary usage? My copy of BOTNS is not to hand.)

CITADEL, chapter XXXIII, second page. Severian, speaking of the _Samru_, "The ship's only real armament, a swivel gun . . ."

The appendix also mentions "Severian's failure to distinguish clearly between space-going and ocean-going craft." [in the "manuscripts"]

Baldanders also says, in answering Valeria's question about who will live if the continents die, "Those on ships, possibly. Those whose ships are in the air or in the void, certainly." It is clear from the context that the first sentence refers to ships at sea. (URTH, chapter XLII, p-300)

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 03 Dec 2007, 09:44 · in reply to Mark Millman

Mark Millman wrote:
Dear Mr. Wilson:

If "ship" can come to include "rockets and four masters and magical space time machines that traffic with other universes" over millenia, why must "volant" remain fixed in stone? If you insist on strictly historical heraldry, "a ship volant" is as meaningless a device as "a serpent rampant"; you can't draw it because historical ships have no wings any more than historical serpents had feet.

Not so; a ship volant would show no waterline, while a ship natant would.

Pimsley says "natant" means swimming to the right, and applies to fish.

Calling floating "natant" seems as figurative as sailing being called "volant".

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Jeff Wilson — 03 Dec 2007, 11:13 · in reply to matthew at calmeilles.co.uk

matthew at calmeilles.co.uk wrote:
jwilson at io.com wrote:

historical heraldry, "a ship volant" is as meaningless a device as "a serpent rampant";

Vide Poe, E A. ;-)

The very same flub to which I was alluding. (It appears in "A Cask of Amontillado", for those playing at home.)

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >