

# Babbie

The Urth list — 146 messages, 19 voices, 17 Mar 2009

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5364>

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Son of Witz — 17 Mar 2009, 18:10

while we've been talking about Babbie,

what do people make of that Horn in Babbie concept that was thrown around years ago. Stu pointed it out to me.

what the hell is up with that?

I don't think I buy that at all, but I understand the knee bit, and the outsider calling for Babbie confounds the reading. That an the "Beast with three horns bit" What else could be a beast with Three horns. Are horns just a metaphor for souls, which, seem to number 3 in Horn, but, the prophesy is that Horn will ride that beast, not be part of that beast, so I'm not sure if you could be a horn, and be a rider. hum...

When I read it, I felt Babbie mirrored (in a way) Pig. Horn had Babbie with him on one leg, and Pig with him on the other. Both are pigs of sorts.

~witz

---

John Watkins — 17 Mar 2009, 18:35 · in reply to Son of Witz

I'm just starting my first Short Sun reread, so I may have more thoughts on this later, but wouldn't the Babbie/Pig parallel underscore the likelihood that some or all of Horn's soul winds up in Babbie? A copy of Silk's soul, after all, was in Pig. The parallel works better if both of them serve as "pen cases" for souls.

On Tue, Mar 17, 2009 at 2:10 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:  
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~witz

---

Son of Witz — 17 Mar 2009, 18:43 · follows John Watkins

I guess it underscores the Babbie/Pig parallel, to some degree.

Yet, I see no symbolic or plot reason for Horn in Babbie.

Why, would a part of Horn enter Babbie? Surely it's not his complete self, because he's very present on Green, after he leaves Babbie behind. And if Horn in Babbie is true, does Horn leave Silk and go completely to babbie in the end?

~witz

-----Original Message-----

From: John Watkins [mailto:john.watkins04 at gmail.com]

Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2009 11:35 AM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

I'm just starting my first Short Sun reread, so I may have more thoughts on this later, but wouldn't the Babbie/Pig parallel underscore the likelihood that some or all of Horn's soul winds up in Babbie? A copy of Silk's soul, after all, was in Pig. The parallel works better if both of them serve as "pen cases" for souls.

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When I read it, I felt Babbie mirrored (in a way) Pig. Horn had Babbie with him on one leg, and Pig with him on the other. Both are pigs of sorts.

~witz

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Gwern Branwen — 18 Mar 2009, 02:31 · in reply to Son of Witz

On Tue, Mar 17, 2009 at 2:10 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:  
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...

~witz

If I may, I believe we are omitting a major & fundamental question.

How is babby formed?

gwern

---

Son of Witz — 18 Mar 2009, 02:43 · in reply to Gwern Branwen

On Mar 17, 2009, at 7:31 PM, Gwern Branwen wrote:

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gwern

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LoL. you may not.

unless of course you don't mind if I say:

"Yo Dawg, I heard you like reading about possession, so we put some Pas in your Silk and some Silk in your Horn so you can read about Pas while you read about Silk while you read about Horn."

\*inserts photoshopped pic of Xzibit with two heads\*

long live retarded internet memes.

~sonofsonofwitz

---

James Wynn — 18 Mar 2009, 18:50 · in reply to Son of Witz

From: "Son of Witz" <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2009 9:43 PM

"Yo Dawg, I heard you like reading about possession, so we put some Pas in your Silk and some Silk in your Horn so you can read about Pas while you read about Silk while you read about Horn."

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And there my friends is Horn riding the beast with three Horns...for Horn is a clone of Typhon, and the Neighbor who reanimated him is Horn (so he says in his meeting with the Neighbors), and Silk --a clone of Typhon's son with Kypris-- was possessed by Pas and so used to heal Pas at the end of LS: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. One and yet three.

But this combines three explanations I've offered in the past that are different yet the same in that they all never seemed to have appealed to very many people.

P.S. It does seem that Babbie is psychically connected to Horn as long as he remains in his presence.

J

---

Stuart Hamm — 18 Mar 2009, 18:57 · in reply to James Wynn

YEAH!

Please see my next post...

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624

???? Skype? stuart.amm

myspace.com/stuamm

? ??? stuarthamm.net

--- On Wed, 3/18/09, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 11:50 AM

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John Watkins — 18 Mar 2009, 18:58 · in reply to James Wynn

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Stuart Hamm — 18 Mar 2009, 19:01 · in reply to John Watkins

Pas got loaded into Silk in Mainframe right??? Can't remember where it's stated though...

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624

???? Skype? stuart.hamm

myspace.com/stuhamm

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John Watkins — 18 Mar 2009, 19:03 · in reply to Stuart Hamm

I thought \*Silk\* got loaded into \*Pas\* at Mainframe, "healing" Pas in the sense of turning him into, in part at least, the "Silver Silk" who later possesses Pig.

On Wed, Mar 18, 2009 at 3:01 PM, Stuart Hamm <hammstu at sbcglobal.net> wrote:  
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Mobile (415) 786-3624  
Skype stuart.hamm  
myspace.com/stuhamm  
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James Wynn — 18 Mar 2009, 19:15 · in reply to Stuart Hamm

John Watkins: Horn is a clone of Typhon?

Yes. Tussah too. Next time you read SS, read it with the possibility in mind that Horn is Typhon; the first hint is when Horn gives his little lecture to his family about Pas having the ability to come to Blue.

John Watkins: I also don't think Silk was possessed by Pas...

Of course not. Few people seem to. Theories are a dime-a-dozen here. I won't strip you of yours.

Stuart Hamm: Pas got loaded into Silk in Mainframe right???  
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John Watkins: I thought Silk got loaded into Pas at Mainframe, "healing"  
Pas in the sense of turning him into, in part at least, the "Silver Silk" who later possesses Pig.

Why do you think the technicians carried the leader of a single Whorl city all the way to Mainframe to repair Pas? If anyone would do, why not use someone more accessible? Why wait 20 years when in order to use someone from the Cargo?

J

---

Stuart Hamm — 18 Mar 2009, 19:16 · in reply to James Wynn

James, can I call you and have you explain everything to me...please...???

hehe

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624  
???? Skype? stuart.hamm  
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Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie  
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Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 12:15 PM  
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Son of Witz — 18 Mar 2009, 19:17 · follows Stuart Hamm

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Wait. Horn a clone of Typhon?!?!?! What makes you suggest that?

I guess I can sort of swallow, chokingly, the idea that Horn became a neighbor in the pit as Stu describes. I'd have to read it again.

I got that Silk was a special embryo, but where is the suggestion that it was Typhon and Kypris's son? I must have missed that completely. I have to admit that I didn't pick up on Pas in Silk in either LS or SS. only on retrospect, after Stu made me notice the pen case.

and Re: the three in one, I get that. But is can one aspect of the trinity "ride" the itself and the other two? I guess it's close enough for prophesy. But I read it as Horn on a 3 Horned beast, making 4 Horns total.

craziness.

do you guys get the Yo Dawg meme joke? So stupid, so funny. I know Jordon does, if he's currently reading?

---

Adam Thornton — 18 Mar 2009, 19:21 · in reply to Son of Witz

On Mar 18, 2009, at 2:17 PM, Son of Witz wrote:

do you guys get the Yo Dawg meme joke? So stupid, so funny. I know Jordon does, if he's currently reading?

I did.

I was attempting not to dignify it with a response.

Adam

---

Son of Witz — 18 Mar 2009, 19:26 · follows Adam Thornton

On Mar 18, 2009, at 2:17 PM, Son of Witz wrote:

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I did.

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Adam

probably a good instinct, I guess. these memes have a way of taking over. The forum where I met Jordon is awash in ridiculous memes right now. they grow like cancer.

---

James Wynn — 18 Mar 2009, 19:28 · in reply to Son of Witz

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No, no, no. The Neighbor in the form of a greenbuck whom Horn was chasing when he kilt hisself became Horn: reanimating him and taking on his identity. Neighbors seem to be more morally sensitive than humans because the Neighbor feels such great guilt over killing Horn (as he sees it) that he spends almost the entire novel coming to terms with it.

J

---

John Watkins — 18 Mar 2009, 19:29 · in reply to James Wynn

I'm actually rereading it right now...read chapter one of On Blue's Waters last night. I'll keep an eye out for signs that Horn is Typhon's clone.

My theory is that it all comes down to two passages in Long Sun--Incus explaining that demons can't pretend to be gods without being absorbed into the god, and the Outsider telling Silk that he's absorbing Kypris, and that, even if Kypris is killed, he'll simply absorb Thelx as instead. Typhons family *\*are* *\*demons*, in a very real sense, and the Outsider is engaged in the process of absorbing them into his godhood. Kypris is first and easiest, because, like the Outsider, she's a love god.

So Kypris is the one who suggests to Silk, and also (in my theory) to the technicians (via Tartaros? whatever) that Silk must be taken to Mainframe for Pas. The addition of the basically-good Silk-soul into the basically-evil Typhon soul that constitutes Pas is the first step of redeeming Pas into a god fit for worship on Blue.

Anyway, that's my reading. I'd argue that Silk/Horn's role in bringing peace to the soul of Scylla is additional evidence that this is what's going on, thematically, in the books.

On Wed, Mar 18, 2009 at 3:15 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

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J

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Stuart Hamm — 18 Mar 2009, 19:39 · in reply to James Wynn

OBW p 27

"I must have known that something enormously significant? was happening, and associated it with out haunch of greenbuck"

J, I love you man, again..please come to my house and explain everything and then I can get back to my recording next CD....and my "life"

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624

???? Skype? stuart.hamm

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From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2009, 12:28 PM

I guess I can sort of swallow, chokingly, the idea that Horn became a neighbor in the pit as Stu describes.

No, no, no. The Neighbor in the form of a greenbuck whom Horn was chasing when he kilt hisself \_became\_ \_Horn\_: reanimating him and taking on his identity. Neighbors seem to be more morally sensitive than humans because the Neighbor feels such great guilt over killing Horn (as he sees it) that he spends almost the entire novel coming to terms with it.

J

---

John Watkins — 18 Mar 2009, 19:41 · in reply to James Wynn

That's the freaking plot of Alan Moore's second Swamp Thing story and I'm an absolute moron for missing it.

This always happens with Gene Wolfe, doesn't it?

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Son of Witz — 18 Mar 2009, 19:43 · follows John Watkins

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James, you officially just blew my fucking mind.

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Adam Thornton — 18 Mar 2009, 19:46 · in reply to Son of Witz

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This only sort of gently stroked my mind, largely with the back of its fingernails.

It was the part about Swamp Thing that blew my mind.

Now my mind needs a refractory period.

Adam

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David Stockhoff — 18 Mar 2009, 19:48 · follows Adam Thornton

Thematically, do you think Wolfe is pondering the extent and manner in which we make our own gods? Certainly the matter of "false" gods serving the true god is present in BotNS, and seems to continue in LS/SS.

-----  
Message: 5

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From: John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com>

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To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>  
Message-ID:  
<93d4039f0903181229k6afc50fda614cd0bc0c4251a at mail.gmail.com>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

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Stuart Hamm — 18 Mar 2009, 19:49 · in reply to Adam Thornton

tell me about it...I just started TttW, now I gotta go back and re-re-re-read the 1st 2...

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624  
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John Watkins — 18 Mar 2009, 19:49 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Yes and no...I think Wolfe is interested in the question of how the human mind approaches the divine and in the way that the Divine approaches the human mind.

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Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

I'm actually rereading it right now...read chapter one of On Blue's Waters last night. I'll keep an eye out for signs that Horn is Typhon's clone.

My theory is that it all comes down to two passages in Long Sun--Incus explaining that demons can't pretend to be gods without being absorbed into the god, and the Outsider telling Silk that he's absorbing Kypris, and that, even if Kypris is killed, he'll simply absorb Thelx as instead. Typhons family \*are\* demons, in a very real sense, and the Outsider is engaged in the process of absorbing them into his godhood. Kypris is first and easiest, because, like the Outsider, she's a love god.

So Kypris is the one who suggests to Silk, and also (in my theory) to the technicians (via Tartaros? whatever) that Silk must be taken to Mainframe for Pas. The addition of the basically-good Silk-soul into the basically-evil Typhon soul that constitutes Pas is the first step of redeeming Pas into a god fit for worship on Blue.

Anyway, that's my reading. I'd argue that Silk/Horn's role in bringing peace to the soul of Scylla is additional evidence that this is what's going on, thematically, in the books.

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avast! Antivirus: Outbound message clean.  
Virus Database (VPS): 090317-0, 03/17/2009  
Tested on: 3/18/2009 3:48:11 PM  
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Son of Witz — 18 Mar 2009, 19:54 · follows John Watkins

James, you officially just blew my fucking mind.

This only sort of gently stroked my mind, largely with the back of its fingernails.

It was the part about Swamp Thing that blew my mind.

Now my mind needs a refractory period.

Adam

I ought to reread those as an adult. I remember Swamp Thing being a bit obtuse to me when I picked it up. I assume that, given it's Moore, it holds up after all this time. Sadly, I reread Return of the Dark Knight recently and found it wasn't quite as great as I'd always thought it was. Yet I reread Watchmen for the 11th time last week and it was better than ever.

~witz

---

John Watkins — 18 Mar 2009, 19:57 · in reply to Son of Witz

Dark Knight Returns is a mess philosophically, but it has some fantastic dialogue (well...fantastic inner monologue.)

This mud pit...is an operating table. And I'm the surgeon.

Something inside me tells me to stop with the leg. I don't listen.

On Wed, Mar 18, 2009 at 3:54 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>wrote:

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~witz

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Son of Witz — 18 Mar 2009, 20:09 · follows John Watkins

yeah, I can only really enjoy Millers pulpy dialogue at this point.

-----Original Message-----

From: John Watkins [mailto:john.watkins04 at gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2009 12:57 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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On Wed, Mar 18, 2009 at 3:54 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>wrote:

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~witz

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David Stockhoff — 18 Mar 2009, 22:21 · follows Son of Witz

Yes, much better put. In reaching toward the divine, humans make stuff up. Some of it is true, some of it is less true.

But Wolfe doesn't seem to see any of the stuff we make up as dead ends, false gods, idols, or traps and snares. Rather, it's all good, especially if the Divine isn't offended but reaches out in turn to make the false true. And that fits his oeuvre, which is consistent in this regard, from Soldier of Sidon to Free Live Free and the Eyeflash Miracles to The Wizard Knight.

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Message: 3

Date: Wed, 18 Mar 2009 15:49:56 -0400

From: John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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Son of Witz — 18 Mar 2009, 23:40 · follows David Stockhoff

-----Original Message-----

From: James Wynn [mailto:crushtv at gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2009 12:28 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

I guess I can sort of swallow, chokingly, the idea that Horn became a neighbor in the pit as Stu describes.

No, no, no. The Neighbor in the form of a greenbuck whom Horn was chasing when he kilt hisself \_became\_ \_Horn\_: reanimating him and taking on his identity. Neighbors seem to be more morally sensitive than humans because the Neighbor feels such great guilt over killing Horn (as he sees it) that he spends almost the entire novel coming to terms with it.

J

Man, this is so twisted.

what is the symbolic point of this. and wouldn't there be four quills in the pen case if Wolfe was really plotting this idea into it?

I've forgotten, how can a Neighbor be a greenbuck?

Does the spend the book feeling remorseful about it. Why wouldn't the narrator come clean. It seems to me like the narrator spends the book denying that Silk is present within him, which is why he starts with "facts" "My name is Horn"

or does a neighbor just heal him because he's not too broken, unlike on Green, when they can't reform so they transfer him. Why would a neighbor need help from another neighbor like this?

isn't he just called Neighbor-Man because of Seawrack's ring.

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 00:30 · in reply to Son of Witz

Me: No, no, no. The Neighbor in the form of a greenbuck whom Horn was chasing when he kilt hisself \_became\_ \_Horn\_: reanimating him and taking on his identity. Neighbors seem to be more morally sensitive than humans because the Neighbor feels such great guilt over killing Horn (as he sees it) that he spends almost the entire novel coming to terms with it.

Witz: Man, this is so twisted.  
what is the symbolic point of this[?]

Well, it *\*does\** afford Wolfe the opportunity to (once again) explore the concept of the Trinity and to provide a rationalized example of it. Also, Wolfe (once again) get's to provide a layer of unreliability to his narrator, which makes him very happy. Also, it provides an added depth to the story that the reader cannot get his mind around without a repeated reading which also makes him very happy.

and wouldn't there be four quills in the pen case if Wolfe was really plotting this idea into it?

