

Appearances of Inire

The Urth list — 564 messages, 24 voices, 28 Jun 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5642>

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Lee Berman — 28 Jun 2010, 18:28

Ryan Dunn: Ah yes, I always assumed Ossipago was Father Inire (same with the picture cleaner, and Palaemon).

Woo hoo! Well, Borski has also considered Ossipago and Palaemon as versions of Father Inire. I'm not sure about them.

But I thought I was alone in considering the picture cleaner, Rudesind, to perhaps be Inire. I suppose I am the champion/clown prince in finding Father Inire in the most places actually. I haven't posted about that in a few years (under the name bsharp, for some reason that account won't work here any more. Was I banned? yikes!)

My starting point is the first mention of Father Inire where he is described as old, bent and twisted and monkey-like. Rudesind fits the bill in appearance and in his occupation since Father Inire seems to be involved in all museum-oriented things artisan, arts, architecture, contrivances etc.

We also learn that Inire has an attraction to young pretty girls. This helps bring the Boatman, Dorcas' husband, into the pool of candidates. He is old, bent, hangs out in the right place, and speaks in a folksy voice like Rudesind. Boats plus young girls plus folksy talk plus telling "manatee" stories suggests Maxellindis' "uncle" might be in the mix also.

Monkey arms, a thing for young girls and interest in the arts makes Fechin another candidate. Especially since Rudesind's boyhood painting might be a self-portrait (there are paint brushes in the picture). This adds red hair to the mix and opens up all sorts of worm cans. (e.g. I think I know why Agia has auburn hair).

There are the likely possibilities of the cowed servitor of the autarch, the jungle guide and Isangoma. Plus I have to wonder about the odd monkey creatures which seem to peek in on Severian's progress from time to time.

Ryan Dunn — 28 Jun 2010, 18:43 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Jun 28, 2010, at 2:28 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

He is old, bent, hangs out in the right place

Yes!

My whole take on Inire, is that he is something of a puppetmaster. We get an in-depth story from Thecla about Inire's mirrors, and how he is a master of the corridors of time. We also get plenty allusion that Severian lives in parallel timelines, none more evident than as Apu Punchau.

The motivation, IMO, would be for Inire and perhaps Severian to be in collusion in trying to shape the Severian (that we follow in BotNS) to become the New Sun. If at first you don't succeed...

Also, if there are seven Severians or more floating around Urth and beyond, and Inire was the master who taught him (assumption) why couldn't there be a dozen or more Inire's coexisting? Why COULDN'T he be more than one character in disguise? I always felt Ossipago and Palaemon to be OBVIOUSLY in disguise, and both VERY critical in setting Severian's course.

When I read the text with this in mind, all of the "coincidences" are suddenly justified and warranted, almost requisite. Also, when I read it this way, I feel like that "bubble" Severian is in, is very much intentional. It's sort of like Peter Weir's "Truman Show" with Jim Carrey, in a way. With Inire playing Ed Harriss's role.

I remember Severian senses a shadow of himself at the end of the book, when he returns to the Atrium of Time. As though the Severian from the beginning was only moments away, perhaps overlapping since time behaves weird there.

...ryan

Adam Thornton IO — 28 Jun 2010, 19:13 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Bent, long arms, red hair, monkey^Wape-like.

Well, obviously Inire's also Master Ultan. Since he's clearly the Librarian. Obviously, too, time travel is required to have him appear

before _The Color of Magic_.

Ook.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 28 Jun 2010, 19:15 · in reply to Adam Thornton IO

On Mon, Jun 28, 2010 at 12:13 PM, Adam Thornton (IO) <adam at io.com> wrote:

Bent, long arms, red hair, monkey^Wape-like.

Well, obviously Inire's also Master Ultan. ?Since he's clearly the Librarian. ?Obviously, too, time travel is required to have him appear

before _The Color of Magic_.

Ook.

That's, Ah say, that's _Oook_, sun.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

David Stockhoff — 28 Jun 2010, 19:26 · in reply to Adam Thornton IO

It's one thing to suggest multiple Inires. He could probably handle that. And if so, then one of them could be blind without them all being blind. And I suppose the multiple names would be so he could keep himself straight.

Also, since Father Inire himself never appears, it follows that he must appear as something other than Father Inire.

But I agree with what I think is your skepticism: there is the principle of conservation of characters, but this is overapplication. At this rate, anyone (male) could be Inire after several hundred years, even Severian if he works on his tan.

Adam Thornton (IO) wrote:

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before _The Color of Magic_.

Ook.

Ryan Dunn — 28 Jun 2010, 19:33 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On Jun 28, 2010, at 3:26 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It's one thing to suggest multiple Inires. He could probably handle that. And if so, then one of them could be blind without them all being blind. And I suppose the multiple names would be so he could keep himself straight.

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But I agree with what I think is your skepticism: there is the principle of conservation of characters, but this is overapplication. At this rate, anyone (male) could be Inire after several hundred years, even Severian if he works on his tan.

Personally, I think all of the coincidences or overly convenient happenings in BotNS are a product of design, not chance, or an easy way out for Wolfe. Would you agree?
If so, why not suspect two known time-travelers in this text, Severian and Inire (in no particular order). What is the endgame for them? To bring the New Sun, correct?
Not sure why it is such a stretch to see Inire in disguise, helping the way. In fact, Rudesind giving different directions may have saved him from (I dunno) an armiger's ambush? Not drawing random conclusions, just saying there would be a "reason" for Inire to plant himself along Severian's journey, no?
...ryan

Jeff Wilson — 28 Jun 2010, 20:00 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

If so, why not suspect two known time-travelers in this text, Severian and Inire (in no particular order). What is the endgame for them? To bring the New Sun, correct?

Is Inire known to travel in time, himself? Or is he the station master?

IIRC, there are four characters who may travel in time without artifice: Severian, Juturna, the Green Man, and Tzadkerbell.

There are about five artifices that allow time travel: the Ship, Inire's mirrors, the various dimensional architectures, the portals in Yesod, and FB&O's saucer. Despite Inire's association with and mastery of most or all of these, he's not documented passing through them into other times that I recall.

(His Botanical Gardens technically reach into other times in other cycles but there's no opportunity to touch back into Urthly history of future there I can see.)

James Wynn — 28 Jun 2010, 20:25 · in reply to Lee Berman

Monkey arms, a thing for young girls and interest in the arts makes Fechin another candidate.

"We've a Fechin here that shows three girls dressing another one with flowers that's so real you expect the bees to come out of it." ~ Shadow of the Torturer

Nicolai Ivanovich Fechin was an actual early 20th century painter. He's classified as an Impressionist. But the color and detail of many of his paintings are nearly photorealistic, and

the eye-popping color often gives the sense of three-dimensional depth.

Especially since Rudesind's boyhood painting might be a self-portrait (there are paint brushes in the picture). This adds red hair to the mix and opens up all sorts of worm cans. (e.g. I think I know why Agia has auburn hair).

I have a theory that red-hair in the Sun Cycle is an intentional association with Typhon in some way. Red-hair is signifier of being a werewolf, and the red-haired sacrificial victims in the Osiris cult were called "Typhonians".

~ J. u+16b9

Roy C. Lackey — 28 Jun 2010, 20:28 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff wrote:

But I agree with what I think is your skepticism: there is the principle of conservation of characters, but this is overapplication. At this rate, anyone (male) could be Inire after several hundred years, even Severian if he works on his tan.

Why limit Inire to male characters? If he can be a fraking robot (Ossipago) and monkey his way up Agia's family tree (which, according to some, makes him related to Severian), and be both dead characters (Boatman, Maxellindis' uncle) and living ones, a change of gender is no obstacle. And since Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

-Roy

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 28 Jun 2010, 20:32 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On Mon, Jun 28, 2010 at 1:28 PM, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:

And since

Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

...and some day they'll want us.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Ryan Dunn — 28 Jun 2010, 20:35 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On Jun 28, 2010, at 4:28 PM, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Why limit Inire to male characters? If he can be a fraking robot (Ossipago) and monkey his way up Agia's family tree (which, according to some, makes him related to Severian), and be both dead characters (Boatman, Maxellindis' uncle) and living ones, a change of gender is no obstacle. And since Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

I wouldn't count any of this theorizing as a conspiracy theory, if that is what you're implying here.

The idea of a boy in a bubble is very plausible, and could be the context for this entire story. How many side-stories involving plays, puppets or other theatrics are here in the text to serve as beacons?

Father Inire clearly described as monkeylike...

"More fantastic still were the tales of his vizier, the famous Father Inire, who looked like a monkey and was the oldest man in the world."

(SotT)

An old, monkeylike man pointing Severian on his way...

"When I admitted I did not, he scrambled down from the ladder like an aged monkey, seeming all arms and legs and wrinkled neck; his hands were as long as my feet, the crooked fingers laced with blue veins."

(SotT)

A painting of a painter who looks monkeylike, with red-hair...

"He was the worst of us all, that Fechin. A tall, wild boy with red hair on his hands, on his arms. Like a monkey's arms, so that if you saw them reaching around the corner to take something, you'd think, except for the size, that it was a monkey taking it."

(SotL)

Oh, and here's a red-bearded monkey spying on Severian, because why not? We never see Inire with his socks off, after all...

"Birds unknown to me called overhead, and once a monkey who might, save for his four hands, have been a wizened, red-bearded man in fur, spied on me from a fork as high as a spire."

(CotC)

Those are just a few I pulled. The crissing and crossing of things in the book is impossible to ignore, however over the top it may seem. No?

...ryan

David Stockhoff — 28 Jun 2010, 21:39 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Of course. And as I said, the fact that Inire never shows his face in the conventional manner means he must appear in disguise or unannounced.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

On Jun 28, 2010, at 3:26 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It's one thing to suggest multiple Inires. He could probably handle that. And if so, then one of them could be blind without them all being blind. And I suppose the multiple names would be so he could keep himself straight.

Also, since Father Inire himself never appears, it follows that he must appear as something other than Father Inire.

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Personally, I think all of the coincidences or overly convenient happenings in BotNS are a product of design, not chance, or an easy way out for Wolfe. Would you agree?

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Not sure why it is such a stretch to see Inire in disguise, helping the way. In fact, Rudesind giving different directions may have saved him from (I dunno) an armiger's ambush? Not drawing random conclusions, just saying there would be a "reason" for Inire to plant himself along Severian's journey, no?

...ryan

David Stockhoff — 28 Jun 2010, 21:40 · in reply to James Wynn

Brilliant!

James Wynn wrote:

I have a theory that red-hair in the Sun Cycle is an intentional association with Typhon in some way. Red-hair is signifier of being a werewolf, and the red-haired sacrificial victims in the Osiris cult were called "Typhonians".

~ J. u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 28 Jun 2010, 21:42 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

But there will be no "they" left. They will all be us.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

On Mon, Jun 28, 2010 at 1:28 PM, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:

And since

Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

...and some day they'll want us.

David Stockhoff — 28 Jun 2010, 21:52 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Surely sometimes a monkey is just a monkey.

It is at very least a theme. We certainly do need to note any time "monkey" is used to describe a character. It may be Typhonian, it may be a trickster. Typhon himself is a bit of a trickster. And Severian is certainly in a kind of bubble. But Palaemon? Isn't he almost blind?

Also, recall that exultants are very tall and long-limbed. I assume that Inire, who is after all not really human, would have a monkey face---that that is what is meant by that description. Limbs alone may not be enough. Is he red-haired?

Does anyone know whether exultants have simply retained our unnatural 21st century height while everyone else shrank with the new ice age, or exultants were actually made taller by breeding or other means? There is a detailed discussion of exultant families and their dwindling---this suggests to me a dying race of world-rulers, not a created class of freaks. Are any units of measurement or comparisons used that could tell us?

Ryan Dunn wrote:

On Jun 28, 2010, at 4:28 PM, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Why limit Inire to male characters? If he can be a fraking robot (Ossipago) and monkey his way up Agia's family tree (which, according to some, makes him related to Severian), and be both dead characters (Boatman, Maxellindis' uncle) and living ones, a change of gender is no obstacle. And since Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

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/"Birds unknown to me called overhead, and once a monkey who might, save for his four hands, have been a wizened, red-bearded man in fur, spied on me from a fork as high as a spire."
(CotC)/

/

/

Those are just a few I pulled. The crissing and crossing of things in the book is impossible to ignore, however over the top it may seem. No?

...ryan

On Jun 28, 2010, at 5:52 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

There is a detailed discussion of exultant families and their dwindling---this suggests to me a dying race of world-rulers, not a created class of freaks.

Yes, there used to be more families over the course of histories, but it seemed to me that Gurloes was impressing upon Severian the VASTNESS of the exultant families still going, no?

There are nearly 3,000 exultant blood lines still going, based on this math...

.

"He turned, and after searching the disorderly shelves behind his chair produced a squat book. 'Have you any notion how many exulted families there are? This lists only the ones that are still going. A compendium of the extinguished ones would take an encyclopedia, I suppose. I've extinguished a few of them myself.'

He laughed and I laughed with him.

'It gives about half a page to each. There are seven hundred and forty- six pages.'"

.

...ryan

Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 00:54 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

"Birds unknown to me called overhead, and once a monkey who might, save for his four hands, have been a wizened, red-bearded man in fur, spied on me from a fork as high as a spire."
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Those are just a few I pulled. The crissing and crossing of things in the book is impossible to ignore, however over the top it may seem. No?

Maybe Severian likes monkeys so he writes about them in preference to the other inconsequentialities that go unrecorded.

John Watkins — 29 Jun 2010, 01:17 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Or Wolfe is using monkeys as a motif for some reason. Not every literary choice is justified in the plot.

That said, at least *some *of the candidates have to be Inire.

On Mon, Jun 28, 2010 at 8:54 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:
"Birds unknown to me called overhead, and once a monkey who might, save for his four hands, have been a wizened, red-bearded man in fur, spied on me from a fork as high as a spire."
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Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 01:19 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Jun 28, 2010, at 5:52 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

There is a detailed discussion of exultant families and their dwindling---this suggests to me a dying race of world-rulers, not a created class of freaks.

They're both. Exultants have greater height genetically, and enhance it further by harvesting hormones or actual glands from their khaibits. This modification for greater height may be a tradition going back as far as the stone town:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Head_Shaping.jpg

Yes, there used to be more families over the course of histories, but it seemed to me that Gurloes was impressing upon Severian the VASTNESS of the exultant families still going, no?

There are nearly 3,000 exultant blood lines still going, based on this math...

'It gives about half a page to each. There are seven hundred and forty-six pages.'"

$2 \times 746 = 1492$, but that may not be a one for one correspondence, as one family may include others by marriage, like Prince Charles being a Windsor as well as a Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and a Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg, which are themselves obviously made of other families, each with their own laws about succession and inheritance.

Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 01:30 · in reply to John Watkins

Or Wolfe is using monkeys as a motif for some reason. Not every literary choice is justified in the plot.

Maybe *Wolfe* likes monkeys are writes about them in preference to the other inconsequentialities that go unrecorded.

That said, at least *some* of the candidates have to be Inire.

Why is that?

John Watkins — 29 Jun 2010, 01:36 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Well, as Dan Rabin pointed out on this list, Severian implies pretty strongly in Autarch that he knows Inire was the uturuncu:

"We even know that your master was with us in the jungles of the north, where he tried until it was too late to rescue my predecessor."

If that's right--if we were supposed to pick up that the bent old shaman in the jungle was Inire--then we're pretty directly being challenged to reread the text from the beginning looking for the guy (and to question whether Severian's "perfect" memory is consistent with Inire's stalking.) I buy motifs, and I buy red herrings, but I don't buy that there's that broad clue and a million monkeylike references without there being at least a little fire.

On Mon, Jun 28, 2010 at 9:30 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:
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That said, at least *some *of the candidates have to be Inire.

Why is that?

David Stockhoff — 29 Jun 2010, 03:18 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Thanks.

And thanks for that disturbing image!

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On Jun 28, 2010, at 5:52 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 29 Jun 2010, 03:20 · in reply to John Watkins

Exactly.

But which?

John Watkins wrote:

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On Mon, Jun 28, 2010 at 8:54 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com
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> book is impossible to ignore, however over the top it may seem. No?

Maybe Severian likes monkeys so he writes about them in preference
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other inconsequentialities that go unrecorded.

Ryan Dunn — 29 Jun 2010, 03:22 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Jeff,

Just pointing out, that Gurloes's book is likely printed on both sides, which means one half of
one side of one sheet = 4 families per page.

But yeah, could be some cross-over, though I took the book to be house names, irrelevant of
the cross-pollination.

...ryan

On Jun 28, 2010, at 9:19 PM, Jeff Wilson wrote:
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inheritance.

Ryan Dunn — 29 Jun 2010, 03:29 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Jun 28, 2010, at 11:22 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:
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Oh and also, I think having close to 3,000 exultant family names is still pretty sizable, though I may not have a good enough grasp on that in terms of Urth vs. Earth.

...ryan

Roy C. Lackey — 29 Jun 2010, 03:43 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff wrote:

Does anyone know whether exultants have simply retained our unnatural 21st century height while everyone else shrank with the new ice age, or exultants were actually made taller by breeding or other means? There is a detailed discussion of exultant families and their dwindling---this suggests to me a dying race of world-rulers, not a created class of freaks. Are any units of measurement or comparisons used that could tell us?

Yes. According to Wolfe, Severian is 6'1". The exultant Ultan was a head and a half taller than Severian.

Back to the topic. Ryan Dunn wrote:

My whole take on Inire, is that he is something of a puppetmaster. We get an in-depth story from Thecla about Inire's mirrors, and how he is a master of the corridors of time. We also get plenty allusion that Severian lives in parallel timelines, none more evident than as Apu Punchau.

The motivation, IMO, would be for Inire and perhaps Severian to be in collusion in trying to shape the Severian (that we follow in BotNS) to become the New Sun. If at first you don't succeed...

And how would being a famous painter two generations before Severian's time have furthered the coming of the New Sun?

How would probing a lake for forty years looking for the body of Severian's grandmother have helped? Where did Inire find the time, since he was the Old Autarch's vizier during those years? Not to mention that the old boatman died but Inire was still there as Severian's vizier for another ten years.

-Roy

Ryan Dunn — 29 Jun 2010, 04:02 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On Jun 28, 2010, at 11:43 PM, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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How would probing a lake for forty years looking for the body of Severian's grandmother have helped? Where did Inire find the time, since he was the Old Autarch's vizier during those years? Not to mention that the old boatman died but Inire was still there as Severian's vizier for another ten years.

Do you disagree then that Inire appears to us in any form during the course of the books? I never thought the boatman was Inire, btw. But the boatman seems to be the same man at

Gyoll who asks Roche (?) whether Severian mentioned a woman after his drowning.
Rudesind could be Inire, in order to get Severian to Ultan.
Not sure about Fechin (maybe too deep for me).
But why go to the trouble to make a point of a character having monkey-like qualities, which is clearly how Inire is described (at least second or third hand)?
Regarding Ossipago, he may/may not be Inire. I do however suspect he and Palaemon are of the same ilk if not the same being outright.
...ryan

John Watkins — 29 Jun 2010, 04:06 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Tue, Jun 29, 2010 at 12:02 AM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

But why go to the trouble to make a point of a character having monkey-like qualities, which is clearly how Inire is described (at least second or third hand)?

Motif; red herring.

Regarding Ossipago, he may/may not be Inire. I do however suspect he and Palaemon are of the same ilk if not the same being outright.

Why?

...ryan

Ryan Dunn — 29 Jun 2010, 04:49 · in reply to John Watkins

On Jun 29, 2010, at 12:06 AM, John Watkins wrote:

Regarding Ossipago, he may/may not be Inire. I do however suspect he and Palaemon are of the same ilk if not the same being outright.

Why?

Because hidden eyes never sit well with me.

:)

And because I interpret BotNS from a paranoid POV, meaning I believe there are people watching/shaping Severian's life from start to finish. I agree with Borski, insofar as Terminus Est potentially having a tracking device for FBO to track Severian. And with Ossipago being the "odd thing out" compared to F and B, I sense a roboticness about him, same as I do with Palaemon.

...ryan

Ryan Dunn — 29 Jun 2010, 04:51 · in reply to John Watkins

On Jun 29, 2010, at 12:06 AM, John Watkins wrote:

But why go to the trouble to make a point of a character having monkey-like qualities, which is clearly how Inire is described (at least second or third hand)?

Motif; red herring.

Also, I argue against/reject the idea of red herrings in a Gene Wolfe novel.

Motif maybe, but a red herring just feels too lazy and convenient. Easier to just leave it alone, find a different descriptor, then.

...ryan

Sonofwitz at butcherbaker.org — 29 Jun 2010, 06:01 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Jun 29, 2010, at 12:06 AM, John Watkins wrote:

But why go to the trouble to make a point of a character having monkey-like qualities, which is clearly how Inire is described (at least second

I don't have any firm opinions about this subject, but this could just be a very cheeky signifier to show ANY meddling with Severian. These Monkeys might just be Agents of Inire.

Why would the boatman be an agent? Maybe the boatman stirred Dorcas his way. Don't know, but if they're monkeying with his timeline to produce some certain characteristics then Dorcas is somehow a part of it, right.

Roy C. Lackey — 29 Jun 2010, 06:43 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote:

Do you disagree then that Inire appears to us in any form during the course of the books?

I think he was the guy in a cowl who led Sev out of the House Absolute and back to the theater troupe. And of course that he was the shaman in the jungle who tried to rescue the Old Autarch. And he may have been the ape-dog thing that looked in on Sev in the lazaret after the avern duel.

I never thought the boatman was Inire, btw.

But Lee does, and we had this whole monkey battle a few years ago.

But the boatman seems to be the same man at Gyoll who asks Roche (?)

whether Severian mentioned a woman after his drowning.

Many people have thought so, but there are some who don't buy it.

Rudesind could be Inire, in order to get Severian to Ultan.

Yeah, and Rudesind could have lied about the letter from Inire at the end of CITADEL. Of course he would have been lying to the new autarch, the autarch Inire would be vizier to for the next ten years. A rather foolish thing to do, it seems to me. And Sev may not be as smart as some people like to think, but how stupid would he have to be not to have found Inire out in those ten years that went by before he wrote the manuscript that detailed that meeting?

Not sure about Fechin (maybe too deep for me).

That old battle. Again. <g> I haven't changed my mind and neither has Lee.

But why go to the trouble to make a point of a character having monkey-like qualities, which is clearly how Inire is described (at least second or third hand)?

Regarding Ossipago, he may/may not be Inire. I do however suspect he and Palaemon are of the same ilk if not the same being outright.

Ossipago is a machine. Palaemon is very, very human, an old man who aged visibly in the six months between Sev's exile and return to the tower as autarch. That one scene near the end of CITADEL is enough to show that clearly. Sev was able to see in the old man's face the youth he had been. And he eats and drinks wine, sighs, makes facial expressions, etc. He is a man.

-Roy

Lee Berman — 29 Jun 2010, 13:13 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Well, obviously Inire's also Master Ultan. Since he's clearly the Librarian.

Yes, Ultan is a curator. And like some other candidates, Ultan's eyes are obscured. I think the dark haired woman in the grave is some version of Catherine. Why does Severian see her face in Ultan's? Could he be Catherine's father? If Inire is also Dorcas' husband, he would appear as grandfather to Severian on both sides of the family. Why IS he called "Father" Inire? I can't recall any religious association.

Is Inire known to travel in time, himself?

If he is Isangoma, who resembles the jungle shaman, then I'd say, yes.

Why limit Inire to male characters? If he can be a fraking robot (Ossipago) and monkey his way up Agia's family tree (which, according to some, makes him related to Severian), and be both dead characters (Boatman, Maxellindis' uncle) and living ones, a change of gender is no obstacle.

In UotNS we are rather explicitly shown that Tzadkiel can change size, shape gender and plurality, so I agree with Roy's statement. If there is a female version of Father Inire, the most likely candidate is Cumaeon. One is Father, the other is The Mother. We hear them paired as alike but they are never quite together. Inire has his monkey essence, the Cumaeon has her snake essence. I don't know if they are supposed to be borne of the same original entity or not but they could be.

Given the Tzadkiel model, there is no reason there can't be multiple versions of the same being running around manipulating Severian's life and travels. We are told that not even Tzadkiel can resurrect a dead person. So, I suspect, neither can Father Inire (or the Cumaeon, by herself). Perhaps it wasn't a coincidence the boatman just happened to be there on the lake when Severian showed up. How else could he restore his long dead wife?

Tzadkiel is an angel (who never comes to Urth). What is Inire?

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I suspect that Wolfe is making the point that the fallen angels of Judeo-Christianity bear a striking resemblance to the gods and monsters of pagan mythology and are, perhaps, one and the same. Incestuous, large sized, animal essenced, shape-changing, other "magic" abilities, mating with humans, the pattern is fairly consistent. (Hephaestus is an artisan, bent and twisted, sometimes depicted with red hair).

One more candidate for Father Inire- Cyriaca's book-loving "uncle" who seems to know so much about the inner workings of the Autarchy and the history of humanity and the universe. And Cyriaca does share some characteristics with Catherine. Cyriaca's dark hair paired with a red-headed father might produce the chestnut color we find in Agia and Agilus.

Thus the origin of the incestuous curse which seems to plague Severian's family- the Father.

Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

Yes. I once read a Gene Wolfe interview in which he said he was unhappy with his status as an only child and spent much of his youth scouring the faces of strangers for signs of hidden family and lost kinship. This is more explicitly themed in Fifth Head of Cerberus but I think it makes a significant appearance in New Sun also.

(p.s. the "battles" over these issues from a few years ago were invaluable to me in helping clarify my interpretations. I truly appreciate all those who participated and helped me)

Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 15:59 · in reply to John Watkins

On 6/28/2010 8:36 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Well, as Dan Rabin pointed out on this list, Severian implies pretty strongly in Autarch that he knows Inire was the uturuncu:

"We even know that your master was with us in the jungles of the north, where he tried until it was too late to rescue my predecessor."

If that's right--if we were supposed to pick up that the bent old shaman in the jungle was Inire--then we're pretty directly being challenged to reread the text from the beginning looking for the guy (and to question whether Severian's "perfect" memory is consistent with Inire's stalking.) I buy motifs, and I buy red herrings, but I don't buy that there's that broad clue and a million monkeylike references without there being at least a little fire.

Okay, I can buy that Inire would come out to help the old Autarch in a matter of life or death and given his fame and distinctive appearance that he would be in disguise, but that's an argument for one of them to be Inire. Just watching/stalking seems to be more than adequately covered by the aquastors in the field and the zillion servants in the Citadel and House.

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

Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 16:21 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 6/28/2010 10:22 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:
Jeff,

Just pointing out, that Gurloes's book is likely printed on both sides, which means one half of one side of one sheet = 4 families per page.

'It gives about half a page to each. There are seven hundred and forty- six pages.'

Unless Gurloes is like Rainman, he got the page count from the last numbered page. Traditionally there is one numbered page on either side of a leaf. But whatever a "page" is, there are 746 of them, and each one can only have two halves, so the accommodated number of families remains approx 1500.

Ordinarily I wouldn't bother digressing on this, but it does establish something of a maximum degree of precision for figures given in the book, and I'm warming up to a new estimate on the Wall's height based on Ouen's comments where it might be important.

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

Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 16:32 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On 6/28/2010 10:43 PM, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

And how would being a famous painter two generations before Severian's time have furthered the coming of the New Sun?

Fechin being a historical painter sharing a name with a painter whose paintings can be attested as originals by the subject makes wonder if Inire didn't collect them and Rudesind through time. That would also explain why the Apollo image is still suitable for viewing after many chilliads - it's only a few subjective centuries old at most.

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Ryan Dunn — 29 Jun 2010, 17:49 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I still think the books are printed on both sides of one page, like basically ALL other books you currently own.

...ryan

On Jun 29, 2010, at 12:21 PM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

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John Watkins — 29 Jun 2010, 18:08 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

...and almost everyone in the world refers to a "page" as being a single face of the paper, not a single sheet of paper. Which there are different numbers on the opposite sides of the sheet.

On Tue, Jun 29, 2010 at 1:49 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

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Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 18:12 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 6/29/2010 12:49 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Why then does each "page" have two numbers?

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
IEEE Student Chapter Blog at
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John Watkins — 29 Jun 2010, 18:15 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Tue, Jun 29, 2010 at 2:12 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

On 6/29/2010 12:49 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

I still think the books are printed on both sides of one page, like basically ALL other books you currently own.

Why then does each "page" have two numbers?

This is the most peculiar argument I've ever had on this list. Maybe anywhere.

--

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

Ryan Dunn — 29 Jun 2010, 18:18 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Oops, total mind melt. I spaced on that one. So pages, not sheets, I can dig that.

...ryan

On Jun 29, 2010, at 2:12 PM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 6/29/2010 12:49 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Why then does each "page" have two numbers?

brunians at brunians.org — 29 Jun 2010, 18:58 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Everyone here knows what a leaf is, right?

.

On 6/29/2010 12:49 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Jeff Wilson — 29 Jun 2010, 19:01 · in reply to John Watkins

On 6/29/2010 1:08 PM, John Watkins wrote:

...and almost everyone in the world refers to a "page" as being a single face of the paper, not a single sheet of paper. Which there are different numbers on the opposite sides of the sheet.

Technically, most published books have several pages printed on a large sheet of paper that is called a signature when it is folded for attachment to others to form a volume. They are (or were) then cut into separate leaves to give the reader access to the pages otherwise concealed within the folds.

The Book Club edition of SotL, for instance, has 16 signatures by my count, accounting for the 279 pages of story, 1 about the author, and 8 front matter if they alternate 10 leaves as in the first signature with 8 leaves as in the last. There are two more protective blank leaves of sturdier paper which are actually part of the end papers glued inside the covers.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com

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Gerry Quinn — 29 Jun 2010, 19:04 · in reply to David Stockhoff

From: "David Stockhoff" <dstockhoff at verizon.net>

Does anyone know whether exultants have simply retained our unnatural 21st century height while everyone else shrank with the new ice age, or exultants were actually made taller by breeding or other means? There is a detailed discussion of exultant families and their dwindling---this suggests to me a dying race of world-rulers, not a created class of freaks. Are any units of measurement or comparisons used that could tell us?

Didn't Jonas say "those old families are the newest of all"? This suggests that it is the exultants who differ.

- Gerry Quinn

David Stockhoff — 29 Jun 2010, 23:38 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Correct. Two pages make a leaf.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 29 Jun 2010, 23:39 · in reply to Lee Berman

Wolfe bases all his "gods" on "real" gods. Yes, there does seem to be a pairing of Mother and Father in Inire and the Cumaeae, but then there would be.

Lee Berman wrote:

Well, obviously Inire's also Master Ultan. Since he's clearly the Librarian.

Yes, Ultan is a curator. And like some other candidates, Ultan's eyes are obscured. I think the dark haired woman in the grave is some version of Catherine. Why does Severian see her face in Ultan's? Could he be Catherine's father? If Inire is also Dorcas' husband, he would appear as grandfather to Severian on both sides of the family. Why IS he called "Father" Inire? I can't recall any religious association.

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In UotNS we are rather explicitly shown that Tzadkiel can change size, shape gender and plurality, so I agree with Roy's statement. If there is a female version of Father Inire, the most likely candidate is Cumaeon. One is Father, the other is The Mother. We hear them paired as alike but they are never quite together. Inire has his monkey essence, the Cumaeon has her snake essence. I don't know if they are supposed to be borne of the same original entity or not but they could be.

