

PEACE: the source story

The Urth list — 10 messages, 6 voices, 01 Jun 2009

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5456>

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Christopher Keiser — 01 Jun 2009, 23:45

Hello there?Urth.net, long time lurker, first time poster.

I am suffering, at the moment, a specific mental ailment, Eireneomania.

During my third consecutive read, an allusion that had been nibbling away in my brain finally chewed its way free.

"An Inhabitant of Carcosa", by Ambrose Bierce, is the the source story for _PEACE_.

<http://www.ambrosebierce.org/carcosa.html>

In interviews, Gene Wolfe always points to one or another story as the root source of his story, the seed of the idea.

Never would I say anything is 100% with Wolfe, but, I will say it now: this story is the seed of _PEACE_.

I believe this will also support the theory that Weer is dead, though I am not sure anyone at this point believed otherwise. My favorite interpretation of _PEACE_ places Weer's ghost in the far future, after the fall of our civilization. "An Inhabitant of Carcosa" would support that hypotheses.

I hope this is not a repeat of something previously posted to Urth. I did a search on Urth, and the Internet in general, and found nothing similar.

Have a read, any feedback would be appreciated. Please tell me I am not crazy.

Thanks,
Chris Keiser

Adam Thornton — 02 Jun 2009, 00:49 · in reply to Christopher Keiser

On Jun 1, 2009, at 6:45 PM, Christopher Keiser wrote:

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"An Inhabitant of Carcosa", by Ambrose Bierce, is the the source story for _PEACE_.

My head asplode.

I need to reread the Bierce, but I don't think I disagree.

Adam

Gwern Branwen — 02 Jun 2009, 01:11 · in reply to Christopher Keiser

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Hash: SHA512

On Mon, Jun 1, 2009 at 7:45 PM, Christopher Keiser wrote:
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Thanks,

The first time through that story, my head asploded as well, until I looked up the dates and realized that _The King in Yellow_ had borrowed the names like Hyades and Carcosa from this story, rather than some other avenue of influence.

The second time, I don't really see any smoking gun. There must surely have been other stories where the narrator is a ghost who finally realizes his spectral nature; just off the top of my head, I'm sure there was a _Twilight Zones_ episode like that. Do we have any connection beside the generic ghostly narrator?

- -

gwern

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Version: GnuPG v1.4.9 (GNU/Linux)

iEYEAREKAAYFAkokfFgACgkQvpDo5Pfl1oL3mACgnBT43YiP0fbxJjshdegSGoKH
ltoAn1X2Ooj/hI3ic5JM92hT/R6UVW8P
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Christopher Keiser — 02 Jun 2009, 03:21 · follows Gwern Branwen

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gwern

That is certainly an honest request, considering Gene Wolfe.

1. Hoseib Alar Robardin finds his grave entangled in the roots of a tree.
2. The narrator does not know that he is dead.
3. Obviously, The inclusion of the *Morrryster's Marvell's of Science* shows that Wolfe is familiar with Bierce (of course, is there anything with which he isn't familiar?). The inclusion of the three mythos tomes, (Bierce, Lovecraft and Bloch), another substrata of the novel, displays more than a passing fancy regarding authors borrowing fictional books from each other, and thereby strengthening their 'reality'.
4. The motif "all are dead, all is gone, I am alone" is repeated many times in *PEACE*.
5. Savages now inhabit the world ... Iroquois inherit Cassionsville after Blaine dies
6. "I continued, 'I am ill and lost. Direct me, I beseech you, to Carcosa.' ... very similar to Weer's conversations with many characters.
7. And the smoking gun ...

"A chorus of howling wolves saluted the dawn. I saw them sitting on their haunches, singly and in groups, on the summits of irregular mounds and tumuli filling a half of my desert prospect and extending to the horizon. And then I knew that these were ruins of the ancient and famous city of Carcosa."

Gene Wolfe is obviously his own grandfather, and has traveled back in time, influencing Ambrose to include the image of Wolf in his short story, so that a young Wolf may appropriate it for his first novel. ;-)

Seriously, I think I will reread *PEACE* again, find perhaps some textual proof.

Thanks,

David Stockhoff — 03 Jun 2009, 16:38 · follows Christopher Keiser

Chris, you're definitely crazy.

But only because you have laid eyes on things Man was not meant to see, and uncovered secrets Man was not meant to know.

So you should just go with it!

Message: 1
Date: Mon, 1 Jun 2009 19:45:57 -0400
From: Christopher Keiser <slowalrus at gmail.com>
Subject: (urth) PEACE: the source story
To: urth at lists.urth.net
Message-ID:
<d1bb7a150906011645t1b354cb5l7fea0d70d9a224d8 at mail.gmail.com>
Content-Type: text/plain; charset=ISO-8859-1

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Matthew King — 10 Jun 2009, 17:02 · in reply to Christopher Keiser

On Mon, Jun 1, 2009 at 6:45 PM, Christopher Keiser<slowalrus at gmail.com> wrote:
"An Inhabitant of Carcosa", by Ambrose Bierce, is the the source story for _PEACE_.

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From the first paragraph:

"In one kind of death the spirit also dieth, and this it hath been known to do while yet the body was in vigor for many years. Sometimes, as is veritably attested, it dieth with the body, but after a season is raised up again in that place where the body did decay."

Silk died the first kind, Horn the second?

Christopher Keiser — 10 Jun 2009, 17:05 · in reply to Matthew King

Actually, I was speaking specifically about the Novel `_PEACE_`, but, it may apply there also.

On Wed, Jun 10, 2009 at 1:02 PM, Matthew King<automatthew at gmail.com> wrote:

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brunians at brunians.org — 10 Jun 2009, 17:32 · in reply to Christopher Keiser

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Christopher Keiser — 10 Jun 2009, 20:00 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

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brunians at brunians.org — 10 Jun 2009, 21:07 · in reply to Christopher Keiser

That is possible. Someone should ask him at some point, and we will know.

I wouldn't be surprised if Wolfe's descriptions of war and combat owed something to Bierce.

.
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