Not at all. All three are Horn and all three are riding.

I've forgotten, how can a Neighbor be a greenbuck?

Perhaps, the same way he became Horn. Who knows? Not me. How can a Neighbor be a tree (remember those "sleepy" trees that Horn mentions)? Don't they remind you huorns? Didn't the arrangement of the Neighbors remind you of trees (standing and felled)? I don't know how that is.

Does the spend the book feeling remorseful about it.  
Why wouldn't the narrator come clean.  
It seems to me like the narrator spends the book denying

that Silk is present within him, which is why  
he starts with "facts" "My name is Horn"

Here is the post in which I explained all this the first time (causing barely a ripple at the time):  
<http://lists.urth.net/htdig.cgi/urth-urth.net/2004-December/004360.html>

Horn is really confused about who \_Horn\_ is as well. Remember when he tells the story of the final destruction of Horn's body on Green? [IGJ (HB) pg 122] "'Was this you for real Incanto? Were you on Green? By Echidna's babies, I think you were!' "I shook my head and told him it had been someone else, a man whose name I have forgotten, a man who wore a ring with a white stone. My own name is Horn, no matter what Oreb may say."

He denies that he is Silk because he doesn't feel guilty over Silk's death. Silk had already killed himself when the Neighbors gave him his body and reanimated him as the Narrator (let's call him 'The Raja' as Wolfe does) did with Horn's broken body before.

or does a neighbor just heal him because he's not too broken,  
unlike on Green, when they can't reform so they transfer him.  
Why would a neighbor need help from another neighbor like this?

Seawrack and Babbie could plainly see that Horn was dead. I presume his neck was broken. Silk had bled out (or almost so) when the Raja got his body and memories. Those are pretty severe injuries. Perhaps they can only reanimate a body once. Or maybe some particular part of Horn's body was damaged that prevented repair. Or too many parts. We're not told.

Perhaps, he needed help because there was no other body for him to go to. Maybe if he had an assisting inhumani to help him dream-travel he could have saved himself. I don't know. Perhaps by resurrecting Horn, the Raja tied himself to the fate of Horn's body without extraordinary assistance. All we know is what the Neighbor told the him.

isn't he just called Neighbor-Man because of Seawrack's ring.

I'd have to look it up, but IIRC he was called Neighbor-Man by He-Pen-Sheep before he met with the Neighbors.

J

---

Jeffrey Brent McBeth — 19 Mar 2009, 02:32 · in reply to James Wynn

isn't he just called Neighbor-Man because of Seawrack's ring.

I'd have to look it up, but IIRC he was called Neighbor-Man by  
He-Pen-Sheep before he met with the Neighbors.

He was, but he already had the ring at that point. And the Neighbor feigning to be Horn makes Horns' permission for the Neighbors to be on Blue pointless.

Jeff

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"The man who does not read good books has no advantage over  
the man who cannot read them."  
-- Mark Twain  
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James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 02:54 · in reply to Jeffrey Brent McBeth

He was, but he already had the ring at that point. ?And the Neighbor  
feigning to be Horn makes Horns' permission for the Neighbors to be on

Blue pointless.

No. It makes the Raja the Mediator between the Neighbors and Mankind: Both Neighbor and Human. Remind you of anyone?

J

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 04:39 · in reply to James Wynn

On Mar 18, 2009, at 7:54 PM, James Wynn wrote:

He was, but he already had the ring at that point. And the Neighbor feigning to be Horn makes Horns' permission for the Neighbors to be on

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No. It makes the Raja the Mediator between the Neighbors and Mankind: Both Neighbor and Human. Remind you of anyone?

J

I think there's some timeline screw up here.

When Horn get's permission, he's plain Horn. The Rajan writes about it after the fact, with his Horn memories. he'd have to be lying, which is of course possible, but...

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Craig Brewer — 19 Mar 2009, 05:02 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David, that's a really interesting reading. I tend to think that Wolfe is more ambiguous. It's not all good, and, in fact, the way I see it, most of his stories are about the never-ending problems of figuring out the dead ends from the good made up stuff. Otherwise, why wouldn't Severian be fine believing in the Claw? Or why would Silk have to have the Outsider help him see through Pas? Or why would Able have to be forced to look up to Michael instead of down to Disiri, etc.

I think you're right that, in the end, all the "false gods" seem to be able to be integrated, but it takes his heroes a lot of time figuring out how to do it properly without following divergent paths.

----- Original Message -----

From: David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net>

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Sent: Wednesday, March 18, 2009 5:21:50 PM

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

Yes, much better put. In reaching toward the divine, humans make stuff up. Some of it is true, some of it is less true.

But Wolfe doesn't seem to see any of the stuff we make up as dead ends, false gods, idols, or traps and snares. Rather, it's all good, especially if the Divine isn't offended but reaches out in turn to make the false true. And that fits his oeuvre, which is consistent in this regard, from Soldier of Sidon to Free Live Free and the Eyeflash Miracles to The Wizard Knight.

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Message: 3

Date: Wed, 18 Mar 2009 15:49:56 -0400

From: John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 05:09 · in reply to Son of Witz

Witz: I think there's some timeline screw up here.  
When Horn get's permission, he's plain Horn. The Rajan writes about it after the fact, with his Horn memories.  
he'd have to be lying, which is of course possible, but...

When tBotSS starts, it is the Raja who is writing. Not only is he Horn, but he is also Silk. He has already flown to Green and died, returned to the Whorl, and come back to rule. The Raja is a Neighbor, but he has all of Horn's memories and identity within him. Same for Silk. 100% of what Horn was is within him. 100% of Silk.

The Raja makes a choice to assert Horn within him. He could have chosen to do the same for Silk. He doesn't for a very obvious reason. When he says he's Horn, he's not lying. He's disturbed. As so often is the case with Wolfe's characters, he's telling a lie that is also the truth, but it's not the whole truth.

He denies his Neighborhood for the same reason he denies he is Silk...because if he's really "not-Horn" then Horn is dead and he killed him. It is not until after the battle that he embraces who he is at a conscious level. But he still can't bring himself to face Hoof and Hide on the day he leaves for the Whorl --as he says-- because he killed their father.

J.

Marble:

"It was I, the one who prayed, who lied and lied too. I know that must seem illogical, yet it was so." On Blue's Waters, Chap. 3

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Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 05:23 · in reply to James Wynn

On Mar 18, 2009, at 10:09 PM, James Wynn wrote:  
Witz: I think there's some timeline screw up here.  
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J.

Ok. I just read that old post of yours, and I think I get you more clearly.  
<http://lists.urth.net/htdig.cgi/urth-urth.net/2004-December/004360.html>

You're NOT including Pas in your Trinity right? just Horn/Silk/ Neighbor. Not Horn/Silk/Neighbor/Pas. It's very interesting what you're laying out. but if the souls add up to four, it's not right. But it looks like you're only counting three souls, so it may hold water. I think what is needed to really seal the deal for me is some textual reason to have the Greenbuck a Neighbor. My memory loses track of lots of things, but I can't remember justification for that. I certainly felt, when I read the pit scene, that he had died, but that may have just been Severian conditioning on my brain. Then I was unsure afterwards.

~witz

---

Chris P — 19 Mar 2009, 05:41 · in reply to Son of Witz

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At least the way I read it, Pas did not have a soul as such. He was a... pattern, or a psyche (in the terminology I remember us using in that particular conversation) at best. Typhon's soul stayed with Typhon. Even that psyche was not exactly Typhon, because it had either changed on its own or been edited to fit its new role on the ship (not to mention the things that happened to it afterward).

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 05:49 · in reply to Chris P

On Mar 18, 2009, at 10:41 PM, Chris P wrote:

Witz: I think there's some timeline screw up here.  
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I hear you. But wouldn't that mean that Divine Silk was a pattern and not a soul or psyche? I've understood that it was Divine Silk that got into Pig and thus Horn/Silk. Unless of course, Divine Silk doesn't really factor in at all, and somehow Silk's soul got into Pig by some other means.

I'm not trying to make a watertight case for any particular view, just trying to parse out the possibilities. I'm completely up in the air about it. I know I thoroughly enjoyed these books before I even got a clue about the third soul. If Stu hadn't clued me into the pen case, I don't think I would have caught a whiff at all.

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David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 11:43 · follows Son of Witz

Those are good examples---I couldn't think of any right off. Yes, that's what I meant by "true" and "less true." That is, there is never just "bad" and "good."  
Any mistaken belief can be a step toward realizing and undoing that belief, and moving closer to a true understanding. The journey naturally is no straight path you can fall off of into

damnation, nor a maze exactly, but rather a tangle. A path through a wood. Thus, even the dead ends are not really "dead" just as the gods and their myths are not really "false," and since the "traps and snares" I referred to (Milton) are always set by the Devil, who apparently has no presence in Wolfe (or if he does he works for the Increate), they don't exist. It's an interesting contrast with Protestantism---and Satan-obsessed Catholicism? Even Catholic priests can become stuck, I guess (haven't read Pirate Freedom). If we become trapped, we do it ourselves. One could be trapped forever, I suppose, but I don't think anyone is ever condemned for it ... even Baldanders.

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Message: 7  
Date: Wed, 18 Mar 2009 22:02:29 -0700 (PDT)  
From: Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com>  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 11:45 · in reply to Son of Witz

Witz: You're NOT including Pas in your Trinity right? just Horn/  
Silk/Neighbor. Not Horn/Silk/Neighbor/Pas.

Chis P: At least the way I read it, Pas did not have a soul as such. He was a... pattern, or a psyche (in the terminology I remember us using in that particular conversation) at best. Typhon's soul stayed with Typhon. Even that psyche was not exactly Typhon, because it had either changed on its own or been edited to fit its new role on the ship (not to mention the things that happened to it afterward).

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Unless of course, Divine Silk doesn't really factor in at all, and somehow Silk's soul got into Pig by some other means.

The question of whether Wolfe views souls as physical/wave or metaphysical entities is still an issue of debate. He treats them as both. But think of Abel's discussion with Mani the cat about whether he is a cat or an elemental spirit. Abel says he is neither. For as long as they are together, he's a new entity made up of both.

There are only three people in the Raja...and only three souls. When the Raja takes on Silk's body and his mind, he takes on both Silk and any daemon riding along when he died --which would not be Silk or Pas but the Silk-Pas. This is further complicated by the fact that Pas is no longer the original Pas either. They had to add a little bit of Silk to complete him (so Pas has Silk's head now). Consequently, Pas himself is also Silk-Pas, so what's the difference? (And Typhon, when Sev met him --and apparently when he was scanned-- also consisted of two souls, right? Hmmm...The head that was changed in Pas was the tyrant's, not Pieton's, right?. How much of the old Urth's calde even exists in Pas anymore? )

So, only three souls and only three Horns. But the three are not necessarily the same three. If you are familiar with the way Wolfe weaves mythology into his stories and characters, then you know he's quite comfortable with this sort of double and triple -iteration.

J

---

brunians at brunians.org — 19 Mar 2009, 11:56 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Thus, even the dead ends are not really "dead" just as the gods and their myths are not really "false," and since the "traps and snares" I referred to (Milton) are always set by the Devil, who apparently has no presence in Wolfe (or if he does he works for the Increate), they don't exist. It's an interesting contrast with Protestantism---and Satan-obsessed Catholicism?

Catholicism isn't anywhere near as Satan-obsessed as Protestantism. In my opinion, anyway.

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John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 13:52 · in reply to James Wynn

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 7:45 AM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:  
Witz: You're NOT including Pas in your Trinity right? just Horn/  
Silk/Neighbor. Not Horn/Silk/Neighbor/Pas.

The question of whether Wolfe views souls as physical/wave or metaphysical entities is still an issue of debate. He treats them as both. But think of Abel's discussion with Mani the cat about whether he is a cat or an elemental spirit. Abel says he is neither. For as long as they are together, he's a new entity made up of both.

That's basic Thomism, which of course Wolfe is familiar with. It's possible that Thomistic rules apply only in Wizard Knight, which is explicitly a medieval-style world, but I doubt it. I think that all Wolfe souls are Thomistic souls--patterns or animating essences of spirits. That's why Severian is able to carry Thecla's soul by gaining her memories and how the aquastors work--a person's "soul" is really just the pattern of their personality, which can be perfectly reconstructed by perfect memory or imperfectly reconstructed by incomplete or imperfect memories.

There are only three people in the Raja...and only three souls. When the Raja takes on Silk's body and his mind, he takes on both Silk and any daemon riding along when he died --which would not be Silk or Pas but the Silk-Pas.

Could be...I'm still not sure Pas went into Silk at the end of Long Sun. If he didn't, that's just Silk in Silk's body until the Horn-patterned Neighbor shows up.

This is further complicated by the fact that Pas is no longer the original Pas either. They had to add a little bit of Silk to complete him (so Pas has Silk's head now).

Definitely agree--this is the Silver Silk, a Pas/Silk gestalt with Silk's personality "in front."

Consequently, Pas himself is also Silk-Pas, so what's the difference?

Presumably their varying experiences in the time that passed since Long Sun ended if you're right about the merger...if Pas didn't go into Silk at Mainframe, then that scene in Return to the Whorl is a Pig/Silk/Pas gestalt, with Silk in front, talking to a Silk/Horn-patterned Neighbor gestalt. Pig/Silk/Pas seems to recognize both Horn and Silk in the gestalt.

And Typhon, when Sev met him --and apparently when he was scanned-- also consisted of two souls, right? Hmmmm...The head that was changed in Pas was the tyrant's, not Pieton's, right?. How much of the old Urth's calde even exists in Pas anymore? )

I'm not sure Pieton's soul was scanned--why would it be? The portrayals of two-headed Pas has symbolic value that don't depend on Pieton's soul having actually been uploaded.

I also want to note that this whole thing is a rationalization of the Incarnation, not the Trinity. The three Persons of the Trinity all share a single essence (in orthodox Christianity, that is), whereas Jesus Christ possessed two essences in a single Person. I think that these "gestalts" definitely have multiple essences, but over time pretty clearly merge into one "person" (as

Severian never really does become one with Thecla, at least that we see.)

So, only three souls and only three Horns. But the three are not necessarily the same three. If you are familiar with the way Wolfe weaves mythology into his stories and characters, then you know he's quite comfortable with this sort of double and triple -iteration.

J

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 13:54 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 7:43 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

Thus, even the dead ends are not really "dead" just as the gods and their myths are not really "false," and since the "traps and snares" I referred to (Milton) are always set by the Devil, who apparently has no presence in Wolfe (or if he does he works for the Increate), they don't exist. It's an interesting contrast with Protestantism---and Satan-obsessed Catholicism?

I think the Devil does exist in Wolfe's work. He's portrayed pretty directly in Wizard Knight, for example, and I'm not sure we're supposed to think that there's anything redeemable about the Squid God and his ilk.

That said, I do think that Wolfe flirts with the Origenism we see in George MacDonald and, to a lesser extent, C.S. Lewis.

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Message: 7

Date: Wed, 18 Mar 2009 22:02:29 -0700 (PDT)

From: Craig Brewer <cnbrewer at yahoo.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <176065.18290.qm at web37605.mail.mud.yahoo.com>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset=us-ascii

David, that's a really interesting reading. I tend to think that Wolfe is more ambiguous. It's not all good, and, in fact, the way I see it, most of his stories are about the never-ending problems of figuring out the dead ends from the good made up stuff. Otherwise, why wouldn't Severian be fine believing in the Claw? Or why would Silk have to have the Outsider help him see through Pas? Or why would Able have to be forced to look up to Michael instead of down to Disiri, etc.

I think you're right that, in the end, all the "false gods" seem to be able to be integrated, but it takes his heroes a lot of time figuring out how to do it properly without following divergent paths.

---

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<http://www.avast.com>

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## Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 14:00 · in reply to James Wynn

On Mar 19, 2009, at 4:45 AM, James Wynn wrote:

Witz: You're NOT including Pas in your Trinity right? just Horn/Silk/Neighbor. Not Horn/Silk/Neighbor/Pas.

Chis P: At least the way I read it, Pas did not have a soul as such. He was a... pattern, or a psyche (in the terminology I remember us using in that particular conversation) at best. Typhon's soul stayed with Typhon. Even that psyche was not exactly Typhon, because it had either changed on its own or been edited to fit its new role on the ship (not to mention the things that happened to it afterward).

I hear you. But wouldn't that mean that Divine Silk was a pattern and not a soul or psyche?

I've understood that it was Divine Silk that got into Pig and thus Horn/Silk.