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Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

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(p.s. the "battles" over these issues from a few years ago were invaluable to me in helping clarify my interpretations. I truly appreciate all those who participated and helped me)

Right, that does make sense. And if Severian were the exultant norm, that would be one thing---but he's not. Presumably he's half-exultant. I'm sure someone has worked all that out.

Would Severian's mother have had to give birth while she was in the hands of the torturers for him to have been kept and raised in the guild, since his father supposedly is alive?

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- Gerry Quinn

brunians at brunians.org — 30 Jun 2010, 00:41 · in reply to David Stockhoff

These guys are not gods.

They are angels or fairies or some such.

The distinction is nontrivial.

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Sev mentions children who arrive with clients are sized and distributed accordingly. If there is no Dad or other next of kin available to take the client's child at the time of the arrest, there may be no later opportunity to claim them from the soldiers, and the Seekers certainly will not release them without orders.

David Stockhoff — 30 Jun 2010, 00:43 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Thus the double quotes.

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If he is Isangoma, who resembles the jungle shaman, then I'd say, yes.

Why limit Inire to male characters? If he can be a fraking robot (Ossipago) and monkey his way up Agia's family tree (which, according to some, makes him related to Severian), and be both dead characters (Boatman, Maxellindis' uncle) and living ones, a change of gender is no obstacle.

In UotNS we are rather explicitly shown that Tzadkiel can change size, shape gender and plurality, so I agree with Roy's statement. If there is a female version of Father Inire, the most likely candidate is Cumaeon. One is Father, the other is The Mother. We hear them paired as alike but they are never quite together. Inire has his monkey essence, the Cumaeon has her snake essence. I don't know if they are supposed to be borne of the same original

entity
or not
but they could be.

Given the Tzadkiel model, there is no reason there can't be multiple versions of the same being running around manipulating Severian's life and travels. We are told that not even Tzadkiel can resurrect a dead person. So, I suspect, neither can Father Inire (or the Cumaean, by herself). Perhaps it wasn't a coincidence the boatman just happened to be there on the lake when Severian showed up. How else could he restore his long dead wife?

Tzadkiel is an angel (who never comes to Urth). What is Inire?

Genesis 6:1-8 seems to suggest that the purpose of The Flood was to cleanse the earth and humanity of a corruption brought on by the mating of fallen angels and human women, producing giants, demons, etc. Severian's resistance to the seduction of Juturna is significant. What is the purpose of the Flood of Urth? The same as the Biblical Flood, I think.

I suspect that Wolfe is making the point that the fallen angels of Judeo-Christianity bear a striking resemblance to the gods and monsters of pagan mythology and are, perhaps, one and the same. Incestuous, large sized, animal essenced, shape-changing, other "magic" abilities, mating with humans, the pattern is fairly consistent. (Hephaestus is an artisan, bent and twisted, sometimes depicted with red hair).

One more candidate for Father Inire- Cyriaca's book-loving "uncle" who seems to know so much about the inner workings of the Autarchy and the history of humanity and the universe. And Cyriaca does share some characteristics with Catherine. Cyriaca's dark hair paired with a red-headed father might produce the chestnut color we find in Agia and Agilus. Thus the origin of the incestuous curse which seems to plague Severian's family- the Father.

Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

Yes. I once read a Gene Wolfe interview in which he said he was unhappy with his status as an only child and spent much of his youth scouring the faces of strangers for signs of hidden family and lost kinship. This is more explicitly themed in Fifth Head of Cerberus but I think it makes a significant appearance in New Sun also.

(p.s. the "battles" over these issues from a few years ago were invaluable to me in helping clarify my interpretations. I truly appreciate all those who participated and helped me)

Adam Thornton — 30 Jun 2010, 03:58 · follows brunians at brunians.org

Well, obviously Inire's also Master Ultan. Since he's clearly the Librarian.

Yes, Ultan is a curator. And like some other candidates, Ultan's eyes are obscured.

I'm only working the Ook angle here.

Ook In Oz: A Radical Reinterpretation of the Book of the New Sun.

Adam

Roy C. Lackey — 30 Jun 2010, 04:32 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman quoted and wrote:

Why limit Inire to male characters? If he can be a fraking robot (Ossipago) and monkey his way up Agia's family tree (which, according to some, makes him related to Severian), and be both dead characters (Boatman, Maxellindis' uncle) and living ones, a change of gender is no obstacle.

In UotNS we are rather explicitly shown that Tzadkiel can change size, shape gender and plurality, so I agree with Roy's statement.

Huh. And I thought I might have been too sarcastic.

If there is a female version of Father Inire, the most likely candidate is Cumaeon. One is Father, the other is The Mother. We hear them paired as alike but they are never quite together. Inire has his monkey essence, the Cumaeon has her snake essence.

I

don't know if they are supposed to be borne of the same original entity or not but they could be.

The Cumaean was a Hierodule, so Inire had told Sev (URTH, 357). Famulimus and Barbatus nodded agreement when he said that in the tomb.

Given the Tzadkiel model, there is no reason there can't be multiple versions of the same being running around manipulating Severian's life and travels.

We

are told that not even Tzadkiel can resurrect a dead person. So, I suspect, neither can Father Inire (or the Cumaean, by herself). Perhaps it wasn't a coincidence the boatman just happened to be there on the lake when Severian showed up. How else could he restore his long dead wife?

Tzadkiel is an angel (who never comes to Urth). What is Inire?

Tzadkiel is a Hierogrammate. The Hierogrammates created the Hierodules to serve them. Hierodules are short-lived, according to Baldanders, living only about as long as a dog. That statement is indirectly confirmed by Barbatus when he said that "We've known you half our lives now, Severian, . . ." (URTH, 356) They had known and advised Sev for the ten years he had been autarch before leaving for Yesod.

In the first paragraph of chapter XXXVIII in CITADEL, Sev wrote: ". . . old Father Inire, alive so long beyond the span of his short-lived kind . . ."

It is never directly stated in the Urth Cycle that Inire is a Hierodule, but when you put these clues together, the implication is that Inire was a Hierodule, regardless of how he may have lived so much longer than he should have.

Hierodules do not have the power and abilities of a Hierogrammate

-Roy

Lee Berman — 30 Jun 2010, 12:37 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Roy-

Huh. And I thought I might have been too sarcastic.

That is your value Roy! Even in sarcasm and skepticism you are very helpful as a sounding board. Your comment did force me to consider the gender aspect of shape changing a bit further. Improving my personal understanding of Wolfe books is a self-indulgent exercise but if putting it in print provides food for thought or fodder for amusement or even derision in others, I am content with any of that.

In trying to understand an SF story such as this I find it to be more fiction than science. So I expect metaphor and allusion to have a more important role than, say, a book on astronomy. Thus I have trouble with an argument that a character with the angelic name Tzadkiel is not an angel but is rather a Hierogrammate. Why not both?

Since Biblical angels are arranged in a tiered hierarchy, why can't hierodules be lower-tiered angels in our story? For me, Severian's recognition that Father Inire's portals are a lesser version of Tzadkiel's portals is a way of expressing the relationship. And I find that recognizing "fallen angels" is essential to my understanding of this story. But I know that is not the case for everyone.

brunians-

These guys are not gods. They are angels or fairies or some such.

David stockton did use quotes to address your concern. You are using the lower-case g for your "gods". Is this not sufficient?

Is it possible that ancient pagans confused aliens/angels (fallen or not) with gods, fairies, monsters etc. Or, more to the point, is it worth considering that Gene Wolfe has explored this possibility in his writing?

[some excerpts from articles about angel heirarchy]-

The Dominions (lat. dominatio, pl. dominationes), also known as the Hashmallim, hold the task of regulating the duties of lower angels. It is only with extreme rarity that the angelic lords make themselves physically known to humans. The Dominions are believed to look like divinely beautiful humans with a pair of feathered wings, much like the common representation of Angels.

In rabbinic writings Zadkiel belongs to the order of Hashmallim (equated with the Dominations or Dominions), and considered by some sources to be chief of that order. In Maseket Azilut, Zadkiel/Hesediel is listed as co-chief with Gabriel.

The Principalities (lat. principatus, pl. principat?s) are shown wearing a crown and carrying a sceptre. Their duty also is said to be to carry out the orders given to them by the Dominions and bequeath blessings to the material world. Their task is to oversee groups of people. They are the educators and guardians of the realm of earth both individuals, as well as groups. As beings related to the world of the germinal ideas, they are said to inspire living things to many things such as art or science.

António Pedro Marques — 30 Jun 2010, 14:03 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson wrote (30-06-2010 01:41):

Right, that does make sense. And if Severian were the exultant norm, that would be one thing---but he's not. Presumably he's half-exultant. I'm sure someone has worked all that out.

Would Severian's mother have had to give birth while she was in the hands of the torturers for him to have been kept and raised in the guild, since his father supposedly is alive?

Sev mentions children who arrive with clients are sized and distributed accordingly. If there is no Dad or other next of kin available to take the client's child at the time of the arrest, there may be no later opportunity to claim them from the soldiers, and the Seekers certainly will not release them without orders.

I think it can be economically explained by their simply not knowing who the father was.

António Pedro Marques — 30 Jun 2010, 14:07 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Roy C. Lackey wrote (30-06-2010 05:32):

Hierodules do not have the power and abilities of a Hierogrammate

It's probably time to point out, if it's news to anyone, that -dule means 'slave'. The name 'hierodule' may look impressive but doesn't in fact mean its bearer is all that important.

António Pedro Marques — 30 Jun 2010, 14:20 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman wrote (30-06-2010 13:37):

brunians-

These guys are not gods. They are angels or fairies or some such.

David stockton did use quotes to address your concern. You are using the lower-case g for your "gods". Is this not sufficient?

Is it possible that ancient pagans confused aliens/angels (fallen or not) with gods, fairies, monsters etc. Or, more to the point, is it worth considering that Gene Wolfe has explored this possibility in his writing?

Just what a god (in the polytheist sense) and other preternatural being is may not be easy to define in words, but nonetheless I think the distinction is all too clear. Most mythologies have gods and have other preternatural beings, and they are not confused. That said, a powerful enough being that has or seeks universal (i.e., not limited) domain of something usually ends up being considered a god, no matter its origins.

James Wynn — 30 Jun 2010, 14:24 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Hierodules do not have the power and abilities of a Hierogrammate

It's prtobably time to point out, if it's news to anyone, that -dule means 'slave'. The name 'hierodule' may look impressive but doesn't in fact mean its bearer is all that important.

Another word meaning "slave" is "robot". Ossipago is obviously a robot, but I suppose that the "race" created by the Hierogrammates were originally all robots/androids. Personally, I presume they all are still.

J u+16b9

Jeff Wilson — 30 Jun 2010, 15:04 · in reply to James Wynn

On 6/30/2010 9:24 AM, James Wynn wrote:

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It's prtobably time to point out, if it's news to anyone, that -dule means 'slave'. The name 'hierodule' may look impressive but doesn't in fact mean its bearer is all that important.

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That makes a certain amount of sense - it avoids the problems of depending on unreliable fleshy creatures, which could appeal to angels as beings of the spirit, but Tzadkeil and especially Alpheta seem to be carnal beings as well.

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

James Wynn — 30 Jun 2010, 15:21 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Hierodules do not have the power and abilities of a Hierogrammate

It's probably time to point out, if it's news to anyone, that -dule means 'slave'. The name 'hierodule' may look impressive but doesn't in fact mean its bearer is all that important.

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That makes a certain amount of sense - it avoids the problems of depending on unreliable fleshy creatures, which could appeal to angels as beings of the spirit, but Tzadkeil and especially Alpheta seem to be carnal beings as well.

One can make robots out of flesh as well as tin, or cover the tin with a fleshy facade. The ways such creatures can be different from humans are varied, extreme, subtle, and irrelevant. One could write a library of novels denoting the difference.

J u+16b9

António Pedro Marques — 30 Jun 2010, 16:32 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson wrote (30-06-2010 16:04):

On 6/30/2010 9:24 AM, James Wynn wrote:

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It's probably time to point out, if it's news to anyone, that -dule means 'slave'. The name 'hierodule' may look impressive but doesn't in fact mean its bearer is all that important.

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That makes a certain amount of sense - it avoids the problems of depending on unreliable fleshy creatures, which could appeal to angels as beings of the spirit, but Tzadkeil and especially Alpheta seem to be carnal beings as well.

There's that thing about only God being creator.

Ryan Dunn — 30 Jun 2010, 16:56 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Jun 30, 2010, at 11:04 AM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

Another word meaning "slave" is "robot". Ossipago is obviously a robot, but I suppose that the "race" created by the Hierogrammates were originally all robots/androids. Personally, I presume they all are still.

That makes a certain amount of sense - it avoids the problems of depending on unreliable fleshy creatures, which could appeal to angels as beings of the spirit, but Tzadkeil and especially Alpheta seem to be carnal beings as well.

It still begs the question of Palaemon, whether he is a real man, or a robot. Why the lenses? I get wary when eyes are obscured in BotNS, and there is plenty situations involving "masks" of course.

...ryan

James Wynn — 30 Jun 2010, 17:01 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

It still begs the question of Palaemon, whether he is a real man, or a robot. Why the lenses? I get wary when eyes are obscured in BotNS, and there is plenty situations involving "masks" of course.

Corrective lenses? I presumed Palaemon is blind.

Jeff Wilson — 30 Jun 2010, 18:28 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Jeff Wilson wrote (30-06-2010 16:04):

On 6/30/2010 9:24 AM, James Wynn wrote:

Hierodules do not have the power and abilities of a Hierogrammate

It's prtobably time to point out, if it's news to anyone, that -dule means 'slave'. The name 'hierodule' may look impressive but doesn't in fact mean its bearer is all that important.

Another word meaning "slave" is "robot". Ossipago is obviously a robot, but I suppose that the "race" created by the Hierogrammates were originally all robots/androids. Personally, I presume they all are still.

That makes a certain amount of sense - it avoids the problems of depending on unreliable fleshy creatures, which could appeal to angels as beings of the spirit, but Tzadkeil and especially Alpheta seem to be carnal beings as well.

There's that thing about only God being creator.

How is that relevant here? Do you prefer that people use "assemble" instead of "create"?

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 30 Jun 2010, 18:31 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Wed, Jun 30, 2010 at 11:28 AM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Jeff Wilson wrote (30-06-2010 16:04):

On 6/30/2010 9:24 AM, James Wynn wrote:

There's that thing about only God being creator.

How is that relevant here? Do you prefer that people use "assemble" instead of "create"?

It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Jeff Wilson — 30 Jun 2010, 18:40 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

On Wed, Jun 30, 2010 at 11:28 AM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Jeff Wilson wrote (30-06-2010 16:04):

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So demons build the robots?

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 30 Jun 2010, 18:48 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Wed, Jun 30, 2010 at 11:40 AM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:
It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping
the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

So _demons_ build the robots?

Not necessarily: but it casts some doubt on whether the Hiero*foos are doing God's work.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 30 Jun 2010, 19:34 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On 6/30/2010 1:31 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

On Wed, Jun 30, 2010 at 11:28 AM, Jeff Wilson<jwilson at io.com> wrote:

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instead of "create"?

It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping
the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

Not that I'm bothered _much_, but --for the record-- it was Antonio who said the bit about only
God being the creator. Antonio might mind. :-)

J u+16b9

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 30 Jun 2010, 19:39 · in reply to James Wynn

On Wed, Jun 30, 2010 at 12:34 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Not that I'm bothered _much_, but --for the record-- it was Antonio who said
the bit about only God being the creator. Antonio might mind. :-)

Oops. Apologies to both.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 30 Jun 2010, 19:44 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping
the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

So _demons_ build the robots?

Not necessarily: but it casts some doubt on whether the Hiero*foos are
doing God's work.

Another interpretation is that "Heirodules" is a grandiose term for "robots created by the Heiro
race". That the Heirogrammates made and used robots is not necessarily sinful. Kindly, devout
missionaries employ water purifiers. What if the purifiers eventually became so sophisticated
that they were _apparently_ self-aware? What if they were sophisticated enough to use
extra-dimensional technology to improvise based on their self-propagation programming to
ensure the invention of water purifiers everywhere?

J u+169b

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 02:24 · in reply to David Stockhoff

It occurred to me that Wolfe may have been inspired by an SF magazine cover rather than by a painting. I searched The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and found a similar image:

http://www.philsp.com/data/images/f/fantasy_and_science_fiction_197702.jpg

At least it has the gold faceplate and earth. Maybe Rudesind's painting is a composite?

The entire archive can be found here:

<http://www.philsp.com/mags/fsf.html>

Are there other pulp magazines that are candidates?

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 02:38 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I'll make the quote marks bigger next time.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Angels and fairies are not even a lot like gods.

They are much more like human beings than they are like gods.

.

Thus the double quotes.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

These guys are not gods.

They are angels or fairies or some such.

The distinction is nontrivial.

.

Wolfe bases all his "gods" on "real" gods. Yes, there does seem to be a pairing of Mother and Father in Inire and the Cumaeon, but then there would be.

Lee Berman wrote:

Well, obviously Inire's also Master Ultan. Since he's clearly the Librarian.

Yes, Ultan is a curator. And like some other candidates, Ultan's eyes are obscured. I think the dark haired woman in the grave is some version of Catherine. Why does Severian see her face in Ultan's? Could he be Catherine's father? If Inire is also Dorcas' husband, he would appear as grandfather to Severian on both sides of the family. Why IS he called

"Father" Inire? I can't recall any religious association.

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the earth and humanity of a corruption brought on by the mating of fallen angels and human women, producing giants, demons, etc. Severian's resistance to the seduction of Juturna is significant. What is the purpose of the Flood of Urth? The same as the Biblical Flood, I think.

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Severian only screws his relatives, by logical extension "All You Zombies" is us and we are Inire, but we are not alone.

Yes. I once read a Gene Wolfe interview in which he said he was unhappy with his status as an only child and spent much of his youth scouring the faces of strangers for signs of hidden family and lost kinship. This is more explicitly themed in Fifth Head of Cerberus but I think it makes a significant appearance in New Sun also.

(p.s. the "battles" over these issues from a few years ago were invaluable to me in helping clarify my interpretations. I truly appreciate all those who participated and helped me)

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 02:42 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Precisely.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

On Wed, Jun 30, 2010 at 11:28 AM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

Jeff Wilson wrote (30-06-2010 16:04):

On 6/30/2010 9:24 AM, James Wynn wrote:

There's that thing about only God being creator.

How is that relevant here? Do you prefer that people use "assemble" instead of "create"?

It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 03:00 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I don't buy it.

God delegates all the time.

.

Precisely.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

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Adam Thornton — 01 Jul 2010, 03:01 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 06/30/2010 09:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It occurred to me that Wolfe may have been inspired by an SF magazine cover rather than by a painting. I searched The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and found a similar image:

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At least it has the gold faceplate and earth. Maybe Rudesind's painting is a composite?

Rudesind's painting does not match any of the actual Apollo images I could find, when I went looking a few years ago.

Adam

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 03:03 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

The question, then, is whether such delegation occurred---or not.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:
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Maybe for you.

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It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 03:07 · in reply to Adam Thornton

Yes, exactly. That's why I went in search of art that wasn't published in the traditional sense, but that Wolfe may have seen. The best candidate was painted after 1980. F&SF had post-moon mission covers in the early 1970s.

But there is also Astounding, and there are others.

It's difficult to find ANY image containing all elements: astronaut, faceplate, flag, and Earth.

Adam Thornton wrote:

On 06/30/2010 09:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It occurred to me that Wolfe may have been inspired by an SF magazine cover rather than by a painting. I searched The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and found a similar image:

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At least it has the gold faceplate and earth. Maybe Rudesind's painting is a composite?

Rudesind's painting does not match any of the actual Apollo images I could find, when I went looking a few years ago.

Adam

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 03:09 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

No, the definition of usurping demands it. So does the concept of a local archon pretending to be the Outsider. You can explain it any way you want, but that's the concept.

Think Tolkien.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Maybe for you.

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It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

Jeff Wilson — 01 Jul 2010, 03:13 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 6/30/2010 9:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It occurred to me that Wolfe may have been inspired by an SF magazine cover rather than by a painting. I searched The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and found a similar image:

http://www.philsp.com/data/images/f/fantasy_and_science_fiction_197702.jpg

At least it has the gold faceplate and earth. Maybe Rudesind's painting is a composite?

If it's a composite, it could be a composite of anything, and I think it's a bit of a knock to say the pulp covers are more inspirational than actual pictures of actual spacemen on the moon.

A while back, we eliminated all of the then-recently released archive of Apollo 11 surface photography, as well as all of Alan Bean's work of an age to have been influential on BoTNS. If the painting is intended to be an original painting and not a portraitized photograph, it is likely that the combination of details became traditional at some point when some painter deviated from the strictly historical but was well received nonetheless, like wozzname conflating Cupid with cherubim.

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

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 03:21 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Who usurping where?

Which archon is pretending to be the Outsider? Tzadkiel?

I don't think so.

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No, the definition of usurping demands it. So does the concept of a local archon pretending to be the Outsider. You can explain it any way you want, but that's the concept.

Think Tolkien.

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Maybe for you.

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Precisely.

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Jeff Wilson wrote (30-06-2010 16:04):

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manner.

James Wynn — 01 Jul 2010, 04:56 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Rudesind's painting does not match any of the actual Apollo images I could find, when I went looking a few years ago.

There's a picture, maybe an illustration --a famous one-- that I remember from my childhood. An astronaut on the moon. The Earth over his shoulder. The American flag behind him or beside him. I thought that was the one when I read the description.

u+16b9

Gerry Quinn — 01 Jul 2010, 06:32 · in reply to James Wynn

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

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

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An astronaut on the moon. The Earth over his shoulder. The American flag behind him or beside him. I thought that was the one when I read the description.

I have exactly the same feeling. But it may be that we are creating a composite image, or that Wolfe did, or both.

- Gerry Quinn

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 11:55 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Jeff, no one said pulp covers were more inspirational than photos.

But if you eliminate Apollo 11 photos and Alan Bean, what's left?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 6/30/2010 9:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It occurred to me that Wolfe may have been inspired by an SF magazine cover rather than by a painting. I searched The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and found a similar image:

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David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 12:01 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

No one said anyone was pretending anything. It was a general theoretical observation.

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Who usurping where?

Which archon is pretending to be the Outsider? Tzadkiel?

I don't think so.

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Think Tolkien.

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Maybe for you.

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The question, then, is whether such delegation occurred---or not.

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God delegates all the time.

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How is that relevant here? Do you prefer that people use "assemble" instead of "create"?

It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 12:10 · in reply to David Stockhoff
Good.

I feel totally free to disregard it as being basically meaningless.

No one said anyone was pretending anything. It was a general theoretical observation.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

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John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 12:18 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Right.

Although now I will say such a thing. Tzadkiel presents himself not as the Outsider but as His agent. Arguably the most important question of the series is whether Tzadkiel is lying. I think there are in fact three options:

- 1) Tzadkiel is, like a Christian archangel, more or less in direct contact with the will of the deity. Thus he/she is to be completely trusted and is a more or less incontrovertible moral authority.
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David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 12:26 · in reply to James Wynn

I thnl we all did. But can you find the image?

Was it perhaps National Geographic?

James Wynn wrote:

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u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 12:27 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

That's what I want to find out.

Gerry Quinn wrote:

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There's a picture, maybe an illustration --a famous one-- that I remember from my childhood.

An astronaut on the moon. The Earth over his shoulder. The American flag behind him or beside him. I thought that was the one when I read the description.

I have exactly the same feeling. But it may be that we are creating a composite image, or that Wolfe did, or both.

- Gerry Quinn

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 12:28 · in reply to John Watkins

Three for me.

.

Right.

Although now I will say such a thing. Tzadkiel presents himself not as the Outsider but as His agent. Arguably the most important question of the series is whether Tzadkiel is lying. I think there are in fact three options:

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It's relevant because a race that creates a (slave) race is usurping the privilege of the Creator -- is in fact acting in daemonic manner.

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 12:29 · in reply to John Watkins

There is no meaningful difference between one and three.

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Right.

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David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 12:33 · in reply to John Watkins

Exactly.

Similarly, but beyond the scope of this list, is Yahweh lawfully in charge of a creation he created, or not?

2 x 2 = 4 possible variations: lawful creation, lawful governance, unlawful usurpation of creation, unlawful usurpation of creative powers. See TBotLS.

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John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 12:34 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I don't agree. With 1), everything Tzadkiel says can be taken as the Word of God. With 3), everything Tzadkiel says can be taken as being said with good intention. Great gulf fixed there.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 8:29 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
There is no meaningful difference between one and three.

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Right.

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I go back and forth between 2) and 3) myself.

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 12:35 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

#1 could be phrased more strongly, deleting "more or less" and using the words "infallible" and "definitely in direct contact." That would be more distinct.

As I understand it.

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John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 12:40 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Well, I didn't want to get into various schools of angelology in Christian and Gnostic thought. Obvious there must be *some *possible separation between angelic will and divine will, or fallen angels wouldn't have been possible. It's my understanding that there are various interpretations of what this means even in our world, and in a consciously created myth it could mean anything (Tolkien's Valar, for instance, are not in constant communication with Illuvatar or anything like it and they make various errors of judgment. I don't think, however, that they ever lie or commit acts of intentional evil, except for of course Melkor and arguably Aule on one occasion).

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brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 12:52 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I like Satan

He's rich and chocalatey

He's my boyfriend

Satan, Satan, whee!

-- Anonhymnous

.

Exactly.

Similarly, but beyond the scope of this list, is Yahweh lawfully in charge of a creation he created, or not?

2 x 2 = 4 possible variations: lawful creation, lawful governance, unlawful usurpation of creation, unlawful usurpation of creative powers. See TBotLS.

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creates a (slave) race is usurping
the privilege of the Creator -- is in
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manner.

David Stockhoff — 01 Jul 2010, 12:53 · in reply to John Watkins

Well argued. Extra points for use of Tolkien.

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brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 12:54 · in reply to John Watkins
Every resultant act is willed by God.

What anyone says can be in error, and if in error belongs to them.

Insofar as it is true, it belongs to God.

All action belongs to God.

.

I don't agree. With 1), everything Tzadkiel says can be taken as the Word
of God. With 3), everything Tzadkiel says can be taken as being said with
good intention. Great gulf fixed there.

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Maybe 'pertains' is better than 'belongs'.

Depends. Depends upon is also good.

Belongs is not exactly correct.

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brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 13:07 · in reply to John Watkins

I'm not talking about schools of thought.

I am talking about reality as I know it.

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brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 13:08 · in reply to David Stockhoff

What the hell do you have in your pockets, anyway?

.

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Ryan Dunn — 01 Jul 2010, 13:14 · in reply to Adam Thornton

I found a similar image from a later Apollo image, though the painting is a painting, after all, and not a photograph (I don't think).

...ryan

On Jun 30, 2010, at 11:01 PM, Adam Thornton <adam at io.com> wrote:

On 06/30/2010 09:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It occurred to me that Wolfe may have been inspired by an SF magazine cover rather than by a painting. I searched The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and found a similar image:

http://www.philsp.com/data/images/f/fantasy_and_science_fiction_197702.jpg

At least it has the gold faceplate and earth. Maybe Rudesind's painting is a composite?

Rudesind's painting does not match any of the actual Apollo images I could find, when I went looking a few years ago.

Adam

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 13:24 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Thanks.

Obviously, the effect of Tzadkiel's actions is the coming of the New Sun and the drowning of Urth. Lots and lots of people die in this, maybe for a redemptive higher meaning and maybe not. Under 1), we can be quite confident that the slaughter was authorized by God, like the Flood or the apocalypse, and therefore moral, at least by the author's lights (the reader's mileage may vary.) Under 2), the massacring of Urth is no less than genocide. Under 3), it may be either--a clumsy attempt by incredibly powerful but fallible beings to enact what they understand to be the divine will.

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brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 13:40 · in reply to John Watkins

When you die, why are you going to die?

Death happens.

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Jeff Wilson — 01 Jul 2010, 15:02 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/1/2010 6:55 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:
Jeff, no one said pulp covers were more inspirational than photos.

But if you eliminate Apollo 11 photos and Alan Bean, what's left?

A composite of iconic images, as you speculated. The Apollo 11 photo of Buzz saluting the flag has the grey regolith and the gold visor as well, but it was earlier Apollo 8 orbital photos that show the earth rising over the lunar horizon that were hugely popularized. Some of the Apollo 11 photos do show the earth in the sky, but not terribly prominently. IIRC, Van Gogh was known to have put Ursa Major above southern-looking European landscapes; no reason some unborn master yet to paint couldn't do the same for Neil and Buzz.

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

Jeff Wilson — 01 Jul 2010, 15:12 · in reply to James Wynn

On 6/30/2010 11:56 PM, James Wynn wrote:

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There's a picture, maybe an illustration --a famous one-- that I remember from my childhood.

An astronaut on the moon. The Earth over his shoulder. The American flag

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The "man on the moon" shot shows Buzz Aldrin's gold faceplate reflecting Neil Armstrong with the Earth over *his* shoulder, but no flag is up yet, though there is a prominent flag patch on Buzz's left shoulder.

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brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 15:14 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Did you guys set out to be pedants?

If no, how did it happen?

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Afaict 1 and 3 are just points in a continuum. Unless you push 1 further and make it so that Tzadkiel has no will at all but God's will. In that case Tzadkiel would not be a free agent but merely an extension of God. Not exactly the same as an angel. I don't think Tzadkiel is such an extension, so between 1 and 3 I think only 3, which is really more or less the same as the lesser sense of 1, works. It is just open to debate how fallible Tzadkiel is.

The Valar try not to commit evil because they're good, not because they're bound to Eru's will.

2) Tzadkiel is a creepy insectoid alien thing and a liar. The pretensions of religion are a means of controlling the human race. I go back and forth between 2) and 3) myself.

Option 2 I think is untenable.

- If God is good, then it makes no sense to create a universe in which:
 - + God's creatures are toys in an evil power's hands
 - + God's creatures believe that the evil power is not evil at all and is doing God's work
 - + those who oppose the evil power are not, generally speaking, better people than the others, and in fact seem to be worse.
- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

Keeping option 3 doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for, it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

Antonio

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 15:31 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Tdazkiel's people are themselves artificial...awfully difficult to blame God for their control over the universe.

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

Option 2 I think is untenable.

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 - + God's creatures believe that the evil power is not evil at all and is doing God's work
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- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

Keeping option 3 doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for, it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

Antonio

Jeff Wilson — 01 Jul 2010, 15:33 · in reply to John Watkins

On 7/1/2010 8:24 AM, John Watkins wrote:

Thanks.

Obviously, the effect of Tzadkiel's actions is the coming of the New Sun and the drowning of Urth. Lots and lots of people die in this, maybe

for a redemptive higher meaning and maybe not. Under 1), we can be quite confident that the slaughter was authorized by God, like the Flood or the apocalypse, and therefore moral, at least by the author's lights (the reader's mileage may vary.) Under 2), the massacring of Urth is no less than genocide. Under 3), it may be either--a clumsy attempt by incredibly powerful but fallible beings to enact what they understand to be the divine will.

I think 3) maybe makes for the best story. But with 2), there's the possibility of something else going on behind the scenes--maybe over the course of the next seven books--redeeming the act of evil. That would be a pretty great story.

Tzad cops to #3 although he has the luxury not only of seeing how the machinaitons turn out from his perch in Yesod, but of potentially being able to undo any changes that turn out to suck more rather than less. And arguably, any deaths the Yesodis "cause" have already happened to long-dead Urthlings and they're just rearranging the details, or even saving some from having to suffer in that vale of tears to begin with.

