

b sharps's Inire theory

The Urth list — 7 messages, 3 voices, 05 Jul 2008

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5090>

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Roy C. Lackey — 05 Jul 2008, 23:35

Just because I have an old-fashioned sense of fairness, I am going to surprise everyone and see if I can present b sharp's case, as I see it, so that it is more palatable. Maybe I can recast his theory, in outline, so that it doesn't seem to trip all over itself.

The theory that Inire is Rudesind, Fechin and Boatman (maybe some others, but not now) is predicated on similarity of physique, simian in nature. The other component is that Inire is a Hierogrammate. Like Tzadkiel (hell, he may *be* Tzadkiel), he is capable of assuming any form, large or small. As evidenced by Tiny Tzadkiel at the Brook, he can have multiple versions of himself that maintain separate existences that need not be aware of each other at any given time. Thus the Boatman and Rudesind can both be telling the truth to Severian about their life stories, even while living simultaneously. Conflicting details of their lives, if they were all the same person running on and off stage all the time, juggling costumes, so to speak, become moot. Fair enough?

I hope I don't come to regret this. <g>

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 06 Jul 2008, 01:35 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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Stop. There is no evidence Tzadkiel can assume _any_ shape. It has several at its disposal, but we do not know if they are finely customizable. Also, we do not know that Hierogrammates are a race that share the same abilities. They might be a society or a class of beings in the way the Megatherians are, with varying abilities and hindrances.

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This hypothesis seems safely unfalsifiable. If they have separate lives and memories, how is it remotely useful to consider them the same character?

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

b sharp — 06 Jul 2008, 05:40 · follows Jeff Wilson

Kudos and thank you Roy C. Lackey! Using your unquestioned knowledge and skill to tinker with my theory is just the sort of thing I appreciate and find productive in participating on this list. And of course it is understood that it in no way constitutes an endorsement or buying into the accuracy or "correctness" of my theory (whatever that means).

I had previously considered your twist of supposing the many versions of Father Inire as pinched off portions of a larger god-like being but hadn't pursued it. Your take brought some new ideas to mind.

I think Jeff Wilson is wrong in thinking such doppelgangers would have completely separate lives and memories. They would share the memories of up until they split, they would share a common purpose, and being of the same stuff and origin would share a basic inherent nature, abilities, etc. I suppose it is obvious that I also disagree with Jeff's thinking that pursuing oddball ideas will detract from finding the "right answer". Like Einstein should have stuck to Newtonian physics? (who would win the Lupine Nobel Prize, hah! like Gene would ever tell :))

As it could be relevant to this twist, I'll again toss out the mythological tidbit that Charon was the offspring of Erebus, in Greek mythology. But when Roy offhandedly mentioned Tzadkiel as a source for Father Inire versions, my first thought was that Tzadkiel, as Zak, shows a rather simian nature during a phase or two of his evolution. Severian notes that Father Inire's work seems to be a lesser version of the Secret House (Secret Ship?) technology Tzadkiel uses to get around.

I'll also mention recently noticing in the text that Odilo, on the raft and Eata's boat, refers to the days of Father Inire as being departed and gone. Dave Tallman's ideas led to some pondering over the suspicious absence of Inire in the flood day, throne room conversation. Valeria and her husband seem to have ruled on their own (without "the words"). Perhaps Wolfe is hinting that Father Inire secretly joined Severian on the Ship. Perhaps reunited with Tzadkiel? Is he Ceryx on ancient Urth? How does the Cumaeen fit into this scenario?

Or perhaps not fully reunited?...Borski's idea that Ossipago with his short stature, hidden eyes and refusal to doff his mask is a version of Inire could come into play here. And where was Ossipago when Barbatus and Famulimus met Severian just before he got on the tender bound for Urth? I've long felt Wolfe wanted us to think of Ossipago in terms of "deus ex machina". An even more appropriate phrase in the light of this discussion.

-bsharp

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Roy C. Lackey — 06 Jul 2008, 09:08 · follows b sharp

Jeff Wilson quoted and wrote:

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other component is that Inire is a Hierogrammate. Like Tzadkiel (hell, he may **be** Tzadkiel), he is capable of assuming any form, large or small.