Unless of course, Divine Silk doesn't really factor in at all, and somehow Silk's soul got into Pig by some other means.

The question of whether Wolfe views souls as physical/wave or metaphysical entities is still an issue of debate. He treats them as both. But think of Abel's discussion with Mani the cat about whether he is a cat or an elemental spirit. Abel says he is neither. For as long as they are together, he's a new entity made up of both.

There are only three people in the Raja...and only three souls. When the Raja takes on Silk's body and his mind, he takes on both Silk and any daemon riding along when he died --which would not be Silk or Pas but the Silk-Pas. This is further complicated by the fact that Pas is no longer the original Pas either. They had to add a little bit of Silk to complete him (so Pas has Silk's head now). Consequently, Pas himself is also Silk-Pas, so what's the difference? (And Typhon, when Sev met him --and apparently when he was scanned-- also consisted of two souls, right? Hmmmm...The head that was changed in Pas was the tyrant's, not Pieton's, right?. How much of the old Urth's calde even exists in Pas anymore? )

So, only three souls and only three Horns. But the three are not necessarily the same three. If you are familiar with the way Wolfe weaves mythology into his stories and characters, then you know he's quite comfortable with this sort of double and triple -iteration.

J

---

hmmm. Not trying to argue, but regarding "he takes on both Silk and any daemon riding along when he died --which would not be Silk or Pas but the Silk-Pas." doesn't it contradict this statement "And Typhon, when Sev met him -- and apparently when he was scanned-- also consisted of two souls, right?" is it one or two. I'd say Silk-Pas or Pas-Silk is two souls.

I really think your theory is interesting, but I think it needs the justification for the Neighbor being a greenbuck. and wow, I didn't know about that whorlmap site. I'll read up there.

On Mar 19, 2009, at 12:36 AM, Roy C. Lackey wrote:  
Oh, there were. But I'm not going to get into it again, either. Just  
don't  
take everything thrown out here as accepted wisdom. Far, far from it.

-Roy

nah. of course not. Not even yours, though I think you've got a pretty credible take from what I've read.

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 14:07 · follows Son of Witz

Yes, exactly. I meant to contrast Wolfe's apparently traditional (in fact, steeped in 2 millennia of thought) Catholicism with both dualistic Protestantism and those Catholics who are in fact devil-obsessed and thus approach dualism. (I don't know if such call themselves fundamentalists or if they are something else.) For that matter, one could also posit that Catholics who don't think much about God but pay a lot of attention to the saints and Mary are basically polytheists. Another dead end, but again not treated by Wolfe as "error" in the Inquisition's sense of the word. (I suspect that the church of Severian's time was much like this, with the people paying more attention to their own ritual creations than to God. False idols again, but NT, not OT.) It's my opinion that Satan is not really a Christian belief anyway, just something inherited from past religions---a folk belief and a symbol. Wolfe treats Satan as a myth, I believe, nothing more, and not one that interests him. ----- Message: 5  
Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 07:56:08 -0400 (EDT) From: brunians at brunians.org Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Message-ID: <2993.67.142.130.34.1237463768.squirrel at brunians.org> Content-Type: text/plain; charset=iso-8859-1

Thus, even the dead ends are not really "dead" just as the gods and their myths are not really "false," and since the "traps and snares" I referred to (Milton) are always set by the Devil, who apparently has no presence in Wolfe (or if he does he works for the Increate), they don't exist. It's an interesting contrast with Protestantism---and Satan-obsessed Catholicism?

Catholicism isn't anywhere near as Satan-obsessed as Protestantism. In my opinion, anyway.

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 14:29 · in reply to Son of Witz

Witz: I really think your theory is interesting, but I think it needs the justification for the Neighbor being a greenbuck.

There are casual hints about this on the level of the one Stuart Hamm offered, but I don't think it ever gets any clearer than OBW (HB) pg 272 "'My name is Horn.' I offered him my hand. He took it, and this time I felt his hand and \*\*remembered hard\*\*, and seemed to be covered with short, stiff hairs. Beyond that I will not say. " (emphasis mine)

What he remembers here is being a greenbuck. It doesn't sound like a human or a tree or a spider. Also, the Raja states that he feels personally responsible for Horn's death, and the greenbuck is simply the only candidate around when Horn dies:

"We will sail tonight...Would you be willing to make my farewells to Hoof and Hide?...I've been dreading it--in a sense, I have killed their father, though the Outsider surely knows that I never meant him the least harm. I don't want to have to face his sons..." --RTTW (HB) pg 411

Yes, he "in a sense" killed their father by merely accepting that he died and that HE is not HIM. But his answer implies that he feels he caused Horn actual, unintended harm which could not refer to accepting his death.

and wow, I didn't know about that whorlmap site. I'll read up there.

Thanks. I admit I've let it go dormant as I've toiled on a more expansive project that simply did not fit into a short essay. For example, when I say that the Long Sun narrative overlays the myth of Aristaeus, it is not easy to offer a short explanation for why he did that. One day...one day...

J

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 14:43 · follows James Wynn

I forget the name of the character, but I recall that the farthest-down "deity" is pretty clearly identified with the farthest-up. His/her dealings with Abel thus parallel Abaia's undines' dealings with Severian. There are wars and rebellions, but they resemble Vodalus' rebellion against the State but which did not necessarily oppose the Autarch. If these creatures' offers are temptations, they are also tests.

In other words, it's far more complex than simple oppositional dualism.

Falling into error doesn't doom one's soul and make one a social outcast, as the Devil giggles and snorts with glee, as in the Victorian or Protestant German imagination. So perhaps Wolfean characters do in fact treat with the devil all the time, but he is surely an aspect of the divine and thus not really the devil. Or something like that.

-----  
Message: 1

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 09:54:30 -0400

From: John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID:

<93d4039f0903190654p11fd2b42ge04c4adb1ccce5ee at mail.gmail.com>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 7:43 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

Thus, even the dead ends are not really "dead" just as the gods and their myths are not really "false," and since the "traps and snares" I referred to (Milton) are always set by the Devil, who apparently has no presence in Wolfe (or if he does he works for the Increate), they don't exist. It's an interesting contrast with Protestantism---and Satan-obsessed Catholicism?

I think the Devil does exist in Wolfe's work. He's portrayed pretty

directly in Wizard Knight, for example, and I'm not sure we're supposed to think that there's anything redeemable about the Squid God and his ilk.

That said, I do think that Wolfe flirts with the Origenism we see in George MacDonald and, to a lesser extent, C.S. Lewis.

-----

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 15:11 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 10:43 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

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In other words, it's far more complex than simple oppositional dualism. Falling into error doesn't doom one's soul and make one a social outcast, as the Devil giggles and snorts with glee, as in the Victorian or Protestant German imagination. So perhaps Wolfean characters do in fact treat with the devil all the time, but he is surely an aspect of the divine and thus not really the devil. Or something like that.

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Message-ID:

<93d4039f0903190654p11fd2b42ge04c4adb1ccce5ee at mail.gmail.com>

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avast! Antivirus: Outbound message clean.

Virus Database (VPS): 090318-0, 03/18/2009

Tested on: 3/19/2009 10:43:59 AM

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<http://www.avast.com>

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James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 15:12 · in reply to John Watkins

Could be...I'm still not sure Pas went into Silk at the end of Long Sun.  
If he didn't, that's just Silk in Silk's body until the Horn-patterned Neighbor shows up.

Well, the individual explanations I offer have a way of cascading toward my conclusion. It's something that has to be taken as a whole. I recognize that.

If one acknowledges that the Raja is a Neighbor who has reanimated Horn and is in some way Horn himself, then it becomes difficult not to say, "Hmm...resurrected Horn is a beast with TWO horns. Where does the other horn come from? Silk? How is Silk a "horn" or Horn? It would be tidy to say that Horn is one of those special embryos, and a clone of the \*same\* person of whom Silk was, but that's impossible because they don't look alike. Horn could once do a good impression of Silk, but his sons don't think he looks like him.

There are other ways to put the pieces together, in isolation, rather than say that Silk had Pas in him. But **\*\*choosing\*\*** the particular answer from among the others and accepting Horn as a clone of Typhon (which resolves other things) is only way I know of to get Horn into Silk (without feral speculation).

Resolving Wolfean puzzles often requires picking from multiple, viable solutions. To do that, I prefer to look at all the open problems as a whole and see which arrangement of solutions ties up the most open puzzles I have without refuting a bunch of other solutions.

I also want to note that this whole thing is a rationalization of the Incarnation, not the Trinity. The three Persons of the Trinity all share a single essence (in orthodox Christianity, that is), whereas Jesus Christ possessed two essences in a single Person.

Technically, I suppose you're right. But I think a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three-in-one analogy was what Wolfe was going for.

J.

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 15:19 · in reply to James Wynn

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 11:12 AM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:  
>Could be...I'm still not sure Pas went into Silk at the end of Long Sun.

If he didn't, that's just Silk in Silk's body until the Horn-patterned Neighbor shows up.

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I see your point...the third "horn" is Typhon if Horn is a clone of Typhon. Or Horn's soul--the actual soul of the honest-to-goodness Horn goes into Babbie, who has two horns already, making three. I think both are plausible and I'll pay mind to both in my reread.

I also tend to think, though, that Silk is a powered-up clone of Typhon rather than Typhon's biological son with "Kypris" or a clone of that son.

There are other ways to put the pieces together, in isolation, rather than say that Silk had Pas in him. But **\*\*choosing\*\*** the particular answer from among the others and accepting Horn as a clone of Typhon (which resolves other things) is only way I know of to get Horn into Silk (without feral speculation).

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Technically, I suppose you're right. But I think a Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, three-in-one analogy was what Wolfe was going for.

J.

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 15:26 · follows John Watkins

Two cents:

Stags are such a standard mythical sign of the otherworldly or godly, whether of Annwn or Olympus, that they are almost a cliché. So just the fact that Horn sights and chases a "buck" is telling. Especially when it's a white one---but that's cheesy, and this one is an alien green.

Usually it is a boar (the other classic royal quarry) that kills the king (via a wound in the thigh, of course), but that's a detail. For all I know greenbucks have huge tusks.

-----  
Message: 2

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 09:29:42 -0500

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <35BFFEB921144B5F84880311EB50E24D at eMachinePC>

Content-Type: text/plain; format=flowed; charset="iso-8859-1";  
reply-type=response

Witz: I really think your theory is interesting, but I think it needs the justification for the Neighbor being a greenbuck.

There are casual hints about this on the level of the one Stuart Hamm offered, but I don't think it ever gets any clearer than OBW (HB) pg 272 "'My name is Horn.' I offered him my hand.

He took it, and this time I felt his hand and **\*\*remembered hard\*\***, and seemed to

be covered with short, stiff hairs. Beyond that I will not say. " (emphasis mine)

What he remembers here is being a greenbuck. It doesn't sound like a human

or a tree or a spider. Also, the Raja states that he feels personally responsible for Horn's death, and the greenbuck is simply the only candidate around when Horn dies:

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 15:29 · follows David Stockhoff

I recall that now. I found Wizard Knight bewildering on 1 read, frankly. It had my head spinning.

-----  
Message: 9

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 11:11:47 -0400

From: John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID:

<93d4039f0903190811m4fcf9806w2ad42d35f53acf66 at mail.gmail.com>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

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The Most Low God does claim to be the Most High God. But he's lying--the text is fairly clear (given that it's Wolfe) on the point.

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 15:47 · in reply to John Watkins

Or Horn's soul--the actual soul of the honest-to-goodness

Horn goes into Babbie, who has two horns already, making three.

An even simpler explanation that doesn't contradict Raja/Horn/greenbuck is to say that Babbie was becoming Horn via an innate psychic ability to merge his personality to a human being. That seems to be going on. But I just didn't think that was the pay-off I was expecting in the prophecy.

I also tend to think, though, that Silk is a powered-up clone of

Typhon rather than Typhon's biological son with "Kypris" or a clone of that son.

There's lots of narrative and thematic reasons to like that. I certainly did. The Mommy references are between Silk and Kyris are sooo compelling to me, though. This is not an impediment in itself. It is just like Typhon to have the original Kypris implanted with a clone of himself.

However, my acceptance of Silk=Typhon explanation died by a thousand pin pricks. One of those was this: How does this get me to Horn riding a beast with three horns? Okay, Silk is Typhon. So who is Horn. Not Typhon. Could Horn be possessed by Pas? That makes Silk and Horn the same, but it seems to me it ends up making Horn ride a beast with three Typhons instead of Horns. You probably think I've done something similar to this already. I can't emphatically refute that. But this is just a Bridge Too Far.

Have you seen "The Lost Room"? I often identify myself with all those crazy object seekers with their Object Diagrams.

J

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 16:11 · in reply to James Wynn

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 11:47 AM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:  
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I thought that was a Freudian headfake...Silk associates romance and his mother, so to some extent his interpretation of Kypris's romantic interest in him (as her reincarnated lover) is, in Silk's mind, maternal (well, also he can't wrap his head around the idea of a goddess being interested in him.)

However, my acceptance of Silk=Typhon explanation died by a thousand pin pricks. One of those was this: How does this get me to Horn riding a beast with three horns? Okay, Silk is Typhon. So who is Horn. Not Typhon. Could Horn be possessed by Pas? That makes Silk and Horn the same, but it seems to me it ends up making Horn ride a beast with three Typhons instead of Horns. You probably think I've done something similar to this already. I can't emphatically refute that. But this is just a Bridge Too Far.

Yeah, I don't know. Could Horn just be Horn? Why would his parents have bought a special embryo? I dunno.

Have you seen "The Lost Room"? I often identify myself with all those crazy object seekers with their Object Diagrams.

Yes--I loved it until the end.

J

---

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Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 16:13 · follows John Watkins

I wonder if Three Horns should be taken literally.

Literal reading leads us to Babbie as the resolution.

Not sure what to call Wynn's reading, but that leads us away from Babbie, into the idea that the Horns are just a stand in for Souls or Psyches, which is an idea that has some resonance to me. Could we also read "Horns" as "Whorls" I just thought of this now. He's certainly rode three whorls. Horn, as a sort of hybrid, becomes a beast (especially if he's a Neighbor) who has a soul from Blue(Neighbor), a soul from The Whorl Starcrossover (Silk) and a soul from the Red Sun Whorl (Typhon/Pas) Something like that. I'm not trying to stand behind this idea, just throwing it out there as I think it.

also:

The seeming death in the pit is problematic. But isn't it just as feasible to think that it took those three days for the Neighbors to heal Horn? I mean, Babbie and Seawrack's assumption that he was dead isn't much to go on. Seawrack is naive, and what the hell does Babbie know? She doesn't say, "It looked like you were broken." I imagine this naive humanoid and this animal sitting at the pit, unable/unwilling to climb down, watching Horn not move for several hours, and made an assumption.

~witz

-----Original Message-----

From: James Wynn [mailto:crushtv at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 08:47 AM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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Have you seen "The Lost Room"? I often identify myself with all those crazy object seekers with their Object Diagrams.

J

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 16:17 · follows Son of Witz

-----Original Message-----

From: John Watkins [mailto:john.watkins04 at gmail.com]

I thought that was a Freudian headfake

Headfuck? never heard of headfake. are you just being polite? go ahead an swear, we're all adults here.

Yeah, I don't know. Could Horn just be Horn? Why would his parents have bought a special embryo? I dunno.

I'm with you on that. I don't buy Horns origin as anything other than standard issue. Of course, by the end Horn is not just Horn, but you don't need me to point that out I guess.

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 16:26 · in reply to Son of Witz

You non sports person, you. No no, a Headfake is from basketball, when one uses one's head to broadcast a move in one direction, then moves one's body in another direction in order to misdirect.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 9:17 AM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

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From: John Watkins [mailto:john.watkins04 at gmail.com]

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---

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 17:01 · follows Jordon Flato

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]

You non sports person, you. No no, a Headfake is from basketball, when one uses one's head to broadcast a move in one direction, then moves one's body in another direction in order to misdirect.

Ha. yeah, me don'tknows from the basketballz.  
but, he was framing with Freud, not pigskin.

wait, basketballs aren't pigskin, are they?

dang.

~quitz

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---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 17:26 · follows Son of Witz

James

I see from the Wiki for Aristaeus that you are way ahead of me:

"When he was grown, he sailed from Libya to Boeotia <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boeotia>>, where he was inducted into further mysteries in the cave of Chiron <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chiron>> the centaur. In Boeotia, he was married to Autonoe <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Autonoe>> and became the father of the ill-fated Actaeon <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Actaeon>>, who inherited the family passion for hunting, to his ruin, and of Macris <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macris>>, who nursed the child Dionysus <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dionysus>>."