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

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 15:43 · in reply to John Watkins

I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe it's early afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

Tdazkiel's people are themselves artificial...awfully difficult to blame God for their control over the universe.

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>

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- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

Keeping option 3 doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for, it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

Antonio

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 01 Jul 2010, 16:06 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 8:14 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Did you guys set out to be pedants?

If no, how did it happen?

Coff. Coff.

Pot.

Kettle.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 16:11 · in reply to António Pedro Marques
Archangels are just angels who have cleared away more of their ego.

There no God where I is.

.

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 13:18):

I think there are in fact three options:

- 1) Tzadkiel is, like a Christian archangel, more or less in direct contact with the will of the deity. Thus he/she is to be completely trusted and is a more or less incontrovertible moral authority.
- 3) Tzadkiel is a "higher" being in some meaningful sense but remains metaphysically removed from the divine, like the angel in "The Cock and the Angel." His/her belief in the Increate and desire to do its will is sincere, and to that end he/she is just doing the best he/she can, but like the angel in the story Tzadkiel remains fallible and infinitely removed from the mind of the Increate.

Afaict 1 and 3 are just points in a continuum. Unless you push 1 further and make it so that Tzadkiel has no will at all but God's will. In that case Tzadkiel would not be a free agent but merely an extension of God. Not exactly the same as an angel. I don't think Tzadkiel is such an extension, so between 1 and 3 I think only 3, which is really more or less the same as the lesser sense of 1, works. It is just open to debate how fallible Tzadkiel is.

The Valar try not to commit evil because they're good, not because they're bound to Eru's will.

- > 2) Tzadkiel is a creepy insectoid alien thing and a liar. The
- > pretensions of religion are a means of controlling the human race.
- > I go back and forth between 2) and 3) myself.

Option 2 I think is untenable.

- If God is good, then it makes no sense to create a universe in which:
 - + God's creatures are toys in an evil power's hands
 - + God's creatures believe that the evil power is not evil at all and is doing God's work
 - + those who oppose the evil power are not, generally speaking, better people than the others, and in fact seem to be worse.

- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

Keeping option 3 doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for,
it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

Antonio

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 16:12 · in reply to John Watkins

Are they?

Tzadkiel is a hierodule?

Are you sure?

.

Tzadkiel's people are themselves artificial...awfully difficult to blame God
for their control over the universe.

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

Option 2 I think is untenable.

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- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

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We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

Antonio

Jeff Wilson — 01 Jul 2010, 16:15 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On 7/1/2010 10:43 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:
I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe it's early afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

Preach it, Brother Ant?nio!

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
IEEE Student Chapter Blog at

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 16:16 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

He appears to believe that Tzadkiel is a hierodule.

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I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe it's early afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

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Antonio

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 16:21 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Next time I meet you, Dan'l, the first words out of your mouth better be an apology.

Don't take this as a joke.

.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 8:14 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Did you guys set out to be pedants?

If no, how did it happen?

Coff. Coff.

Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 01 Jul 2010, 16:37 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Josh, someone who insists on medieval definitions of words like "planet" _is_ a pedant.

If you find that offensive, look in the mirror.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 9:21 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Next time I meet you, Dan'l, the first words out of your mouth better be
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Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 16:41 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Take my words to heart, Dan'l.

.

Josh, someone who insists on medieval definitions of words like
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If you find that offensive, look in the mirror.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 9:21 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

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Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 01 Jul 2010, 16:44 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I don't know **how** to take this discourse at all.
I had no idea that "pedant" was an insult around here.
I thought that was what we were all striving for.

u+16b9

Take my words to heart, Dan'l.

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Did you guys set out to be pedants?

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Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 16:54 · in reply to James Wynn

It may be what you are striving for.

It may not be an insult to you.

.
I don't know *how* to take this discourse at all.
I had no idea that "pedant" was an insult around here.
I thought that was what we were all striving for.

u+16b9

Take my words to heart, Dan'I.

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Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 17:08 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 12:16 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
He appears to believe that Tzadkiel is a hierodule.

.
No. I believe that the Hierogrammates were artificially bred by the Hieros.

I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe it's early
afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

Tdazkiel's people are themselves artificial...awfully difficult to blame
God for their control over the universe.

2010/7/1 Ant??nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>
>> <mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>

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- + God's creatures are toys in an evil power's hands
- + God's creatures believe that the evil power is not evil at all and is doing God's work
- + those who oppose the evil power are not, generally speaking, better people than the others, and in fact seem to be worse.

- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

Keeping option 3 doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for, it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

Antonio

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 17:12 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:08):

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 12:16 PM, <brunians at brunians.org
<mailto:brunians at brunians.org>> wrote:

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.

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But the point I brought up is independent of whether the evil power was created by God or bred by whoever.

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> John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

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>> and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good

>> intentions is Hell full'.

>>

>> Antonio

>>

>> _____

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 17:22 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:08):

But the point I brought up is independent of whether the evil power was created by God or bred by whoever.

Is it? I dunno. I think the existence of, say, hurricanes, or the bubonic plague, is potentially more troubling from a theodicy standpoint than the possibility that the free will of hman beings might create monstrous demigods as the Hierogrammates under Scenario 2 are. Anyway I rather doubt that the author would agree that the existence of such beings is inconsistent with the existence of a traditionally-understood God.

Regardless, we are getting afield of the question.

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>> Antonio
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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 01 Jul 2010, 17:33 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I'm taking them to heart. The question is, whether to take them to the Hayfork police. Making threats on the internet is illegal, you know.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 9:41 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Take my words to heart, Dan'l.

.

Josh, someone who insists on medieval definitions of words like
"planet" _is_ a pedant.

If you find that offensive, look in the mirror.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 9:21 AM, ?<brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Next time I meet you, Dan'l, the first words out of your mouth better be an apology.

Don't take this as a joke.

.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 8:14 AM, ?<brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Did you guys set out to be pedants?

If no, how did it happen?

Coff. Coff.

Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Ryan Dunn — 01 Jul 2010, 17:33 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Would logic follow that you should apologize to the group of "striving pedants" as well? I'm not offended, mind you, but I AM an instigator 'round these parts.

Or was it the way he misspelled "coff" that bugged you?

In any case here's another image with visor, flag, landscape and earthrise:

http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

Though I would guess it is a composite as depicted in an oil painting created by an artist of Urth, about Earth, before the moon got all forested up.

...ryan

On Jul 1, 2010, at 12:54 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

It may be what you are striving for.

It may not be an insult to you.

.

I don't know *how* to take this discourse at all.

I had no idea that "pedant" was an insult around here.

I thought that was what we were all striving for.

u+16b9

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Don't take this as a joke.

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If no, how did it happen?

Coff. Coff.

Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 01 Jul 2010, 17:40 · in reply to John Watkins

He appears to believe that Tzadkiel is a hierodule.

No. I believe that the Hierogrammates were artificially bred by the

Hieros.

It seems to me that Apheta said the Hierogrammates were made by the Hieros, the humans of a previous mantanvara.

u+16b9

Paul B — 01 Jul 2010, 17:45 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

The internet, as we all know, is serious business.

Now let's all put our sabers away and get back to talking about how Agia is an Inhumu-robot-Hierodule, and Severian is actually a character from a wholly different Wolfe book because how kewl would that be.

Paul

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 1:33 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:
I'm taking them to heart. The question is, whether to take them to the Hayfork police. Making threats on the internet is illegal, you know.

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Coff. Coff.

Pot.

Kettle.

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 18:05 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:22):

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:08):

But the point I brought up is independent of whether the evil power was created by God or bred by whoever.

Is it? I dunno. I think the existence of, say, hurricanes, or the bubonic plague, is potentially more troubling from a theodicy standpoint than the possibility that the free will of hman beings might create monstrous demigods as the Hierogrammates under Scenario 2 are.

Natural disasters aren't ever considered benign. They may be considered part of some higher purpose, but that's not what we're discussing here.

Anyway I rather doubt that the author would agree that the existence of such beings is inconsistent with the existence of a traditionally-understood God.

A universe under the dominion of an evil being that poses and is seen as doing God's will is consistent with the existence of a benign God?

Regardless, we are getting afield of the question.

> I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe it's early

> afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

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> John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

>> Tdazkiel's people are themselves artificial...awfully difficult to blame

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>> _____

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 18:09 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:22):

\

A universe under the dominion of an evil being that poses and is seen as
doing God's will is consistent with the existence of a benign God?

It's the premise of Gnosticism, isn't it? And arguably of Christianity,
just on a grander scale.

Regardless, we are getting afield of the question.

> I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe
it's early

> afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

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> John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

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>> and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good
>> intentions is Hell full'.
>>
>> Antonio
>>
>> _____
>> Urth Mailing List
>> To post, write urth at urth.net <mailto:urth at urth.net>
<mailto:urth at urth.net <mailto:urth at urth.net>>
<mailto:urth at urth.net <mailto:urth at urth.net>
<mailto:urth at urth.net <mailto:urth at urth.net>>>

Jerry Friedman — 01 Jul 2010, 19:06 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

From: António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote:

...

2) Tzadkiel is a creepy insectoid alien thing and a liar. The pretensions of religion are a means of controlling the human race.

Option 2 I think is untenable.

- If God is good, then it makes no sense to create a universe in which:
+ God's creatures are toys in an evil power's hands
+ God's creatures believe that the evil power is not evil at all and is doing God's work
+ those

who oppose the evil power are not, generally speaking, better people than the others, and in fact seem

to be worse.

Hasn't this been the situation in many dictatorships, especially theocratic ones? In Europe when and where the Inquisition flourished?

I agree with those who say this theodicy is no worse than the one Christians face in the real world.

And what about /The Wizard Knight/? The Aelf could be toys in the hands of evil humans if the humans realized it, just as humans sometimes are for Lothur. (But then the whole non-Christian deism of TWK is strange. Humans seem to be at the bottom instead of in the middle.)

- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

Keeping option 3

doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for, it just means they're done with

the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

In English, "The road to Hell is paved with good intentions."

Jerry Friedman

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 19:10 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 19:09):

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <entonio at gmail.com>
<mailto:entonio at gmail.com>>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:22):

A universe under the dominion of an evil being that poses and is seen as doing God's will is consistent with the existence of a benign God?

It's the premise of Gnosticism, isn't it? And arguably of Christianity, just on a grander scale.

Could you elaborate?

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 19:20 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

Jerry Friedman wrote (01-07-2010 20:06):

From: Ant?nio Pedro Marques<entonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote:

...

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- + God's creatures believe that the evil power is not evil at all and is doing God's work
- + those who oppose the evil power are not, generally speaking, better people than the others, and in fact seem to be worse.

Hasn't this been the situation in many dictatorships, especially theocratic ones? In Europe when and where the Inquisition flourished?

I don't think so. I think it's very different if nothing else in terms of scale. You can hardly say the Inquisition had domain over the Universe, and whatever power dictatorships have is transient. Granted, sometimes evil can establish itself as the moral referent - cf. 'Stockholm's syndrome' - but so far, that I've seen, only in limited scale.

I agree with those who say this theodicy is no worse than the one Christians face in the real world.

If the real world saw triumph of Evil perceived as Good in most parts and for most of the time, I'd agree. But I don't see the world that way.

And what about /The Wizard Knight/? The Aelf could be toys in the hands of evil humans if the humans realized it, just as humans sometimes are for Lothur. (But then the whole non-Christian deism of TWK is strange. Humans seem to be at the

bottom instead of in the middle.)

Here I should disclose that I haven't read TWK yet.

- If God isn't good then by what standard can we call such an unfathomable being as Tzadkiel evil?

Keeping option 3

doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for, it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

In English, "The road to Hell is paved with good intentions."

Somehow I never remember that.

Still haven't had the time to answer to your reply on Agia.

Roy C. Lackey — 01 Jul 2010, 19:50 · in reply to John Watkins

This is probably a futile attempt to drag this discussion back to what Wolfe actually wrote, but I am going to do it anyway.

What has gotten lost is the truth of what Dan'I and John Watkins alluded to. I invite anyone who doesn't understand or doesn't remember the "The Key to the Universe" chapter (XXXIV) of CITADEL to read it again. (There is more on the topic in URTH.) It contains a summary of Severian's understanding.

This is the gist. The human beings of the First Empire formed (that is the verb used) a new race of beings. The new beings were cruelly fashioned from lesser beings (less than humans). The end result was the race we know as the Hierogrammates. The cruel humans who formed them were the Hieros.

That much is straightforward. Here is where the subject turns tricky and leads some to question the motives and moral authority of the Hierogrammates. (Peter Wright comes to mind.)

"However it may be, they [the Hierogrammates] shape us now as they themselves were shaped; it is at once their repayment and their revenge.

"The Hierodules they have found too, and formed more quickly, to serve them in this universe."

These are the textual facts, as Severian understood them. The Hierogrammates are doing unto human beings much the same thing that humans had done unto them. They also tinkered with some sort of beings to form their holy slaves.

-Roy

Roy C. Lackey — 01 Jul 2010, 20:08 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Correction. I wrote:

This is the gist. The human beings of the First Empire . . .

I should not have said human beings of the First Empire, which was earlier in Severian's universe. That should have been "The human beings of a previous universe . . ."

-Roy

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 20:27 · in reply to John Watkins

And you believe this because ...

.
On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 12:16 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
He appears to believe that Tzadkiel is a hierodule.

.
No. I believe that the Hierogrammates were artificially bred by the Hieros.

I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe it's early afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

Tdazkiel's people are themselves artificial...awfully difficult to blame
God for their control over the universe.

2010/7/1 Ant??nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>
>> <mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>

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Antonio

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 20:28 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 19:09):

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:22):

A universe under the dominion of an evil being that poses and is seen as doing God's will is consistent with the existence of a benign God?

It's the premise of Gnosticism, isn't it? And arguably of Christianity, just on a grander scale.

Could you elaborate?

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See C.S. Lewis's Space Trilogy for a literalization of this kind of cosmology. There, Satan is the local ruler--the planetary genius of Earth--and the true God is the ruler of the universe, from whom Satan originally had authority in fiefdom, but against whom Satan has rebelled. Of course, the scale is different from the 2) hypothetical (planet versus universe), but from the perspective of Earth there's very little different.

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 20:28 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

I have made no threats.

Do what you feel you should do.

.

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 20:29 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I don't think so.

Why would it?

.

Would logic follow that you should apologize to the group of "striving pedants" as well? I'm not offended, mind you, but I AM an instigator 'round these parts.

Or was it the way he misspelled "coff" that bugged you?

In any case here's another image with visor, flag, landscape and earthrise:

http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

Though I would guess it is a composite as depicted in an oil painting created by an artist of Urth, about Earth, before the moon got all forested up.

...ryan

On Jul 1, 2010, at 12:54 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

It may be what you are striving for.

It may not be an insult to you.

.

I don't know *how* to take this discourse at all.
I had no idea that "pedant" was an insult around here.
I thought that was what we were all striving for.

u+16b9

Take my words to heart, Dan'l.

.

Josh, someone who insists on medieval definitions of words like
"planet" _is_ a pedant.

If you find that offensive, look in the mirror.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 9:21 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Next time I meet you, Dan'l, the first words out of your mouth
better
be
an apology.

Don't take this as a joke.

.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 8:14 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Did you guys set out to be pedants?

If no, how did it happen?

Coff. Coff.

Pot.

Kettle.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 20:31 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 4:27 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
And you believe this because ...

Because, as James and Roy have pointed out, it is what the text says about
them.

On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 12:16 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

He appears to believe that Tzadkiel is a hierodule.

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No. I believe that the Hierogrammates were artificially bred by the
Hiers.

I honestly think top-posting usually isn't helpful - maybe it's early afternoon drowsiness but I can't grasp your point.

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 16:31):

Tdazkiel's people are themselves artificial...awfully difficult to blame
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2010/7/1 Ant??nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>
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Antonio

James Wynn — 01 Jul 2010, 20:33 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

And what about/The Wizard Knight/? The Aelf could be toys in the hands of evil humans if the humans realized it, just as humans sometimes are for Lothur. (But then the whole non-Christian deism of TWK is strange. Humans seem to be at the bottom instead of in the middle.)

I think that was the point. Human degeneracy had caused them to be enslaved by their lowest instincts. Humanity ought to have been seeking to serve the ideals of Valfather and then Michael's and then discover the ideals that are even higher still.

Due to their enslavement to Arnthor (a dragon in disguise from a realm two levels lower), even Aelfrice (representing lower instincts but higher than those that had enslaved humanity) was also enslaved by those instincts and hence rebelled -- because humans had relinquished the ideals necessary to hold the beings of Aelfrice in awe.

This is a picture of a man with his priorities upside down. TWK might well be viewed as the most moralistic novel Wolfe has ever written. The following is a key scene: Valfather bowing before Michael, as Michael tells Abel that to be a knight he must be able to command Disiri with the same authority.

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 01 Jul 2010, 20:34 · in reply to John Watkins

I was confused.

That's right.

.
On Thu, Jul 1, 2010 at 4:27 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

And you believe this because ...

Because, as James and Roy have pointed out, it is what the text says about them.

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Antonio

Gerry Quinn — 01 Jul 2010, 21:05 · in reply to John Watkins

2010/7/1 António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

Keeping option 3 doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no atoning for, it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

A common saying in English is "the road to Hell is paved with good intentions".

However, In Wolfe's short 'The Last Thrilling Wonder Story', this is denied by one who should know:

Luciifer smiled at it. "That will not break my pavements," he said. "Despite so many wild rumours, they are not laid of good intentiona - which are, in my experience, quite easily broken".

Of course he could be lying. He does that.

- Gerry Quinn

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 22:52 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote:

2010/7/1 António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 19:09):

2010/7/1 António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote (01-07-2010 18:22):

A universe under the dominion of an evil being that poses and is seen as doing God's will is consistent with the existence of a benign God?

It's the premise of Gnosticism, isn't it? And arguably of Christianity, just on a grander scale.

Could you elaborate?

Yes. Gnosticism posits that "the world" is the creation of the demiurge, a debased being posing as the true God, but that a benign God still exists and calls for our loyalty. Gnostic Christianity (or Gnosticism proper) posits that Jesus Christ was a sort of messenger from the true God, preaching a rejection of the demiurge. Orthodox

Christianity refers at times to the Devil as "the lord of [the/this] world," with much the same significance.

But what they consider is that the demiurge is antagonistic to God. They do not consider the demiurge to be God, and those who they see worshipping God are not worshipping what they consider as the demiurge. So I think the parallel fails.

See C.S. Lewis's Space Trilogy for a literalization of this kind of cosmology. There, Satan is the local ruler--the planetary genius of Earth--and the true God is the ruler of the universe, from whom Satan originally had authority in fiefdom, but against whom Satan has rebelled. Of course, the scale is different from the 2) hypothetical (planet versus universe), but from the perspective of Earth there's very little different.

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 23:06 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

António Pedro Marques wrote:

John Watkins wrote:

2010/7/1 António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>

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I mean, it's not the parallel between BNS and gnostic christianity that fails, it's the parallel to a BNS in which an evil Tazdkiel had wide moral control over mankind, such that those who opposed him were of dubious moral stature, that does. For such is the option offered by 2 - it hypothesizes that Tzadkiel is evil (let's not go to Machen's The White People's prologue), but it

doesn't remove the fact that those who serve and revere him tend to be good, whereas those who oppose him tend a bit to the thug side - at least if I remember the text (put aside the ones who were merely fighting for their lives).

John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 23:07 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

This is mistaken. The Gnostic posits that the demiurge is in fact the God of the Old Testament; while it's at least consistent with Christianity to posit that the gods worshipped by various pagans are identifiable with devils.

On 7/1/10, Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com> wrote:
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John Watkins — 01 Jul 2010, 23:11 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

I'm confused by this too.

Certainly Pas is evil. Certainly many of his servants (Silk) are good. And of those servants who aren't very good, they tend to be improved by greater service (Incus). Wolfe seems to believe and in fact very nearly states in canon that good service to even a false god is sanctifying.

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James Wynn — 01 Jul 2010, 23:12 · in reply to John Watkins

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At risk of seeming pedantic, Lewis' cosmology is a little different from the Gnostic version. In the Gnostic version, the demiurge (or just as often, the demiurges) is the genuine Creator. But because he is imperfect, --not the Increate-- the world is imperfect.

In Lewis' version, the Satan is, as you say, a local administrator in revolt.

Incidentally, I really like the idea in That Hideous Strength in which the Earth-facing side of the moon was blasted into a wasteland during the war between the Revolutionaries and the Loyalists, but the "Dark Side" (which at the time of writing had never been seen) was covered in idyllic forests, and was in Loyalist territory.

u+16b9

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 23:34 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote:

This is mistaken. The Gnostic posits that the demiurge is in fact the God of the Old Testament;

Only the jews, a very small part of the world's population, worshipped the God of the OT as such, and they certainly went to end talking about his wrath, jealousy and favouritisms, which aren't exactly benign traits.

while it's at least consistent with

Christianity to posit that the gods worshipped by various pagans are identifiable with devils.

Angelic beings, fallen or not, not necessarily devils.

But how many pagan gods considered evil by christians were not considered evil by their own worshippers? Many deities were worshipped out of fear. It's one thing to give worship to, other to consider good. To worship and consider good something which actually is evil raises the bar quite a bit.

António Pedro Marques — 01 Jul 2010, 23:53 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote:

I'm confused by this too.

I'm confused as to why you don't write your remarks below the part of the message whcih they address.

Certainly Pas is evil. Certainly many of his servants (Silk) are good.

But I didn't say evil masters can't have good servants. I said that in the books, if Tzadkiel were evil, you'd have an evil master whose servants would be better than his opponents - i.e., those who oppose the evil master are of a quite lesser moral standing than those who serve him - and

would actually consider the master to be good. I don't recall Silk ever considering Pas good, nor actually any of the Whorl gods. In fact, from what I recall, the people in the Whorl are fed up with their gods.

And of those servants who aren't very good, they tend to be improved by greater service (Incus). Wolfe seems to believe and in fact very nearly states in canon that good service to even a false god is sanctifying.

Quite sure, inasmuch as the false (here the issue is 'evil', not 'false') or evil god is also ultimately bound to God's plan for the world. It's not because of Pas's evilness that Auk or Incus improve (I'm not even certain their Incus shows much of an improvement, but that's another matter).

What salvific elements are there in the Whorl's religion are due either to the community's appropriation and improvement by serious reshaping (motivated by individual episodes of enlightenment or not) of the basics they were primed with, or whatever of the originals shows through the transvestite. It's not from Scylla's demand of 50 children that the good people of the Whorl got their morals.

On 7/1/10, Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com> wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 01:56 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Links!

Ryan Dunn wrote:

I found a similar image from a later Apollo image, though the painting is a painting, after all, and not a photograph (I don't think).

...ryan

On Jun 30, 2010, at 11:01 PM, Adam Thornton <adam at io.com> wrote:

On 06/30/2010 09:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It occurred to me that Wolfe may have been inspired by an SF magazine cover rather than by a painting. I searched The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction and found a similar image:

http://www.philsp.com/data/images/f/fantasy_and_science_fiction_197702.jpg

At least it has the gold faceplate and earth. Maybe Rudesind's painting is a composite?

Rudesind's painting does not match any of the actual Apollo images I could find, when I went looking a few years ago.

Adam

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 01:59 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

That's true. So perhaps this painting is not something Wolfe made up, but rather a painting by a person he made up, in Borgesian fashion.

Either way, it is a study in symbols/icons becoming more real than reality.

Unless, of course, there IS a real model.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/1/2010 6:55 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:

Jeff, no one said pulp covers were more inspirational than photos.

But if you eliminate Apollo 11 photos and Alan Bean, what's left?

A composite of iconic images, as you speculated. The Apollo 11 photo of Buzz saluting the flag has the grey regolith and the gold visor as well, but it was earlier Apollo 8 orbital photos that show the earth rising over the lunar horizon that were hugely popularized. Some of the Apollo 11 photos do show the earth in the sky, but not terribly prominently. IIRC, Van Gogh was known to have put Ursa Major above southern-looking European landscapes; no reason some unborn master yet to paint couldn't do the same for Neil and Buzz.

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 02:03 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

So you think the Yesodis are operating a time-travel historical-intervention scheme, from a perspective at the end of Urth's universe?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/1/2010 8:24 AM, John Watkins wrote:

Thanks.

Obviously, the effect of Tzadkiel's actions is the coming of the New Sun and the drowning of Urth. Lots and lots of people die in this, maybe for a redemptive higher meaning and maybe not. Under 1), we can be quite confident that the slaughter was authorized by God, like the Flood or the apocalypse, and therefore moral, at least by the author's lights (the reader's mileage may vary.) Under 2), the massacring of Urth is no less than genocide. Under 3), it may be either--a clumsy attempt by incredibly powerful but fallible beings to enact what they understand to be the divine will.

I think 3) maybe makes for the best story. But with 2), there's the possibility of something else going on behind the scenes--maybe over the course of the next seven books--redeeming the act of evil. That would be a pretty great story.

Tzad cops to #3 although he has the luxury not only of seeing how the machinaitons turn out from his perch in Yesod, but of potentially being able to undo any changes that turn out to suck more rather than less. And arguably, any deaths the Yesodis "cause" have already happened to long-dead Urthlings and they're just rearranging the details, or even saving some from having to suffer in that vale of tears to begin with.

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 02:10 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

That's it! Or very close.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

Would logic follow that you should apologize to the group of "striving pedants" as well? I'm not offended, mind you, but I AM an instigator 'round these parts.

Or was it the way he misspelled "coff" that bugged you?

In any case here's another image with visor, flag, landscape and earthrise:

http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 02:22 · in reply to David Stockhoff

How might such an apology be phrased?

.

That's it! Or very close.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

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http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 02:29 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I can do this.

I am very sorry that many of you are making great efforts to be pedants.

There!

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How might such an apology be phrased?

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That's it! Or very close.

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In any case here's another image with visor, flag, landscape and earthrise:

http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 02:47 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I was referring to the photo in the link. I think that's the photo in Rudesind's gallery, or a painting of it, or a printout on really tough paper and ink.

The reason I believe this is that Wolfe does not make things up when he can construct them out of existing materials. No presumed composite would satisfy him.

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http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

Jeff Wilson — 02 Jul 2010, 02:48 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/1/2010 9:03 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:
So you think the Yesodis are operating a time-travel
historical-intervention scheme, from a perspective at the end of Urth's
universe?

Many such, though the perspective might be more from above than from the chronological end. Yesod doesn't seem to follow Earth-Urth-Ushas in time. In a way, that would support the beneficence of the Yesodis, who in that case are helping this parallel or offshoot universe they have no stake in to avoid the sort of horrid duration that drove their forebears off of or out of the cycle of bangs and gnabs before they perfected their union with the Increate.

This can still be read cynically as the Yesodis experimenting on a serially unconnected universe so that they don't snuff it if they accidentally break the chain of causality by killing *everyone*, but I like the tough love, Clarkeian version better.

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

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 03:03 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I repeat my apology.

.

I was referring to the photo in the link. I think that's the photo in Rudesind's gallery, or a painting of it, or a printout on really tough paper and ink.

The reason I believe this is that Wolfe does not make things up when he can construct them out of existing materials. No presumed composite would satisfy him.

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That's it! Or very close.

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Or was it the way he misspelled "coff" that bugged you?

In any case here's another image with visor, flag, landscape and earthrise:

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 03:13 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Inclusive of such a perspective, I should have said.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/1/2010 9:03 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

So you think the Yesodis are operating a time-travel historical-intervention scheme, from a perspective at the end of Urth's universe?

Many such, though the perspective might be more from above than from the chronological end. Yesod doesn't seem to follow Earth-Urth-Ushas in time. In a way, that would support the beneficence of the Yesodis, who in that case are helping this parallel or offshoot universe they have no stake in to avoid the sort of horrid durance that drove their forebears off of or out of the cycle of bangs and gnabs before they perfected their union with the Increate.

This can still be read cynically as the Yesodis experimenting on a serially unconnected universe so that they don't snuff it if they accidentally break the chain of causality by killing *everyone*, but I like the tough love, Clarkeian version better.

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 03:14 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

You can apologize all you want!

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I repeat my apology.

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I was referring to the photo in the link. I think that's the photo in Rudesind's gallery, or a painting of it, or a printout on really tough paper and ink.

The reason I believe this is that Wolfe does not make things up when he can construct them out of existing materials. No presumed composite would satisfy him.

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brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 03:34 · in reply to David Stockhoff
I know!

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You can apologize all you want!

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http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

Ryan Dunn — 02 Jul 2010, 04:10 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Josh,

Do you really think this is any more pedantic than our Agia as robot discourse?

I happened to find my virgin reading of that passage (about the astronaut) one of the first OH WOW! moments of the series. Because it was more clear than the propulsion chamber clue in revealing that we are in a distant future, but that the planet is OUR planet, Earth.

I've, on more than one occasion, tried to find this image online. It's pretty fun to hunt for it. I don't think it's pedantic, however.

The talk of gnostic gods, and Zak's role as archangel or insectoid, and so forth really hurts my brain, though.

:)

...ryan

On Jul 1, 2010, at 11:34 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
I know!

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You can apologize all you want!

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http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

Ryan Dunn — 02 Jul 2010, 04:26 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Yeah, this is a better version of that image, hi-res:

<http://history.nasa.gov/alsj/a17/AS17-134-20387HR.jpg>

It's not the exact image from SotT, because Wolfe says the warrior is holding a staff.

The image is from the Apollo 17 mission, and the astronaut is Harrison "Jack" Schmitt, who has had a few quite awesome photos taken of him:

http://1.bp.blogspot.com/_O_L1W8HmE8E/S8AlwQXNFVI/AAAAAAAAABdE/jiK9msGVSlc/s1600/Jack+Schmitt.jpg

http://apod.nasa.gov/apod/image/0012/lunarscape_apollo17_big.jpg

http://4.bp.blogspot.com/_AsL5s6RwTrk/Sc4F10aUY6I/AAAAAAAAAB2s/LB-IOJ8LeEk/s1600/as17-140-21391.jpg

http://hubblesite.org/explore_astronomy/skywatch/db/263/images/large.jpg

http://www.airportjournals.com/Photos/0509/X/0509011_9.jpg

<http://images.google.com/hosted/life/f?q=harrison+jack+schmitt&prev=/images%3Fq%3Dharri>

son%2Bjack%2Bschmitt%26start%3D21%26um%3D1%26hl%3Den%26client%3Dsafari%26sa%3DX%26rls%3Den%26ndsp%3D21%26tbs%3Disch:1,isz:l&imgurl=245970a4d79b352c
http://3.bp.blogspot.com/_04kZGR_ltmE/SskHoHLHhtI/AAAAAAAAExw/JWtP2ctZzoM/s1600/as17-134-20382.jpg
...ryan

On Jul 1, 2010, at 10:10 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:
That's it! Or very close.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Or was it the way he misspelled "coff" that bugged you?

In any case here's another image with visor, flag, landscape and earthrise:

http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 04:30 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

What you mean by this?

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Ryan Dunn — 02 Jul 2010, 04:34 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Oh, I was reacting to this:

"I am very sorry that many of you are making great efforts to be pedants."

And I sensed you were offended when Dan implied you were a pedant yourself, so didn't know where you decided to draw the line.

I mean, is investigating the source of the astronaut painting any more pedantic than locating a sex doll who escaped a lemonwood box?

Not a jibe, mind you, an honest curiosity.

