

Urth Digest, Vol 70, Issue 15

The Urth list — 5 messages, 4 voices, 04 Jun 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5622>

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David Stockhoff — 04 Jun 2010, 12:08

James, you should post this kind of stuff more often.

Would it be safe to say that the apparent theme or motif of incest committed by Severian derives directly from the twinned sexes comprising the gnostic God?

If so, necessarily, Valeria must be Severian's sister, as has been suggested.

If Severian is always mating with his female counterparts/family members through TBotNS, is this a process of the Keymaster always trying to fit his Key into the right Gatekeeper (iirc) so that a new universe may be born?

(See John Crowley, *Endless Things* etc., for an account of an apparently failed attempt to do this, or maybe not failed at all...)

Message: 3

Date: Thu, 03 Jun 2010 23:47:49 -0500

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

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

Subject: Re: (urth) travelling north

Message-ID: <4C088575.5010807 at gmail.com>

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

The figurative worlds of Severian and Silk are Gnostic ones not Judeo-Apostolic ones. Those protagonists act, and achieve, within their worlds as the Gnostic Christ does. Not as the Johanne Christ acts.

David Stockhoff wrote:

Interesting. Can you elaborate on the distinction?

(I'm not familiar with the Gnostic Christ's achievements.)

Well, for starters, the Gnostic Christ does not save anyone individually. He saves mankind as a whole through the example of his enlightenment. This is closer to the salvation of Silk and Severian than Jesus. Additionally "the Christ" is merely the male half of God (although even that term has a somewhat different meaning). With the female half they form the syzygy of their particular Aeon. This is Severian and Thecla. Silk and Hyacinth are a retelling of the gnostic story of Simon Magus and Helena. Helena was the Ennoia who had fallen into the lower aeons and become trapped in matter. "The Father", manifesting himself as Simon Magus, "The Son", finds her in a brothel suffering abuse, and rescues her. There's also Ophis, the serpent, mixed up in the story. It would difficult, but take fewer words, to detail the ways that New Sun and Long Son are inconsistent with what we know of the teachings of guys like Tatian and Valentinus or the group founded on their teachings known as the Severians.

J

brunians at brunians.org — 04 Jun 2010, 12:10 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Yeah!

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James, you should post this kind of stuff more often.

Would it be safe to say that the apparent theme or motif of incest committed by Severian derives directly from the twinned sexes comprising the gnostic God?

If so, necessarily, Valeria must be Severian's sister, as has been suggested.

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James Wynn — 04 Jun 2010, 17:07 · in reply to David Stockhoff

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Would it be safe to say that the apparent theme or motif of incest committed by Severian derives directly from the twinned sexes comprising the gnostic God? If so, necessarily, Valeria must be Severian's sister, as has been suggested.

There's nothing inconsistent about incest between the important characters of Gnosticism (the influence of Egyptian philosophy and myth ensures that). Norea was said in some writings to be the wife and sister of Seth, while simultaneously half of a syzygy. That said, who Norea was depends on who you are reading. For others, she is the wife of Noah (a hostile relationship there --like Sev and Valeria-- since she burned down his ark three times). The problem with saying "Valeria must be Severian's sister" is that Wolfe so happily plays with the definitions of terms. In The Book of the Short Sun, the Rajan calls Jahlee (the inhuman bearing, I believe, Chenille's soul) his daughter and his sister. So you're not just dealing with the twisted and unintuitive world of Gnosticism, but also the twisted worlds of Wolfe where little is as it seems.

J.

Jeff Wilson — 04 Jun 2010, 23:11 · in reply to James Wynn

On 6/4/2010 12:07 PM, James Wynn wrote:
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It's not just Wolfe and Gnosticism; the regular OT has Abraham, his "sister" Sarah, and the Pharaoh, plus some "my wife, my sister" action in the Song of Songs.

brunians at brunians.org — 04 Jun 2010, 23:35 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I'm waiting for someone to tell me that incest has been traced back to the early Roman empire.

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Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
IEEE Student Chapter Blog at
< <http://ieeetamut.org> >