So Horn is Actaeon, who was turned to a stag by Artemis/Diana and whose own hounds tore him apart. I assume Aristaeus is Silk-like because he set an island town straight (executed murderers, brought cool winds) and introduced a proper Zeus cult. Pretty broad, of course: a gunslinger who kills the thugs terrorizing a town would also be Aristaeus, if he gets the townspeople to go to church more afterward. But I guess that's the point.

Can you point me to a source that is more suggestive?

-----  
Message: 2

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 09:29:42 -0500

From: "James Wynn" <[crushtv@gmail.com](mailto:crushtv@gmail.com)>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <[urth@lists.urth.net](mailto:urth@lists.urth.net)>

Message-ID: <35BFFEB921144B5F84880311EB50E24D at eMachinePC>

Content-Type: text/plain; format=flowed; charset="iso-8859-1";

reply-type=response

Thanks. I admit I've let it go dormant as I've toiled on a more expansive project that simply did not fit into a short essay. For example, when I say that the Long Sun narrative overlays the myth of Aristaeus, it is not easy to offer a short explanation for why he did that. One day...one day...

J

---

Adam Thornton — 19 Mar 2009, 17:31 · in reply to James Wynn

On Mar 19, 2009, at 9:29 AM, James Wynn wrote:

Witz: I really think your theory is interesting, but I think it needs the justification for the Neighbor being a greenbuck.

There are casual hints about this on the level of the one Stuart Hamm offered, but I don't think it ever gets any clearer than OBW (HB) pg 272

"My name is Horn." I offered him my hand.

He took it, and this time I felt his hand and \*\*remembered hard\*\*, and seemed to

be covered with short, stiff hairs. Beyond that I will not say.

" (emphasis mine)

What he remembers here is being a greenbuck. It doesn't sound like a human or a tree or a spider.

I thought it DID sound like a spider.

Ugh. Spiders. Ugh.

Adam

---

Adam Thornton — 19 Mar 2009, 17:47 · in reply to Son of Witz

On Mar 19, 2009, at 11:13 AM, Son of Witz wrote:  
The seeming death in the pit is problematic. But isn't it just as feasible to think that it took those three days for the Neighbors to heal Horn? I mean, Babbie and Seawrack's assumption that he was dead isn't much to go on. Seawrack is naive, and what the hell does Babbie know? She doesn't say, "It looked like you were broken." I imagine this naive humanoid and this animal sitting at the pit, unable/unwilling to climb down, watching Horn not move for several hours, and made an assumption.

I can't think of anyone else who was dead for three days and then wasn't.

Adam

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 17:51 · in reply to Son of Witz

Yeah, I don't know. Could Horn just be Horn? Why would his parents have bought a special embryo? I dunno.

I'm with you on that. I don't buy Horn's origin as anything other than standard issue. Of course, by the end Horn is not just Horn, but you don't need me to point that out I guess.

That route actually works a little if you use the Short Sun = Sol. But I've seen Marc take such awful thrashings trying to justify the presence of the Neighbors and inhumis on Urth. It's such an intractable obstacle that I'd probably want to try a lot of other options before going there. Horn as Typhon works so nicely at textual and certain thematic levels. But I'm not prepared at this time to defend it as emphatically as I am that the Raja was the greenbuck, and Incus is a woman, yet many (most?) people don't find those things convincing either. So, there ya go.

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 17:54 · in reply to James Wynn

Ok, why is Incus a woman rather than, as he seems, a gay man?

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 1:51 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Yeah, I don't know. Could Horn just be Horn? Why would his parents have bought a special embryo? I dunno.

I'm with you on that. I don't buy Horn's origin as anything other than standard issue. Of course, by the end Horn is not just Horn, but you don't need me to point that out I guess.

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Horn as Typhon works so nicely at textual and certain thematic levels. But I'm not prepared at this time to defend it as emphatically as I am that the Raja was the greenbuck, and Incus is a woman, yet many (most?) people don't find those things convincing either. So, there ya go.

---

Chris P — 19 Mar 2009, 18:09 · in reply to James Wynn

Witz: You're NOT including Pas in your Trinity right? just Horn/  
Silk/Neighbor. Not Horn/Silk/Neighbor/Pas.

Chis P: At least the way I read it, Pas did not have a soul as such. He was a... pattern, or a psyche (in the terminology I remember us using in that particular conversation) at best. Typhon's soul stayed with Typhon. Even that psyche was not exactly Typhon, because it had either changed on its own or been edited to fit its new role on the ship (not to mention the things that happened to it afterward).

Witz: I hear you. But wouldn't that mean that Divine Silk was a pattern and not a soul or psyche?

I've understood that it was Divine Silk that got into Pig and thus Horn/Silk.

Unless of course, Divine Silk doesn't really factor in at all, and somehow Silk's soul got into Pig by some other means.

JW: The question of whether Wolfe views souls as physical/wave or metaphysical entities is still an issue of debate. He treats them as both. But think of Abel's discussion with Mani the cat about whether he is a cat or an elemental spirit. Abel says he is neither. For as long as they are together, he's a new entity made up of both.

There are only three people in the Raja...and only three souls. When the Raja takes on Silk's body and his mind, he takes on both Silk and any daemon riding along when he died --which would not be Silk or Pas but the Silk-Pas. This is further complicated by the fact that Pas is no longer the original Pas either. They had to add a little bit of Silk to complete him (so Pas has Silk's head now). Consequently, Pas himself is also Silk-Pas, so what's the difference? (And Typhon, when Sev met him --and apparently when he was scanned-- also consisted of two souls, right? Hmmm...The head that was changed in Pas was the tyrant's, not Pieton's, right?. How much of the old Urth's calde even exists in Pas anymore? )

So, only three souls and only three Horns. But the three are not necessarily the same three. If you are familiar with the way Wolfe weaves mythology into his stories and characters, then you know he's quite comfortable with this sort of double and triple -iteration.

Part of this discussion started with some reflections on identity. I mentioned that there is a "simple" view where each self is a "soul", thought of as a (perhaps eternal) substance that undergoes various changes; it is a single, indivisible unit. There is also a "complex" view in which we think of the self as comprised as various components - your memories, your traits, your vital interests, etc. On this view I am only partially still the same person I was when I was in love with my college sweetheart: one is prone to say things like "I was a different person then." And if I think of myself as (mostly) a different person now than then, there are obviously varying degrees along the way. This is not as marginal or purely literary way of talking as it seems - it's part of why we have a statute of limitations, and why we are inclined to not hold an elderly adult responsible for things they did when they were a child. We referred in that

discussion, roughly, to the collection of little pieces that make up such an identity as a "psyche".

Most of us waver back and forth between different ways of talking about personal identity without noticing it. Different situations make each seem much more relevant and true than the other. What makes James's (and possibly Wolfe's) theory a little hard to work with and keep a grip on is that it forces us to actually hold both views at once. That doesn't make it wrong, just that there are going to constantly be points of the text where you want to look at it either one way or the other but not both. So I have never been able to go much further with this theory, as good of a theory as I think it is.

My gut inclination, as an aside though, has always been that there is a point at which Horn has definitely left the combined entity (both psyche and soul, whichever way you want to look at it; though if you think of it as the psyche you could say that there are some remnants).

---

don doggett — 19 Mar 2009, 18:10 · follows Chris P

Doggerel

[www.don-doggett.blogspot.com](http://www.don-doggett.blogspot.com)

--- On Thu, 3/19/09, David Stockhoff <[dstockhoff at verizon.net](mailto:dstockhoff@verizon.net)> wrote:

Pretty broad, of course: a

gunslinger who kills the thugs terrorizing a town would also be Aristaeus, if he gets the townspeople to go to church more afterward. But I guess that's the point.

Whoah. Pale Rider, anyone?

Don

---

Matthew Groves — 19 Mar 2009, 18:14 · in reply to Adam Thornton

On Mar 19, 2009, at 9:29 AM, James Wynn wrote:

Witz: I really think your theory is interesting, but I think it needs the justification for the Neighbor being a greenbuck.

There are casual hints about this on the level of the one Stuart Hamm offered, but I don't think it ever gets any clearer than OBW (HB) pg 272

"'My name is Horn.' I offered him my hand.

He took it, and this time I felt his hand and \*\*remembered hard\*\*, and seemed to

be covered with short, stiff hairs. Beyond that I will not say. "  
(emphasis mine)

What he remembers here is being a greenbuck. It doesn't sound like a human or a tree or a spider.

It does actually sound insectoid. Do we have anywhere a description of greenbuck hair? What about Babbie's hair?

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 18:16 · in reply to don doggett

Like \*The Sixth Sense\* for smart people.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 2:10 PM, don doggett <kingwukong at yahoo.com> wrote:

Doggerel  
www.don-doggett.blogspot.com

--- On Thu, 3/19/09, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

Pretty broad, of course: a  
gunslinger who kills the thugs terrorizing a town would also  
be Aristaeus, if he gets the townspeople to go to church  
more afterward. But I guess that's the point.

Whoah. Pale Rider, anyone?

Don

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 18:23 · follows John Watkins

I'm stumped too. Why does Wolfe keep doing this to us?

After reading and discussing all this, I can't help but envision Ossipago, Barbatus, and  
Famulimus rolling away the stone while Master Malrubius and Triskele look on and the crypt fills  
with light.

Witz, paint us a picture!

-----

Message: 3  
Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 12:47:17 -0500  
From: Adam Thornton <adam at io.com>  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie  
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>  
Message-ID: <9ADF6D86-E60C-4B9B-A6AA-64DEF4C1ECE4 at io.com>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="us-ascii"; Format="flowed";  
DelSp="yes"

On Mar 19, 2009, at 11:13 AM, Son of Witz wrote:

The seeming death in the pit is problematic. But isn't it just as  
feasible to think that it took those three days for the Neighbors to  
heal Horn? I mean, Babbie and Seawrack's assumption that he was  
dead isn't much to go on. Seawrack is naive, and what the hell does  
Babbie know? She doesn't say, "It looked like you were broken." I  
imagine this naive humanoid and this animal sitting at the pit,  
unable/unwilling to climb down, watching Horn not move for several  
hours, and made an assumption.

I can't think of anyone else who was dead for three days and then  
wasn't.

Adam

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 18:30 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff: I see from the Wiki for Aristaeus that you are way ahead of me: "When he was grown, he sailed from Libya to Boeotia, where he was inducted into further mysteries in the cave of Chiron the centaur. In Boeotia, he was married to Autonoe and became the father of the ill-fated Actaeon, who inherited the family passion for hunting, to his ruin, and of Macris, who nursed the child Dionysus."

So Horn is Actaeon, who was turned to a stag by Artemis/Diana and whose own hounds tore him apart. I assume Aristaeus is Silk-like because he set an island town straight (executed murderers, brought cool winds) and introduced a proper Zeus cult. Pretty broad, of course: a gunslinger who kills the thugs terrorizing a town would also be Aristaeus, if he gets the townspeople to go to church more afterward. But I guess that's the point.

Can you point me to a source that is more suggestive?

I was not aware of the connection between Horn and Actaeon. I wrote my essay on Aristaeus before I'd read tBotSS. That's really interesting. The essay is here:

<http://www.urth.org/whorlmap/aristaeus.htm> The version that Wolfe used to plot the novel is Robert Graves's from "The Greek Myths". I presume you've read my essay on this already, but if you haven't, I map Grave's rendition to Wolfe's novel from beginning to end. I realize the perils in declaring any decent novel to be an "allegory" but I found it uncanny the way Wolfe managed to link every element in Graves' narrative to his own story. Incidentally, in this overlay Tussah is Apollo, Quetzal is Dionysus, and Pas is Zeus. The Myrtle nymphs? Look up myrtle in the index and check out the references--they are illuminating.

Another less important Aristaeus reference is Herodotus's "History of the Persian War" (also useful when reading 'Soldier of the Mist'). Herodotus relates how Aristaeus appeared in Italy several centuries after his disappearance (he was supposed to be murdered, then the body disappeared). He told the people that he had been serving as Apollo's raven. Speaking of 'Soldier of the Mist', the poet Pindar (Latro's friend) wrote some paens to Aristaeus.

"The Greek Myths" is an excellent resource. Regarding Graves's theories in 'The White Goddess', Wolfe has ascribed them as crazy, and I'd be surprised if he thought otherwise. But he has recommended TGM and of course the connection between Severian and Claudius in "I, Claudius" is well-documented. Grave's commentary (in the numbered annotations) is certainly less than trustworthy, but he often does a very nice job of connecting-the-dots even if he often fails to properly distinguish the picture when he's done. It seems to me that Wolfe seems to appreciate his connecting ability at least.

J.

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 18:33 · in reply to John Watkins

Ok, why is Incus a woman rather than, as he seems, a gay man?

I'll put that together tomorrow evening.

J

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 18:39 · in reply to James Wynn

Thanks, I appreciate it.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 2:33 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:  
>Ok, why is Incus a woman rather than, as he seems, a gay man?

I'll put that together tomorrow evening.

J

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 18:41 · follows John Watkins

-----Original Message-----

From: David Stockhoff [mailto:dstockhoff at verizon.net]

Witz, paint us a picture!

ha.

actually, I just finished a painting for SC3's next. I wasn't particularly thrilled on the subject matter, or the style (realistic 70's italian horror movie poster), and wanted to be doing some New Sun stuff, so I tried to fool myself by framing it as a new sun piece. It has an angelic blond and a wicked brunette. So I just pretended the blond was Dorcas and the Brunette was Agia.

I've got to do a cover for this danish SoundtrackN'Roll band, SPEkTR (not the french black metal band) and they want a 70's 80's PKD style cover, so I'm gonna do my best to make a faux cover for Long Sun. the type of cover it definitely should NOT have, but the type it probably would have gotten if it was cheaply published in the 70's.

SPEkTR is quite fun. perhaps SC3-lite, without the middle eastern stuff.

<http://www.myspace.com/spektrscope>

If you check it out, I'd suggest skipping the top two "Alt Version" tracks, and go straight to Betonville and the others from "B/W Vs. Technicolor", which I did the packaging for. I've gotten a lot of mileage out of that album.

~witz

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 18:52 · follows Son of Witz

I have to comment that this schema easily allows for the copying of persona/whatever by machines in the first place. I don't believe that machines could copy souls. Machines are the opposite of souls and could never capture them, I'd think. And there would be the theological implications. (Again, haven't heard from the Pope on this but I imagine he'd be pretty ticked off.)

Electromagnetic brainwave patterns, however, present no difficulty whatsoever. Scan'em in, scan'em out, put'em on a floppy. In fact, you'd have to work harder to convince me that any Wolfean characters actually have souls at all than that their psyches could not be replicated and merged.

-----  
Message: 3

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 18:09:03 +0000

From: Chris P <rasputin\_ at hotmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <BLU120-W5D3816582B130AD6CAA5286960 at phx.gbl>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="windows-1252"

Part of this discussion started with some reflections on identity. I mentioned that there is a "simple" view where each self is a "soul", thought of as a (perhaps eternal) substance that undergoes various changes; it is a single, indivisible unit. There is also a "complex" view in which we think of the self as comprised as various components - your memories, your traits, your vital interests, etc. On this view I am only partially still the same person I was when I was in love with my college sweetheart: one is prone to say things like "I was a different person then." And if I think of myself as (mostly) a different person now than then, there are obviously varying degrees along the way. This is not as marginal or purely literary way of talking as it seems - it's part of why we have a statute of limitations, and why we are inclined to not hold an elderly adult responsible for things they did when they were a child. We referred in that discussion, roughly, to the collection of little pieces that make up such an identity as a "psyche".

Most of us waver back and forth between different ways of talking about personal identity without noticing it. Different situations make each seem much more relevant and true than the other. What makes James's (and possibly Wolfe's) theory a little hard to work with and keep a grip on is that it forces us to actually hold both views at once. That doesn't make it wrong, just that there are going to constantly be points of the text where you want to look at it either one way or the other but not both. So I have never been able to go much further with this theory, as good of a theory as I think it is.

My gut inclination, as an aside though, has always been that there is a point at which Horn has definitely left the combined entity (both psyche and soul, whichever way you want to look at it; though if you think of it as the psyche you could say that there are some remnants).