...ryan

On Jul 2, 2010, at 12:30 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
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Jeff Wilson — 02 Jul 2010, 04:49 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/1/2010 9:47 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

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I do not think it matches the passage. To refresh:

"The picture he was cleaning showed an armored figure standing in a desolate landscape. It had no weapon, but held a staff bearing a strange, stiff banner. The visor of this figure's helmet was entirely of gold, without eye slits or ventilation; in its polished surface the deathly desert could be seen in reflection, and nothing more."

and

"...Today I took the notion to clean it again. And it needs it see how nice it's brightening up? There's your blue Urth coming over his shoulder again, fresh as the Autarch's fish."

and

"...'Is that the moon? I have been told it's more fertile.'

"Now it is, yes. This was done before they got it irrigated. See that gray-brown? In those times, that's what you'd see if you looked up at her. Not green like she is now."

The linked, autographed photo does not show a staff, and the visor pointedly shows the flag and the sun more than the moonscape. The earth is above his head rather than either shoulder.

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 04:52 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I was not offended.

I was insulted.

I'm mostly over it.

.

Oh, I was reacting to this:

"I am very sorry that many of you are making great efforts to be pedants."

And I sensed you were offended when Dan'l implied you were a pedant yourself, so didn't know where you decided to draw the line.

I mean, is investigating the source of the astronaut painting any more pedantic than locating a sex doll who escaped a lemonwood box?

Not a jibe, mind you, an honest curiosity.

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brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I can do this.

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There!

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That's it! Or very close.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

Would logic follow that you should apologize to the group of "striving pedants" as well? I'm not offended, mind you, but I AM an instigator 'round these parts.

Or was it the way he misspelled "coff" that bugged you?

In any case here's another image with visor, flag, landscape and earthrise:

http://www.custodiansofhistory.com/images/Astro_GusCerway.jpg

Gerry Quinn — 02 Jul 2010, 06:24 · in reply to John Watkins

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

Certainly Pas is evil. Certainly many of his servants (Silk) are good.

And of those servants who aren't very good, they tend to be improved by greater service (Incus). Wolfe seems to believe and in fact very nearly states in canon that good service to even a false god is sanctifying.

I'm not sure the concept 'Pas is evil' makes much real sense (we can posit that Typhon was evil, but Typhon is not exactly Pas).

Pas is the creator of the Whorl, which has much good in it, even if, as Silk animadverts towards the end of _TBotLS_ it also has much evil. And he seems to be doing his best for it, in his way.

Evil is generally defined as being opposite to good, not as mere imperfection. The imperfect has evil within it, but it cannot reasonably be considered synonymous with evil.

- Gerry Quinn

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 06:34 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

Typhon was well motivated.

I am sure that if you told him he was evil he would agree (megalomaniacal but not exactly delusional, him), and point out that he did a lot of good things, which he would proceed to list.

.

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

Certainly Pas is evil. Certainly many of his servants (Silk) are good.

And of those servants who aren't very good, they tend to be improved by greater service (Incus). Wolfe seems to believe and in fact very nearly states in canon that good service to even a false god is sanctifying.

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- Gerry Quinn

James Wynn — 02 Jul 2010, 06:39 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Yeah, this is a better version of that image, hi-res:

<http://history.nasa.gov/alsj/a17/AS17-134-20387HR.jpg>

It's not the exact image from SotT, because Wolfe says the warrior is holding a staff.

The uncropped version of this picture works fine I think. It would show the flag on it's pole.

One of the arguments from the conspiracists that the moon landings were faked is that their composition is perfect despite their cameras having no viewfinders. But the truth is that all the pictures were cropped.

Full quote:

"The picture he was cleaning showed an armored figure standing in a desolate landscape. It had no weapon, but held a staff bearing a strange, stiff banner. The visor of this figure's helmet was entirely of gold, without eye slits or ventilation; in its polished surface the deathly desert could be seen in reflection, and nothing more. [snip] 'There's your blue Urth coming over his shoulder again, fresh as the Autarch's fish.' "

u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 13:55 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

It's true that the figure holds the flag. But you have to allow for some poetic license as far as visor color and earth distance.

At any rate, we are closer to the image than we were the last time this came up.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/1/2010 9:47 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

I was referring to the photo in the link. I think that's the photo in Rudesind's gallery, or a painting of it, or a printout on really tough paper and ink.

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"'Now it is, yes. This was done before they got it irrigated. See that gray-brown? In those times, that's what you'd see if you looked up at her. Not green like she is now.'"

The linked, autographed photo does not show a staff, and the visor pointedly shows the flag and the sun more than the moonscape. The earth is above his head rather than either shoulder.

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 13:57 · in reply to James Wynn

It may even show the armored figure's glove on the flagstaff.

James Wynn wrote:

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u+16b9

James Wynn — 02 Jul 2010, 14:51 · in reply to David Stockhoff

It's true that the figure holds the flag. But you have to allow for some poetic license as far as visor color and earth distance.

Maybe visor color since it is not "entirely gold". But there's no requirement for Urth size is there?

António Pedro Marques — 02 Jul 2010, 14:52 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (02-07-2010 05:34):

Urth Mailing List

To post, writeurth at urth.net

Subscription/information:<http://www.urth.net>

Urth Mailing List

To post, writeurth at urth.net
Subscription/information:<http://www.urth.net>

avast! Antivirus: Inbound message clean.
Virus Database (VPS): 100701-1, 07/01/2010
Tested on: 7/1/2010 10:30:22 PM
avast! - copyright (c) 1988-2010 ALWIL Software.
<http://www.avast.com>

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

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

avast! Antivirus: Inbound message clean.
Virus Database (VPS): 100701-1, 07/01/2010
Tested on: 7/1/2010 11:03:23 PM
avast! - copyright (c) 1988-2010 ALWIL Software.
<http://www.avast.com>

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 14:55 · in reply to James Wynn

No, the passage doesn't say how far, small, or high Urth appears. But even in the best candidate it is almost over the astronaut's head.

James Wynn wrote:

It's true that the figure holds the flag. But you have to allow for some poetic license as far as visor color and earth distance.

Maybe visor color since it is not "entirely gold". But there's no requirement for Urth size is there?

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

avast! Antivirus: Inbound message clean.
Virus Database (VPS): 100702-0, 07/02/2010
Tested on: 7/2/2010 10:52:35 AM
avast! - copyright (c) 1988-2010 ALWIL Software.
<http://www.avast.com>

António Pedro Marques — 02 Jul 2010, 15:14 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (02-07-2010 05:26):

Yeah, this is a better version of that image, hi-res:

<http://history.nasa.gov/alsj/a17/AS17-134-20387HR.jpg>

Well, I can see how the earth could be described as being over his shoulder and how the 'faceplate' seems to be made of gold. The staff can be imagined, part of a different crop, or introduced by restorers (not satisfactory, I know).

brunians at brunians.org — 02 Jul 2010, 15:29 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

But it looks so cool!

.

Ryan Dunn wrote (02-07-2010 05:34):

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Tested on: 7/1/2010 10:30:22 PM

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avast! Antivirus: Inbound message clean.

Virus Database (VPS): 100701-1, 07/01/2010

Tested on: 7/1/2010 11:03:23 PM

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<http://www.avast.com>

Jeff Wilson — 02 Jul 2010, 15:53 · in reply to James Wynn

On 7/2/2010 9:51 AM, James Wynn wrote:

It's true that the figure holds the flag. But you have to allow for some poetic license as far as visor color and earth distance.

Maybe visor color since it is not "entirely gold". But there's no requirement for Urth size is there?

I think "entirely gold" is meant to convey the entire visor is gold colored, rather than merely a gold band across the eyes or some other arrangement of detail. Speaking of the visor, if you click to show the full resolution of the second image linked, you can see another astronaut (apparently Harrison Schmitt) rather than "nothing more".

Schmitt also took this iconic image

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Earth_seen_from_Apollo_17.jpg

which may be the source of Rudesinde's peculiar possessive reference "*your* blue Urth".

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

James Wynn — 02 Jul 2010, 16:16 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

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I take it to mean that the visor looked like it was made of gold. That works for the picture. The black could readily be scene as part of the reflection on the visor.

Speaking of the visor, if you click to show the full resolution of the second image linked, you can see another astronaut (apparently Harrison Schmitt) rather than "nothing more".

Eh...I can see what might be an arm since I know what to look for.

But on reflection, it would have been pointless in this case to reference a single photo among the hundreds taken and illustrations created of the lunar landings. Wolfe described a picture that included the important elements for us to identify the scene and context. We can easily imagine the scene based on his description.

On the other hand, what is Severian looking at when he sees "a dancer whose wings seemed leeches"?

u+169b

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 16:24 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Yeah, except it's not rising over anyone's shoulder.

I suppose I should clarify that I think it's plain that "visor of gold" doesn't mean that at all. It just needs to be dominated almost entirely by a solar/moonscape reflection.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/2/2010 9:51 AM, James Wynn wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 16:30 · in reply to James Wynn

As I've said, I can accept the composite theory if I must, but I have reason to doubt it. However, since it's supposedly a painting, there may be a real painting or illustration that combines these elements and therefore "is" the painting if Wolfe saw it---even if Rudesinde's is a totally different physical painting. All that is necessary is that somewhere is a scene that fits the description---not that it be a photograph.

And I admit that what really motivates me is that I am sure I've seen it somewhere!

Are there any photos with the astronaut holding the flag?

James Wynn wrote:

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u+169b

Jeff Wilson — 02 Jul 2010, 16:31 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/2/2010 8:57 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:

It may even show the armored figure's glove on the flagstaff.

I'm afraid not; the visor reflection also shows the other hand and the other astronaut well away from the flag.

James Wynn wrote:

Yeah, this is a better version of that image, hi-res:

<http://history.nasa.gov/alsj/a17/AS17-134-20387HR.jpg>

It's not the exact image from SotT, because Wolfe says the warrior is holding a staff.

The uncropped version of this picture works fine I think. It would show the flag on it's pole.

One of the arguments from the conspiracists that the moon landings were faked is that their composition is perfect despite their cameras having no viewfinders. But the truth is that all the pictures were cropped.

You know about the suppressed transmission, of course? No? Oh, well, it's a covert operation between the United States government and the Soviet Union, it's been going on for over 50 years. We've been on the moon since the '50s. We've been on Mars since '62, it was May 22nd.

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

James Wynn — 02 Jul 2010, 16:41 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

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I have a friend whose in-laws believe the moon landing was faked. He said once, "The thing that gets me is...why do they think anyone would do that?"

My answer: "Because it's fun to trick people. Who needs a reason?"

u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 16:41 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Here's another partial match, in which the astronaut holds the staff and his visor is gold. The shadows could be cropped out.

http://www.apolloarchive.com/apg_thumbnail.php?ptr=219&imageID=AS14-66-9232

James Wynn — 02 Jul 2010, 16:58 · in reply to David Stockhoff

And I admit that what really motivates me is that I am sure I've seen it somewhere! Are there any photos with the astronaut holding the flag?

I did to. I even know exactly where I thought I'd seen it: It was in the book "We Came in Peace: The Story of Man in Space". I had that volume as a child. But googling for the images from that book makes me think it's not there. And in the picture in my memory the astronaut is not actually holding the flag.

u+16b9

António Pedro Marques — 02 Jul 2010, 17:00 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff wrote (02-07-2010 17:24):

Yeah, except it's not rising over anyone's shoulder.

You draw a vertical line, it **is** over the shoulder. If you then picture the planet rising in an arc, clockwise, it doesn't sound far off. But here my understanding of english may be just deficient.

I suppose I should clarify that I think it's plain that "visor of gold" doesn't mean that at all. It just needs to be dominated almost entirely by a solar/moonscape reflection.

The reflection on the visor, in that picture, looks like it's something reflected on a gilded surface. The black part could be interpreted as shadow. In fact, if I didn't know better, I might also guess the visor's surface was golden.

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 17:06 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

That's exactly what I think. If everything else fit, these would not be problems.

António Pedro Marques wrote:

David Stockhoff wrote (02-07-2010 17:24):

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Jeff Wilson — 02 Jul 2010, 17:16 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On 7/2/2010 12:00 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

David Stockhoff wrote (02-07-2010 17:24):

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The image of the earth begins about 820 pixel columns from the left border and extends to the 910th or so; the helmet begins about 740 and extends to 1260. If the image is rotated to align local vertical with the y-axis, it's even closer to directly above his head.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
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Dave Lebling — 02 Jul 2010, 17:22 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

I'm really fairly amazed at the level of nit-pickery over this question. Let us cast our minds back to the thrilling days of yesteryear (the late 70s), when Wolfe wrote SotT. There was no internet on which you could look up all the thousands of then-unreleased Apollo program pictures, there were a few places you could find pictures in hardcopy (Life -- already moribund, National Geographic, a few coffee table books, etc.). As an SF fan, I'm sure he had resources such as the F&SF cover -- or not, he may not be a pack rat.

It seems quite obvious that the description he wrote is based on his memories of various photos and paintings he had actually seen, but he very likely wasn't staring at an actual photo when he wrote the words. Even if he was, who's to say he might not have taken auctorial liberties with what he saw?

I know that after many re-readings of SotT, my minds-eye image of the "canonical" Apollo photograph is now the (non-existent) one Wolfe described.

-- David Lebling, aka vizcacha

2010/7/2 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

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James Wynn — 02 Jul 2010, 17:35 · in reply to Dave Lebling

On 7/2/2010 12:22 PM, Dave Lebling wrote:

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Yeah, but wonder, if he were asked, would Wolfe shed some light on that dancer with wings like leeches?

u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 17:36 · in reply to Dave Lebling

You have a point about finding specific photos. Even though Wolfe was in publishing and no doubt knows more than a little about how and where to find images, there was no Web gallery to browse. However, we're not necessarily looking for a photo Wolfe saw. It could have been a photo someone else saw and painted. It could have been an image in our national memory, or our shared fannish memory. It could have been his own bad memory.

I still think this is an worthwhile quest, because:

(1) The book may have had the same effect on me as it did on you, and I'd be fascinated to know the truth.

(2) Issues of memory are hardly irrelevant to the novel. Nor are issues of myth.

(3) Is the painting a Borgesian artefact? Is it a knowingly false but truer-than-true insertion?

(4) Is it an SF in-joke, as might be if the image was on the cover of Astounding?

Error? Red herring? MacGuffin? These are basic interpretive questions. I've already suggested that I don't think Wolfe makes things up when he has an alternative at hand. Thus the question: was there an alternative to making it up?

Keep in mind that this painting is the only plain link to the 20th c in the entire book(s), if you set aside the many pulp references.

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Ryan Dunn — 02 Jul 2010, 17:56 · in reply to Dave Lebling

On Jul 2, 2010, at 1:22 PM, Dave Lebling wrote:

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David,

Wolfe also built an entire SF series with hundreds of extinct words which he found through diligent research. I wouldn't put hours spent at the microfiche table past him, and those NASA photos would have been released I'm almost certain. Hell, most of the images currently found on Google are from prints from the 60's and 70's, some of them autographed.

However, I'm of the same mind as you, that he cobbled together the perfect composition from a few iconic images. I think the image in my head in that pinakotheken, is a wide shot of an astronaut standing on Earth's surface with a flag in his hand and an Earth rising over his shoulder. You can't see a staff in his hand without it being wide enough, etc.

...ryan

Dave Lebling — 02 Jul 2010, 18:09 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

He's told us some of his main sources for obscure words, such as "Mrs. Byrne's Dictionary" and books on the Byzantine and Roman Empires. I don't think he needed to spend much time with a microfiche reader, if any.

I also think you overestimate the availability of NASA Apollo prints. Some were only released in the last few years, for example.

But at least we are in violent agreement...

-- Dave

On Fri, Jul 2, 2010 at 1:56 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

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...ryan

Ryan Dunn — 02 Jul 2010, 18:28 · in reply to Dave Lebling

I'm curious about the release dates of the ones I've found. I've posted a screengrab with my captions on them here:

www.liftingfaces.com/uploads/moonman_sources.jpg

Things to note:

- a strangely stiff banner (i found an image with the flag threaded with a rod along the top)
- the deathly desert is reflected in his visor and nothing more, you would see stuff (cameraman) in a real photo
- there are images of astronauts with earthrise behind them, but it's an easy enough composite, and symbolic

...ryan

On Jul 2, 2010, at 2:09 PM, Dave Lebling wrote:

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António Pedro Marques — 02 Jul 2010, 18:47 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson wrote (02-07-2010 18:16):

On 7/2/2010 12:00 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

David Stockhoff wrote (02-07-2010 17:24):

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The image of the earth begins about 820 pixel columns from the left border and extends to the 910th or so; the helmet begins about 740 and extends to 1260. If the image is rotated to align local vertical with the y-axis, it's even closer to directly above his head.

But it's far above enough that I think it can be described as being rising over his shoulder (<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/3012885/Var/AS17-134-20387HR-crop.png>). The photo is taken sideways anyway. Why mention the shoulder rather than the head? I think saying it was rising over his head would be strange, as it would give no hint of directionality, either 3D or 2D wise. It doesn't say which shoulder, but that's a matter of leaving off irrelevant information (irrelevant for them, who were looking at the picture).

And what do you make of that 'again'? Will someone now suggest they were looking at a video (or an animated gif! or flash animation! or silverlight...) in which the earth rose and set in a loop? Or that they had been watching other pictures of the earth as seen from space? (Aha... we're on to something... that 'again' certainly is a clue that they had been discussing a whole lot of pictures prior to that one... and Severian doesn't mention it... I wonder why...)

Of course, if one allows for rotation, all bets are off. Or on.

adam at io.com — 02 Jul 2010, 18:49 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On Fri, 02 Jul 2010 18:00:11 +0100, António Pedro Marques

<entonio at gmail.com> wrote:

The reflection on the visor, in that picture, looks like it's something reflected on a gilded surface. The black part could be interpreted as shadow. In fact, if I didn't know better, I might also guess the visor's surface was golden.

Well, er....

<http://history.nasa.gov/alsj/alsj-LEVA.html>

"The inner surface of the polysulfone sun visor has a gold coating which provides protection against light and reduces heat gain within the helmet."

David Stockhoff — 02 Jul 2010, 18:53 · in reply to adam at io.com

Correct. I didn't know there multiple visors though.

He'd still have to be facing the sun to give him a reason to have the visor full down.

Now here might be an excuse to make up such a scene---if the figure is facing the Sun for symbolic reasons.

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"The inner surface of the polysulfone sun visor has a gold coating which provides protection against light and reduces heat gain within the helmet."

I may have not expressed myself clearly. I might guess it was all solid gold.

Jeff Wilson — 02 Jul 2010, 19:51 · in reply to Ant?nio Pedro Marques

On 7/2/2010 1:47 PM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

And what do you make of that 'again'?

Same as the other 'again', he had cleaned it twice before.

"Today I took the notion to clean it again. And it needs it see how nice it's brightening up?
There's your blue Urth coming over his shoulder again, fresh as the Autarch's fish."

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
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On 7/2/2010 2:51 PM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/2/2010 1:47 PM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

And what do you make of that 'again'?

Same as the other 'again', he had cleaned it twice before.

"Today I took the notion to clean it again. And it needs it see how
nice it's brightening up? There's your blue Urth coming over his
shoulder again, fresh as the Autarch's fish."

The picture had become so dingy that Urth had become obscured in the picture.

u+16b9

Jerry Friedman — 02 Jul 2010, 21:57 · in reply to James Wynn

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

I wrote:

And what about /The Wizard Knight/? The Aelf could be toys in the hands of evil humans if the humans realized it, just as humans sometimes are

for Lothur. (But then the whole non-Christian deism of TWK is strange. Humans seem to be at the bottom instead of in the middle.)

I think that was the point. Human degeneracy had caused them to be
enslaved by their lowest
instincts. Humanity ought to have been seeking

to serve the ideals of Valfather and then Michael's > and then discover the ideals that are even
higher still.

I agree with that.

Due to their enslavement to Arnthor

He's not a good ruler (although not such a bad one, in Able's judgement), but I don't see that
people are enslaved to him--certainly not humanity as a whole.

(a dragon in disguise from a realm

two levels lower),

Half-dragon? Is that ever made clear?

even Aelfrice (representing lower instincts but

higher than those that had enslaved humanity) was > also enslaved by those instincts and
hence rebelled -- because humans had relinquished the ideals

necessary to hold the beings of Aelfrice in awe.

This is a picture of a man with his priorities upside down.

The Seven Worlds are a picture of a man? Not, maybe, a society?

TWK might

well be viewed as the most moralistic novel Wolfe has ever written.

For one thing, it's one of the few where sexual fidelity seems like it might be a good idea.

The
following is
a key scene: Valfather bowing before Michael, as Michael
tells Abel that to be a knight he must be
able to command Disiri with

the same authority.

Not to be a knight, unless I'm missing something. All I see is that Michael is answering Able's question of how to find her (TK, Ch. 44).

It's certainly a key scene, and beautifully done, but I get the feeling other scenes show humanity at the bottom. I can't imagine that humans could impress the Overcyns and trick them into worshipping us the way the Aelf have done to some humans, or even pester Overcyns the way Uri and Baki pester Able. Or that any human could transform an Overcyn the way Disiri transforms Able. Both the Aelf and the Overcyns have supernatural powers, but humans don't seem to have any powers that the Aelf don't have (except summoning them). Both the Overcyns and the Aelf have special leaders, such as the Valfather or Disiri, but humanity doesn't--who is the model for Aelf fathers or kings? Able presumably has his priorities as straight as anyone, and his feelings toward the Valfather are very different from his feelings toward Arnthor, but he treats them the same way: respect, obedience, and a little civil disobedience.

So what's going on?

Jerry Friedman

Gerry Quinn — 03 Jul 2010, 14:56 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

From: "Jeff Wilson" <jwilson at io.com>

Schmitt also took this iconic image

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Earth_seen_from_Apollo_17.jpg

which may be the source of Rudesinde's peculiar possessive reference
"*your* blue Urth".

"the whole world began to rise, pivoting (I think) on Madagascar"
[from 'The Death of Hyle']

- Gerry Quinn

Ryan Dunn — 03 Jul 2010, 15:58 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Jul 2, 2010, at 11:53 AM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

Schmitt also took this iconic image

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:The_Earth_seen_from_Apollo_17.jpg

which may be the source of Rudesinde's peculiar possessive reference "**your** blue Urth".

Either that or Rudesind = Inire, who is likely NOT from Urth, but a hierodule, hence **your** Urth (it ain't his).

Call me crazy.

...ryan

Gerry Quinn — 03 Jul 2010, 16:08 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

From: "Ant?nio Pedro Marques" <entonio at gmail.com>

But it's far above enough that I think it can be described as being rising over his shoulder

(<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/3012885/Var/AS17-134-20387HR-crop.png>). The photo is taken sideways anyway. Why mention the shoulder rather than the head? I think saying it was rising over his head would be strange, as it would give no hint of directionality, either 3D or 2D wise. It doesn't say which shoulder, but that's a matter of leaving off irrelevant information (irrelevant for them, who were looking at the picture).

That makes sense... good literary technique, making a more concrete image for the reader.

- Gerry Quinn

David Stockhoff — 03 Jul 2010, 17:34 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Or he could be any hierodule or alien. Or he may know who Severian is, and his special connection to it. Or he could simply be speaking in vernacular.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Call me crazy.

...ryan

Ryan Dunn — 03 Jul 2010, 18:33 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I tend to favor Inire in disguise, personally (masks abound, etc.). But I am definitely open to Mitchell Bailey's thoughts on the matter from some time back...

<http://www.urth.net/urth/archives/v0027/0088.shtml>

The curators at the Botanic Garden, in particular, makes his argument very convincing to me.

...ryan

On Jul 3, 2010, at 1:34 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

Or he could be any hierodule or alien. Or he may know who Severian is, and his special connection to it. Or he could simply be speaking in vernacular.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Call me crazy.

...ryan

Gerry Quinn — 03 Jul 2010, 19:28 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

I agree that the humans seem underpowered in some ways compared to the others. The Aelf have more magic than the humans, and the Dragons have more magic than the Aelf. But the Overcyn have more magic than the humans too! (When I say humans, I mean all on Mythgartr - the Angrborn and the Osterlanders do not have much magic power either.)

But maybe Mythgartr has something special. I know every world is supposed to be smaller than the world above... but I don't feel that about Mythgartr. Maybe it's because the characters are human - but it feels like the largest world in some way.

Whatever the humans have, it ain't magic. But they have something. They are not at the bottom... in some way they are central. And there's another world too, full of humans, this so called 'America'.

- Gerry Quinn

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

From: Jerry Friedman

It's certainly a key scene, and beautifully done, but I get the feeling other scenes show humanity at the bottom. I can't imagine that humans could impress the Overcyns and trick them into worshipping us the way the Aelf have done to some humans, or even pester Overcyns the way Uri and Baki pester Able. Or that any human could transform an Overcyn the way Disiri transforms Able. Both the Aelf and the Overcyns have supernatural powers, but humans don't seem to have any powers that the Aelf don't have (except summoning them). Both the Overcyns and the Aelf have special leaders, such as the Valfather or Disiri, but humanity doesn't--who is the model for Aelf fathers or kings? Able presumably has his priorities as

straight as anyone, and his feelings toward the Valfather are very different from his feelings toward Arnthor, but he treats them the same way: respect, obedience, and a little civil disobedience.

<http://www.urth.net>

James Wynn — 03 Jul 2010, 21:31 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

**

And what about/The Wizard Knight/? The Aelf could be toys in the hands of evil humans if the humans realized it, just as humans sometimes are for Lothur.

(But then the whole non-Christian deism of TWK is strange. Humans seem to be at the bottom instead of in the middle.)

I think that was the point. Human degeneracy had caused them to be enslaved by their lowest instincts. Humanity ought to have been seeking to serve the ideals of Valfather and then Michael's and then discover the ideals that are even higher still.

I agree with that.

Due to their enslavement to Arnthor

He's not a good ruler (although not such a bad one, in Able's judgement), but I don't see that people are enslaved to him--certainly not humanity as a whole.

He's a figure. Everyone in the story is within his realm IIRC.

(a dragon in disguise from a realm two levels lower),

Half-dragon? Is that ever made clear?

I thought it was clear that Arnthor, his sister, and Garsecg/Setr were actually dragons in the lower world, Muspel. They simultaneously exist there as dragons. Humanity Rule by Dragons is a figure, I think, of a man ruled by his base instincts: sex, food, acquisition.

even Aelfrice (representing lower instincts but higher than those that had enslaved humanity) was > also enslaved by those instincts and hence rebelled -- because humans had relinquished the ideals necessary to hold the beings of Aelfrice in awe.

This is a picture of a man with his priorities upside down.

The Seven Worlds are a picture of a man? Not, maybe, a society?

Well, to the extent that society is an extrapolation of the people within it, yeah. But the book is about following "knightly ideals", and one needs a society to act within in order to become a knight. So it works better I think if the figure is individualized. Able is us, in a sense. And Mythgarthr is Able.

(*) I'm putting a mark about this next paragraph to reference it later.

I say the novel is a "figure", because it is the wrong way around to ask "well, were the dragons were doing the wrong thing in attempting to go to Mythgarthr? Were the people of Skai doing the wrong thing in allowing Able to be a hero there?" It's not about them. It's a novel about people not Overcyns.

TWK might well be viewed as the most moralistic novel Wolfe has ever written.

For one thing, it's one of the few where sexual fidelity seems like it might be a good idea.

Well, that's part of it. Able conquers his Dragony baser instincts for the sake of the instincts of Aelfrice -- What those greater instincts are is not clear, but let's say they are Romantic Love and Beauty. Ironically without those Dragony instincts, he would not find the Aelfrice instincts appealing. By the same token, his love for Aelfrice's Disiri causes him to relinquish a chance to be near her and to live in Skai. The lower worlds, in their proper place, drives the hero to the higher worlds.

The following is
a key scene: Valfather bowing before Michael, as Michael tells Abel
that to be a knight he must be
able to command Disiri with the same authority.

Not to be a knight, unless I'm missing something. All I see is that
Michael is answering Able's question of how to find her (TK, Ch. 44).

Well, it's true I'm speaking in terms of the intended message as I see it. Michael says that in order true have Disiri, Able must learn to summon her...that is he must be her her master...that is, he must master his lower desires. In order to do that, he defeats his dragon Grengarm and goes --the opposite direction from Aelfrice-- to Skai. After that, he has become a knight Mythgarthr sense and can perform all the duties of a knight that he has pledged. And *then* he can summon Disiri.

It's certainly a key scene, and beautifully done, but I get the feeling other scenes show humanity at the bottom. I can't imagine that humans could impress the Overcyns and trick them into worshiping us the way the Aelf have done to some humans, or even pester Overcyns the way Uri and Baki pester Able. Or that any human could transform an Overcyn the way Disiri transforms Able. Both the Aelf and the Overcyns have supernatural powers, but humans don't seem to have any powers that the Aelf don't have (except summoning them). Both the Overcyns and the Aelf have special leaders, such as the Valfather or Disiri, but humanity doesn't--who is the model for Aelf fathers or kings? Able presumably has his priorities as straight as anyone, and his feelings toward the Valfather are very different from his feelings toward Arnthor, but he treats them the same way: respect, obedience, and a little civil disobedience. So what's going on?

See (*)

Michael is on a quest because he has dishonored himself in some way. So ostensibly it is possible for the people of each level to fail in some way. But it's a novel about people. The Aelf and the Overcyns are devices within that theme.

u+169b

Gerry Quinn — 03 Jul 2010, 21:57 · in reply to James Wynn

From: James Wynn

I thought it was clear that Arnthor, his sister, and Garsecg/Setr were actually dragons in the lower world, Muspel. They simultaneously exist there as dragons. Humanity Rule by Dragons is a figure, I think, of a man ruled by his base instincts: sex, food, acquisition.

I see no evidence that Arnthor and Morcaine utilise their dragon aspects elsewhere. Morcaine is introduced as dinner for a dragon. Later Able speculates on the issue of whether Arnthor's dragonly equipment may be an impediment to his relationship with Gaynor, but this seems a little doubtful to me, even if it fits her character somewhat. [It is unfortunate he could not have found a woman like Idnn, who would, at least after a pep talk with Able, take such issues in her

stride. So to speak.]

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I can buy this interpretation. Though I am not 100% convinced by it.

Of course Disiri is also Woman... and as usual Wolfe is less than wholehearted in proclaiming Her superiority.

- Gerry Quinn

James Wynn — 04 Jul 2010, 03:11 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

I see no evidence that Arnthor and Morcaine utilise their dragon aspects elsewhere. Morcaine is introduced as dinner for a dragon. Later Able speculates on the issue of whether Arnthor's dragonly equipment may be an impediment to his relationship with Gaynor, but this seems a little doubtful to me, even if it fits her character somewhat.

Able's speculation qualifies as evidence, I think. And since Garsecg/Setr is Aelf in Aelfrice and a dragon in Muspel, it seems to me that you are rejecting the obvious. When Able sets things right in Mythgarthr, it means the end of Arnthor's and Morcaine's rule.

[It is unfortunate he could not have found a woman like Idnn, who would, at least after a pep talk with Able, take such issues in her stride. So to speak.]

Well, it's true I'm speaking in terms of the intended message as I see it. Michael says that in order true have Disiri, Able must learn to summon her...that is he must be her her master...that is, he must master his lower desires. In order to do that, he defeats his dragon Grengarm and goes --the opposite direction from Aelfrice-- to Skai.

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I can buy this interpretation. Though I am not 100% convinced by it.

That's good enough for me.

Of course Disiri is also Woman... and as usual Wolfe is less than wholehearted in proclaiming Her superiority.