Stop. There is no evidence Tzadkiel can assume *_any_* shape. It has several at its disposal, but we do not know if they are finely customizable. Also, we do not know that Hierogrammates are a race that share the same abilities. They might be a society or a class of beings in the way the Megatherians are, with varying abilities and hindrances.

I don't know how many forms a Hierogrammate can assume, but the apport on the Ship started out as a fur-ball and eventually morphed into the small, hairy man-shape that was Zak. (See long paragraph, URTN, IX, 68, near end) Zak became Tzadkiel of the Trial. Sev later met giantess Captain Tzadkiel who turned one of her fingers into a woman-sized version of herself. The captain seemed to be ignorant of Trial Tzadkiel's doings. She spoke of her **race's** ability to change shape and said that broken-off pieces of her larger self would inform her greater self of anything they learned. (XXIV, 176, last page) Small Tzadkiel also was ignorant of her larger self's doings with Sev.

he can have multiple versions of himself that maintain separate existences that need not be aware of each other at any given time. Thus the Boatman and Rudesind can both be telling the truth to Severian about their life stories, even while living simultaneously.

This hypothesis seems safely unfalsifiable. If they have separate lives and memories, how is it remotely useful to consider them the same character?

Useful? In the same way that Tzadkiel found the practice useful, I suppose. Trial Tzadkiel became Zak just for kicks, so he could get to know Sev. Inire could marry for the love of young women, just as men do. But he could do it more than once, and at the same time, if he was a Hierogrammate. And he could manipulate events to cause Sev to become the New Sun. Note that I said that split-off versions **need not** be aware of another version's doings, but they could if they wanted to, particularly Rudesind and Inire. They may all get together, by and by.

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Jeff Wilson — 06 Jul 2008, 19:55 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

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Okay, so T's race can take different shapes, and split off independent parts, stipulated. But can T's race take on a multitude of different faces? And where is it writ that Inire is a member of T's race?

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Suppose I am Inire, and too busy doing transcendent things to date. How does it help me quench my desire for a young lady's company to bud off a boatman who departs, perhaps to reunite in 50 or so years, perhaps not, especially when I am already in close cahoots with the owner of a youth-oriented clone bordello? Surely he could keep a really young one on hand, perhaps in return for a new section of the Botanical Gardens for he and his bees to enjoy?

Hmmm - maybe that's where the Catherines come from?

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

Roy C. Lackey — 07 Jul 2008, 00:09 · follows Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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T went from hairy-faced Zak to both male and female faces that aren't described but don't look like Zak's. This from the start of the Trial:

"I knew then that I had seen Tzadkiel before I helped

Sidero and the rest catch him as Zak, and that the male form I saw was no more true (though no less) than the winged woman whose glance had stunned me then, and that neither was more true, or less, than the animal shape that had saved me when Purn had tried to kill me outside his cage." (XXI, 151)

And where is it writ that Inire is a member of T's race?

Nowhere.

Suppose I am Inire, and too busy doing transcendent things to date. How does it help me quench my desire for a young lady's company to bud off a boatman who departs, perhaps to reunite in 50 or so years, perhaps not, especially when I am already in close cahoots with the owner of a youth-oriented clone bordello? Surely he could keep a really young one on hand, perhaps in return for a new section of the Botanical Gardens for he and his bees to enjoy?

To be clear: I still see no real reason the Boatman should be part of the Inire cadre, and I think the theory would be the better for taking that famous Razor to him -- it would eliminate needless complications. But Rudesind had had a wife and kids, and girls seemed to have liked Fechin, or he them. Anyway, I suppose it best to think of Inire as just another split-off version of a Hierogrammate.

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Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2008, 03:15 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

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But don't the various female forms have immediately recognizable faces? How similar is the non-bestial male face to the female face?

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Inire as a Hierogrammate-let, I can buy. It could also be a lead on his "real" name, since if Zak is a particle of Tzadkiel, perhaps Inire is a subset of "Entire" or "innir vandlega" or something.

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