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John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 18:58 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 2:52 PM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:  
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That's basically all an Aristotelian or Thomistic soul is, though--a pattern. In Thomistic philosophy, humans \*have\* souls, but they \*are\* the unity of the soul and the body. Think of the soul as the sum total of all of your memories up to the present + your will, and that's basically a Thomistic soul. In theory, this could be copied--the copy would have an independent will and independent consciousness, but it would have, for an infinitesimal moment, the same soul that you do.

I can't say that this is Catholic orthodoxy, but it isn't heterodox either. It's a permitted philosophical viewpoint that merely requires a few other theological assumptions to salvage its orthodoxy, which someone like St. Thomas happily would grant (i.e., the soul is miraculously sustained after death for the particular judgment.)

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Message: 3

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 18:09:03 +0000

From: Chris P <rasputin\_ at hotmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

To: <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <BLU120-W5D3816582B130AD6CAA5286960 at phx.gbl>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset="windows-1252"

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avast! Antivirus: Outbound message clean.

Virus Database (VPS): 090319-0, 03/19/2009

Tested on: 3/19/2009 2:52:30 PM

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<http://www.avast.com>

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 19 Mar 2009, 18:59 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David,

I think you're on the right track. However, I don't suppose Wolfe is proposing any specific answer to the question of what a soul is, let alone whether it can be copied or not. Rather, I suggest that he's asking questions: "What if \_this\_ were possible; then where would the soul be?" and some of his novels are, among other things, attempts to explore those questions, though not necessarily to \_answer\_ them as such.

The best fiction raises questions but doesn't necessarily answer them.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

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John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 19:06 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

I just remember another passage where Wolfe seems to explicitly endorse a Thomistic theory of the soul...it's in *Urth of the New Sun* when Severian is talking with the Hierodules about his various iterations. One of the simplest ways of explaining it is to use the analogy of writing or music. A song ("Let it Be," for example) is neither a particular performance of the song nor the music and lyrics in their abstract--the former is like a body and the latter is like a soul. Every time the soul (the music and lyrics) are instantiated in a performance, then the song exists, but it is always the same song as long as it is the same music and lyrics.

I believe a similar example is used to explain to Severian how he can be in two places at once, and how, if he and another Sev get too close together, they'll blend into one guy.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 2:59 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danl do at gmail.com> wrote:  
David,

I think you're on the right track. However, I don't suppose Wolfe is proposing any specific answer to the question of what a soul is, let alone whether it can be copied or not. Rather, I suggest that he's asking questions: "What if \_this\_ were possible; then where would the soul be?" and some of his novels are, among other things, attempts to explore those questions, though not necessarily to \_answer\_ them as such.

The best fiction raises questions but doesn't necessarily answer them.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

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David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 19:07 · follows John Watkins

No, I have not read that, but thanks!

The correspondence of the Whorl gods to the Greek pantheon was always plain, but I never tried to map it. I will read this.

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Message: 4  
Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 13:30:24 -0500  
From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at gmail.com>  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie  
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>  
Message-ID: <CBABAAF59A9B4ED1AC75366F2E349C09 at eMachinePC>  
Content-Type: text/plain; format=flowed; charset="iso-8859-1";  
reply-type=response

I was not aware of the connection between Horn and Actaeon. I wrote my essay on Aristaeus before I'd read tBotSS. That's really interesting.  
The essay is here: <http://www.urth.org/whorlmap/aristaeus.htm>  
The version that Wolfe used to plot the novel is Robert Graves's from "The Greek Myths". I presume you've read my essay on this already, but if you haven't, I map Grave's rendition to Wolfe's novel from beginning to end. I realize the perils in declaring any decent novel to be an "allegory" but I found it uncanny the way Wolfe managed to link every element in Graves' narrative to his own story. Incidentally, in this overlay Tussah is Apollo, Quetzal is Dionysus, and Pas is Zeus. The Myrtle nymphs? Look up myrtle in the index and check out the references--they are illuminating.

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 19:36 · follows David Stockhoff

Sure. I was only saying I had no trouble with the two-part model used to explain the Horn-Silk complex. John seems to suggest that it's even less of a problem than that from a theological perspective (I myself am no expert on souls), in which case 2 parts may not even be needed.

Personally, I'm not sure what Wolfe is getting at with all these transmogrifications of souls. Perhaps it is a matter of emphasizing the divine and eternal over the fleeting and mundane. And if we or someone could control souls, it would be powerful "magic" indeed. (I have noticed that Wolfe doesn't write about fireball-throwing wizards so much. Magic artillery doesn't lead one to question the nature of the divine.)

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----- Message: 3 Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 11:59:32 -0700 From: "Dan'l Danehy-Oakes" <danldo at gmail.com> Subject:

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James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 19:41 · in reply to John Watkins

This could get interesting again, so I'm moving this conversation to a new thread.

Just because I'm that way, I'll mention that in The Book of the Short Sun, the Raja gives a very detailed analogy to the soul and body as a person living in a house. This version is founded on a metaphysical/particlist view of the soul. Rose-in-Marble also says that while she is now just those little "gold doo-dads" you see on cards, she still a "real person" because she always was. This gives idea of a soul as something immutable even it is copied into a mechanical construction (or arguably, into an inhumani). So the gods might be "genuine" souls even if they've had their memories and personalities distorted for practical purposes in running the ship. Typhon did this to the souls of the human cargo as well. He manipulated their memories . Aren't their souls real? And where do you suppose the minds of the chems came from? Don't you find it interesting that even a pair of chem  
\*hands\* easily absorbed Rose's memories and identity via proximity? Is Rose-in-Marble any less real than Marble-in-Marble?

Conversation I'm responding to is below

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A conversation I had with Chris about souls and identity in Wolfe's fiction that lead to my detailing of the identity of the Raja in The Book of the Short Sun:

<http://lists.urth.net/htdig.cgi/urth-urth.net/2004-December/004360.html>

Witz sez:

You're NOT including Pas in your Trinity right? just Horn/  
Silk/Neighbor. Not Horn/Silk/Neighbor/Pas.

Chis P:

At least the way I read it, Pas did not have a soul as such. He was a... pattern, or a psyche (in the terminology I remember us using in that particular conversation) at best. Typhon's soul stayed with Typhon. Even that psyche was not exactly Typhon, because it had either changed on its own or been edited to fit its new role on the ship (not to mention the things that happened to it afterward).

Witz sez:

I hear you. But wouldn't that mean that Divine Silk was a pattern and not a soul or psyche?

I've understood that it was Divine Silk that got into Pig and thus Horn/Silk.

Unless of course, Divine Silk doesn't really factor in at all, and somehow Silk's soul got into Pig by some other means.

James Wynn sez:

The question of whether Wolfe views souls as physical/wave or metaphysical entities is still an issue of debate. He treats them as both. But think of Abel's discussion with Mani the cat about whether he is a cat or an elemental spirit. Abel says he is neither. For as long as they are together,

he's a new entity made up of both.

There are only three people in the Raja...and only three souls. When the Raja takes on Silk's body and his mind, he takes on both Silk and any daemon

riding along when he died --which would not be Silk or Pas but the Silk-Pas.

This is further complicated by the fact that Pas is no longer the original Pas either. They had to add a little bit of Silk to complete him (so Pas has

Silk's head now). Consequently, Pas himself is also Silk-Pas, so what's the

difference? (And Typhon, when Sev met him --and apparently when he was scanned-- also consisted of two souls, right? Hmmm...The head that was changed in Pas was the tyrant's, not Pieton's, right?. How much of the old Urth's calde even exists in Pas anymore? )

So, only three souls and only three Horns. But the three are not necessarily

the same three. If you are familiar with the way Wolfe weaves mythology into

his stories and characters, then you know he's quite comfortable with this sort of double and triple -iteration.

**Chris P sez:**

Part of this discussion started with some reflections on identity. I mentioned that there is a "simple" view where each self is a "soul", thought of as a (perhaps eternal) substance that undergoes various changes; it is a single, indivisible unit. There is also a "complex" view in which we think of the self as comprised as various components - your memories, your traits, your vital interests, etc. On this view I am only partially still the same person I was when I was in love with my college sweetheart: one is prone to say things like "I was a different person then." And if I think of myself as (mostly) a different person now than then, there are obviously varying degrees along the way. This is not as marginal or purely literary way of talking as it seems - it's part of why we have a statute of limitations, and why we are inclined to not hold an elderly adult responsible for things they did when they were a child. We referred in that discussion, roughly, to the collection of little pieces that make up such an identity as a "psyche". Most of us waver back and forth between different ways of talking about personal identity without noticing it. Different situations make each seem much more relevant and true than the other. What makes James's (and possibly Wolfe's) theory a little hard to work with and keep a grip on is that it forces us to actually hold both views at once. That doesn't make it wrong, just that there are going to constantly be points of the text where you want to look at it either one way or the other but not both. So I have never been able to go much further with this theory, as good of a theory as I think it is. My gut inclination, as an aside though, has always been that there is a point at which Horn has definitely left the combined entity (both psyche and soul, whichever way you want to look at it; though if you think of it as the psyche you could say that there are some remnants).

**David Stackhoff sez:**

I have to comment that this schema easily allows for the copying of persona/whatever by machines in the first place. I don't believe that machines could copy souls. Machines are the opposite of souls and could never capture them, I'd think. And there would be the theological implications. (Again, haven't heard from the Pope on this but I imagine he'd be pretty ticked off.) Electromagnetic brainwave patterns, however, present no difficulty whatsoever. Scan'em in, scan'em out, put'em on a floppy. In fact, you'd have to work harder to convince me that any Wolfean characters actually have souls at all than that their psyches could not be replicated and merged.

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes sez:

I think you're on the right track. However, I don't suppose Wolfe is proposing any specific answer to the question of what a soul is, let alone whether it can be copied or not. Rather, I suggest that he's asking questions: "What if \_this\_ were possible; then where would the soul be?" and some of his novels are, among

other things, attempts to explore those questions, though not necessarily to \_answer\_ them as such.

David Stockhoff sez:

I just remember another passage where Wolfe seems to explicitly endorse a Thomistic theory of the soul...it's in Urth of the New Sun when Severian is talking with the Hierodules about his various iterations. One of the simplest ways of explaining it is to use the analogy of writing or music. A song ("Let it Be," for example) is neither a particular performance of the song nor the music and lyrics in their abstract--the former is like a body and the latter is like a soul. Every time the soul (the music and lyrics) are instantiated in a performance, then the song exists, but it is always the same song as long as it is the same music and lyrics.

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 19:53 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Also, He-Pen-Sheep calls Horn neighbor man because of the ring seawrack gives horn:

"When I asked what a Neighbor-man was, he laughed and pointed to the ring Sewrack had given me. "You Neighbor Man."

It's the ring that lets He-Pens-Sheep to identify Horn as a neighborman, not any recognition of a Neighbor Soul in Horn.

I'm not trying to shoot you down here James, I just don't see any evidence, espeically with what Roy brings above, that indicates that the Greenbuck was a Neighbor at all. It doesn't track with me, or with the text, as far as I can tell. The above corrected quote from Roy, which is correct and different from how you quoted it, removes some of the ambiguity.

Again, doesn't destroy the theory, but two important points of it have at least been called into question....

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 1:38 PM, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:  
James Wynn quoted and wrote:

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the  
justification for the Neighbor being a greenbuck.

There are casual hints about this on the level of the one Stuart Hamm  
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"My name is Horn." I offered him my hand.  
He took it, and this time I felt his hand and \*\*remembered hard\*\*, and  
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(emphasis  
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What he remembers here is being a greenbuck. It doesn't sound like a  
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or a tree or a spider. [snip]

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the Neighbor had helped him stand up. He said that he didn't remember how  
the Neighbor's hands had felt when he was helped up, but he did take notice  
when they shook hands.

This does not ruin your theory, per se, but it does cast more than a little  
doubt on the notion that Silkhorn remembers being a greenbuck.

-Roy

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 20:02 · follows Jordon Flato

For me, it's enough that Horn saw and gave chase to a greenbuck. When you see a large white  
stag, the Old Folk are near---it's that simple---and if you are smart, you will go home  
immediately. Of course, heroes are not smart in that way, and so they go plunging after a green  
stag, not realizing the Neighbors are close by. And so one was near when Horn died. Fuzzy,  
perhaps. But enough for me.

----- Message: 4 Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 14:38:55 -0600 From: "Roy C.  
Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net> Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at  
lists.urth.net> Message-ID: <001e01c9a8d2\$bd49d1e0\$2dd24a0c at rclackey> Content-Type:  
text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

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-Roy

-----  

---

hammstu at sbcglobal.net — 19 Mar 2009, 20:11 · in reply to James Wynn

THIS I can't wait to read...thanks so much for your illuminating posts John Wynn! Sent from my BlackBerry? smartphone with SprintSpeed

-----Original Message-----

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at gmail.com>

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 13:33:03

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 20:28 · follows hammstu at sbcglobal.net

I've got to third this.

my text matches Roy's correction.

it really notches the idea down.

Even that a Stag can be a god (is that right) doesn't really jibe because teh neighbors are not gods.

~witz

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 12:53 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

Also, He-Pen-Sheep calls Horn neighbor man because of the ring seawrack gives horn:

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-Roy

---

Chris P — 19 Mar 2009, 20:29 · in reply to James Wynn

David Stackhoff sez:

I have to comment that this schema easily allows for the copying of persona/whatever by machines in the first place. I don't believe that machines could copy souls. Machines are the opposite of souls and could never capture them, I'd think. And there would be the theological implications. (Again, haven't heard from the Pope on this but I imagine he'd be pretty ticked off.)

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This is basically why I made the comment I did about Pas. Though James is extremely to the point in bringing up Rose-in-Marble, who I think foreshadows this problem at least in part. (There is foreshadowing in other ways as well, from LS to SS; consider that we've said very little about the inhuma but they are an integral part of the story. And the passage in LS about imitation - be it a demon imitating god, an inhuma imitating a human, or... someone imitating Silk or Horn, is relevant). Your position on this is going to at least in part depend on what you think of the Rose-in-Marble situation, which makes for a nice thought problem in itself.

Rose says she's a person (and, indeed, the *\*same\** person - again, an issue of identity: what makes for "sameness"?) but we have no unequivocal way to parse this out. The fact that she makes the statement doesn't necessarily mean anything, because a well-trained Eliza-bot could give you the same utterance. The problem is that while Rose-in-Marble may have the "psyche" or "pattern" of Rose, there was clearly no transfer of immortal "soul" (again, thinking of soul as a *\*substance\** in the technical/logical sense of the word). My own interpretation of this episode is that Silk puts aside the presence or non-presence of the immortal soul as irrelevant to the situation, deciding that she was worthy of the same respect and consideration regardless of whether she truly was the "same person".

John Watkins sez:

That's basically all an Aristotelian or Thomistic soul is, though--a pattern.

In Thomistic philosophy, humans have souls, but they are the unity of the soul and the body. Think of the soul as the sum total of all of your memories

up to the present + your will, and that's basically a Thomistic soul.

In theory, this could be copied--the copy would have an independent will and independent consciousness, but it would have, for an infinitesimal moment, the same soul that you do.

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Well, this is part of the problem with using the word "soul"; there is an ambiguity in these ways of looking at how the word is used, which tends to lead to metaphysical questions like "Well ok, what is the 'soul' \*really\*?" The introduction of the two different words was to make a bit more explicit the possibility that we can be talking about two different things; this pushes the dispute a bit away from that metaphysical ground towards a question of "OK, well, which of these (possibly distinct) things is what determines personal identity; which is 'really \*me\*'?"

Now, if you take the position that the two words (soul/psyche) don't actually refer to anything distinct but to a single underlying notion of "soul", then the question is immediately pushed back to "What is the soul really like?" and you seem forced to say that one of the two ways of looking at it must be wrong, after all. This is part of what gives me trouble with James's composite view... Because we can vacillate case by case in which notion seems to best fit our intuitive understanding of identity. But if we take a single case and attempt to claim that identity consists in both of them at the same time, then you once again seem to point back to that metaphysical question, and you have to reject soul-as-substance, psyche, or possibly both.

---

hammstu at sbcglobal.net — 19 Mar 2009, 20:38 · in reply to Son of Witz

Need I remind you the chapter is called "The End"????  
Sent from my BlackBerry? smartphone with SprintSpeed

-----Original Message-----

From: "Son of Witz" <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 20:28:02

To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

I've got to third this.

my text matches Roy's correction.

it really notches the idea down.

Even that a Stag can be a god (is that right) doesn't really jibe because teh neighbors are not gods.