Hmmm...I don't want to respond contemptuously, so just imagine that I did. ;-) What is the message of then of Valfather bowing before Michael? One thing I appreciate about Wolfe's fiction is that he is apparently deaf to unspoken PC post-feminist rules that cause other writers to turn their female characters into predictable stock.

u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 04 Jul 2010, 03:32 · in reply to James Wynn

Amen to that.

James Wynn wrote:

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writers to turn their female characters into predictable stock.

u+16b9

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Jeff Wilson — 04 Jul 2010, 06:49 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 7/3/2010 10:58 AM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

On Jul 2, 2010, at 11:53 AM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

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"*your* blue Urth".

Either that or Rudesind = Inire, who is likely NOT from Urth, but a
hierodule, hence *your* Urth (it ain't his).

Call me crazy.

You're one crazy optimater!

Rudesind is clearly Inire's body double.

Jeff Wilson - [jwilson at io.com](mailto:jwilson@io.com)

IEEE Student Chapter Blog at

< <http://ieeetamut.org> >

António Pedro Marques — 04 Jul 2010, 19:22 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

Gerry Quinn wrote:

2010/7/1 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <[antonio at gmail.com](mailto:antonio@gmail.com)>

Keeping option 3 doesn't mean that the acts of Tzadkiel need no

atoning for, it just means they're done with the best of intentions and knowledge. We have a saying here, 'Of [people with] good intentions is Hell full'.

A common saying in English is "the road to Hell is paved with good intentions".

I think the reason I seldom remember the english proverb is that it evokes in me the image of a single soul's gradual descending path into damnation. I might remember it if I were going after that image. The portuguese one rather suggests a lot of people with good intentions rather than a single person with a lot of good intentions.

A fabulous thing, intentions.

António Pedro Marques — 04 Jul 2010, 19:26 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff wrote:

Or he could be any hierodule or alien.Or he may know who Severian is, and his special connection to it. Or he could simply be speaking in vernacular.

Or the possessive may mean he's pointing to it for the benefit of Severian, since he (Rudesind) knows all thee is to know about the picture anyway.

António Pedro Marques — 04 Jul 2010, 19:40 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote:

I tend to favor Inire in disguise, personally (masks abound, etc.). But I am definitely open to Mitchell Bailey's thoughts on the matter from some time back...

I don't like the idea of reducing the whole book to a single character. Along the lines of thought that have been presented here, everyone could be everybody (yeah, I know others have complained about this before).

The old Autarch appears in the book before we know who he is. Father Inire is never mentioned as appearing but there is at least one time someone appears who may be he (at the old Autarch's accident). I really don't think any more connections are called for. Where's the added value in positing that FI is, say, Rudesind? Unless it is conducive to a richer reading, I think speculation on any Gene Wolfe material is to be seriously avoided.

David Stockhoff — 04 Jul 2010, 19:59 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Exactly. That's kind of what I meant: "your" being like "that old" or similar---a folksy storytelling manner of speaking. I'm not sure what part of speech it would be---maybe an intensifying article.

Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

David Stockhoff wrote:

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Ryan Dunn — 05 Jul 2010, 00:00 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

The appearance of the Autarch at House Azure opens the gates to other unannounced, unnamed characters appearing. He did it with Hildegryn as well, and a handful of other characters. Why not Inire, perhaps the most talked about yet never seen character?

You sort of proved my point for me.

Why go to the trouble of giving Rudesind monkey-like description? Why have Eata say Inire looks like a monkey? Why have a red, wizened monkey who could be a man were it not for the hand-feet watching over Severian from the jungle above? Why, why WHY?

Because Inire has a clear motive to make sure Severian's journey goes just so, and that he and his eidetic memory make their way to the war with the proper "experiences", for the inevitable trip to Yesod.

No? Not sure that is as speculative as it may seem.

...ryan

On Jul 4, 2010, at 3:40 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

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Eugene Zaretskiy — 05 Jul 2010, 05:43 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Sun, Jul 4, 2010 at 8:00 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

The appearance of the Autarch at House Azure opens the gates to other unannounced, unnamed characters appearing. He did it with Hildegryn as well, and a handful of other characters. Why not Inire, perhaps the most talked about yet never seen character?

You sort of proved my point for me.

I think you may have missed the point, actually. To believe Wolfe places masks everywhere and to search every sentence for signs of these masks is, I believe, a fundamental misunderstanding of why many of Wolfe's characters wear masks. The Autarch appearing in the House Azure before the reader knows it's him is not done to make you feel clever when you figure it out. It's done because that fact, when you realize it, fundamentally changes your understanding of what it means to rule the Commonwealth, what it means to be an Autarch, and changes the purpose of Severian's trip there. If I'm being vague, it's because that has been discussed on this list a number of times before in clearer terms than I can provide. More importantly, the details are beside the point.

The point, the one I believe you misinterpreted to believe it supports your point, is that the Autarch's mask in this case serves a very strong purpose that enriches the story. The suggestion that Inire is Rudesind seems to be ignoring this. What value to the book is there if Inire is indeed Rudesind? Saying that it proves Inire is guiding Severian seems ridiculous to me (and perhaps only me) since Rudesind's directions could have been obtained from anyone, and if Inire wanted to guide Severian in meaningful ways, there were many other, better opportunities to have done so. Why search for masks for the sake of masks?

Why go to the trouble of giving Rudesind monkey-like description? Why have Eata say Inire looks like a monkey? Why have a red, wizened monkey who could be a man were it not for the hand-feet watching over Severian from the jungle above? Why, why WHY?

For the same reason any writer has for using metaphors: they provide a convenience when needing to describe someone. In this case, much is accomplished by the use of the word "monkey" without having to assume it's time to go on a meaningless mask-hunt. Personally, I think the description of Inire as a monkey helps build the image the common folk have of him: As being non-human.

No? Not sure that is as speculative as it may seem.

Speculation is fine, but as you say: why? Why would Inire be Rudesind?

- EZ

Gerry Quinn — 05 Jul 2010, 08:07 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

From: "Ryan Dunn" <ryan at liftingfaces.com>

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It's not that strange that two people, or one person and one cacogen, might resemble in some way our closest animal relatives. We've all known of people likened to monkeys. A recent US president was regularly caricatured as a chimp. The monkey in the jungle may have looked human, but he had prehensile feet. Maybe Inire has too... but nobody has suggested that Rudesind had anything unusual in the foot department.

Because Inire has a clear motive to make sure Severian's journey goes just so, and that he and his eidetic memory make their way to the war with the proper "experiences", for the inevitable trip to Yesod.

No? Not sure that is as speculative as it may seem.

Even if this were so... what exactly would be the implications of Severian's monkey sightings when it comes to bringing the New Sun?

- Gerry Quinn

António Pedro Marques — 05 Jul 2010, 11:24 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (05-07-2010 01:00):

The appearance of the Autarch at House Azure opens the gates to other unannounced, unnamed characters appearing. He did it with Hildegrin as well, and a handful of other characters.

Well, that's just the way it works - people don't usually go around shouting their names on the street. You later on recognise them and think 'oh, I've seen you before'. And Severian meets those people and later on recognises he's met them. What do we gain at all by positing that he's also met loads of people who were all, in fact, the same as a lot of other people he's met, but doesn't recognise?

Why not Inire, perhaps the most talked about yet never seen character?

How so 'yet'? We talk about powerful politicians all the time, but we seldom meet them in person, and mostly would never have seen them if not for newspaper photographs and television.

Purpose. Purpose. Where's the added value in such speculation? What richness does it open the door to?

John Watkins — 05 Jul 2010, 12:21 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Sun, Jul 4, 2010 at 8:00 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:
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But he isn't never-seen. It's fairly clear that he's the tiger-shaman guy. Now maybe he's one or more of the other candidates mentioned as well, but I can't see why he needs to be all of them.

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On Jul 4, 2010, at 3:40 PM, Antnio Pedro Marques wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 05 Jul 2010, 18:10 · in reply to John Watkins

To be fair, Inire's importance-to-visibility ratio is quite high. That is, for a character so vital to the plot---to the plot, not the story---to be so rarely and only indirectly seen is remarkable.

However, I think that itself rules out Rudesind. Wolfe likes to let characters unfold themselves through their speech. Rudesind is right there in plain sight, folksy ways and all. If he were Inire, our only glimpse of Inire's speech and manner when he's not talking to little girls is Rudesind and his letter to Severian. They don't match, and Rudesind doesn't match with Thecla's tale. Inire would have to be an actor, of which there are plenty others. But he's not an actor, and he's got other things to do than risk giving himself away to Severian.

Also, Inire is described as being of middling height or similar. Rudesind is quite tall.

John Watkins wrote:

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On Jul 4, 2010, at 3:40 PM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

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Jeff Wilson — 05 Jul 2010, 18:48 · in reply to Eugene Zaretskiy

On 7/5/2010 12:43 AM, Eugene Zaretskiy wrote:

Saying that it proves Inire is guiding

Severian seems ridiculous to me (and perhaps only me) since Rudesind's directions could have been obtained from anyone, and if Inire wanted to guide Severian in meaningful ways, there were many other, better opportunities to have done so. Why search for masks for the sake of masks?

There is a very strong mask motif in the BOTNS, so of course we look for a theme of multiple or at least dual identities that would be built or established with that motif. It's not the only theme that a mask motif could support, but others like a protective shell theme don't seem to apply - a couple of the earliest images in the book are the collapsed curtain wall and Eata slipping past the guards at the gate, if anything the BOTNS is about transgressing barriers....which disguises help you do as well.

And on his first appearance, Rudesind delivers directions that are **not** available from anyone, in fact the armigers deliberately misguide him and Rudesind literally sets him on the correct path. This is not the only path, as Rudesind admits the other way might let him make it to Ultan's study after more hours of walking. However, the directions given in his second appearance in the more dangerous proximity of the House Absolute are much more crucial.

Or is Rudesind's second appearance rather Inire's first appearance? I wasn't kidding about Rudesind being Father Inire's body double; it would be very handy to have an alter ego who **can** be in the same room with you at the same time, and the irony of a senile old man calling thousand-year-old Inire old and senile and fumbling with a cover story being commuted into a self-deprecating acknowledgment of his reputation and an admission that he's a complete deception is very Wolfean - and parallels Severian's disembody with Thais, Pega, and Odilo on the raft in URTN.

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

David Stockhoff — 05 Jul 2010, 19:15 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I forgot about the second time Rudesind appears, when he says something odd about the painting of Inire, but also that there is a painting of himself. He seems confused and excited. But he was a boy when the painting was painted---if he is Inire then Inire was also a boy when his was painted. Fechin painted it. Is that possible?

The Autarch then appears, as the procurer, then Inire, but Rudesind is gone. So doubling arises in the scene.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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Ryan Dunn — 05 Jul 2010, 19:32 · in reply to David Stockhoff

The whole thing with Rudesind is weird. I'll leave it at that, since I don't think I have a strong enough set of criteria to support a Rudesind = Inire case with the folks 'round here.

...ryan

On Jul 5, 2010, at 3:15 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

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David Duffy — 05 Jul 2010, 22:05 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Mon, 5 Jul 2010, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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I thought there was a consensus that he is one of Inire's agents. He comes down his ladder, S. feels sure, because he heard the name of Vodalus.

David Duffy.

David Stockhoff — 05 Jul 2010, 22:31 · in reply to David Duffy

And the Autarch says he has people on the lookout for him in the House Absolute, just after Rudesind directs him thence.

David Duffy wrote:

On Mon, 5 Jul 2010, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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Ryan Dunn — 05 Jul 2010, 23:17 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Yes, I can buy that. Is it possible all of the Curators are basically agents of Inire? They crop up at the pinakotheken, in the library, at the botanic, etc...

...ryan

On Jul 5, 2010, at 6:31 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

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David Duffy.

Lee Berman — 06 Jul 2010, 02:47 · follows Ryan Dunn

The whole thing with Rudesind is weird. I'll leave it at that, since I don't think I have a strong enough set of criteria to support a Rudesind = Inire case with the folks 'round here.

Ryan, some have been on this list for a LONG time. Many are content with their reading of BotNS and there is no new theory strong enough to meddle with that contentment. As it should be. We are each seeking our own best reading and should not seek to bend others to our own comfort level.

For me, if there is one master key to unlocking puzzles of this story it is the recognition of archetypes. We are given one well described phenomenon and expected to recognize it disguised elsewhere in the story.

Over and over we are shown that rulers appear in various guises.

We know the old Autarch is ruler but also 3rd bursar and also a brothel Madame plus other unmentioned roles. Tzadkiel takes the multiple role thing far more seriously with various shapes, sizes, species and genders. Even Severian legitimately introduces himself to Pega, et al. via his role as "Hipparch Severian of the Black Tarentines."

So, I find it expected that Father Inire would do the same sort of role playing.

I could even guess he'd do it more extensively than the Old Autarch, more on a level with Tzadkiel, given his extra-terrestrial nature. I think we are invited to find all versions of him. And, as with Zak/Tzadkiel some distinguishing characteristic by which we may identify him. Perhaps

multiple marks. If we have a gold ankle ring and brown, feathery coloration to identify the Armiger's Daughter, perhaps monkey features, obscured eyes, lust for young girls, artistic interest and losing material possessions are a constellation of traits for identifying Father Inire.

I understand the motivation of those who counsel parsimony, when it might appear there is no purpose to having multiple versions peeping out from behind every bramble bush. But for me, there is a purpose to these hidden Father Inires which is to fill in some missing spots on Severian's family tree. To me, solving that central mystery is important and could be a reason for Wolfe to use many difficult-to-penetrate guises for Inire. For others that just might not seem very important or interesting.

FWIW, I don't think Rusesind's height is ever mentioned. He does have hands as long as Severian's feet and a nose which almost touches his chin.

Like so? <http://smackamack.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/proboscis-monkey-adult.jpg>

Ryan Dunn — 06 Jul 2010, 03:22 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Jul 5, 2010, at 10:47 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

Ryan, some have been on this list for a LONG time. Many are content with their reading of BotNS and there is no new theory strong enough to meddle with that contentment. As it should be. We are each seeking our own best reading and should not seek to bend others to our own comfort level.

Having only read BotNS twice, I can see I have my work cut out for me. I appreciate your feedback, however, and I think you and I share a similar feeling about the text, that there is a central puzzle and that is Severian and his journey to becoming Autarch, and eventually [bringer of] the New Sun.

There is a definite theatrical undertone to the book, and I believe as a reader, I feel like these sitcom-like encounters are not merely coincidences, but a series of moments forged by revisionist history in the making, with disguises, masks, spies and so forth.

There are also a lot of side-stories involving stage plays and traditional theatrical devices (puppets, vaudevillian plays, etc.) and I think that they are another clue to the bigger meaning of the entire story arc. For this reason, I feel like these over-the-top double-identities are fair game. "Nothing is what it seems," as it were.

Thanks again.

...ryan

Jeff Wilson — 06 Jul 2010, 03:32 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 7/5/2010 6:17 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

Yes, I can buy that. Is it possible all of the Curators are basically agents of Inire? They crop up at the pinakotheken, in the library, at the botanic, etc...

It would not be much of a stretch for an immortal officer of the Autarch's court to have vetted and personally charged thousands of servants with being the Autarch's eyes and ears, and helping hands when the need arises.

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

Jeff Wilson — 06 Jul 2010, 03:43 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 7/5/2010 9:47 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

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gold ankle ring and brown, feathery coloration to identify the Armiger's Daughter, perhaps monkey features, obscured eyes, lust for young girls, artistic interest and losing material possessions are a constellation of traits for identifying Father Inire.

Where does Inire display carnal interest in young girls?

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
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David Stockhoff — 06 Jul 2010, 11:40 · in reply to Lee Berman

Yes, that's the line. I take that (long limbs) as suggesting height, though not Ultan's great height.

Is there anything monkeylike about noses touching chins?

Lee Berman wrote:

.

FWIW, I don't think Rusesind's height is ever mentioned. He does have hands as long as Severian's feet and a nose which almost touches his chin.

David Stockhoff — 06 Jul 2010, 11:47 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

That's an assumption many have made. Thecla's story indicates Inire's well-known fondness for and interest in young girls, and the way she says it suggests the kind of matter-of-fact acceptance of perversions one might find at a court. But without any evidence for sexual contact, Inire strikes me as a Lewis Carroll figure at most. The truth is we don't know why he is interested in them.

Little girls are not common enough is TBotNS to be much of a help.

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John Watkins — 06 Jul 2010, 12:19 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Wait a minute now. Severian goes out of his way to heal the girl in **Sword of the Lictor**. That was an unusual display of compassion/interest for Severian, and we've only routinely seen him so interest in women for one reason. So Severian is himself Inire.

And healing a young girl who was head/near-dying is pretty much a direct reference to the Talitha cumi incident. So Severian is Inire and Jesus as well. And Lewis Carroll. (Note--Talitha

cumi, or Talitha cum*aeana*? The pun is a bit too on-the-nose. Maybe the Cumaeana is also the girl Severian raised, through time travel? Sure, one's a girl and one's a...snaky thing, but given the Tzadkiel precedent and the abundance of masks I feel this is a valid possibility.)

Now, there was also an X-Files episode called Talitha Cumi, but unless Gene himself is time-travelling (which I suppose we can't rule out, given *Peace*) I doubt it could have any connection to the Book of the New Sun, despite the character who heals people miraculously, the concealed identities, the hidden aliens, and the missing family members. Actually, maybe I need to check *Peace* out again...

On Tue, Jul 6, 2010 at 7:47 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:
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David Stockhoff — 06 Jul 2010, 12:44 · in reply to John Watkins

John, all I did was answer Jeff's question.

John Watkins wrote:
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Lee Berman — 06 Jul 2010, 14:43 · follows David Stockhoff

JW- Where does Inire display carnal interest in young girls?

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Well, this is where my discussion of comfort level comes in. If you are comfortable not understanding Father Inire, not understanding why there are suggestions of incest and not knowing who might be Severian family members then there is no reason to pursue these issues. I'm uncomfortable not knowing and willing to suspend my own skepticism and parsimony and take a leap of faith in an attempt to understand. But why take that leap if you don't need to?

Lewis Carroll was a lifelong bachelor who enjoyed taking nude pictures of pre-pubescent girls. If you think Gene Wolfe is alluding to him with Inire and his looking glass/mirrors and finds both a bit creepy I would not disagree. Still I must guess Wolfe admires Lewis Carroll as he does other referenced authors such as J.L. Borges, Rudyard Kipling and Mary Shelley.

Still I think the deeper meaning to this attraction to young girls is found in Greek (and other) mythology. I think this is the source of incest insinuations also. For Zeus and other olympians, you had two choices for sex, screwing your sister or changing form and screwing humans. My personal view is that the origin of these myths is connected to the incestuous Pharaonic family dynasties and the inevitable dalliances with commoners.

I think Gene Wolfe prefers to connect these myths to the Bible and The Flood and connect pagan gods to fallen angels and their half-human offspring- giants and demons and such. Surely his view makes for far more interesting and colorful stories.

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Taking this view (with further elaboration of course) allows me an understanding of every scene, dream, fable etc. in BotNS, including golden beams of light, corn maidens and weird bull-figures, etc. And that's what I want. If others have alternative explanations I am interested in hearing them. If others prefer the whole thing to remain an unexplainable mystery, that's okay too.

John Watkins' sincere attempt to solve the mystery of BotNS is surely appreciated. I will disagree with his likening of Inire and Severian's intentions for young women. Inire intrudes on two pretty, aristocratic girls looking at themselves in a mirror and chides them for vanity. He then realizes one of them, Domnina, has a special gift for perception (the same perceptive ability found in the adult Domnicellae?). He forces her to have an audience with him against her will and attempts to instruct and awe her with his divine technology. This seems a Zeus-like approach toward young women.

Severian's interaction with young women is the opposite. He is drawn to the poor and sick and malformed. He uses his divine resources to heal and restore health and withered arms. In contrast to Zeus, this is rather Jesus-like as John suggests. We see Severian's young women grow up to become a prophetess and a religious acolyte. I rather doubt Father Inire had a very positive effect on the young women who received his attentions (I'm thinking Dorcas, Catherine, Cyriaca and Agia, perhaps).

I thank John Watkins for helping illuminate the contrast between Inire and Severian in this regard.

Ryan Dunn — 06 Jul 2010, 14:52 · in reply to John Watkins

honks clown nose

...ryan

On Jul 6, 2010, at 8:19 AM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:
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Where does Inire display carnal interest in young girls?

John Watkins — 06 Jul 2010, 15:03 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

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DAVID STOCKHOFF — 06 Jul 2010, 16:11 · in reply to Lee Berman

I think a lot of that makes sense.

--- On Tue, 7/6/10, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com>

Subject: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind To: urth at lists.urth.net Date: Tuesday, July 6, 2010, 10:43 AM

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Roy C. Lackey — 06 Jul 2010, 18:59 · in reply to Eugene Zaretskiy

Eugene Zaretskiy wrote:

The point, the one I believe you misinterpreted to believe it supports your point, is that the Autarch's mask in this case serves a very strong purpose that enriches the story. The suggestion that Inire is Rudesind seems to be ignoring this. What value to the book is there if Inire is indeed Rudesind? Saying that it proves Inire is guiding

Severian seems ridiculous to me (and perhaps only me) since Rudesind's directions could have been obtained from anyone, and if Inire wanted to guide Severian in meaningful ways, there were many other, better opportunities to have done so. Why search for masks for the sake of masks?

Indeed.

(I don't know how this topic got switched to this thread.)

As I have already said, the last recorded conversation with Rudesind took place *after* Severian became autarch, and was written ten years after the conversation. Okay, one may argue that Sev becoming autarch wasn't enough (to satisfy the theory that Inire-as-Rudesind was guiding Sev to the throne and toward a New Sun), that Inire must get Sev to Yesod. Fine, let's make that assumption just for the sake of the theory.

Somewhere early in URTH, Sev wrote that he had had few friends while autarch, save for Inire. He also lets drop that Inire had told him that the Cumaeans were Hierodules and it is revealed that the Hierodules BF&O had been his "councilors" (p-354) while he was autarch. It's hard for me to imagine that Sev was not told about Inire's supposed disguises during those ten years, or that he didn't figure it out, but I'll set that aside.

The facts mentioned in the above paragraph come from Sev's second manuscript, written *at least* two generations after the events related in it, which includes the arrival of the New Sun and the transformation of Urth into Ushas. It's a done deed. It's all over with. It's in the history books and can't be undone. There is no need for anyone to play games, no need to maintain past charades that are now meaningless.

If Sev knew, or even suspected, that Rudesind had really been Inire, there was no reason not to say so. If BF&O knew Inire had been an agent of Yesod, there was no reason to withhold that information from him in their meeting in Apu's tomb.

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 06 Jul 2010, 19:20 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/6/2010 6:47 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:

That's an assumption many have made. Thecla's story indicates Inire's well-known fondness for and interest in young girls, and the way she says it suggests the kind of matter-of-fact acceptance of perversions one might find at a court. But without any evidence for sexual contact, Inire strikes me as a Lewis Carroll figure at most. The truth is we don't know why he is interested in them.

Little girls are not common enough is TBotNS to be much of a help.

IIRC in "The Cat", on their second meeting he tests their memory of their first meeting. This would suggest a purpose of selection like the Torturers' and Librarians' testing of children.

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

brunians at brunians.org — 06 Jul 2010, 22:39 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

He is fond of them.

There is no evidence at all that he is diddling them.

On 7/5/2010 9:47 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

If we have a
gold ankle ring and brown, feathery coloration to identify the Armiger's
Daughter,
perhaps monkey features, obscured eyes, lust for young girls, artistic
interest and
losing material possessions are a constellation of traits for
identifying Father
Inire.

Where does Inire display carnal interest in young girls?

--

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

Russ Allbery — 07 Jul 2010, 01:58 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> writes:

Lewis Carroll was a lifelong bachelor who enjoyed taking nude pictures of pre-pubescent girls. If you think Gene Wolfe is alluding to him with Inire and his looking glass/mirrors and finds both a bit creepy I would not disagree. Still I must guess Wolfe admires Lewis Carroll as he does other referenced authors such as J.L. Borges, Rudyard Kipling and Mary Shelley.

It's probably also worth mentioning that several modern historians believe this was nowhere near as shocking as it sounds to modern sensibilities. At the time, photography was very new and photography advocates and hobbyists were trying to treat it as an art form akin to painting, with very similar goals. The classical nude, of a variety of ages, was common subject material for painting, and hence it's likely that photography enthusiasts considered it suitable subject material for photography as well, for a variety of artistic reasons that don't necessarily have anything directly to do with sex or eroticism. There's also some evidence that child nudes were seen as a symbol of innocence and were simply not viewed with the approbation that they are today, to the extent that they may have appeared on Christmas cards and the like.

For much more on this topic, see the work of Hugues Lebaillly, who among others has been calling into question the traditional interpretation of Carroll's photographic subjects (which are far more varied than just young girls as is often believed).

On a similar front, there's also some reason to believe that Carroll's supposed preference for young girls over other companions is way overblown and is based largely on a few written comments taken out of context. See, for example,
<<http://carrollmyth.com/contrariwise/cldandfemales.html>>.

Russ Allbery (rra at stanford.edu) <<http://www.eyrie.org/~eagle/>>

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 02:27 · in reply to Russ Allbery

That's exactly the Lewis Carroll I had in mind. And yes, when a little girl goes through a looking glass ... it's not a Nabokov reference.

Still, there is a sinister touch to Thecla's tale. Naturally.

Russ Allbery wrote:

Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> writes:

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Lee Berman — 07 Jul 2010, 02:27 · follows David Stockhoff

D.S.>Is there anything monkeylike about noses touching chins?

I did previously post this pic of a proboscis monkey

<http://smackamack.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/proboscis-monkey-adult.jpg> Might look a bit like Rudesind.

Here is one of the S. American uakari which makes a notable appearance in BotNS http://www.konicaminolta.com/kids/animals/library/field/img/bald-uakari_img01-l.jpg

I could see Wolfe getting the inspiration for Father Inire's appearance from one of these critters. I note that both these monkeys have reddish hair. As did the Russian/American painter Nicolai Fechin. (self-portrait with paintbrush <http://www.bpib.com/illustrat/fechin3.jpg>)

I think it truly could all be unintended coincidence. But since Wolfe took seven years to produce BotNS I can't rule out that he used some of that time to interlace the story with such nearly

imperceptible connections all intersecting at Father Inire. I just consider it a very interesting possibility.

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 02:32 · in reply to Lee Berman

Well done. Could be.

Any thoughts on the question of Fechin having painted Inire as a little boy, thus proving that he is Rudesind, who was painted by Fechin as a little boy?

To me, it seems impossible. But then Rudesind's clues have no purpose, except to reveal his character, and his easily distracted yet narrowly focused mind.

Lee Berman wrote:

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The New Busy think 9 to 5 is a cute idea. Combine multiple calendars with Hotmail.

http://www.windowlive.com/campaign/thenewbusy?tile=multicalendar&ocid=PID28326::T:WLMTAGL:ON:WL:en-US:WM_HMP:042010_5

Adam Thornton — 07 Jul 2010, 03:10 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 07/06/2010 09:27 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

I could see Wolfe getting the inspiration for Father Inire's appearance from one of these critters. I note that both these monkeys have reddish hair. As did the Russian/American painter Nicolai Fechin. (self-portrait with paintbrush <http://www.bpib.com/illustrat/fechin3.jpg>)

The Librarian gets angry if you call him a monkey.

Oook.

Adam

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 03:12 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman wrote:

D.S.>Is there anything monkeylike about noses touching chins?

I did previously post this pic of a proboscis monkey

Well, I bet for almost every family of mammals you have members with proboscides.

<http://smackamack.files.wordpress.com/2009/04/proboscis-monkey-adult.jpg>

Might look a bit like Rudesind.

I honestly don't think Rudesind looks like that at all.

Rather like this: http://www.galleryoftheabsurd.com/2006/05/celebrity_optic.html

Here is one of the S. American uakari which makes a notable appearance in BotNS

http://www.konicaminolta.com/kids/animals/library/field/img/bald-uakari_img01-l.jpg

I don't see a nose touching a chin here.

I could see Wolfe getting the inspiration for Father Inire's appearance from one of these critters. I note that both these monkeys have reddish hair. As did the Russian/American painter Nicolai Fechin. (self-portrait with paintbrush <http://www.bpib.com/illustrat/fechin3.jpg>)

I think it truly could all be unintended coincidence. But since Wolfe took seven years to produce BotNS I can't rule out that he used some of that time to interlace the story with such nearly imperceptible connections all intersecting at Father Inire. I just consider it a very interesting possibility.

But what's interesting about it? That's what I've been asking all along.

And where's the coincidence?

- Rudesind's nose touches his chin.
- Are you claiming Fechin was a monkey? Last time I checked he was a russian human being.
- FI is said to have monkey-like features and the one time we actually see someone who is all but introduced as FI, he's... a creature that looks like a monkey. Not some subtle red-headed person.

You only see coincidences because you want to. As Horn or someone said, everything is connected to everything else. By lowering the bar for connectedness as has been done here, one can find coincidences everywhere. But the 'incidence' part of the coincidences is entirely of yallr own making. You are connecting dots that you have put there yourselves. That could be interesting if it lead to something, but to what does it lead? What does it mean if Rudesind is FI instead of an agent of FI or someone who just happens to be there? It actually impoverishes the story.

You're perfectly within your right to think the way you do, and congrtulations if it makes the book mor enjoyable to you, but what I'd honestly like to know is the value it brings to the reading. Don't tell me it explains a lot of coincidences or it's a thematic thing - a story with disjoint motivations is better than one in which everything derives from some central intension. The story gains nothing from Rudesind being FI, it loses. If I sound harsh, it's unintended: I really wish someone would say what would be gained if such speculations were correct.

On a related note - what's the deal with saying, for instance, that 'Ultan is Borges'? Does it mean Ultan's grandmother was english? That Ultan wrote Evaristo Carriego or Facing Moon or the Book of Sand? It's one thing to say Ultan is a homage to Borges or an echo of him, but let's not be carried away.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 03:27 · in reply to Russ Allbery

Dodgson is known to have had relationships with younger, albeit adult, women whom he had known since childhood.

This would have been scandalous, but was not considered beyond the pale in enlightened circles.

It was kept quiet by the people who knew about it.

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Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> writes:

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--

Russ Allbery (rra at stanford.edu) <<http://www.eyrie.org/~eagle/>>

Gerry Quinn — 07 Jul 2010, 08:09 · in reply to Lee Berman

From: "Lee Berman" <severiansola at hotmail.com>
D.S.>Is there anything monkeylike about noses touching chins?

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Might look a bit like Rudesind.

On the other hand: "[Old Odilo saw] Father Inire bent nearly double, like a gnome in a nursery book, with no more nose than an alouatte" ('The Cat')

- Gerry Quinn

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 11:55 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

The nose knows.

Gerry Quinn wrote:

From: "Lee Berman" <severiansola at hotmail.com>

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- Gerry Quinn

Lee Berman — 07 Jul 2010, 13:04 · follows David Stockhoff

Jane Delawny- Was intending to ask about this on list but Tim got in there ahead of me - making me wonder if there might be a 'consensus' regarding Borski ... if he's on this list I have missed him, Ohai Robert if you're out there, I have read your stuff with huge amounts of interest but also some skepticism!

Yeah, Borski was on this list, before my time, in the early 2000's I think it was. I think there is sort of a consensus that he took some of his ideas and ran with them so far and so fast that they are difficult for anyone else to follow. And that he left the list because he couldn't stand the criticism. Still I appreciate his efforts to publish his ideas and get them out there. Some of the other old grand masters hold their cards too close to the vest, perhaps also fearing such criticism. This doesn't allow us to pick their brains or participate in the interactive process which I enjoy.