~witz

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To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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-Roy

---

Urth Mailing List  
To post, write urth at urth.net  
Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

---

Roy C. Lackey — 19 Mar 2009, 20:38 · in reply to James Wynn

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-Roy

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David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 21:16 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Sure they are. That is, they are of Faerie, as much as they can be while still being aliens on an alien planet. They're green, aren't they?

Gods, fairies, same thing when it comes to the most ancient tales. It's about otherworldliness. Wolfe seems to see connections, not distinctions, when he writes in the fantastic or mythic mode.

-----  
Message: 6  
Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 20:28:02 +0000  
From: "Son of Witz" <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie  
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>  
Message-ID: <W944121230398371237494482 at webmail27>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

I've got to third this.  
my text matches Roy's correction.  
it really notches the idea down.  
Even that a Stag can be a god (is that right) doesn't really jibe because teh neighbors are not gods.

~witz

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 21:22 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I'm not sure where you fall on the 'hierodules' argument, but hopefully, you are not one to see them as "insect beings" who have no divinity or legitimate connection with divinity. Otherwise, it seems like it would be hard to make the case for the Neighbors having that quality and not the Hierodules....

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 2:16 PM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

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avast! Antivirus: Outbound message clean.

Virus Database (VPS): 090319-0, 03/19/2009

Tested on: 3/19/2009 5:16:21 PM

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<http://www.avast.com>

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 21:23 · follows Jordon Flato

ok. I won't argue with that.

I guess I just need more.

~witz

-----Original Message-----

From: David Stockhoff [mailto:dstockhoff at verizon.net]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 02:16 PM

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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Message-ID: <W944121230398371237494482 at webmail27>

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<http://www.avast.com>

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James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 21:38 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

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Wow! You miss four words and it really changes the meaning. I checked and you're right. So I checked my old copy and, yep, it had a bad printing of the end of that line. arrg! This re-arranges the furniture a bit. And a little chaos does not a convincing argument make. You're right that this corrected text does mean that Horn does not explicitly recall a past as a greenbuck. The most annoying thing is that I will have to rewrite something that nicely put it all together in a bow. Those stiff hairs definitely recall a deer hide for me. And I'd say there's still pretty solid evidence that the Raja is a Neighbor with Horn's and Silk's psyche. Yet, this is going to need buttressing, which I be able to do with out a re-reading.

J

---

David Stockhoff — 19 Mar 2009, 21:44 · follows Chris P

Interestingly, "soul" often has been used the opposite of the way we use "self." That is, as something you possess that is not you, and which you may have stolen from you.

If you consider George MacDonald's "shadows" and Lord Dunsany's shadows and souls, and some fairy tales as well (giant's hearts and so on), they tend to be nameless, faceless things. And this makes sense, because the concept well predates the era of Romanticism. You could consider it a "spark," perhaps.

The "self" is much more to the point here, I think.

---

Message: 1

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 20:29:51 +0000

From: Chris P <rasputin\_ at hotmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Souls

To: <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <BLU120-W35655D15428B8B103756186960 at phx.gbl>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset="windows-1252"

Well, this is part of the problem with using the word "soul"; there is an ambiguity in these ways of looking at how the word is used, which tends to lead to metaphysical questions like "Well ok, what is the 'soul' \*really\*?" The introduction of the two different words was to make a bit more explicit the possibility that we can be talking about two different things; this pushes the dispute a bit away from that metaphysical ground towards a question of "OK, well, which of these (possibly distinct) things is what determines personal identity; which is 'really \*me\*'?"

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Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 21:49 · follows James Wynn

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Wow! You miss four words and it really changes the meaning. I checked and you're right. So I checked my old copy and, yep, it had a bad printing of the end of that line. arrg! This re-arranges the furniture a bit. And a little chaos does not a convincing argument make.

You're right that this corrected text does mean that Horn does not explicitly recall a past as a greenbuck. The most annoying thing is that I will have to rewrite something that nicely put it all together in a bow. Those stiff hairs definitely recall a deer hide for me. And I'd say there's still pretty solid evidence that the Raja is a Neighbor with Horn's and

Silk's psyche. Yet, this is going to need buttressing, which I be able to do with out a re-reading.

J

"Shot down, in a blaze of glory"

sorry man, just kidding.

I'm just glad I'm not overly invested in any of my readings.

dang, it's gotta hurt. What can you do when your text is printed wrong?

it's like if I did a painting of the Amphisbaena based on the typo where he writes "Hand" instead of "Head". My serpent would be chomping it's hand.

~witz

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 22:03 · in reply to David Stockhoff

In "An Evil Guest" one of the characters says that the term "banshee", which means "woman of the faerie mounds" means that they are one of the "gray neighbors".

In folklore/mythology, chasing a white stag inevitably leads one to Faerieland, meaning the other world, the world of spirits, where one's ancestors go. The most famous case was Pwyll in the Mabinogion, who become the Head of the Annwn (that is, Faerieland). Incidentally Pwyll's name meant "sense" and his son Pryderi's name meant "care" or "thought". This is a naming convention that I thought of when I was reading Long Sun.

There's another way to get to Faerieland too. You can enter a faerie circle. For Horn, the faerie circle was a pit. Seawrack and Babbie were not mistaken. Horn was dead dead dead. He had gone on the Summer lands.

---

Chris P — 19 Mar 2009, 22:04 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I agree, although I'd maintain that this is still exactly the same ambiguity - there are two common understandings of what makes up the 'self'. It is somewhat open as to what terms we use to denote which we're talking about.

Actually, if it is of interest to anyone, there is an article (which may be a bit technical, IIRC) by Derek Parfit that led me to ask my question of James in that particular way, and it is online. It isn't so much his primary argument - which is ethical in nature - that got me thinking this way, it is his way of laying it out (via the "Simple" and "Complex" views). I think it would likely be a step back to try to hammer the square peg of what he is saying entirely into this particular hole.

[http://individual.utoronto.ca/stafforini/parfit/parfit\\_-\\_personal\\_identity\\_and\\_rationality.pdf](http://individual.utoronto.ca/stafforini/parfit/parfit_-_personal_identity_and_rationality.pdf)

Interestingly, "soul" often has been used the opposite of the way we use "self." That is, as something you possess that is not you, and which you may have stolen from you.

If you consider George MacDonald's "shadows" and Lord Dunsany's shadows and souls, and some fairy tales as well (giant's hearts and so on), they tend to be nameless, faceless things. And this makes sense, because the concept well predates the era of Romanticism. You could consider it a "spark," perhaps.

The "self" is much more to the point here, I think.

---

Message: 1

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 20:29:51 +0000

From: Chris P <rasputin\_ at hotmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Souls

To: <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <BLU120-W35655D15428B8B103756186960 at phx.gbl>

Content-Type: text/plain; charset="windows-1252"

Well, this is part of the problem with using the word "soul"; there is an ambiguity in these ways of looking at how the word is used, which tends to lead to metaphysical questions like "Well ok, what is the 'soul' \*really\*?" The introduction of the two different words was to make a bit more explicit the possibility that we can be talking about two different things; this pushes the dispute a bit away from that metaphysical ground towards a question of "OK, well, which of these (possibly distinct) things is what determines personal identity; which is 'really \*me\*'?"

Now, if you take the position that the two words (soul/psyche) don't actually refer to anything distinct but to a single underlying notion of "soul", then the question is immediately pushed back to "What is the soul really like?" and you seem forced to say that one of the two ways of looking at it must be wrong, after all. This is part of what gives me trouble with James's composite view... Because we can vacillate case by case in which notion seems to best fit our intuitive understanding of identity. But if we take a single case and attempt to claim that identity consists in both of them at the same time, then you once again seem to point back to that metaphysical question, and you have to reject soul-as-substance, psyche, or possibly both.

---

avast! Antivirus: Outbound message clean.

Virus Database (VPS): 090319-0, 03/19/2009

Tested on: 3/19/2009 5:44:38 PM

avast! - copyright (c) 1988-2009 ALWIL Software.

<http://www.avast.com>

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Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 22:09 · in reply to James Wynn

Well, I'll be looking for evidence of the Neighbor's personality manifesting in the book in this read through. There are plenty of instances of Silk manifesting momentarily through Horn without his intention (which I don't see how that has much resonance or meaning aside from a red herring if a neighbor is actually inhabiting Horn), but I can't think of many instances, save your ambiguous quote at the end about killing their father, where the personality doesn't seem to be Horn or Silk. I would expect, if you are right, there are other clues throughout. I don't see them. \*yet\* But it does give me something new to look for in this read through!

I would agree that chasing the stag, falling in the Pit (which was in the midst of a classic faerie circle of the ruins) represented a crossing over of sorts, but I don't think it necessitates Horn's death. That is a turning point in the narrative for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that it brings Horn directly to the attention of the neighbors (without, I would posit, necessitating a transfer of 'souls' into Horn).

I grant it is possible, but I just don't see it yet.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:03 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:  
In "An Evil Guest" one of the characters says that the term "banshee", which means "woman of the faerie mounds" means that they are one of the "gray neighbors".

In folklore/mythology, chasing a white stag inevitably leads one to Faerieland, meaning the other world, the world of spirits, where one's ancestors go. The most famous case was Pwyll in the Mabinogion, who become the Head of the Annwn (that is, Faerieland). Incidentally Pwyll's name meant "sense" and his son Pryderi's name meant "care" or "thought". This is a naming convention that I thought of when I was reading Long Sun.

There's another way to get to Faerieland too. You can enter a faerie circle. For Horn, the faerie circle was a pit. Seawrack and Babbie were not mistaken. Horn was dead dead dead. He had gone on the Summer lands.

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 22:12 · in reply to Jordon Flato

And, why would a neighbor, finally admitting what he is, if only to himself, choose to return to the Whorl, at the very end? Silk, yes, but a neighbor?

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:09 PM, Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com> wrote:  
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John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 22:21 · in reply to Jordon Flato

I think the sine qua non has got to be that it's really Silk talking to Remora at the big reveal, right? Either Silk was clinging to his body when Neighbor/Horn(?) got poured into it, or Silk reentered the body via Pig at some point, but that's Silk in there at the end. Not necessarily "only" Silk, though.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 6:12 PM, Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com> wrote:  
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On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:09 PM, Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com> wrote:

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I grant it is possible, but I just don't see it yet.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:03 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

In "An Evil Guest" one of the characters says that the term "banshee", which means "woman of the faerie mounds" means that they are one of the "gray neighbors".

In folklore/mythology, chasing a white stag inevitably leads one to Faerieland, meaning the other world, the world of spirits, where one's ancestors go. The most famous case was Pwyll in the Mabinogion, who become

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There's another way to get to Faerieland too. You can enter a faerie circle. For Horn, the faerie circle was a pit. Seawrack and Babbie were not mistaken. Horn was dead dead dead. He had gone on the Summer lands.

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 22:28 · in reply to John Watkins

Yeah, I think so too. I just still am not finding resonance with the idea of Neighbor/Horn if that turns out to be true....

....yet.

---

James Wynn — 19 Mar 2009, 22:37 · in reply to Jordon Flato

And, why would a neighbor, finally admitting what he is, if only to himself, choose to return to the Whorl, at the very end? Silk, yes, but a neighbor?

Well, the Neighbors aren't hanging around Blue and Green, are they? They've said they're moving on. It's humanity, now granted the deed to Blue that is leaving.

The ending is a mystery to me as well. I feel like I'm supposed to recognize Oreb's "Good Fishing!" comment as a reference. But I'll be danged if I do. Consider that Wolfe says the the first thing he plots is his ending. Sheesh.

Where are they all going? To find another planet to colonize, I suppose. But this is one of the more hurtful events for believing that the Short Sun is Sol. After returning to a depopulated Urth or Ushas. Why are they leaving again?

I think the sine qua non has got to be that it's really Silk talking to Remora at the big reveal, right? Either Silk was clinging to his body when Neighbor/Horn(?) got poured into it, or Silk reentered the body via Pig at some point, but that's Silk in there at the end. Not necessarily "only" Silk, though.

Silk was always "there". That's his body. He's got a brain full of memories. His love for Hyacinth is still there, in that regard. I would guess that Horn's memories only exist anymore in the memory of the Neighbor. You seem to be thinking of the Raja as a Neighbor in human disguise. He's not. Like the Mani the cat, he's neither Neighbor nor Horn nor Silk. He's a new thing.

---

Adam Thornton — 19 Mar 2009, 22:39 · in reply to James Wynn

On Mar 19, 2009, at 5:37 PM, James Wynn wrote:  
The ending is a mystery to me as well. I feel like I'm supposed to recognize Oreb's "Good Fishing!" comment as a reference. But I'll be danged if I do. Consider that Wolfe says the the first thing he plots is his ending. Sheesh.

Didn't Jesus say, I will make you a fisher of eyeballs.

Adam

---

David Duffy — 19 Mar 2009, 22:48 · in reply to James Wynn

On Thu, 19 Mar 2009, James Wynn wrote:

"The Greek Myths" is an excellent resource. Regarding Graves's theories in 'The White Goddess', Wolfe has ascribed them as crazy, and I'd be surprised if he thought otherwise.

Crazy but delicious, like, say, Van Vogt, though at a different level. And surely \_Doors\_ owes something to \_Three Days in New Crete\_?

David Duffy.

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 22:49 · in reply to Adam Thornton

I have always assumed "good fishing" was a Jesus reference. Fisher of Men and all that.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:39 PM, Adam Thornton <adam at io.com> wrote:

On Mar 19, 2009, at 5:37 PM, James Wynn wrote:

The ending is a mystery to me as well. I feel like I'm supposed to recognize Oreb's "Good Fishing!" comment as a reference. But I'll be danged if I do. Consider that Wolfe says the the first thing he plots is his ending. Sheesh.

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Adam

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Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 22:50 · follows Jordon Flato

-----Original Message-----

From: James Wynn [mailto:crushtv at gmail.com]

Where are they all going? To find another planet to colonize, I suppose. But this is one of the more hurtful events for believing that the Short Sun is Sol. After returning to a depopulated Urth or Ushas. Why are they leaving again?

Maybe part of Typhon's plan was not only to go to new worlds, but to return to Urth after it's become Ushas. Maybe he knows about the test and the white fountain and such, since the black hole exists in his time. Just like he attempted to have himself on the other side of the star crossing, maybe he wanted to be on the other side of the NewSun Flooding.

So, after that's accomplished, more starcrossing.

????

Silk was always "there". That's his body. He's got a brain full of memories. His love for Hyacinth is still there, in that regard. I would guess that Horn's memories only exist anymore in the memory of the Neighbor. You seem to be thinking of the Raja as a Neighbor in human disguise. He's not. Like the Mani the cat, he's neither Neighbor nor Horn nor Silk. He's a new thing.

Despite my reticence to accept the whole idea, I guess it is compelling in light of the "I killed your father" bit. I don't understand though why a Neighbor / Faerie would have any grief over killing Horn if that's a standard Faerie activity — crossing folks over after a stag chase.

Has Silk's spirit just crowded Horn's out?

Is Silk speaking metaphorically? It was the quest for Silk that killed Horn. perhaps he feels guilty for being both the object and the inspiration for the quest.

~witz

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 22:51 · in reply to James Wynn

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 6:37 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

>I think the sine qua non has got to be that it's really  
Silk talking to Remora at the big reveal, right?

Either Silk was clinging to his body when Neighbor/Horn(?)  
got poured into it, or Silk reentered the body via Pig at  
some point, but that's Silk in there at the end.  
Not necessarily "only" Silk, though.

Silk was always "there". That's his body. He's got a brain full of  
memories. His love for Hyacinth is still there, in that regard. I would  
guess that Horn's memories only exist anymore in the memory of the Neighbor.  
You seem to be thinking of the Raja as a Neighbor in human disguise. He's  
not. Like the Mani the cat, he's neither Neighbor nor Horn nor Silk. He's a  
new thing.

But it isn't just like Mani the Cat, is it? Mani the Cat is the unity of a spirit with the body of a cat. His catlike characteristics come from the fact that his spirit is now dealing with, and has been dealing with for some time, the immutable physical nature of a cat. There's only one pen in his pencease because he only one rational soul.

The Rajan, SilkHorn, whoever we call him has more than one rational soul--there's a bunch of pens in the pencease (maybe different numbers at different times, whatever). I think Silk's rational soul is there--not just his animal or vegetative souls kicking memories up at Neighbor/Horn's rational soul(s?), but his rational soul, that thing we loosely call "Silk." It's just that "Silk" has lost his will to live and is in deep despair, so he tries to be Horn or Neighbor/Horn or whoever else is in the gestalt. He fails pretty miserably at this, of course--he writes and talks like Silk whenever he isn't actively remembering something Horn did when Silk wasn't around yet.

Even if you believe that Silk is dead when Neighbor/Horn gets dumped in there, that's fine--but I think then you have to say that the Silver Silk gets in there somehow from Pig. Except that then I'm not sure how to take the decision to leave Blue...Silver Silk is definitely part Pas, and Pas's whole scheme was to rule over Blue and Green as a living god. Is Silk's innate goodness enough to overcome that?

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 22:52 · in reply to Son of Witz

I can't imagine Typhon having knowledge of Ushas. Seems against the thematics to me....

And yeah, I've always interpreted that "killed their father" line as an acknowledgement that there is nothing left of Horn in Silk, even though he's been pretending their is.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:50 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

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Where are they all going? To find another planet to colonize, I suppose.

But this is one of the more hurtful events for believing that the Short Sun is Sol. After returning to a depopulated Urth or Ushas. Why are they leaving again?

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So, after that's accomplished, more starcrossing.

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Has Silk's spirit just crowded Horn's out?

Is Silk speaking metaphorically? It was the quest for Silk that killed Horn. perhaps he feels guilty for being both the object and the inspiration for the quest.

~witz

---

David Duffy — 19 Mar 2009, 22:58 · in reply to Son of Witz

On Thu, 19 Mar 2009, Son of Witz wrote:

sorry man, just kidding. I'm just glad I'm not overly invested in any of my readings. dang, it's gotta hurt. What can you do when your text is printed wrong? it's like if I did a painting of the Amphisbaena based on the typo where he writes "Hand" instead of "Head". My serpent would be chomping it's hand.

~witz

Nah, that would have been for \_Engine Summer\_.

David Duffy

---

John Watkins — 19 Mar 2009, 23:00 · in reply to Son of Witz

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 5:49 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

-----Original Message-----

From: James Wynn [mailto:crushtv at gmail.com]  
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 02:38 PM  
To: 'The Urth Mailing List'  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

sorry man, just kidding.

I'm just glad I'm not overly invested in any of my readings.  
dang, it's gotta hurt. What can you do when your text is printed wrong?  
it's like if I did a painting of the Amphisbaena based on the typo where he  
writes "Hand" instead of "Head". My serpent would be chomping it's hand.

TROGDOR!

~witz

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 23:01 · follows Jordon Flato

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]  
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 03:52 PM  
To: 'The Urth Mailing List'  
Subject: Re: (urth) The End of RTTW

I can't imagine Typhon having knowledge of Ushas. Seems against the  
thematics to me....

maybe. I'm not sure.

but he knew of the Black Hole. The Hierodules were behind the Autarch. were they behind him?  
Is this barbaric state that Autarchy/Heirodules/Heirogrammates keep Urth in an outcome of  
Typhon's sending crude humanity out into the stars?

It seems very viable to me that this situation of the Test and the New Sun promise pre-existed  
the Autarchy simply because the black hole (which was PUT THERE) pre-existed the Autarchy.

---

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 23:03 · follows John Watkins

-----Original Message-----

From: John Watkins [mailto:john.watkins04 at gmail.com]  
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 04:00 PM  
To: 'The Urth Mailing List'  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 5:49 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

-----Original Message-----

From: James Wynn [mailto:crushtv at gmail.com]  
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 02:38 PM  
To: 'The Urth Mailing List'  
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I'm just glad I'm not overly invested in any of my readings.  
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it's like if I did a painting of the Amphisbaena based on the typo where he

writes "Hand" instead of "Head". My serpent would be chomping it's hand.

TROGDOR!

I don't get this joke.

Do you know I made and published a book called TROG?

I don't get the \_engines summer\_ joke either.

~Witz

---

Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 23:06 · in reply to Son of Witz

We both know I don't subscribe to the Blue/Ushas theory, so I can't even begin to entertain your insane Ramblings, Son of.

;)

Seriously, I think the black hole may have been implanted as punishment for sending crude humanity out into the stars, but I don't see Typhon being given any knowledge of the 'fix' for that, since he was a major part of the problem. Besides, the 'fix' for that problem came back and pretty much spelled the end for typhon, which the Heirodules would have known, so why would they tell Typhon about it knowing that he would be fuxored by the Conciliator (twice) anyway?

Hmmm. Nope. I ain't buyin' it even if it is on sale.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 4:01 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 03:52 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) The End of RTTW

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It seems very viable to me that this situation of the Test and the New Sun promise pre-existed the Autarchy simply because the black hole (which was PUT THERE) pre-existed the Autarchy.

---

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 19 Mar 2009, 23:10 · in reply to James Wynn

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:37 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

The ending is a mystery to me as well. I feel like I'm supposed to recognize

Oreb's "Good Fishing!" comment as a reference. But I'll be danged if I do.

Consider that Wolfe says the the first thing he plots is his ending. Sheesh.

Possibly to the godfather of all generation-ship stories, Robert Heinlein's "Orphans of the Sky." The common greeting on that ship, and one of the last lines of the book, is "Good eating!"

Son of Witz — 19 Mar 2009, 23:17 · follows Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

why tell Typhon?

why not? He ain't gonna be the fix if he was the problem.

come on man, 50% off today only.

How can we give away our crackpot theories so cheaply?

Volume, Volume, Volume.

I got a storehouse full of this crap, got to foist it off somehow.

~shitz

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 04:06 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) The End of RTTW

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Hmmm. Nope. I ain't buyin' it even if it is on sale.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 4:01 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 03:52 PM

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Jordon Flato — 19 Mar 2009, 23:18 · in reply to Son of Witz

I've got some cheap derivative credit default swaps I can leverage with you for those theories.

Wanna trade?

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 4:17 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

why tell Typhon?

why not? He ain't gonna be the fix if he was the problem.

come on man, 50% off today only.

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From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 04:06 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) The End of RTTW

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;)

Seriously, I think the black hole may have been implanted as punishment for sending crude humanity out into the stars, but I don't see Typhon being given any knowledge of the 'fix' for that, since he was a major part of the problem. Besides, the 'fix' for that problem came back and pretty much spelled the end for typhon, which the Heirodules would have known, so why would they tell Typhon about it knowing that he would be fuxored by the Conciliator (twice) anyway?

Hmmm. Nope. I ain't buyin' it even if it is on sale.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 4:01 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

-----Original Message-----

From: Jordon Flato [mailto:jordonflato at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 03:52 PM

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David Stockhoff — 20 Mar 2009, 01:36 · follows Son of Witz

Not at all. But I'm allowing myself to be understood too literally.

I'm suggesting that Wolfe rewrites or incorporates myths and mythical systems, and that we can easily recognize elements from time to time. So Pas is obviously Zeus; certain people have a certain resonance with Christ, some characters resemble angels, others fairy-tale monsters, and still others are people who can't be seen unless they want you to see them. Like the Little People of Ireland, the Neighbors once lived on Blue but now have gone away and will never be seen again. Or not.

Divinity has nothing to do with it, in other words. It's more about niches in literary ecosystems. Just as a horse goddess could be worshiped across pre-Roman Europe under dozens of names, figures out of myth can easily be mixed up and switched around.

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Message: 2

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 14:22:33 -0700

From: Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

---

David Stockhoff — 20 Mar 2009, 01:44 · follows Jordon Flato

Exactly, thanks. I've pretty well forgotten the details of the Mabinogion myself.

But I do remember that Annwn is always accessible, always close by---you can stumble on it anywhere, whether you see the signs or not, but especially at night or in a wood or by a ford or

a mound.

It's both infinitely far (if it never opens for you) and right at your side. If the gods live there, they are literally our neighbors. Latro knows this.

-----

Message: 7

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 17:03:24 -0500

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Neighbors as Faeries

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <542BFC20783A4AB1B6CEA9AD7C5835DE at eMachinePC>

Content-Type: text/plain; format=flowed; charset="iso-8859-1";  
reply-type=response

In "An Evil Guest" one of the characters says that the term "banshee", which means "woman of the faerie mounds" means that they are one of the "gray neighbors".

In folklore/mythology, chasing a white stag inevitably leads one to Faerieland, meaning the other world, the world of spirits, where one's ancestors go. The most famous case was Pwyll in the Mabinogion, who become the Head of the Annwn (that is, Faerieland). Incidentally Pwyll's name meant "sense" and his son Pryderi's name meant "care" or "thought". This is a naming convention that I thought of when I was reading Long Sun.

There's another way to get to Faerieland too. You can enter a faerie circle. For Horn, the faerie circle was a pit. Seawrack and Babbie were not mistaken. Horn was dead dead dead. He had gone on the Summer lands.

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David Stockhoff — 20 Mar 2009, 02:04 · follows Jordon Flato

The difference between Wolfe's version of the faerie circle and the mythic originals is that the old plot mechanics have been switched out for something more complex and literary (and useful to Wolfe the Catholic). That's critical.

That is, just because Horn sees a "stag" and chases it through a circle ruins, that doesn't mean he will be taken away by a beautiful green woman and made love to forever on the mossy forest floor, to return in 100 years. That's Abel, anyway. Nor does it mean a giant will demand that he cut off his head, or that he will be killed by his own hounds, etc. Those stories have been told.

Wolfe's story has its own logic, but uses the elements of these old stories. The significance of these particular elements (buck, circle) is that when Horn dies, he continues to live in another mode. They are "signs" of a life-change involving the otherworld, i.e., a resurrection of sorts---we know from them that he didn't just knock himself out.

Exactly what mode that is, and the precise mechanics of the resurrection, is peculiar to Horn's story.

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Message: 5

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 22:50:45 +0000

From: "Son of Witz" <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

Subject: Re: (urth) The End of RTTW

To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Message-ID: <W259898884941237503045 at webmail32>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

Despite my reticence to accept the whole idea, I guess it is compelling in light of the "I killed your father" bit. I don't understand though why a Neighbor / Faerie would have any grief over killing Horn if that's a standard Faerie activity — crossing folks over after a stag chase.

Has Silk's spirit just crowded Horn's out?

Is Silk speaking metaphorically? It was the quest for Silk that killed Horn. perhaps he feels guilty for being both the object and the inspiration for the quest.

~witz

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David Stockhoff — 20 Mar 2009, 02:07 · follows David Stockhoff

Snakes' hands. You'll have to read John Crowley.

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Message: 5  
Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 23:03:17 +0000  
From: "Son of Witz" <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie  
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>  
Message-ID: <W37165762200461237503797 at webmail32>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset="iso-8859-1"

I don't get this joke.

Do you know I made and published a book called TROG?

I don't get the \_engines summer\_ joke either.

~Witz

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Matthew Groves — 20 Mar 2009, 02:43 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 6:10 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:  
Possibly to the godfather of all generation-ship stories, Robert Heinlein's "Orphans of the Sky." The common greeting on that ship, and one of the last lines of the book, is "Good eating!"

You actually read that book all the way to the end? Ugh.

---

Adam Thornton — 20 Mar 2009, 02:45 · in reply to David Duffy

On Mar 19, 2009, at 5:58 PM, David Duffy wrote:

On Thu, 19 Mar 2009, Son of Witz wrote:

sorry man, just kidding. I'm just glad I'm not overly invested in any of my readings. dang, it's gotta hurt. What can you do when your text is printed wrong? it's like if I did a painting of the Amphisbaena based on the typo where he writes "Hand" instead of "Head". My serpent would be chomping it's hand.

~witz

Nah, that would have been for \_Engine Summer\_.

Touch?, Dr. Boots.

Adam

---

Adam Thornton — 20 Mar 2009, 02:45 · in reply to John Watkins

On Mar 19, 2009, at 6:00 PM, John Watkins wrote:

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 5:49 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

-----Original Message-----

From: James Wynn [mailto:crushtv at gmail.com]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 02:38 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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I'm just glad I'm not overly invested in any of my readings.

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it's like if I did a painting of the Amphisbaena based on the typo where he writes "Hand" instead of "Head". My serpent would be chomping it's hand.

TROGDOR!

OH GOD I GOTTA GO POST THIS TO CROWLEY'S BLOG NOW.

Adam

---

Adam Thornton — 20 Mar 2009, 02:48 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On Mar 19, 2009, at 6:10 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:37 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

The ending is a mystery to me as well. I feel like I'm supposed to recognize

Oreb's "Good Fishing!" comment as a reference. But I'll be danged if I do.

Consider that Wolfe says the the first thing he plots is his ending. Sheesh.

Possibly to the godfather of all generation-ship stories, Robert Heinlein's

"Orphans of the Sky." The common greeting on that ship, and one of the last lines of the book, is "Good eating!"

.....

That's beautiful.

And it might even be right.

I mean, as well as being Godly Fishers Of Eyeballs spreading the Gospel.

Adam

---

Craig Brewer — 20 Mar 2009, 03:10 · in reply to Jordon Flato

Another point that calls it into question for me is his attitude towards the Neighbors in IGJ. If I recall correctly, there are a few passages where he questions Incanto & Co. about local Neighbor ruins and/or local legends about them. But his attitude was definitely groping for information. I know that's vague, and I don't have the book with me to check for passages. But I just recall a general sense of Horn's still trying to learn about the Neighbors, which would seem odd if he was one.

And, why would a neighbor, finally admitting what he is, if only to himself, choose to return to the Whorl, at the very end? Silk, yes, but a neighbor?

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:09 PM, Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com> wrote:

Well, I'll be looking for evidence of the Neighbor's personality manifesting in the book in this read through. There are plenty of instances of Silk manifesting momentarily through Horn without his intention (which I don't see how that has much resonance or meaning aside from a red herring if a neighbor is actually inhabiting Horn), but I can't think of many instances, save your ambiguous quote at the end about killing their father, where the personality doesn't seem to be Horn or Silk. I would expect, if you are right, there are other clues throughout. I don't see them. \*yet\* But it does give me something new to look for in this read through!

I would agree that chasing the stag, falling in the Pit (which was in the midst of a classic faerie circle of the ruins) represented a crossing over of sorts, but I don't think it necessitates Horn's death. That is a turning point in the narrative for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that it brings Horn directly to the attention of the neighbors (without, I would posit, necessitating a transfer of 'souls' into Horn).

I grant it is possible, but I just don't see it yet.

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:03 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

In "An Evil Guest" one of the characters says that the term "banshee", which means "woman of the faerie mounds" means that they are one of the "gray neighbors".

In folklore/mythology, chasing a white stag inevitably leads one to Faerieland, meaning the other world, the world of spirits, where one's ancestors go. The most famous case was Pwyll in the Mabinogion, who become the Head of the Annwn (that is, Faerieland). Incidentally Pwyll's name meant "sense" and his son Pryderi's name meant "care" or "thought". This is a naming convention that I thought of when I was reading Long Sun.

There's another way to get to Faerieland too. You can enter a faerie circle. For Horn, the faerie circle was a pit. Seawrack and Babbie were not mistaken. Horn was dead dead dead. He had gone on the Summer lands.

---

James Wynn — 20 Mar 2009, 03:25 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Nor does it mean a giant will demand that he cut off his head,  
or that he will be killed by his own hounds, etc. Those stories have been told.

Umm...but he was killed on Green by his own men, right? (hello Actaeon)

---

James Wynn — 20 Mar 2009, 03:51 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

The ending is a mystery to me as well. I feel like I'm supposed to recognize Oreb's "Good Fishing!" comment as a reference.

But I'll be danged if I do. Consider that Wolfe says the the first thing he plots is his ending. Sheesh.

Possibly to the godfather of all generation-ship stories, Robert Heinlein's "Orphans of the Sky." The common greeting on that ship, and one of the last lines of the book, is "Good eating!"

By george, I think he's got it.

J

---

James Wynn — 20 Mar 2009, 04:08 · in reply to Craig Brewer

Another point that calls it into question for me is his attitude towards the Neighbors in IGJ. If I recall correctly, there are a few passages where he questions Incanto & Co. about local Neighbor ruins and/or local legends about them. But his attitude was definitely groping for information.

I know that's vague, and I don't have the book with me to check for passages.

But I just recall a general sense of Horn's still trying to learn about the Neighbors, which would seem odd if he was one.

I'd have examine the text with that in mind, but even if it were true, I can think of a couple of explanations.

One is that the Raja is acting as he knows Horn would. If you've read The Fifth Head of Cerberus, you know that a truly perfect imitation loses the extraordinary attributes that allowed him to be a perfect mimic in the first place. VRT does not switch disguises and escape from jail because Dr. Marsch could not. And the Raja does not use any knowledge Neighbory knowledge (except at the very end) in order to help himself along. Krait acts similarly.