David Stockhoff- Any thoughts on the question of Fechin having painted Inire as a little boy, thus proving that he is Rudesind, who was painted by Fechin as a little boy?

I don't think I'd ever hope to prove something but rather find suggestions. And in that scenario, Rudesind says a great artist visited him, when he was a boy artist, to see his work. "It was Fechin, Fechin himself!". Was Fechin, the great artist or the boy? Naturally we jump to the conclusion that the great artist was Fechin. But the painting of the boy included paint brushes (and a tangerine). Many famous artists have done their own self-portrait depicting themselves with brushes (including Picasso, Van Gogh, Rembrandt, Chagall AND Nicolai Fechin) so that could be a sly way of hinting that the boy, Rudesind, was Fechin, not just as subject, but artist also.

A.P. Marques- But what's interesting about it?.. That's what I've been asking all along. You only see coincidences because you want to. As Horn or someone said, everything is connected to everything else. By lowering the bar for connectedness as has been done here, one can find coincidences everywhere.

But the 'incidence' part of the coincidences is entirely of yallr own making. You are connecting dots that you have put there yourselves. That could be interesting if it lead to something, but to what does it lead?

A nice metaphor as we see Severian on his back, looking at stars and making connections into constellations (including, preciently, a peryton/Hethor spying on him). I have not created the dots any more than Severian has created all the stars (well, maybe he created one). Gene Wolfe created all the dots. The question is which, if any, should be connected.

For example, we have Father Inire's mirrors, Hethor's mirrors and mirror sails on Tzadkiel's ship. Three dots. Should we connect them? I think most would say yes, they all seem to work as teleporters, sometimes for weird creatures.

Father Inire is an alien. Hethor was a sailor on an interstellar/universal spaceship. Both show suggestions of an unhealthy attraction to young human women. Should we connect these two characters based on that and the mirror connection? Or should we not connect them because it disrupts our image of Father Inire and doesn't fit with the story we know and love?

FWIW I find much of Greek mythology to have a similar weird understructure. Was Zeus the mighty, heroic god that I (and Gene Wolfe?) admired as a child, who defeated the monstrous Titans, including Typhon, and ruled among the clouds with fatherly grace? Or was he a creepy guy who killed his father and married his sister and spent his spare time using his power to seduce/rape young girls and boys like Europa and Ganymede? He is both, right? But I had to mature as a reader and as a person before I could see both sides.

For me, BotNS is built (NOT coincidentally) like House Absolute. There is a main structure and a second, secret house which has been built co-extensively within it. As the Secret House was constructed by Father Inire, I find it appropriate to think the secret structure of BotNS is centered on that character. If you don't think there are undiscovered mysteries in the story or don't find the search enjoyable I can understand that. The main story is really great and I spent years enjoying it on that level alone. But I always felt there was more.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 13:09 · in reply to Lee Berman

Good insights, Lee.

The problem with this list is that there are a certain number of pedants.

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doesn't fit with the story we know and love?

FWIW I find much of Greek mythology to have a similar weird understructure. Was Zeus the mighty, heroic god that I (and Gene Wolfe?) admired as a child, who defeated the monstrous Titans, including Typhon, and ruled among the clouds with fatherly grace? Or was he a creepy guy who killed his father and married his sister and spent his spare time using his power to seduce/rape young girls and boys like Europa and Ganymede? He is both, right? But I had to mature as a reader and as a person before I could see both sides.

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Adam Thornton — 07 Jul 2010, 13:17 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On 07/07/2010 08:09 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
Good insights, Lee.

The problem with this list is that there are a certain number of pedants.

"FOURTEEN!" shouted the....

oh, never mind.

Also, see "The House of Asterion."

Adam

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 13:48 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 4:09 AM, Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

On the other hand: "[Old Odilo saw] Father Inire bent nearly double, like a gnome in a nursery book, with no more nose than an alouatte" ('The Cat')

This seems to me to settle the matter. Rudesind is not Inire--they have very different physical appearances and no evidence for them being one and the same besides physical appearances has been presented.

- Gerry Quinn

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 13:53 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 9:04 AM, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:

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Or should we not connect them because it disrupts our image of Father Inire and doesn't fit with the story we know and love?

Actually, I thought we'd decided that Hethor's attraction is to sex dolls/robots, but that he might possibly settle for the right kind of human woman (maybe one who role-plays as a sex doll). As for Inire, it's not clear to me that his fondness for little girls is a sexual interest at all (or even that he is, properly speaking, capable of such sexual interest).

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the mighty, heroic god that I (and Gene Wolfe?) admired as a child, who defeated the monstrous Titans, including Typhon, and ruled among the clouds with fatherly grace?

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antonio at gmail.com — 07 Jul 2010, 13:59 · in reply to Lee Berman

No dia 2010/07/07, ?s 14:04, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> escreveu:

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There is a main
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are undiscovered mysteries in the story or don't find the search
enjoyable I can
understand that. The main story is really great and I spent years
enjoying it on that
level alone. But I always felt there was more.

But that's not at all what I'm saying. Of course there are loadheaps of dots to connect. What I'm arguing against is their wanton connection -precisely because there is so much to work with. That's why I insist on results: don't connect things because you believe they fulfill some pattern - patterns are a dime a dozen. Rather, connect them if they lead to novelty.

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 15:12 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee, that is a very heartening quote from you.
It seems most of the undercarriage of this mailing list (both as a long time reader and recent participant) seems to be built around digging under the surface story.
Maybe sometimes so much so that the forest is lost for the leaves on the trees.
All of that said, I think Tzadkiel's appearance in UotNS (a volume Gene vehemently felt did NOT need to be written to help us understand the tetralogy) as a shapeshifter, is most positively a clue to a character (characters) in the first four volumes.
What greater target for this than Inire? Who else? The other mask clues are revealed, but I think they serve as clues for the bigger mysteries, the ones Wolfe does not pander to us to answer, but uses clue-context (Agia/Agilus and the ribbons, chance encounters with Hildegren, old Autarch making sneaky appearances, etc.).
Anyhow, thank you for that analogy below, it brightened my day.
...ryan

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António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 15:49 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (07-07-2010 16:12):

All of that said, I think Tzadkiel's appearance in UotNS (a volume Gene vehemently felt did NOT need to be written to help us understand the tetralogy)

Here I just have to say that I quite never did grasp that idea. If it means that the BNS can be considered complete without UNS, obviously it can. But there is no way that UNS doesn't introduce ideas that just couldn't be gotten from the BNS alone.

as a shapeshifter, is most positively a clue to a character (characters) in the first four volumes.

What greater target for this than Inire? Who else? The other mask clues are revealed, but I think they serve as clues for the bigger mysteries, the ones Wolfe does not pander to us to answer, but uses clue-context (Agia/Agilus and the ribbons, chance encounters with Hildegrin, old Autarch making sneaky appearances, etc.).

I'll have to ask yet again - clues to *what*, please? IF some of the characters that appear throughout the book are Inire in disguise, then what? What happens? What doors open? What new understanding of the story is enabled? What's the net worth of such a knowledge? What is it that we don't grasp about the book that we'd begin to grasp that way? No one has answered this so far.

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 15:56 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Gene's correct.

Every detail of UotNS may be worked out from information given in BotNS.

Perhaps not the names of characters, but I wouldn't be totally sure about that.

.

Lee, that is a very heartening quote from you.

It seems most of the undercarriage of this mailing list (both as a long time reader and recent participant) seems to be built around digging under the surface story.

Maybe sometimes so much so that the forest is lost for the leaves on the trees.

All of that said, I think Tzadkiel's appearance in UotNS (a volume Gene vehemently felt did NOT need to be written to help us understand the tetralogy) as a shapeshifter, is most positively a clue to a character (characters) in the first four volumes.

What greater target for this than Inire? Who else? The other mask clues are revealed, but I think they serve as clues for the bigger mysteries, the ones Wolfe does not pander to us to answer, but uses clue-context (Agia/Agilus and the ribbons, chance encounters with Hildegrin, old Autarch making sneaky appearances, etc.).

Anyhow, thank you for that analogy below, it brightened my day.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 9:04 AM, Lee Berman wrote:

For me, BotNS is built (NOT coincidentally) like House Absolute. There is a main structure and a second, secret house which has been built co-extensively within it.

As the Secret House was constructed by Father Inire, I find it appropriate to think the secret structure of BotNS is centered on that character. If you don't think there are undiscovered mysteries in the story or don't find the search enjoyable I can understand that. The main story is really great and I spent years enjoying it on that level alone. But I always felt there was more.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 16:04 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 8:56 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Gene's correct.

Every detail of UotNS may be worked out from information given in BotNS.

I don't think I'd go so far as "every detail," but certainly the broad outlines, both of plot and of -- for lack of a better word -- cosmology can be. My first reaction when I read Urth was disappointment; it seemed such an _unnecessary_ book...

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 16:07 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

You're you.

God must have had some purpose.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 8:56 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Gene's correct.

Every detail of UotNS may be worked out from information given in BotNS.

I don't think I'd go so far as "every detail," but certainly the broad outlines, both of plot and of -- for lack of a better word -- cosmology can be. My first reaction when I read Urth was disappointment; it seemed such an _unnecessary_ book...

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 16:17 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 17:04):

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 8:56 AM,<brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Gene's correct.

Every detail of UotNS may be worked out from information given in BotNS.

I don't think I'd go so far as "every detail," but certainly the broad outlines, both of plot and of -- for lack of a better word -- cosmology can be. My first reaction when I read Urth was disappointment; it seemed such an _unnecessary_ book...

You mean spending 5 days in Stamboul is unnecessary if you can sightsee the broad outlines in 4?

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 16:31 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

You mean spending 5 days in Stamboul is unnecessary if you can sightsee the broad outlines in 4?

No; I meant that, having spent four days in Stamboul, a fifth day that takes me back to the things I've already seen seems pointless. I'd rather see something new.

UotNS was not _quite_ that disappointing -- there were definitely new vistas. But I felt that the driver was taking me to a lot of places I'd been before.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 16:38 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

And it's more money for Gene.

That's the best thing about it.

.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 17:04):

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 8:56 AM,<brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Gene's correct.

Every detail of UotNS may be worked out from information given in BotNS.

I don't think I'd go so far as "every detail," but certainly the broad outlines, both of plot and of -- for lack of a better word -- cosmology can be. My first reaction when I read Urth was disappointment; it seemed such an _unnecessary_ book...

You mean spending 5 days in Stamboul is unnecessary if you can sightsee the

broad outlines in 4?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 16:40 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes
Clap! Clap!

.
2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

You mean spending 5 days in Stamboul is unnecessary if you can sightsee
the
broad outlines in 4?

No; I meant that, having spent four days in Stamboul, a fifth day that
takes me
back to the things I've already seen seems pointless. I'd rather see
something
new.

UotNS was not _quite_ that disappointing -- there were definitely new
vistas.

But I felt that the driver was taking me to a lot of places I'd been
before.

--
Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 16:43 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l said:
My first reaction when I read Urth was
disappointment; it seemed such an_unnecessary_ book...

Antonio said:
You mean spending 5 days in Stamboul is unnecessary if you
can sightsee the broad outlines in 4?

Dan'l said:
No; I meant that, having spent four days in Stamboul,
a fifth day that takes me>back to the things I've
already seen seems pointless. I'd rather see something
new. UotNS was not _quite_ that disappointing --
there were definitely new vistas. But I felt that the
driver was taking me to a lot of places I'd been before.

Hmmm...would you say The Silmarillion was an unnecessary book?

u+169b

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 16:45 · in reply to James Wynn
The Silmarillion was the original book.

,

Dan'I said:

My first reaction when I read Urth was disappointment; it seemed such an_unnecessary_ book...

Antonio said:

You mean spending 5 days in Stamboul is unnecessary if you can sightsee the broad outlines in 4?

Dan'I said:

No; I meant that, having spent four days in Stamboul, a fifth day that takes me>back to the things I've already seen seems pointless. I'd rather see something new. UotNS was not _quite_ that disappointing -- there were definitely new vistas. But I felt that the driver was taking me to a lot of places I'd been before.

Hmmm...would you say The Silmarillion was an unnecessary book?

u+169b

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 16:49 · in reply to James Wynn

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 9:43 AM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:
Hmmm...would you say The Silmarillion was an unnecessary book?

Heavens, no. There were only slight hints of it in _LotR_. For me, any one of "The Ainulindale," "Of Turin Turambar," and "The Fall of Gondolin" entirely justifies the existence of the _Silm_.

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 16:49 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 17:31):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

You mean spending 5 days in Stamboul is unnecessary if you can sightsee the broad outlines in 4?

No; I meant that, having spent four days in Stamboul, a fifth day that takes me back to the things I've already seen seems pointless. I'd rather see something new.

UotNS was not _quite_ that disappointing -- there were definitely new vistas. But I felt that the driver was taking me to a lot of places I'd been before.

There may not have been much novelty in UNS, but certainly it strengthens the story. Without UNS, many things would be wild guesses; with UNS, they can be built on in order to guess further. At least that's my impression.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 16:51 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

There may not have been much novelty in UNS, but certainly it strengthens the story. Without UNS, many things would be wild guesses; with UNS, they can be built on in order to guess further. At least that's my impression.

I agree completely. And I need to reiterate: disappointment was my initial reaction. My esteem for the book has grown over time.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 16:57 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 17:49):

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 9:43 AM, James Wynn<crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Hmmm...would you say The Silmarillion was an unnecessary book?

Heavens, no. There were only slight hints of it in LotR. For me, any one of "The Ainulindale," "Of Turin Turambar," and "The Fall of Gondolin" entirely justifies the existence of the Silm.

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Well, it wasn't a book.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 17:02 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Well, it wasn't a book.

It is indeed a book. What it is not is a novel.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2010, 17:07 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On 7/7/2010 10:49 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

* It would suggest a serious rift in her family, since supposedly she had no family to take her in after being orphaned.

* It would help confirm Watson as heterosexual, and his relationship with Holmes as platonic. :P

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

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 17:21 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson wrote (07-07-2010 18:07):

On 7/7/2010 10:49 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

* It would suggest a serious rift in her family, since supposedly she had no family to take her in after being orphaned.

* It would help confirm Watson as heterosexual, and his relationship with Holmes as platonic. :P

Well played.

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 17:23 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 18:02):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Well, it wasn't a book.

It is indeed a book. What it is not is a novel.

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 17:28 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 18:02):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Well, it wasn't a book.

It is indeed a book. What it is not is a novel.

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 17:29 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Any clue to Inire is worth considering and processed however you see fit. Same with speculation on the humanity of other characters.

If Tzdakiel's shapeshifting, Inire's mirrors, Hethor's time traveling pets, time traveling ships, Severian as Apu Punchai is all fair game, then it stands to reason that Inire, who is CLEARLY controlling the goings on of the entire planet, appear in many aspects of Severian's life (unknowingly to Severian) to control his journey, instill character traits, build the right memories, all so that his final test on Yesod comes off successful.

If Zak can change from a strange dwarf thing to a furry monster. Could Inire change from a red wizened ape who could be a man, into Inire, into Fechin, into Rudesind? If he IS doing these things, and spying on Severian's journey, isn't that important?

How is that not important to at least consider? Disagreeing with it is one thing, disregarding this speculation out of hand seems to be a bit brash.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:49 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

I'll have to ask yet again - clues to *what*, please? IF some of the characters that appear throughout the book are Inire in disguise, then what? What happens? What doors open? What new understanding of the story is enabled? What's the net worth of such a knowledge? What is it that we don't grasp about the book that we'd begin to grasp that way? No one has answered this so far.

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 17:30 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 10:29 AM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

Any clue to Inire is worth considering and processed however you see fit. Same with speculation on the humanity of other characters.

If Tzdakiel's shapeshifting, Inire's mirrors, Hethor's time traveling pets, time traveling ships, Severian as Apu Punchai is all fair game, then it stands to reason that Inire, who is CLEARLY controlling the goings on of the entire planet, appear in many aspects of Severian's life (unknowingly to Severian) to control his journey, instill character traits, build the right memories, all so that his final test on Yesod comes off successful.

If Zak can change from a strange dwarf thing to a furry monster. Could Inire change from a red wizened ape who could be a man, into Inire, into Fechin, into Rudesind? If he IS doing these things, and spying on Severian's journey, isn't that important?

How is that not important to at least consider? Disagreeing with it is one thing, disregarding this speculation out of hand seems to be a bit brash.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:49 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

I'll have to ask yet again - clues to *what*, please? IF some of the characters that appear throughout the book are Inire in disguise, then what? What happens? What doors open? What new understanding of the story is enabled? What's the net worth of such a knowledge? What is it that we don't grasp about the book that we'd begin to grasp that way? No one has answered this so far.

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 17:35 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Sorry for the blank message; I clicked when I should have clacked.

Anyway.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 10:29 AM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

Any clue to Inire is worth considering and processed however you see fit. Same with speculation on the humanity of other characters.

So if I were to speculate, say, that Dorcas was not human, would that be worth considering? Why or why not?

I think speculations are interesting and worth considering to the extent that they are backed by evidence from the text at hand.

If Zak can change from a strange dwarf thing to a furry monster. Could Inire change from a red wizened ape who could be a man, into Inire, into Fechin, into Rudesind? If he IS doing these things, and spying on Severian's journey, isn't that important?

Yes, IF he is doing these things, it's important. However, it seems to me that the textual evidence given that he is doing these things is, thus far, flimsy at best. That he is spying on Severian's journey? Probably. That he is Fechin and Rudisind? I see no substantive evidence.

I realize that you are answering the question "Why does this matter?" I am suggesting that you are right -- it does matter -- IF it is true -- but that I see little reason to think it true.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 17:36 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 18:28):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 18:02):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Well, it wasn't a book.

It is indeed a book. What it is not is a novel.

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 17:36 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:29 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

If Zak can change from a strange dwarf thing to a furry monster. Could Inire change from a red wizened ape who could be a man, into Inire, into Fechin, into Rudesind? If he IS doing these things, and spying on Severian's journey, isn't that important?

Where's the evidence that Inire, in particular, has the same power-set as Tzadkiel? As I understand is, Tzadkiel is a Hierogrammate and has certain powers thereby--and it is not even clear that all other Hierogrammates possess the same powers.

Inire seems to be a Hierodule. Hierodules use illusions to conceal their facial features on occasion, but they do not appear to have Tzadkiel-esque shapeshifting powers.

Is there evidence that Inire is in fact a Hierogrammate, or that Hierodules in general can shapeshift?

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:49 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

I'll have to ask yet again - clues to *what*, please? IF some of the characters that appear throughout the book are Inire in disguise, then what?

What happens? What doors open? What new understanding of the story is enabled? What's the net worth of such a knowledge? What is it that we don't grasp about the book that we'd begin to grasp that way? No one has answered this so far.

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 17:42 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (07-07-2010 18:29):

Any clue to Inire is worth considering and processed however you see fit. Same with speculation on the humanity of other characters.

If Tzdakiel's shapeshifting, Inire's mirrors, Hethor's time traveling pets, time traveling ships, Severian as Apu Punchai is all fair game,

then it stands to reason that Inire, who is CLEARLY controlling the goings on of the entire planet, appear in many aspects of Severian's life (unknowingly to Severian) to control his journey, instill character traits, build the right memories, all so that his final test on Yesod comes off successful.

If Zak can change from a strange dwarf thing to a furry monster. Could Inire change from a red wizened ape who could be a man, into Inire, into Fechin, into Rudesind? If he IS doing these things, and spying on Severian's journey, isn't that important?

How is that not important to at least consider? Disagreeing with it is one thing, disregarding this speculation out of hand seems to be a bit brash.

How can it be important if I've been asking forever for its implications and no one produces any? I'm not disagreeing with it. I'm asking what does it enable that wasn't there before. I'm generally asking that in relation to much of the speculation that is often done. You do it again: try to justify that, if we know something happens somewhere, then it can happen somewhere else. So you say we are allowed to imagine a shapeshifting FI because there is a shapeshifting Tzadkiel. That doesn't bother me (of course you can have a shapeshifting FI). I'm not dissing some given speculation on the basis of its plausibility, but rather on the basis of its usefulness.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 17:43 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 17:46 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:43 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danl do at gmail.com> wrote:
2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

Again, not a novel. The infodumps were as much for the author's working out of his creative impulse as anything else. Personally, I'm fascinated by Tolkien's process, and while "Of Beleriand and its Realms" is a hard slog, I'm glad to have it.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 17:48 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 18:36):

Inire seems to be a Hierodule.

I understand this is the majority view, has anyone addressed

- the way FI seems to act according to processes much more akin to those of humans when compared to the rest of the hierofolk?
- his extended life span?

I mean, from what we know of FI, he works like a human/martian/aldebaranian being to me, not some other class of being with strange mental processes, which is what the hierodules we do know suggest to me.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 17:54 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

It was the original book which was wisely set aside when the author realized that it would not make him money and might lose him some.

Later the situation was different.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 9:43 AM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Hmmm...would you say The Silmarillion was an unnecessary book?

Heavens, no. There were only slight hints of it in _LotR_. For me, any one of

"The Ainulindale," "Of Turin Turambar," and "The Fall of Gondolin" entirely justifies the existence of the _Silm_.

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

--

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 17:54 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 18:36):

Inire seems to be a Hierodule.

I understand this is the majority view, has anyone addressed

- the way FI seems to act according to processes much more akin to those of humans when compared to the rest of the hierofolk?

That's hard to answer since FI is (almost) entirely offstage and it isn't clear according to what processes he acts.

- his extended life span?

I believe the text mentions that his lifespan is unusual for his "kind."

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 18:00 · in reply to Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:54 PM, Dan'I Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

- his extended life span?

I believe the text mentions that his lifespan is unusual for his "kind."

Right--I think there's a deliberate mystery as to by what means Inire, the hierodule, extends his lifespan (someone has proposed that Inire's lifespan is actually normal, but that he makes extensive use of time travel to only catch the "good parts" of history). But we're supposed to understand that he's a hierodule.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:03 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

It is a set of scriptures.

.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 17:49):

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 9:43 AM, James Wynn<crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Hmmm...would you say The Silmarillion was an unnecessary book?

Heavens, no. There were only slight hints of it in _LotR_. For me, any one of "The Ainulindale," "Of Turin Turambar," and "The Fall of Gondolin" entirely justifies the existence of the _Silm_.

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Well, it wasn't a book.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:03 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

It is, in fact, a set of scriptures.

.

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <entonio at gmail.com>:

I would say that it was a deeply flawed book, however.

Well, it wasn't a book.

It is indeed a book. What it is not is a novel.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:04 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Men have platonic friendships.

Do you doubt this?

Have you decided upon your forfeit?

.

On 7/7/2010 10:49 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

* It would suggest a serious rift in her family, since supposedly she had no family to take her in after being orphaned.

* It would help confirm Watson as heterosexual, and his relationship with Holmes as platonic. :P

--

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

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 18:05 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:03 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
It is, in fact, a set of scriptures.

Almost. What it is is an attempt to create a mythology from scratch (albeit using patterns from other mythologies).

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 18:06 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 19:00):

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:54 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com
<mailto:danldo at gmail.com>> wrote:

2010/7/7 António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>:
> > - his extended life span?

I believe the text mentions that his lifespan is unusual for his "kind."

Right--I think there's a deliberate mystery as to by what means Inire, the hierodule, extends his lifespan (someone has proposed that Inire's lifespan is actually normal, but that he makes extensive use of time travel to only catch the "good parts" of history).

Yeah, that's the first thought, but then there's little way you can spread some 20 years over a millennium and still be all that pervasive. I mean, he must spend time with people!

But we're supposed
to understand that he's a hierodule.

Why not some other kind of being?

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 18:08 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote (07-07-2010 18:54):

2010/7/7 António Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 18:36):

Inire seems to be a Hierodule.

I understand this is the majority view, has anyone addressed - the way FI seems to act according to processes much more akin to those of humans when compared to the rest of the hierofolk?

That's hard to answer since FI is (almost) entirely offstage and it isn't clear according to what processes he acts.

Well, I don't know - there's that letter, which sounds like human speech much more than anything we get from the triad. There's FI going to rescue the old Autarch... it all sounds normal to me. Not like some beings who don't even work in linear time.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:10 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

You are the model for that character.

Have we worked together?

.

Any clue to Inire is worth considering and processed however you see fit. Same with speculation on the humanity of other characters.

If Tzdakiel's shapeshifting, Inire's mirrors, Hethor's time traveling pets, time traveling ships, Severian as Apu Punchai is all fair game, then it stands to reason that Inire, who is CLEARLY controlling the goings on of the entire planet, appear in many aspects of Severian's life (unknowingly to Severian) to control his journey, instill character traits, build the right memories, all so that his final test on Yesod comes off successful.

If Zak can change from a strange dwarf thing to a furry monster. Could Inire change from a red wizened ape who could be a man, into Inire, into Fechin, into Rudesind? If he IS doing these things, and spying on Severian's journey, isn't that important?

How is that not important to at least consider? Disagreeing with it is one thing, disregarding this speculation out of hand seems to be a bit brash.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:49 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

I'll have to ask yet again - clues to *what*, please? IF some of the characters that appear throughout the book are Inire in disguise, then what? What happens? What doors open? What new understanding of the story is enabled? What's the net worth of such a knowledge? What is it that we don't grasp about the book that we'd begin to grasp that way? No one has answered this so far.

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 18:12 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 19:00):

Yeah, that's the first thought, but then there's little way you can spread some 20 years over a millennium and still be all that pervasive. I mean, he must spend time with people!

It certainly is far from a perfect explanation.

But we're supposed to understand that he's a hierodule.

Why not some other kind of being?

I'm eager to consider any kind of being that there is textual evidence for. He himself refers to his own kind in his letter, though, doesn't he? So unless he's lying, or there's some more direct set of information to rely on, what kind of being other than humans has Severian encountered?

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 18:12 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

you lost me.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 2:10 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
You are the model for that character.

Have we worked together?

.

Any clue to Inire is worth considering and processed however you see fit. Same with speculation on the humanity of other characters.

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It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary

Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:13 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

It can't be both?

.

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:14 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Humans can extend their lifespan.

Why should not these other critters be so able?

.

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 18:36):

Inire seems to be a Hierodule.

I understand this is the majority view, has anyone addressed
- the way FI seems to act according to processes much more akin to those
of
humans when compared to the rest of the hierofolk?
- his extended life span?

I mean, from what we know of FI, he works like a
human/martian/aldebaranian
being to me, not some other class of being with strange mental processes,
which is what the hierodules we do know suggest to me.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:17 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

This is your opinion.

It is without doubt a set of scriptures.

Glad to see you got over pissing your pants.

You'd've made a realer fag, you know?

It still throws me when a hetro guy cringes in fear for no apparent reason.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:03 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

It is, in fact, a set of scriptures.

Almost. What it is is an attempt to create a mythology from scratch (albeit using patterns from other mythologies).

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 18:19 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

What is this garbage, Brunians?

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 2:17 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

This is your opinion.

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--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:22 · in reply to John Watkins

Which?

People who want to be friends call me Josh.

.

What is this garbage, Brunians?

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 2:17 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

This is your opinion.

It is without doubt a set of scriptures.

Glad to see you got over pissing your pants.

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Almost. What it is is an attempt to create a mythology from scratch (albeit using patterns from other mythologies).

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 18:22 · in reply to John Watkins

The man wanted to get paid.

This is not an hypothesis.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:43 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

Again, not a novel. The infodumps were as much for the author's working out

of his creative impulse as anything else. Personally, I'm fascinated by Tolkien's process, and while "Of Beleriand and its Realms" is a hard slog, I'm glad to have it.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Lane Haygood — 07 Jul 2010, 18:23 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Why the slur?

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 18:25 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:17 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
This is your opinion.

It was also Tolkien's, as expressed through many letters.

It is without doubt a set of scriptures.

Glad to see you got over pissing your pants.

You'd've made a realer fag, you know?

It still throws me when a hetro guy cringes in fear for no apparent reason.

I do not cringe in fear. I use the tools society provides.

And I'm sorry to see you participating in such blatant homo-hate. Some of the bravest men I've known have been queer.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Lane Haygood — 07 Jul 2010, 18:25 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Tolkien made his living as a professor. The "background" of the Silmarillion was to give his world an impetus for his languages to change, much as our own did, coupled with his desire to formulate a modern mythology for Great Britain. Ergo, Silmarillion and all of his "notes" that have been posthumously edited and published by his son.

LH

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:22 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
The man wanted to get paid.

This is not an hypothesis.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:43 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

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--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

? _____

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 18:25 · in reply to John Watkins

If Zak can change from a strange dwarf thing to a furry monster.
Could Inire change from a red wizened ape who could be a man, into Inire, into Fechin, into Rudesind? If he IS doing these things, and spying on Severian's journey, isn't that important?

Where's the evidence that Inire, in particular, has the same power-set as Tzadkiel? As I understand is, Tzadkiel is a Hierogrammate and has certain powers thereby--and it is not even clear that all other

Hierogrammates possess the same powers. Inire seems to be a Hierodule. Hierodules use illusions to conceal their facial features on occasion, but they do not appear to have Tzadkiel-esque shapeshifting powers. Is there evidence that Inire is in fact a Hierogrammate, or that Hierodules in general can shapeshift?

Well....if there are reddish furry and monkey signifiers connected to Inire and lots of random human and non-human characters appearing with those signifiers, and Inire is never in the same room with those characters at the same time, then isn't that in itself evidence (albeit not conclusive) that Inire can shapeshift...and therefore is a Hierogrammate? I mean, the facts that Clark Kent is never around when Superman is and that both have a special relationship with Lois Lane...those don't PROVE that Clark Kent = Superman. But it is evidence in favor of the theory right?

Does it deciding that Kent is Superman change the story in any way? I mean, Superman still has to rescue Lois, right?

u+16b9

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:49 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:
> I'll have to ask yet again - clues to *what*, please? IF some of the characters that appear throughout the book are Inire in disguise, then what? What happens? What doors open? What new understanding of the story is enabled? What's the net worth of such a knowledge? What is it that we don't grasp about the book that we'd begin to grasp that way? No one has answered this so far.
>
> It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 18:30 · in reply to James Wynn

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 2:25 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Well....if there are reddish furry and monkey signifiers connected to Inire and lots of random human and non-human characters appearing with those signifiers, and Inire is never in the same room with those characters at the same time, then isn't that in itself evidence (albeit not conclusive) that Inire can shapeshift...and therefore is a Hierogrammate? I mean, the facts that Clark Kent is never around when Superman is and that both have a special relationship with Lois Lane...those don't PROVE that Clark Kent = Superman. But it is evidence in favor of the theory right?

You know who else is rarely seen with Superman, if ever?

Wally West.

Does it deciding that Kent is Superman change the story in any way? I mean, Superman still has to rescue Lois, right?

u+16b9

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:49 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

I'll have to ask yet again - clues to *what*, please? IF some of the characters that appear throughout the book are Inire in disguise, then what?

What happens? What doors open? What new understanding of the story is enabled? What's the net worth of such a knowledge? What is it that we don't grasp about the book that we'd begin to grasp that way? No one has answered this so far.

It's as if we posited that Watson's second wife was in fact Mary Morstan's cousin. What would that contribute to the story?

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 18:32 · in reply to John Watkins

Well....if there are reddish furry and monkey signifiers connected to Inire and lots of random human and non-human characters appearing with those signifiers, and Inire is never in the same room with those characters at the same time, then isn't that in itself evidence (albeit not conclusive) that Inire can shapeshift...and therefore is a Hierogrammate? I mean, the facts that Clark Kent is never around when Superman is and that both have a special relationship with Lois Lane...those don't PROVE that Clark Kent = Superman. But it is evidence in favor of the theory right?