Another explanation is that the Raja is a very young Neighbor; that the blue glass dome where Horn found him was a destroyed nursery. Considering the small trees there, that seems reasonable.

However it is, I'm grateful to David Stockhoff for bringing the myth of Actaeon to my attention today. Before reading SS I had already written an essay showing that the LS narrative overlaid the myth of Aristaeus. If I had stopped to think that Wolfe might carry that story on into the SS when I read it, I might been \*looking\* for Horn to be turned in to a stag before I even read it. Or I might have missed it, which seems likely since Wolfe has the story so cleverly twisted.

J.

---

Chris P — 20 Mar 2009, 04:14 · in reply to James Wynn

It has been too long since I read the books and my memory is hazy, but is there not also an aspect in which the Neighbors are themselves sort of... composite... beings? Would it be possible on your interpretation for it not to be an entire Neighbor in there, but just a part of one - just enough, perhaps, to be able to recognize a kinship with the rest of itself when it shakes hands, but not enough to have the full memory and personality of a "complete" Neighbor?

"When small men begin to cast big shadows, it means that the sun is about to set." -- Lin Yutang

From: crushtv at gmail.com  
To: urth at lists.urth.net

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 23:08:22 -0500  
Subject: Re: (urth) Neighbors as Faeries

Another point that calls it into question for me is his attitude towards the Neighbors in IGJ. If I recall correctly, there are a few passages where he questions Incanto & Co. about local Neighbor ruins and/or local legends about them. But his attitude was definitely groping for information. I know that's vague, and I don't have the book with me to check for passages. But I just recall a general sense of Horn's still trying to learn about the Neighbors, which would seem odd if he was one.

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J.

---

Jeffrey Brent McBeth — 20 Mar 2009, 11:42 · in reply to Adam Thornton

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 09:48:48PM -0500, Adam Thornton wrote:

Possibly to the godfather of all generation-ship stories, Robert Heinlein's "Orphans of the Sky." The common greeting on that ship, and one of the

last lines of the book, is "Good eating!"

.....

That's beautiful.

And it might even be right.

I mean, as well as being Godly Fishers Of Eyeballs spreading the Gospel.

Those are pretty cool. I had jumped to the "Good Hunting" from Kipling's The Jungle Books, but there really isn't much reason to like mine.

Jeff

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"The man who does not read good books has no advantage over  
the man who cannot read them."  
-- Mark Twain  
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David Stockhoff — 20 Mar 2009, 11:57 · follows Jeffrey Brent McBeth

If you say so. I need to read it again!

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Message: 4  
Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 22:25:13 -0500  
From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>  
Subject: Re: (urth) The End of RTTW  
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>  
Message-ID:  
<e8e9702e0903192025x64bbc0b7j44c49782dc1b69aa at mail.gmail.com>  
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=ISO-8859-1

Nor does it mean a giant will demand that he cut off his head,  
or that he will be killed by his own hounds, etc. Those stories have been told.

Umm...but he was killed on Green by his own men, right?  
(hello Actaeon)

-----

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James Wynn — 20 Mar 2009, 12:04 · in reply to Chris P

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themselves sort of... composite... beings? Would it be possible  
on your interpretation for it not to be an entire Neighbor in there,  
but just a part of one - just enough, perhaps, to be able to  
recognize a kinship with the rest of itself when it shakes hands,  
but not enough to have the full memory and personality of a  
"complete" Neighbor?

Do you mean this in the way the Shadow children were? And in the way that three children were  
who were turned into a flock of geese in Peace? I think there is probably something to that. The

Raja's memory is weak when he meets the first Neighbor but in a larger group, he remembers better...perfectly (although he refuses to write what he knows. Whether that is applicable to the Raja's knowledge of Neighbor culture and history, I don't know.

HOWEVER, Seawrack forgets everything about her past, even about Mother herself, the longer she is with him. IIFC she does this deliberately according to Mother's command.

J.

---

David Stockhoff — 20 Mar 2009, 13:01 · follows James Wynn

No problem. Thanks for pointing me to your essay. The parallels to LS are indeed unavoidable. My guess as to the reason Wolfe chose this story to retell is simply that it involves a character who promotes the cult of the High God. He doesn't do it because he's pure of heart etc. but because it's the right thing to do; it's also cool the way he appears and disappears as though he has been transformed or Apollo manifests in him.

This kind of tale is often taken to "prefigure" monotheism. That makes Wolfe's aim superficially propagandistic, in a way.

But I think it's more personal than that---he reads myths and thinks, "I could tell that story better by reshaping it to point to the true Divine that I myself seek." The value of the myths---and of Baum's stories and other Wolfean models---is that they instill a sense of wonder, perhaps especially childlike, which Wolfe clearly considers appropriate in approaching the divine.

In fact, the analogy to a child's imagination is probably apt. As a child might believe the moon smiles at him and wishes him good night, so the pre-Christians would naturally see a multitude of spirits in the world without recognizing the most subtle one that animates them all. And none of us has any particular advantage in this over the Celts or Greeks.

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Message: 2

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 23:08:22 -0500

From: "James Wynn" <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Neighbors as Faeries

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Matthew Groves — 20 Mar 2009, 15:12 · in reply to Son of Witz

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:28 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

Even that a Stag can be a god (is that right) doesn't really jibe because teh neighbors are not gods.

~witz

Aren't they gods? I've always wondered whether the many-armedness of the Neighbors was meant, in part, to allude to the representation of Hindu deities, especially in light of the Indian culture of Gaon and the fact that the protagonist is the Rajan.

---

Jordon Flato — 20 Mar 2009, 15:56 · in reply to David Stockhoff

And I'm allowing myself to respond to literally!

There is no denying the mythic resonance of the scene with the pit, the greenbuck, and Horn's 'death'. And now that I've just freshly read the encounter with the Neighbors, their resonance with the faerie is undeniable. Something was given to Horn in the Pit. I might have been new life, or at least a repaired life. Some of a neighbor might have gone into him. I don't think, at this point, it replaced him.

For one, he has memories of seeing Babbie looking down at him from the edge of the pit, so when Babbie sees him and assumes he's dead, he isn't. Also, after the first meeting with Krait, he sees an actual neighbor, who sends his spirit flying back to Nettle (a loaded moment if ever there was one), by touching something to his head. If he is already inhabited by a neighbor, what is the use of this? Well, I'm sure I could think of some if I tried.

It is certainly giving me an interesting perspective on this read through. I'm very grateful for that!

Here are few questions I've come up with this time through OBW:

1) The Neighbors knew of the Mother, and while Horn calls her a Goddess, I don't think we ever know if the Neighbors considered her to be so. It is Seawrack who gives Horn the ring which identifies him as a neighbor/man to He-Pens-Sheep, and may single him out as a representative of all humanity for the Neighbors (or, he IS a neighbor if you want to go that route, which I don't yet). Seawrack comes back with the ring after disappearing under the waves for a while. Could the Mother have given her the ring to give to horn, in an effort to engineer a peace between the neighbors and humanity? Is that part of seawracks purpose, and part of why she was sent to Horn? It's a stretch, but something tingles in the back of my head about it.

2) The neighbors say, when talking of their world: "Some of you call the placw where we are the Neighbor Whorl. It does not matter what we call it, or what we once called this one." Who on Blue would know what World the Neighbors went to, and call it the Neighbor whorl? It is clear in the sentence they are talking about a world other than Blue. Who else on Blue knows about it? Felt significant (and is maybe touched on later, and I'm completely forgetting).

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 6:36 PM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

Not at all. But I'm allowing myself to be understood too literally.

I'm suggesting that Wolfe rewrites or incorporates myths and mythical systems, and that we can easily recognize elements from time to time. So Pas is obviously Zeus; certain people have a certain resonance with Christ, some characters resemble angels, others fairy-tale monsters, and still others are people who can't be seen unless they want you to see them. Like the Little People of Ireland, the Neighbors once lived on Blue but now have gone away and will never be seen again. Or not.

Divinity has nothing to do with it, in other words. It's more about niches in literary ecosystems. Just as a horse goddess could be worshiped across pre-Roman Europe under dozens of names, figures out of myth can easily be mixed up and switched around.

-----

Message: 2

Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 14:22:33 -0700

From: Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

---

Son of Witz — 20 Mar 2009, 16:23 · follows Jordon Flato

-----Original Message-----

From: David Stockhoff [mailto:dstockhoff at verizon.net]

Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2009 06:36 PM

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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David,

This is an excellent post. You've stated very succinctly his technique, which I had understood, but seeing it framed like that is a reminder that helps me see the forest amongst the trees.

So, similar to Jordon's response, I'm with you on the faerie circle buck concept, and that it introduces Horn to their world and he is changed for it. I think no one could deny that this has happened in the mythic sense.

As to the particular Horn version, I think he was just repaired. There's no mechanism for a body cloning by Neighbors who might somehow also be bucks. Repair just makes sense without adding any devices. The fact that the Neighbors, on Green, tell him they could repair him (but you would still be here) is enough proof for me that they can do this, and it's more proof than any Neighbors as Greenbucks (or trees)

I was unaware of the faerie circle / buck symbol.

~witz

---

Stuart Hamm — 20 Mar 2009, 17:23 · in reply to Jordon Flato

I'll try to look it up later, but on my last read I noticed a line where Seawrack says that "Horn" gave her the ring in the first place...

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624

???? Skype? stuart.hamm

myspace.com/stuhamm

? ??? stuarthamm.net

--- On Fri, 3/20/09, Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com> wrote: From: Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com> Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Date: Friday, March 20, 2009, 8:56 AM

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-----  
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Date: Thu, 19 Mar 2009 14:22:33 -0700

From: Jordon Flato <jordonflato at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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David Stockhoff — 20 Mar 2009, 17:24 · follows Stuart Hamm

Thanks. It gets clearer for me with every iteration as well.

You can also think of it as a language. Wolfe is so steeped in myth I bet it oozes out his ears. As in language, you have standard words and sentence structures but you re-order and recombine

them to get new meaning. So stags and faerie circles may not go together in myth (it's usually a pool or glade the stag leads you to), but they can meet if you want them to.

I don't know if a Neighbor "occupies" Horn, but it is clear that Horn dies. And there is a lot of psyche-sharing through blood in SS---it seems to be a motif, like eidolons in NS. It may well be that the Neighbor gave Horn life in the only way he knew how, by giving him Neighbor-life---but in Horn's memories in Horn's body, because memories are electrical/physical.

Then the Neighbor went off to continue his own life in his own body, having merely imprinted Horn's body with not a copy of himself but with the most basic spark of consciousness. Just enough so Horn's body and brain could reboot (plus fix his neck!).

This requires a life-psyche distinction, but not necessarily a soul-psyche distinction. We know a body can live while its brain is dead, and that a brain can "live" without thought. It makes sense that if the Neighbor revived Horn, Horn would only have Horn's memories. However, on some level we can't fathom, he may "feel" Neighborish---enough to put 2+2 and realize what happened and what he is. So he wouldn't know anything about any ruins, but might be drawn to them.

Personally, I suspect that the "trees" somehow summon or project Neighbors, and if multiple trees (say, a circle of them) project one Neighbor, then it makes sense that it would be both multiple (many-legged) and composite. But that's just a hunch.

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Message: 3

Date: Fri, 20 Mar 2009 16:23:56 +0000

From: "Son of Witz" <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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John Watkins — 20 Mar 2009, 17:28 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On Fri, Mar 20, 2009 at 1:24 PM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:  
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This makes the most sense to me of anything so far. NeighborHorn is NeighborHorn, not Neighbor/Horn--he doesn't have the Neighbor's memories/personality/soul, but does have his life/essence/nature. He has Horn's memories/personality/ThomisticSoul, but not anything like

Horn's Platonic/eternal soul, if such things exist in Wolfe's world. He's Horn's ghost in a Neighbor-enhanced version of Horn's body.

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Message: 3  
Date: Fri, 20 Mar 2009 16:23:56 +0000  
From: "Son of Witz" <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org>  
Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

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Son of Witz — 20 Mar 2009, 17:51 · follows John Watkins

Stockhoff:

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Now I think I can get behind this.

I think we may have come to terms with this thing here. what do you think Wynn? Lackey? Flato? Hamm?

~witz

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Jordon Flato — 20 Mar 2009, 17:53 · in reply to Son of Witz

I'm closer to accepting this than a full scale 'possession' of Horn by the Neighbor. I'll be looking closely through the book for more clues this time around.

In terms of ThomisticSoul vs. Eternal soul...well, that is a larger argument that I won't wade into until I'm done with this read through of SS.

On Fri, Mar 20, 2009 at 10:51 AM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:  
Stockhoff:

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~witz

---

Stuart Hamm — 20 Mar 2009, 18:10 · in reply to Son of Witz

Well yeah I'm buying this...I probably didn't make myself clear...I agree that he becomes part neighbor or something, not "turning into" one

We haven't even approached what happens to Inhumani when they drink neighbor blood....

???? Mobile — (415) 786-3624  
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myspace.com/stuhamm

? ??? stuarthamm.net

--- On Fri, 3/20/09, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote: From: Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Date: Friday, March 20, 2009, 10:51 AM

Stockhoff:

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---

James Wynn — 20 Mar 2009, 18:48 · in reply to Son of Witz

Watkins:

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Witz:

Now I think I can get behind this.

I think we may have come to terms with this thing here.

what do you think Wynn? Lackey? Flato? Hamm?

John Watkins seems to be better at explaining these things than I am. Yes, this is exactly the way I see it. Except for this: there is *\*some\** kind of memory possible if the reanimator chooses wants it badly enough because the same thing happens to Silk in front of Hyacinth's coffin and the memory of Horn's memories are transferred as is the desire of NeighborHorn to complete his mission.

But thinking of the revived persons in terms of a Platonic, particle soul (rather than a Thomist, wave psyche) is not useful in this case.

J

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James Wynn — 20 Mar 2009, 19:05 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff:

You can also think of it as a language. Wolfe is so steeped in myth I bet it oozes out his ears. As in language, you have standard words and sentence structures but you re-order and recombine them to get new meaning. So stags and faerie circles may not go together in myth (it's usually a pool or glade the stag leads you to), but they can meet if you want them to.

In 'The Hobbit', the dwarves see a white "hart" in Mirkwood and and try to shoot him down but all their arrows go awry. The narrator says that if they had had their wits about them, they would have realized that their journey through the forest was almost at an end. Because people usually read that book as children, this reference goes right by them. What he is saying is that the appearance of the White Stag means that they are at the borders of the kingdom of the Elves...the edge of Faerieland.

J.

---

Son of Witz — 20 Mar 2009, 20:02 · follows James Wynn

-----Original Message-----

From: James Wynn [mailto:crushtv at gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, March 20, 2009 12:05 PM

To: 'The Urth Mailing List'

Subject: Re: (urth) Babbie

David Stockhoff:

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J.

neat. I just read that to my son and it went over both our heads. ~m

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Jordon Flato — 20 Mar 2009, 20:49 · in reply to Son of Witz

The boy got it. He was just humoring you, didn't want to make you feel bad for missing it.

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Matthew Keeley — 20 Mar 2009, 21:02 · in reply to Adam Thornton

On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 10:48 PM, Adam Thornton <adam at io.com> wrote:

That's beautiful.

And it might even be right.

I mean, as well as being Godly Fishers Of Eyeballs spreading the Gospel.

Adam

And I think Wolfe is also making a joke to his readers: "Good Fishing" for clues. Wolfe laughs and wonders if his readers will ever make head or tail of the book.

-Matt

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brunians at brunians.org — 21 Mar 2009, 00:13 · in reply to Matthew Groves

It shows tht the Gods exist in more than three spatial dimensions.

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On Thu, Mar 19, 2009 at 3:28 PM, Son of Witz <sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org> wrote:

Even that a Stag can be a god (is that right) doesn't really jibe because teh neighbors are not gods.

~witz

Aren't they gods? I've always wondered whether the many-armedness of the Neighbors was meant, in part, to allude to the representation of Hindu deities, especially in light of the Indian culture of Gaon and the fact that the protagonist is the Rajan.

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Brian Lovely — 22 Mar 2009, 13:53 · follows brunians at brunians.org

...maybe they evolve from parasitic vines to leeches...

--Brian Lovely

We haven't even approached what happens to Inhumans when they drink neighbor blood....

[myspace.com/stuhamm](https://myspace.com/stuhamm)

[stuarthamm.net](http://stuarthamm.net)