You know who else is rarely seen with Superman, if ever?
Wally West.

We call that a competing theory.

u+16b9

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 18:34 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:25):

Does it deciding that Kent is Superman change the story in any way? I mean, Superman still has to rescue Lois, right?

If Superman were not Clark, where would he have met Lois? Ok, she's a journalist and he's a public figure. If Superman were someone else other than Clark, wouldn't he have other significant people in his alternate life whom we know zilch about? Among whom probably some love interest.

Kent being Superman doesn't change the story because in the story that's precisely who Kent is. Kent not being Superman would certainly call for a quite different story.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 18:35 · in reply to John Watkins

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:30 AM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:
You know who else is rarely seen with Superman, if ever?

Wally West.

Of course, the fact that West mostly hangs out in Central City while Superman hangs out in Metropolis _might_ have something to do with this...

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 18:36 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 2:35 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:30 AM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

Of course, the fact that West mostly hangs out in Central City while Superman hangs out in Metropolis _might_ have something to do with this...

Non-dispositive. If West is Superman, the commute is pretty short.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 18:49 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On 7/7/2010 1:34 PM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:25):

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whom we know zilch about? Among whom probably some love interest. Kent being Superman doesn't change the story because in the sorty that's precisely who Kent is. Kent not being Superman would certainly call for a quite different story.

I was being factitious in order to make a point. If Inire were also variously Rudesind and a monkey, it would affect the story if only that it would mean Inire might be a Hierogrammate. It would mean that the grammates were affecting humanity directly. I say "might" because we don't really know Hierodules can't shapeshift. If he is a Hierodules and can shape-shift then it means Hierodules can shapeshift. And familiarity with Wolfe's other novels shows that Inire wouldn't have to be able to shape-shift in order to look like someone totally different.

It's not that I have an opinion either way. It's just that I don't think theories should be countered with mere hand-waving. Ultimately, much that goes on in a Wolfe novel is unprovable if your standards for proof are at all stringent. The best one can hope for is to prove that something is flatly denied in the text in a way that a liar would not undermine (which is very difficult in itself). Think of how the details in UotNS have affected the way we understand tBotNS. Then consider that Wolfe had not intended to write UotNS.

u+16b9

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 18:54 · in reply to James Wynn

I was being factitious in order to make a point.

Not "factitious". Facetious

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 19:02 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:49):

Ultimately, much that goes on in a Wolfe novel is unprovable if your standards for proof are at all stringent.

That's why I think that usefulness is a much better test than provability.

Roy C. Lackey — 07 Jul 2010, 19:04 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman quoted and wrote:

David Stockhoff- Any thoughts on the question of Fechin having painted Inire as a little boy, thus proving that he is Rudesind, who was painted by Fechin as a little boy?

I don't think I'd ever hope to prove something but rather find suggestions. And in that scenario, Rudesind says a great artist visited him, when he was a boy artist, to see his work. "It was Fechin, Fechin himself!". Was Fechin, the great artist or the boy?

Since you have claimed that both Rudesind and Fechin are really Inire, it doesn't really matter, does it? They are all the same person, and I guess the part about being a boy is just a lie. And I guess the old man at Casdoe's cabin lied about being a boyhood friend of Fechin's, too. Because, in the interest of pedantry, I feel obliged to point out that Inire had been vizier to all the autarchs, going back at least a thousand years to Ymar. Maybe Inire had a protracted boyhood and only grew up and got old in the last seventy years or so.

-Roy

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 19:04 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:54):

I was being factitious in order to make a point.

Not "factitious". Facetious

And here I was thinking it might be a legitimate synonym. Shame on you, befuddling the furriners.

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 19:08 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Roy C. Lackey wrote (07-07-2010 20:04):

And I guess the old man at Casdoe's cabin lied about being a boyhood friend of Fechin's, too.

What, isn't he Inire as well? And he's also an old woman, which strengthens the shapeshifting argument.

I'm all for considering each and every character than we do not grope the ripe boobs of as being an Inire avatar.

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 19:09 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

So then Inire is a robot.

Hell, three of the few male "friends" to Severian, Talos, Jonas, and now Inire.

Genius! :)

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:04 PM, Roy C. Lackey wrote:
Lee Berman quoted and wrote:

David Stockhoff- Any thoughts on the question of Fechin having painted Inire as a little boy, thus proving that he is Rudesind, who was painted by Fechin as a little boy?

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-Roy

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 19:10 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here. This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:09 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:
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Because, in the interest of pedantry, I feel obliged to point out that Inire had been vizier to all the autarchs, going back at least a thousand years to Ymar.

Maybe Inire had a protracted boyhood and only grew up and got old in the last seventy years or so.

-Roy

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 19:13 · in reply to John Watkins

We've been duped.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:10 PM, John Watkins wrote:
I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here. This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:09 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:
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-Roy

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 19:13 · in reply to John Watkins

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:10 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:
I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here. This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

I think it's time for someone to prove by algebra that Severian is his own father.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 19:15 · in reply to John Watkins

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here.
This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

u+16b9

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 19:18 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 20:15):

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here.
This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

The bastard won't die, that much is known.

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 19:19 · in reply to James Wynn

Well, I don't know that Severian was always already artificial--I know that at one point or another in the narrative his personality is artificially resurrected.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:15 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

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What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

u+16b9

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 19:23 · in reply to John Watkins

his drowning in gyoll? or avern battle? or somewhere else?

...ryan

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u+16b9

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 19:28 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

At the drowning at the earliest; on the ship at the latest.

Not in the avern battle--he kept his original body that time.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:23 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:
his drowning in gyoll? or avern battle? or somewhere else?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:19 PM, John Watkins wrote:

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What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:28 · in reply to Lane Haygood

What slur?

.

Why the slur?

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 19:30 · in reply to John Watkins

On 7/7/2010 2:19 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Well, I don't know that Severian was always already artificial

Why is that necessary? What if --as seems likely to me-- Severian drowned in the Gyll at the beginning of SotT? That would mean that for almost every event in which Severian takes part (with the exception of early childhood memories) he was an artificial presence.

Actually my original point was to show that debating a theory with snark isn't always so easy in a Wolfe novel.

--I know that at one point or another in the narrative his personality is artificially resurrected.

Is that an important distinction? Wouldn't the extrapolation of this be that Pas and Scylla were not artificial persons?

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:31 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

What hate?

How many dicks to I have to suck before it snot hate?

I don't hate fags and I don't hate you.

I actively like fags, and I find you tolerable at times.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:17 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

This is your opinion.

It was also Tolkien's, as expressed through many letters.

It is without doubt a set of scriptures.

Glad to see you got over pissing your pants.

You'd've made a realer fag, you know?

It still throws me when a hetro guy cringes in fear for no apparent reason.

I do not cringe in fear. I use the tools society provides.

And I'm sorry to see you participating in such blatant homo-hate. Some of the bravest men I've known have been queer.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:31 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

The book is obviously a set of scriptures.

I use the duck method.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:17 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

This is your opinion.

It was also Tolkien's, as expressed through many letters.

It is without doubt a set of scriptures.

Glad to see you got over pissing your pants.

You'd've made a realer fag, you know?

It still throws me when a hetro guy cringes in fear for no apparent reason.

I do not cringe in fear. I use the tools society provides.

And I'm sorry to see you participating in such blatant homo-hate. Some of the bravest men I've known have been queer.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:33 · in reply to Lane Haygood

Tolkien wrote books.

He expected to make money selling them.

He did make money selling them.

His major income did indeed come from his professorship.

You speak quite confidently as to Dr Tolkien's motivations.

I wonder how intimately you knew him.

.

Tolkien made his living as a professor. The "background" of the Silmarillion was to give his world an impetus for his languages to change, much as our own did, coupled with his desire to formulate a modern mythology for Great Britain. Ergo, Silmarillion and all of his "notes" that have been posthumously edited and published by his son.

LH

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:22 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

The man wanted to get paid.

This is not an hypothesis.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:43 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

Again, not a novel. ?The infodumps were as much for the author's working

out

of his creative impulse as anything else. ?Personally, I'm fascinated by

Tolkien's process, and while "Of Beleriand and its Realms" is a hard slog,

I'm glad to have it.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

? _____

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 19:34 · in reply to James Wynn

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:30 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Is that an important distinction? Wouldn't the extrapolation of this be that Pas and Scylla were not artificial persons?

I'm not sure if it matters or not. Wolfe certainly seems to be having fun with people of various degrees of artificiality.

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:36 · in reply to Ant?nio Pedro Marques

Why do you assume that the entire life of Superman is chronicled in these obviously journalistic - if not actively propagandistic - graphic novels and short stories?

.

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:25):

Does it deciding that Kent is Superman change the story in any way? I mean, Superman still has to rescue Lois, right?

If Superman were not Clark, where would he have met Lois? Ok, she's a journalist and he's a public figure. If Superman were someone else other than Clark, wouldn't he have other significant people in his alternate life

whom we know zilch about? Among whom probably some love interest.

Kent being Superman doesn't change the story because in the story that's precisely who Kent is. Kent not being Superman would certainly call for a quite different story.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 19:38 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:36 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Why do you assume that the entire life of Superman is chronicled in these obviously journalistic - if not actively propagandistic - graphic novels and short stories?

<facepalm>

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:38 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

In one of the parallel Worlds there is a human being or some such with remarkable powers.

Various people in this World have received various more or less accurate accounts of this person.

They have written various more or less distorted versions of these accounts, which they have used to further their personal agendas.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 11:30 AM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

You know who else is rarely seen with Superman, if ever?

Wally West.

Of course, the fact that West mostly hangs out in Central City while Superman hangs out in Metropolis _might_ have something to do with this...

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 19:40 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Superman is a Dick website: http://superdickery.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=28&Itemid=45

On 7/7/2010 2:36 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
Why do you assume that the entire life of Superman is chronicled in these obviously journalistic - if not actively propagandistic - graphic novels and short stories?.

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:25):

Does it deciding that Kent is Superman change the story in any way? I mean, Superman still has to rescue Lois, right?

If Superman were not Clark, where would he have met Lois? Ok, she's a journalist and he's a public figure. If Superman were someone else other than Clark, wouldn't he have other significant people in his alternate life whom we know zilch about? Among whom probably some love interest.

Kent being Superman doesn't change the story because in the story that's precisely who Kent is. Kent not being Superman would certainly call for a quite different story.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:44 · in reply to James Wynn

Why couldn't both be right?

.
I was being factitious in order to make a point.

Not "factitious". Facetious

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:44 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Indeed, sir.

Where were you, again?

.
James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:49):

Ultimately, much that goes on in a Wolfe novel is unprovable if your standards for proof are at all stringent.

That's why I think that usefulness is a much better test than provability.

Lee Berman — 07 Jul 2010, 19:49 · follows brunians at brunians.org

Well, the archetypes for hierodules would be Barbatus and Famulimus, (not sure about Ossipago, I think he is different). They are very tall outer space people who are supernaturally beautiful beneath their masks. They dispense technological artifacts to Baldanders to allow certain types of knowledge to disseminate among humanity but they avoid direct interaction and interference.

Father Inire is really different. He is short and ugly. He builds public buildings and private palaces, plants avens to block manatees and has been directly involved in human politics for hundreds of years, advising autarchs, leading enemy armies through jungles and goofing around with adolescent young beauties. I think more than an age difference is needed to explain why he is so different from B and F.

As I see it he is best seen as a failed hierodule, one who has violated the Prime Directive as so many misguided villains of Star Trek did. Or, in more religious terms, he is a fallen hierodule who has not correctly followed his divine tasks. As such, like Moses who wasn't evil but who also failed God, he will not be allowed to enter the Promised Land (Ushas). (hence the Mt. Nebo reference for Isangoma in the Jungle Hut). <http://www.keyway.ca/htm2001/20011015.htm>

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 19:49 · in reply to James Wynn

Does it deciding that Kent is Superman change the story in any way? I mean, Superman still has to rescue Lois, right?

If Superman were not Clark, where would he have met Lois? Ok, she's a journalist and he's a public figure. If Superman were someone else other than Clark, wouldn't he have other significant people in his alternate life whom we know zilch about? Among whom probably some love interest. Kent being Superman doesn't change the story because in the sorty that's precisely who Kent is. Kent not being Superman would certainly call for a quite different story.

I'm just sayin'. Imagine if Wolfe had written Superman. There's no way we'd know for certain Kent and Superman were the same guy. If Wolfe had written Murder On the Orient Express, there would be no Hercule Poirot. It would have consisted of first person stories from 12 seemingly random passengers and the conductor who found the body. The reader would have been expected to play the role of Poirot.

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:55 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

It is a legitimate synonym or near synonym, and not Wynn's coinage.

He may or may not have used it accideliberately.

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 19:54):

I was being factitious in order to make a point.

Not "factitious". Facetious

And here I was thinking it might be a legitimate synonym. Shame on you, befuddling the furriners.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:57 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Maybe Inire can travel in time?

Just a guess.

Roy C. Lackey wrote (07-07-2010 20:04):

And I guess the old man at Casdow's cabin lied about being a boyhood friend of Fechin's, too.

What, isn't he Inire as well? And he's also an old woman, which strengthens the shapeshifting argument.

I'm all for considering each and every character than we do not grope the ripe boobs of as being an Inire avatar.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:58 · in reply to John Watkins

it is indeed getting short shrift.

I see no reason to imagine or suppose that Inire is other than Severian said he is, an hierodule who has artificially extended his life.

.

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here. This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:09 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

So then Inire is a robot.

Hell, three of the few male "friends" to Severian, Talos, Jonas, and now Inire.

Genius! :)

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:04 PM, Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Lee Berman quoted and wrote:

David Stockhoff- Any thoughts on the question of Fechin having painted Inire as a little boy, thus proving that he is Rudesind, who was painted by Fechin as a little boy?

I don't think I'd ever hope to prove something but rather find suggestions. And in that scenario, Rudesind says a great artist visited him, when he was a boy artist, to see his work. "It was Fechin, Fechin himself!". Was Fechin, the great artist or the boy?

Since you have claimed that both Rudesind and Fechin are really Inire, it doesn't really matter, does it? They are all the same person, and I guess the part about being a boy is just a lie. And I guess the old man at Casdow's cabin lied about being a boyhood friend of Fechin's, too.

Because, in the interest of pedantry, I feel obliged to point out that Inire had been

vizier to all the autarchs, going back at least a thousand years to Ymar.

Maybe Inire had a protracted boyhood and only grew up and got old in the last seventy years or so.

-Roy

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 19:59 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Exactly.

It had occurred to me that Inire, being long-lived, may have had a long childhood. But that would assume his lifespan was normal, which we are told it is not. So, no.

What to do with Fechin? He can't be the Russian namesake, because he lived only decades ago. Yes, he could have painted himself as a boy, so he could be Rudesind. But he can't be Inire, who is much older.

If Rudesind is hiding an identity it is that of Fechin, who could be a mere 20 years older. Not that of Inire.

That would explain Rudesind's comments about paintings of himself and Inire. But it doesn't explain why he made those remarks.

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:

From: Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 3:04 PM

Lee Berman quoted and wrote:

David Stockhoff- Any thoughts on the question of Fechin having painted Inire as a little boy, thus proving that he is Rudesind, who was painted by Fechin as a little boy?

I don't think I'd ever hope to prove something but rather find suggestions. And in that scenario, Rudesind says a great artist visited him, when he was a boy artist, to see his work. "It was Fechin, Fechin himself!". Was Fechin, the great artist or the boy?

Since you have claimed that both Rudesind and Fechin are really Inire, it doesn't really matter, does it? They are all the same person, and I guess the part about being a boy is just a lie. And I guess the old man at Casdoe's cabin lied about being a boyhood friend of Fechin's, too. Because, in the interest of pedantry, I feel obliged to point out that Inire had been vizier to all the autarchs, going back at least a thousand years to Ymar. Maybe Inire had a protracted boyhood and only grew up and got old in the last seventy years or so.

-Roy

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 19:59 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

That he is his own grandfather is likely.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:10 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here.

This

means Severian is also a robot, of course.

I think it's time for someone to prove by algebra that Severian is his own father.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 20:00 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

And if he is his own father, then he is his own father's father, QED.

"Oh, I'm my own grampaaaaaaw..."

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:59 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

That he is his own grandfather is likely.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:10 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

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This

means Severian is also a robot, of course.

I think it's time for someone to prove by algebra that Severian is his own father.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:00 · in reply to James Wynn

Made by art, sure.

Made by art by God or made by art by God with help or made by some godless atheistic communist and possibly demonic character seems to be the matter under discussion.

.

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here.

This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

u+16b9

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 20:02 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

I thought we "knew" that already. ;)

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

From: Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 3:13 PM

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:10 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here. This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

I think it's time for someone to prove by algebra that Severian is his own father.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:02 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

This is another instance where the half dozen or so near death experiences I have been through give me a peculiar insight that one or two of you perhaps do not share.

.

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 20:15):

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here. This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

The bastard won't die, that much is known.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:04 · in reply to John Watkins

Why do you assume that his personality is artificially resurrected?

My take on this is he is dead in one parallel World, and resurrected in another which includes a dead body that is identical with his old one.

Is a line parallel to itself?

.

Well, I don't know that Severian was always already artificial--I know that at one point or another in the narrative his personality is artificially resurrected.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:15 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here. This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:05 · in reply to James Wynn

He was resurrected.

The book was written by this guy who is well know to believe in God.

Doctor Ockham to the Library.

Doctor Ockham to the Library, stat.

.

On 7/7/2010 2:19 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Well, I don't know that Severian was always already artificial

Why is that necessary? What if --as seems likely to me-- Severian drowned in the Gyll at the beginning of SotT? That would mean that for almost every event in which Severian takes part (with the exception of early childhood memories) he was an artificial presence.

Actually my original point was to show that debating a theory with snark isn't always so easy in a Wolfe novel.

--I know that at one point or another in the narrative his personality is artificially resurrected.

Is that an important distinction? Wouldn't the extrapolation of this be that Pas and Scylla were not artificial persons?

u+16b9

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 20:05 · in reply to Lee Berman

I like it.

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:

From: Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com>

Subject: (urth) Inire as a hierodule

To: urth at lists.urth.net

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 3:49 PM

Well, the archetypes for hierodules would be Barbatus and Famulimus, (not sure about Ossipago, I think he is different). They are very tall outer space people who are supernaturally beautiful beneath their masks. They dispense technological artifacts to Baldanders to allow certain types of knowledge to disseminate among humanity but they avoid direct interaction and interference.

Father Inire is really different. He is short and ugly. He builds public buildings and private palaces, plants avens to block manatees and has been directly involved in human politics for hundreds of? years, advising autarchs, leading enemy armies through jungles and goofing around with adolescent young beauties. I think more than an age difference is needed to explain why he is so different from B and F.

As I see it he is best seen as a failed hierodule, one who has violated the Prime Directive as so many misguided villains of Star Trek did. Or, in more religious terms, he is a fallen hierodule who has not correctly followed his divine tasks. As such, like Moses who wasn't evil but who also failed God, he will not be allowed to enter the Promised Land (Ushas). (hence the Mt. Nebo reference for Isangoma in the Jungle Hut). <http://www.keyway.ca/htm2001/20011015.htm> ???
???????? ???? ?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:06 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Severian has even more near death experiences than me.

This is impressive.

.

his drowning in gyoll? or avern battle? or somewhere else?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:19 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Well, I don't know that Severian was always already artificial--I know that at one point or another in the narrative his personality is artificially resurrected.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:15 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here.
This means Severian is also a robot, of course.

What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:06 · in reply to John Watkins

He has a point.

It's the same as one of mine.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:30 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Is that an important distinction? Wouldn't the extrapolation of this be that Pas and Scylla were not artificial persons?

I'm not sure if it matters or not. Wolfe certainly seems to be having fun with people of various degrees of artificiality.

u+16b9

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:07 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

It had occurred to me that Inire, being long-lived, may have had a long childhood. But that would assume his lifespan was normal, which we are told it is not. So, no. What to do with Fechin? He can't be the Russian namesake, because he lived only decades ago. Yes, he could have painted himself as a boy, so he could be Rudesind. But he can't be Inire, who is much older. If Rudesind is hiding an identity it is that of Fechin, who could be a mere 20 years older. Not that of Inire. That would explain Rudesind's comments about paintings of himself and Inire. But it doesn't explain why he made those remarks.

I'm a bit lost. Have we actually established WHEN Rudesind was a child? We're dealing with Time Travelers here. I think it is problematic that Rudesind is Inire. But is it impossible that Inire is Fechin? And that Rudesind is from the 20th century?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:08 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

It's way more effective when someone else does it.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:36 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Why do you assume that the entire life of Superman is chronicled in these obviously journalistic - if not actively propagandistic - graphic novels and short stories?

<facepalm>

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:08 · in reply to Lee Berman

Why do you assume they are archetypes?

What is an archetype?

Well, the archetypes for hierodules would be Barbatus and Famulimus, (not sure about Ossipago, I think he is different). They are very tall outer space people who are supernaturally beautiful beneath their masks. They dispense technological artifacts to Baldanders to allow certain types of knowledge to disseminate among humanity but they avoid direct interaction and interference.

Father Inire is really different. He is short and ugly. He builds public buildings and private palaces, plants averts to block manatees and has been directly involved in human politics for hundreds of years, advising autarchs, leading enemy armies through jungles and goofing around with adolescent young beauties. I think more than an age difference is needed to explain why he is so different from B and F.

As I see it he is best seen as a failed hierodule, one who has violated the Prime Directive as so many misguided villains of Star Trek did. Or, in more religious terms, he is a fallen hierodule who has not correctly followed his divine tasks. As such, like Moses who wasn't evil but who

also failed God, he will not be allowed to enter the Promised Land (Ushas). (hence the Mt. Nebo reference for Isangoma in the Jungle Hut).
<http://www.keyway.ca/htm2001/20011015.htm>

Hotmail has tools for the New Busy. Search, chat and e-mail from your inbox.

http://www.windowlive.com/campaign/thenewbusy?ocid=PID28326::T:WLMTAGL:ON:WL:en-US:WM_HMP:042010_1

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 20:09 · in reply to James Wynn

If so, then Rudesind and Inire are both about 20,000 years old.

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:07 PM

It had occurred to me that Inire, being long-lived, may have had a long childhood. But that would assume his lifespan was normal, which we are told it is not. So, no. What to do with Fechin? He can't be the Russian namesake, because he lived only decades ago. Yes, he could have painted himself as a boy, so he could be Rudesind. But he can't be Inire, who is much older. If Rudesind is hiding an identity it is that of Fechin, who could be a mere 20 years older. Not that of Inire. That would explain Rudesind's comments about paintings of himself and Inire. But it doesn't explain why he made those remarks.

I'm a bit lost. Have we actually established WHEN Rudesind was a child? We're dealing with Time Travelers here. I think it is problematic that Rudesind is Inire. But is it impossible that Inire is Fechin? And that Rudesind is from the 20th century?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:10 · in reply to John Watkins

Why could he not have several deaths?

I assume that at each of my near death experiences, I was dead in other Worlds, crippled in others, etc.

.

At the drowning at the earliest; on the ship at the latest.

Not in the avern battle--he kept his original body that time.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:23 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

his drowning in gyoll? or avern battle? or somewhere else?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:19 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Well, I don't know that Severian was always already artificial--I know that at one point or another in the narrative his personality is

artificially resurrected.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 3:15 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here.

This

means Severian is also a robot, of course.

What's your definition of "robot"? We do know he's artificial, right?

u+16b9

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:12 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

Severian was there at the construction of Apu Punchau's temple. How old is he?

On 7/7/2010 3:09 PM, DAVID STOCKHOFF wrote:

If so, then Rudesind and Inire are both about 20,000 years old.

--- On *Wed, 7/7/10, James Wynn /<crushtv at gmail.com>/* wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

I'm a bit lost. Have we actually established WHEN Rudesind was a child? We're dealing with Time Travelers here. I think it is problematic that Rudesind is Inire. But is it impossible that Inire is Fetchin? And that Rudesind is from the 20th century?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:13 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Severian begets Ouen

Ouen begets Severian after Inire moves him and Dorcas back in time.

This would make Ouen the fisherman.

.

And if he is his own father, then he is his own father's father, QED.

"Oh, I'm my own grampaaaaaaw..."

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:59 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

That he is his own grandfather is likely.

.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 12:10 PM, John Watkins

<john.watkins04 at gmail.com>

wrote:

I think my "Severian-is-Inire" theory is getting short shrift here.

This

means Severian is also a robot, of course.

I think it's time for someone to prove by algebra that Severian is his own father.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:14 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

I'm not letting go of that monkey description, sorry. It is a clue to something.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:59 PM, DAVID STOCKHOFF <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:
Exactly.

It had occurred to me that Inire, being long-lived, may have had a long childhood. But that would assume his lifespan was normal, which we are told it is not. So, no.

What to do with Fechin? He can't be the Russian namesake, because he lived only decades ago. Yes, he could have painted himself as a boy, so he could be Rudesind. But he can't be Inire, who is much older.

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From: Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 3:04 PM

Lee Berman quoted and wrote:

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vizier to all the autarchs, going back at least a thousand years to Ymar.
Maybe Inire had a protracted boyhood and only grew up and got old in the last seventy years or so.

-Roy

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 20:14 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:13 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Severian begets Ouen

Textual evidence?

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:15 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

Unless they traveled in time.

Or something.

.

If so, then Rudesind and Inire are both about 20,000 years old.

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:07 PM

It had occurred to me that Inire, being long-lived, may have had a long childhood. But that would assume his lifespan was normal, which we are told it is not. So, no. What to do with Fechin? He can't be the Russian namesake, because he lived only decades ago. Yes, he could have painted himself as a boy, so he could be Rudesind. But he can't be Inire, who is much older. If Rudesind is hiding an identity it is that of Fechin, who could be a mere 20 years older. Not that of Inire. That would explain Rudesind's comments about paintings of himself and Inire. But it doesn't explain why he made those remarks.

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brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:17 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:13 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

Severian begets Ouen

Textual evidence?

This is the difference between a pedant and someone who thinks properly.

.

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 20:17 · in reply to James Wynn

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Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net

Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

-----Inline Attachment Follows-----

Lane Haygood — 07 Jul 2010, 20:18 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

When I was but a young lad in college, I took a course with Prof. Hoyt on the linguistics of Middle Earth, including an extensive survey of Prof. Tolkien's own writings on the subject, his speeches, and his views on language. The scholarly consensus among such people as H. Fauskanger (who runs the Ardalambion website) is that Tolkien's literary works served as a backdrop for him to experiment with the changing field of philology and its metamorphosis into modern linguistics.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 2:33 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Tolkien wrote books.

He expected to make money selling them.

He did make money selling them.

His major income did indeed come from his professorship.

You speak quite confidently as to Dr Tolkien's motivations.

I wonder how intimately you knew him.

.

Tolkien made his living as a professor. The "background" of the Silmarillion was to give his world an impetus for his languages to change, much as our own did, coupled with his desire to formulate a modern mythology for Great Britain. Ergo, Silmarillion and all of his "notes" that have been posthumously edited and published by his son.

LH

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The man wanted to get paid.

This is not an hypothesis.

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Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

Again, not a novel. The infodumps were as much for the author's working out

of his creative impulse as anything else. Personally, I'm fascinated by

Tolkien's process, and while "Of Beleriand and its Realms" is a hard slog, I'm glad to have it.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

?_____

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 20:18 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I don't think you should.

Loki had red hair, did he not?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:

From: Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind To: "The Urth

Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net> Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:14 PM

I'm not letting go of that monkey description, sorry. It is a clue to something. ...ryan On Jul 7, 2010, at 3:59 PM, DAVID STOCKHOFF <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:

Exactly.

It had occurred to me that Inire, being long-lived, may have had a long childhood. But that would assume his lifespan was normal, which we are told it is not. So, no.

What to do with Fechin? He can't be the Russian namesake, because he lived only decades ago. Yes, he could have painted himself as a boy, so he could be Rudesind. But he can't be Inire, who is much older.

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-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2010, 20:19 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

If so, then Rudesind and Inire are both about 20,000 years old.

By birth perhaps, but not by internal time. Inire made the time-bending and space-bending Botanical Gardens, and had some of Gyll diverted to water the ancient purple creepers and otherworldly averts under the conservation of the curators. It make sense that he also collects artwork from other times and places, and may have diverted a curator to keep it washed as well.

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 20:19 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

Challenge: name a (humanoid and non-undine) character in The Book of the New Sun who is definitely not Inire, Severian, Typhon or a member of one of their families.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 4:17 PM, DAVID STOCKHOFF <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:
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Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2010, 20:23 · in reply to John Watkins

Challenge: name a (humanoid and non-undine) character in The Book of the New Sun who is definitely not Inire, Severian, Typhon or a member of one of their families.

Piaton!

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 20:25 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 4:23 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:
Challenge: name a (humanoid and non-undine) character in The Book of the New Sun who is definitely not Inire, Severian, Typhon or a member of one of their families.

Piaton!

...fair enough. Assuming Piaton is not one of Typhon's bastards, that is.

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:26 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

Only if they made the Time Machine themselves. But, look. If Rudesind and Inire were actually boys together, that means Rudesind is ALSO old enough to have been a councilor to all the other Autarchs. And, yet, all he likes doing is restoring art.

On 7/7/2010 3:17 PM, DAVID STOCKHOFF wrote:

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Lee Berman — 07 Jul 2010, 20:27 · follows brunians at brunians.org

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"claimed" is such a harsh word, Roy. So final and legalistic. I prefer "suggested" or "offered possibility".

Anyway I don't think you have the right mind set for how such a thing could work. Ryan Dunn is more along my way of thinking- using Tzadkiel as a model for shapeshifting. A giant shapeshifting being who can squeeze off smaller parts which themselves can shapeshift. I wonder if the giant Tzadkiel that Severian sees on her throne is even the biggest version of him/her.

Anyway, so, like Tzadkiel, these squeezed off pieces could act as various agents at various times. One could look like a proboscis monkey with a long nose, one like a uakari with almost no nose, one like a cynocephalic baboon, one like a long-armed, red-haired artist etc. I would expect each one to have an identifying mark to tie them back to the original being though, like

the Armiger's Daughter. Part of good story telling.

Where might a gigantic original being which could spawn Father Inire copies actually reside while on Urth? Where indeed. I could also wonder from whence did Juturna and her "sisters" originate? Does a squeezed off piece of Abaia have to be male? I think Seawrack and The Mother in Blue's ocean might be another example of a similar relationship.

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:27 · in reply to John Watkins

Timon?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 4:19 PM, John Watkins <john.watkins04 at gmail.com> wrote:
Challenge: name a (humanoid and non-undine) character in The Book of the New Sun who is definitely not Inire, Severian, Typhon or a member of one of their families.

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DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 20:29 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
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By birth perhaps, but not by internal time. Inire made the time-bending and space-bending Botanical Gardens, and had some of Gyoll diverted to water the ancient purple creepers and otherworldly averns under the conservation of the curators. It make sense that he also collects artwork from other times and places, and may have diverted a curator to keep it washed as well.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 20:31 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:27 PM, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:
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Well, I'm pretty sure that one of the undines tells Sev that they are the "brides" of Abaia. This may not mean much in the framework that some people seem determined to build up, but to me it suggests that they are different people (pace Heinlein and "All You Zombies").

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 20:32 · in reply to James Wynn

Yes, it would mean that. So he doesn't want to be Head Curator?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

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Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:32 · in reply to Lee Berman

Could one also have the head of a dog and the body of an ape like the creature watching Severian when he wakes in the Lazaret in SotT?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 4:27 PM, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:
Anyway, so, like Tzadkiel, these squeezed off pieces could act as various agents at various times. One could look like a proboscis monkey with a long nose, one like a uakari with almost no nose, one like a cynocephalic baboon, one like a long-armed, red-haired artist etc. I would expect each one to have an identifying mark to tie them back to the original being though, like the Armiger's Daughter. Part of good story telling.

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:34 · in reply to John Watkins

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<mailto:jwilson at io.com>> wrote:

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> their families.

Piaton!

...fair enough. Assuming Piaton is not one of Typhon's
bastards, that is.

Typhon:

"Piaton was one of my slaves...."

"Sword of the Lictor" chap 25

Typhon's daughter:

"We slaves. Pas own."

"Return to the Whorl"

I'm just sayin'. It could happen.

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:36 · in reply to Lane Haygood

It was based upon his ideas regarding deep history.

In other words.

.

When I was but a young lad in college, I took a course with Prof. Hoyt on the linguistics of Middle Earth, including an extensive survey of Prof. Tolkien's own writings on the subject, his speeches, and his views on language. The scholarly consensus among such people as H. Fauskanger (who runs the Ardalambion website) is that Tolkien's literary works served as a backdrop for him to experiment with the changing field of philology and its metamorphosis into modern linguistics.

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Tolkien wrote books.

He expected to make money selling them.

He did make money selling them.

His major income did indeed come from his professorship.

You speak quite confidently as to Dr Tolkien's motivations.

I wonder how intimately you knew him.

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LH

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:22 PM, ?<brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

The man wanted to get paid.

This is not an hypothesis.

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On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:43 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes <danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

Again, not a novel. ?The infodumps were as much for the author's working out of his creative impulse as anything else. ?Personally, I'm fascinated by

Tolkien's process, and while "Of Beleriand and its Realms" is a hard slog,
I'm glad to have it.

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

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Typhon:

"Piaton was one of my slaves...."

"Sword of the Lictor" chap 25

Typhon's daughter:

"We slaves. Pas own."

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I'm just sayin'. It could happen.

Indeed, given the degree of tissue matching that would be required for the operation in question to succeed, it would be surprising if Typhon and Piaton were not close relatives.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:37 · in reply to John Watkins

The reader.

.

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brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:37 · in reply to John Watkins

I suppose there might be a raven or two reading.

I wouldn't put it past them and they have the hands.

.

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brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:40 · in reply to James Wynn

Everyone's got to have a hobby.

Look at me.

Only if they made the Time Machine themselves. But, look. If Rudesind and Inire were actually boys together, that means Rudesind is ALSO old enough to have been a councilor to all the other Autarchs. And, yet, all he likes doing is restoring art.

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I see your point, which in fact is a suggestion I made. But that would make them boy time travelers. Which is another comic book series entirely.

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

Severian was there at the construction of Apu Punchau's temple.
How old is he?

On 7/7/2010 3:09 PM, DAVID STOCKHOFF wrote:

If so, then Rudesind and Inire are both about 20,000 years old.

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

I'm a bit lost. Have we actually established WHEN Rudesind was a child? We're dealing with Time Travelers here. I think it is problematic that Rudesind is Inire. But is it

impossible that Inire is Fetchin? And that Rudesind is from the 20th century?

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 20:41 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I'll put it this way. Tolkien was interested in languages. He invented his own language in his 20s which he called a "Fairy language". But a true language must occur over time. It has to change according to certain rules. So Tolkien wrote the Silmarillion as a world for his language to develop within.

In "Leaf by Niggle", Tolkien wrote a story about a guy who enjoyed drawing leaves and was very good at that. So he began drawing landscapes with distant mountains as a backdrop for his leaves. Eventually, everyone liked his his landscapes and were crazy about what was going on in those distant mountains. That's the story of the Silmarillion.

On 7/7/2010 3:36 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
It was based upon his ideas regarding deep history.

In other words.

When I was but a young lad in college, I took a course with Prof. Hoyt on the linguistics of Middle Earth, including an extensive survey of Prof. Tolkien's own writings on the subject, his speeches, and his views on language. The scholarly consensus among such people as H. Fauskanger (who runs the Ardalambion website) is that Tolkien's literary works served as a backdrop for him to experiment with the changing field of philology and its metamorphosis into modern linguistics.

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 2:33 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Tolkien wrote books.

He expected to make money selling them.

He did make money selling them.

His major income did indeed come from his professorship.

You speak quite confidently as to Dr Tolkien's motivations.

I wonder how intimately you knew him.

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Tolkien made his living as a professor. The "background" of the Silmarillion was to give his world an impetus for his languages to change, much as our own did, coupled with his desire to formulate a modern mythology for Great Britain. Ergo, Silmarillion and all of his "notes" that have been posthumously edited and published by his son.

LH

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:22 PM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

The man wanted to get paid.

This is not an hypothesis.

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On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:43 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes<danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it
deeply
flawed?

Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people
skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's
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by
Tolkien's process, and while "Of Beleriand and its Realms" is a hard
slog,
I'm glad to have it.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:41 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

You mean, a new one?

Why would that be a useful thing?

.

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by

Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:19 PM

If so, then Rudesind and Inire are both about 20,000 years old.

By birth perhaps, but not by internal time. Inire made the time-bending and space-bending Botanical Gardens, and had some of Gyll diverted to water the ancient purple creepers and otherworldly averts under the conservation of the curators. It make sense that he also collects artwork from other times and places, and may have diverted a curator to keep it washed as well.

Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2010, 20:42 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:46 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

What possible motivation might he have to be the head curator?

He apparently really enjoys restoring paintings.

I can't imagine the Head does much of that.

.

Yes, it would mean that. So he doesn't want to be Head Curator?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:26 PM

Only if they made the Time Machine themselves. But, look. If Rudesind and Inire were actually boys together, that means Rudesind is ALSO old enough to have been a councilor to all the other Autarchs. And, yet, all he likes doing is restoring art.

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-----Inline Attachment Follows-----

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:48 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Why not?

That's how God works in this World.

.

Could one also have the head of a dog and the body of an ape like the creature watching Severian when he wakes in the Lazaret in SotT?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 4:27 PM, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:

Anyway, so, like Tzadkiel, these squeezed off pieces could act as various agents at various times. One could look like a proboscis monkey with a long nose, one like a uakari with almost no nose, one like a cynocephalic baboon, one like a long-armed, red-haired artist etc. I would expect each one to have an identifying mark to tie them back to the original being though, like the Armiger's Daughter. Part of good story telling.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:49 · in reply to James Wynn

This is only one reading.

.

I'll put it this way. Tolkien was interested in languages. He invented his own language in his 20s which he called a "Fairy language". But a true language must occur over time. It has to change according to certain rules. So Tolkien wrote the Silmarillion as a world for his language to develop within.

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drawing leaves and was very good at that. So he began drawing landscapes with distant mountains as a backdrop for his leaves. Eventually, everyone liked his his landscapes and were crazy about what was going on in those distant mountains. That's the story of the Silmarillion.

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In other words.

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On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 1:43 PM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes<danldo at gmail.com> wrote:

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>:

The Quenta Silmarillion is an unfinished book, but why is it deeply

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Try reading "Of Beleriand and its Realms" without falling asleep.

Is that a matter of not 'leav[ing] out the parts that people skip'?

It's a matter of not doing a good job of integrating one's infodumps.

Again, not a novel. The infodumps were as much for the author's working out

of his creative impulse as anything else. Personally, I'm fascinated

by

Tolkien's process, and while "Of Beleriand and its Realms" is a

hard

slog,

I'm glad to have it.

--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 20:50 · in reply to James Wynn

In what way does what you say contradict what I say?

.

I'll put it this way. Tolkien was interested in languages. He invented his own language in his 20s which he called a "Fairy language". But a true language must occur over time. It has to change according to certain rules. So Tolkien wrote the Silmarillion as a world for his language to develop within.

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--

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2010, 20:51 · in reply to Lee Berman

Where might a gigantic original being which could spawn Father Inire copies actually reside while on Urth? Where indeed. I could also wonder from whence did Juturna and her "sisters" originate? Does a squeezed off piece of Abaia have to be male?

Juturna and the lot could be humans adapted to live underwater, like Baldanders, or their descendants.

Jeff Wilson — 07 Jul 2010, 20:55 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Indeed, given the degree of tissue matching that would be required for the operation in question to succeed, it would be surprising if Typhon and Piaton were not close relatives.

I considered that, but if tissue matching were necessary, he'd use a clone.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 07 Jul 2010, 20:57 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Indeed, given the degree of tissue matching that would be required for the operation in question to succeed, it would be surprising if Typhon and Piaton were not close relatives.

I considered that, but if tissue matching were necessary, he'd use a clone.

Unless what was killing him was inherent to his genome. Then he'd need a close relative that didn't have that disease, whatever it was.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 21:01 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Jeff Wilson wrote (07-07-2010 21:42):

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

That era? By his name I'd guess he was born some centuries before the 20th.

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 21:03 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

This is only one reading.

This is the way Tolkien described it. See "The Letters of JRR Tolkien"

In what way does what you say contradict what I say?

Well, to the extent that 1) what I say is the way Tolkien described the creation of his world in very straightforward and engaging terms, and 2) that he never offered "deep history" as an explanation...well it doesn't

contradict what your saying. Saying "Oranges grow from trees in Florida" does not contradict "Oranges can be thought of as a symbol of fertility." But only one

statement tells me where to buy oranges wholesale.

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 21:11 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 20:49):

Does it deciding that Kent is Superman change the story in any way? I mean, Superman still has to rescue Lois, right?

If Superman were not Clark, where would he have met Lois? Ok, she's a journalist and he's a public figure. If Superman were someone else other than Clark, wouldn't he have other significant people in his alternate life whom we know zilch about? Among whom probably some love interest. Kent being Superman doesn't change the story because in the story that's precisely who Kent is. Kent not being Superman would certainly call for a quite different story.

I'm just sayin'. Imagine if Wolfe had written Superman. There's no way we'd know for certain Kent and Superman were the same guy. If Wolfe had written *Murder On the Orient Express*, there would be no Hercule Poirot. It would have consisted of first person stories from 12 seemingly random passengers and the conductor who found the body. The reader would have been expected to play the role of Poirot.

Dunno. Wolfe wrote the March B Street stories. And Cherry Jubilee.

But **if** Wolfe had written Superman and the text didn't show Superman and Clark were the same guy, our speculation that they might be **would** lead to a richer reading. We would postulate they were the same guy because that would take the story to a whole new level, not because of some esoteric motivation for weaving the alter ego theme into it.

Whereas no one has yet explained just what the considering-that-some-characters-in-the-BNS-are-Inire brings to the table. Lee points to it enlightening Inire's nature and motivations, but I find that sketchy. Could your camp do some more sketching, perhaps?

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 07 Jul 2010, 21:11 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

You did. But were you finished?

How did Rudesind become a curator?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:42 PM

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 21:13 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

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What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 21:18 · in reply to James Wynn

Exactly, or Ouen being her son, or a boatman looking for 'Cas. Or FBO going backwards in time only to keep meeting Severian as if by chance?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 5:13 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:
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António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 21:18 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 22:13):

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Lee points to it enlightening Inire's nature and motivations, but I find that sketchy. Could your camp do some more sketching, perhaps?

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

I'm not talking about narrative advantage. I'm talking about speculative advantage.

And as a side note I'm against the idea of narrative advantage. I don't see that real life employs it, why should fiction?

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 21:33 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Maybe I should point out in more detail how the two things you are confusing are quite distinct.

- One is the author having a purpose for including something in the story. The thing is there because it serves some end. That is its narrative advantage.

- The other is the reader having a purpose for making assumptions about what happens in the

story, i.e., speculation. Speculation is justified because it enables a novel or in some way extended reading.

In fact, the reason you've provided yourself for justifying speculation is that it serves to find a narrative advantage to things which otherwise you think don't have any.

Now, I'm not a fan of the idea that everything must provide narrative advantage. In fact I think a decent lengthy book should have detail in it that is there only for its own sake. Maybe it could provide narrative advantage in a parallel story. Maybe the fact that the character forded 3 instead of 2 brooks could be significant in some untold story about that place. Maybe the story can even be written one of these days.

In short, I don't think everything in a book should serve some purpose within that book. But reader speculation must, because with all the stuff that Wolfe left lying there to toy with, if you don't set some standard, then you can go on indefinitely at random.

Whereas you've done the reverse: you think everything in the story must serve some purpose, yet speculation is free to roam.

Ryan Dunn wrote (07-07-2010 22:18):

Exactly, or Owen being her son, or a boatman looking for 'Cas. Or FBO going backwards in time only to keep meeting Severian as if by chance?

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What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 21:42 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On 7/7/2010 4:18 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

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What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

I'm not talking about narrative advantage. I'm talking about speculative advantage.

And as a side note I'm against the idea of narrative advantage. I don't see that real life employs it, why should fiction?

Okay. What's the speculative advantage to Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

I remember when the grandmother theory was posed. There was no more textual evidence for it than this Hairy Inire theory. The only reason it's not sitting on the "Half-baked Theory" pile today is because Wolfe uncharacteristically confirmed it to a questioner.

I think the real test is: "Do the accumulated facts form a real pattern or only a perceived pattern?" Almost anything you say about Wolfe's fiction *could* be shunted with "who cares? This won't change my opinion on the story." If you feel that way, fine. Go on to the next post. You have nothing to add. People post these theories because they see what looks like a deliberate pattern. They want someone to say "It couldn't work because..." or "Here's something else that fits that pattern...."

u+16b9

Ryan Dunn — 07 Jul 2010, 21:53 · in reply to James Wynn

On Jul 7, 2010, at 5:42 PM, James Wynn wrote:

I remember when the grandmother theory was posed. There was no more textual evidence for it than this Hairy Inire theory. The only reason it's not sitting on the "Half-baked Theory" pile today is because Wolfe uncharacteristically confirmed it to a questioner.

Half baked? And it required a Wolfe confirmation to accept Grandma Dorcas? Man, that one seemed pretty obvious from my first reading. And the confirmation actually instills hope that digging like that for answers is in fact what Wolfe intended with the text.

Whenever he goes to the trouble of describing something mundane, take close note of it, because it means something. Whenever Severian is confused by something, study it carefully, because Wolfe is saying "LOOK AT ME!" He's saying... remember, this is an untrustworthy narrator, so don't take him at his word. Look beyond what he sees, reinterpret it using your own archetypes, use logic where Severian fails. And so forth.

Hethor's rant needs to be studied carefully, otherwise Wolfe (Severian) would not have bothered to share it with us. And when you study it, what do you find? I tried to start that discourse a month ago, and it was quite fruitful. But then there were the preconceived notions that it was trivial to study it.

Same with Inire. His physical absence in conjunction with his omnipresence means "LOOK FOR SIGNS" to me, because that is in keeping with the literary style of Grandma Dorcas. In fact, it's **PRECISELY** the type of thing Wolfe is asking of us.

Whether that rabbit hole leads you to Albuquerque or Anchorage is secondary to the idea of looking for the signs, puzzling it together. Gene wanted to layer a series of books that could be studied for generations. That means there are puzzles, clues, and interwoven symbolism abound.

Inire is probably, along with Tzdakiel and Typhon, one of the main characters we should be looking into. Don't you think?

...ryan

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 21:54 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On 7/7/2010 4:33 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

Whereas you've done the reverse: you think everything in the story must serve some purpose, yet speculation is free to roam.

I think his point was "Inire is repeatedly compared to a monkey. This comes up several times with other characters. Are these flags that Inire is or has been in other guises. If not, what does Wolfe's repeated use of these simian signifiers mean? Why do they occur repeatedly?"

I don't know if he's on to something or not. But saying "I don't see how this changes anything" is just not an answer. A lot times, you don't know a plot element changes anything until a good while after you've accepted it as true.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 21:55 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

You can do quick and dirty.

Graft on a head, route in the spinal chord, give the two time to recover, cut off the right (or was it the left?) head.

You'd need to have identical or clones.

In order for it to work longterm.

But if you were willing to graft your own head onto body after body, you could do it with unrelated bodies.

You'd have to get a new one every six months or so.

.

Indeed, given the degree of tissue matching that would be required for the operation in question to succeed, it would be surprising if Typhon and Piaton were not close relatives.

I considered that, but if tissue matching were necessary, he'd use a clone.

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 22:02 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On Wed, Jul 7, 2010 at 5:53 PM, Ryan Dunn <ryan at liftingfaces.com> wrote:
Same with Inire. His physical absence in conjunction with his omnipresence means "LOOK FOR SIGNS" to me, because that is in keeping with the literary style of Grandma Dorcas. In fact, it's PRECISELY the type of thing Wolfe is asking of us.

I'm not sure that anyone has said that there's nothing to be found in all the various clues about Inire. The question is whether it makes any sense to assume that every candidate for being Inire-in-disguise is in fact Inire-in-disguise, and the dialogue has gone much like this:

"X might be Inire. They both look like monkeys!"

"Well, X doesn't act much like Inire."

"Why the monkey thing, then?"

"Well, X's backstory is inconsistent with X being Inire."

"The backstory's a lie."

"Well, X's physical description is incompatible with Inire's."

"Inire is a shapeshifter and master of disguise."

"Well, that would require Inire to be in two places at once."

"Tzadkiel can do that, why not Inire?"

"Well, what does it add to the story to assume X is Inire?"

"Irrelevant."

At some point in that conversation, the burden of proof was shifted to the skeptic and the argument that X is Inire became non-falsifiable. If Inire is an immortal shapeshifting, time-travelling bilocating liar, it's impossible to demonstrate to anyone's satisfaction that any given character is not Inire.

But why look for him, then? It doesn't much matter who Inire is unless there are people he isn't.

Whether that rabbit hole leads you to Albuquerque or Anchorage is secondary to the idea of looking for the signs, puzzling it together. Gene wanted to layer a series of books that could be studied for generations. That means there are puzzles, clues, and interwoven symbolism abound.

Inire is probably, along with Tzadkiel and Typhon, one of the main characters we should be looking into. Don't you think?

...ryan

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:02 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Ten headed Ravana (sort of an inherently decent Typhon) had, as his name implies, ten heads until he sacrificed one to Ishvara.

Let's say you had a whole bunch of identical clones.

Raise them together as brothers until they are of age.

And let's say you kept all but one in suspended animation.

And let's further say that you grafted the head of that one onto another one when you got old.

So now you have two heads.

You're cool with yourself. What do you care?

Lather, rinse, repeat.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ravana>

.

Indeed, given the degree of tissue matching that would be required for the operation in question to succeed, it would be surprising if Typhon and Piaton were _not_ close relatives.

I considered that, but if tissue matching were necessary, he'd use a clone.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:05 · in reply to António Pedro Marques
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolai_Fechin

Nineteen years.

Now **that** is interesting.

.

Jeff Wilson wrote (07-07-2010 21:42):

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

That era? By his name I'd guess he was born some centuries before the 20th.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:06 · in reply to James Wynn
What is your point?

Is Tolkien's reading the only reading?

Do you consider Tolkien's reading to be authoritative?

I thought you were a Christian. Are you not a Christian?

.

This is only one reading.

This is the way Tolkien described it. See "The Letters of JRR Tolkien"

In what way does what you say contradict what I say?

Well, to the extent that 1) what I say is the way Tolkien described the creation of his world in very straightforward and engaging terms, and 2) that he never offered "deep history" as an explanation...well it doesn't **contradict** what your saying. Saying "Oranges grow from trees in Florida" does not contradict "Oranges can be thought of as a symbol of fertility." But only one statement tells me where to buy oranges wholesale.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:07 · in reply to James Wynn

Whenever you mention an author, you mention the Author.

.

This is only one reading.

This is the way Tolkien described it. See "The Letters of JRR Tolkien"

In what way does what you say contradict what I say?

Well, to the extent that 1) what I say is the way Tolkien described the creation of his world in very straightforward and engaging terms, and 2) that he never offered "deep history" as an explanation...well it doesn't *contradict* what your saying. Saying "Oranges grow from trees in Florida" does not contradict "Oranges can be thought of as a symbol of fertility." But only one statement tells me where to buy oranges wholesale.

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 22:09 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On 7/7/2010 5:06 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

That is your point? Is Tolkien's reading the only reading? Do you consider Tolkien's reading to be authoritative? I thought you were a Christian. Are you not a Christian

What's the subtext here? Why would taking the AUTHOR's reading as AUTHORitive make one a pagan?

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:09 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

Why is it important?

.

You did. But were you finished?

How did Rudesind become a curator?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:42 PM

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:10 · in reply to James Wynn

What is a narrative advantage and why are you talking about it here in public where people can see you?

But *if* Wolfe had written Superman and the etxt didn't show Superman and Clark were the same guy, our speculation that they might be *would* lead to a richer reading. We would postulate they were the same guy because that would take the story to a whole new level, not because of some esoteric motivation for weaving the alter ego theme into it.

Whereas no one has yet explained just what the considering-that-some-characters-in-the-BNS-are-Inire brings to the table.

Lee points to it enlightening Inire's nature and motivations, but I find that sketchy. Could your camp do some more sketching, perhaps?

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 22:12 · in reply to James Wynn

On 7/7/2010 5:09 PM, James Wynn wrote:

On 7/7/2010 5:06 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

That is your point? Is Tolkien's reading the only reading? Do you consider Tolkien's reading to be authoritative? I thought you were a Christian. Are you not a Christian

What's the subtext here? Why would taking the AUTHOR's reading as AUTHORitive make one a pagan?

u+16b9

Oooh. I think I'm being pranked. I feel like an idiot. I'm hip now.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:12 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

What is a narrative advantage when it's at home with its friends?

Exactly, or Ouen being her son, or a boatman looking for 'Cas. Or FBO going backwards in time only to keep meeting Severian as if by chance?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 5:13 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Whereas no one has yet explained just what the considering-that-some-characters-in-the-BNS-are-Inire brings to the table.

Lee points to it enlightening Inire's nature and motivations, but I find

that sketchy. Could your camp do some more sketching, perhaps?

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:33 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

You are wrong, Antonio.

The writer is the author.

The reader is the Author.

.

Maybe I should point out in more detail how the two things you are confusing are quite distinct.

- One is the author having a purpose for including something in the story. The thing is there because it serves some end. That is its narrative advantage.

- The other is the reader having a purpose for making assumptions about what happens in the story, i.e., speculation. Speculation is justified because it enables a novel or in some way extended reading.

In fact, the reason you've provided yourself for justifying speculation is that it serves to find a narrative advantage to things which otherwise you think don't have any.

Now, I'm not a fan of the idea that everything must provide narrative advantage. In fact I think a decent lengthy book should have detail in it that is there only for its own sake. Maybe it could provide narrative advantage in a parallel story. Maybe the fact that the character forded 3 instead of 2 brooks could be significant in some untold story about that place. Maybe the story can even be written one of these days.

In short, I don't think everything in a book should serve some purpose within that book. But reader speculation must, because with all the stuff that Wolfe left lying there to toy with, if you don't set some standard, then you can go on indefinitely at random.

Whereas you've done the reverse: you think everything in the story must serve some purpose, yet speculation is free to roam.

Ryan Dunn wrote (07-07-2010 22:18):

Exactly, or Owen being her son, or a boatman looking for 'Cas. Or FBO going backwards in time only to keep meeting Severian as if by chance?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 5:13 PM, James Wynn<crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Whereas no one has yet explained just what the considering-that-some-characters-in-the-BNS-are-Inire brings to the table.

Lee points to it enlightening Inire's nature and motivations, but I

find

that sketchy. Could your camp do some more sketching, perhaps?

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:39 · in reply to James Wynn

You're not one of those Reconstructionists or whatever you call them, are you Antonio?

Us Americans, you know, am ignorant and unaccustomed to such advanced forms of thought.

.

On 7/7/2010 4:33 PM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

Whereas you've done the reverse: you think everything in the stpry must serve some purpose, yet speculation is free to roam.

I think his point was "Inire is repeatedly compared to a monkey. This comes up several times with other characters. Are these flags that Inire is or has been in other guises. If not, what does Wolfe's repeated use of these simian signifiers mean? Why do they occur repeatedly?"

I don't know if he's on to something or not. But saying "I don't see how this changes anything" is just not an answer. A lot times, you don't know a plot element changes anything until a good while after you've accepted it as true.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:42 · in reply to James Wynn

I don't know.

I am not certain, now, whether I finished that last sentence with a dot or a squiggly thingie or even one of those stand up mofos followed by a squiggly thingie.

I suppose it's possible I wrote it like that.

Could be.

I don't keep copies.

Did you not miss my minor epistle contrasting the two terms Author?

I remember!

You're a protestant!

That solves my puzzlish bewilderment.

.

On 7/7/2010 5:06 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

That is your point? Is Tolkien's reading the only reading? Do you consider Tolkien's reading to be authoritative? I thought you were a

Christian. Are you not a Christian

What's the subtext here? Why would taking the AUTHOR's reading as AUTHORitive make one a pagan?

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:42 · in reply to James Wynn
Master Wynn.

On 7/7/2010 5:09 PM, James Wynn wrote:

On 7/7/2010 5:06 PM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

That is your point? Is Tolkien's reading the only reading? Do you consider Tolkien's reading to be authoritative? I thought you were a Christian. Are you not a Christian

What's the subtext here? Why would taking the AUTHOR's reading as AUTHORitive make one a pagan?

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Oooh. I think I'm being pranked. I feel like an idiot. I'm hip now.

James Wynn — 07 Jul 2010, 22:45 · in reply to John Watkins

On 7/7/2010 5:02 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Same with Inire. His physical absence in conjunction with his omnipresence means "LOOK FOR SIGNS" to me, because that is in keeping with the literary style of Grandma Dorcas. In fact, it's PRECISELY the type of thing Wolfe is asking of us.

I'm not sure that anyone has said that there's nothing to be found in all the various clues about Inire. The question is whether it makes any sense to assume that every candidate for being Inire-in-disguise is in fact Inire-in-disguise, and the dialogue has gone much like this:

This is not really the course of the argument as I saw it. I can come up with an equally tendentious synopsis of the course of this argument from the other side. To a large extent (not in every case) the course of the argument has been people showing how smart they are by coming up with counter-evidence that is totally beside the point.

"X might be Inire. They both look like monkeys!"

"Well, X doesn't act much like Inire."

Well, that's not really surprising for someone in disguise.

"Why the monkey thing, then?"

"Well, X's backstory is inconsistent with X being Inire."

"The backstory's a lie."

I'm not sure this was the general response. I think it was that Inire is a Time-traveller, like Severian. You might as well say that Severian's "backstory" was inconsistent with him being the Conciliator. This was true until Urth of the New Sun was published.

"Well, X's physical description is incompatible with Inire's."

"Inire is a shapeshifter and master of disguise."

Actually, the only implied disguise that a merely human Inire could not pull off was the monkey. And I think Ryan was only half-serious (at best) about that.

"Well, that would require Inire to be in two places at once."

Okay. I guess we're talking about Rudesind is Fechin? Here's where things get techy. It might be right. But it is cumbersome. Too many balls in the air at once. Which would make me despair of ever coming conclusively to a definitive answer. But there are a couple puzzles I've thought that at first and then *click*.

But there are still those monkey arms. Just because one part of a theory goes awry, doesn't mean the whole thing collapses or it is not based on a firm foundation. Saying that it does mean that is just opportunism on the "con" side of the debate.

"Tzadkiel can do that, why not Inire?"

"Well, what does it add to the story to assume X is Inire?"

"Irrelevant."

The problem is not that the assertion is irrelevant. It's the at the con-side has decided to stop arguing evidence and begun to argue metaphysics.

At some point in that conversation, the burden of proof was shifted to the skeptic and the argument that X is Inire became non-falsifiable.

There is very little that is falsifiable tBotNS. When I listen to a theory, I think: "Is this evidence real evidence? Or are the bits of text being offered supposed to mean something else?" Almost always when someone is following a false lead (I've been there), it is because he thinks the subtext means something but Wolfe has intended something else entirely. But determining that requires looking at the text fresh. And that is something people who have read the books 3 or 4 times are usually not inclined to do.

If Inire is an immortal shapeshifting, time-travelling bilocating liar, it's impossible to demonstrate to anyone's satisfaction that any given character is not Inire.

I think the theory limits it to people with hairy red arms and monkey fingers.

u+16b9

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 22:51 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Because Wolfe told us how people become curators. Because that system did not exist in the early 20th century.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Why is it important?

.

You did. But were you finished?

How did Rudesind become a curator?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:42 PM

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:57 · in reply to James Wynn

Or was that Master Bates?

I thought you got it.

Now I think you didn't get it.

The reader is the first author.

The writer is the second.

Does that make more sense?

Hardly anyone understands the proper use of capitalization unless they know a bisseldeutsch.

.

On 7/7/2010 5:02 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Same with Inire. His physical absence in conjunction with his omnipresence means "LOOK FOR SIGNS" to me, because that is in keeping with the literary style of Grandma Dorcas. In fact, it's PRECISELY the type of thing Wolfe is asking of us.

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"X might be Inire. They both look like monkeys!"

"Well, X doesn't act much like Inire."

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If Inire is an immortal shapeshifting, time-travelling bilocating liar, it's impossible to demonstrate to anyone's satisfaction that any given character is not Inire.

I think the theory limits it to people with hairy red arms and monkey fingers.

u+16b9

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 22:58 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Are you very, very sure about that?

In Russia in the late nineteenth century, a Byzantine system of recruitment was, you think, unlikely to survive?

.

Because Wolfe told us how people become curators. Because that system did not exist in the early 20th century.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Why is it important?

.

You did. But were you finished?

How did Rudesind become a curator?

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Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind

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Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:42 PM

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 23:05 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 22:42):

On 7/7/2010 4:18 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

But *if* Wolfe had written Superman and the text didn't show Superman and Clark were the same guy, our speculation that they might be *would* lead to a richer reading. We would postulate they were the same guy because that would take the story to a whole new level, not because of some esoteric motivation for weaving the alter ego theme into it.

Whereas no one has yet explained just what the considering-that-some-characters-in-the-BNS-are-Inire brings to the table. Lee points to it enlightening Inire's nature and motivations, but I find that sketchy. Could your camp do some more sketching, perhaps?

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

I'm not talking about narrative advantage. I'm talking about speculative advantage.

And as a side note I'm against the idea of narrative advantage. I don't see that real life employs it, why should fiction?

Okay. What's the speculative advantage to Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

That has been discussed to death.

I remember when the grandmother theory was posed. There was no more textual evidence for it than this Hairy Inire theory. The only reason it's not sitting on the "Half-baked Theory" pile today is because Wolfe uncharacteristically confirmed it to a questioner.

It's probably the only 'puzzle' in the book that everyone gets. The only way it could be more transparent would be if instead of Cas the boatman would have called her Dorcas. It's not like

the boatman calls her Fifi.

I think the real test is: "Do the accumulated facts form a real pattern or only a perceived pattern?" Almost anything you say about Wolfe's fiction *could* be shunted with "who cares? This won't change my opinion on the story." If you feel that way, fine. Go on to the next post. You have nothing to add. People post these theories because they see what looks like a deliberate pattern. They want someone to say "It couldn't work because..." or "Here's something else that fits that pattern...."

You're *again* trying to find patterns for patterns' sake. That's what's wrong with it.

Patterns come by the dozens. In books as rich in detail as Wolfe's you can get patterns out of anything. It's futile. You think you're clever because you've found a pattern, when in fact the hard thing is not to find them. For the umpteenth time, the *worth* of patterns is what's at stake. Not their viability. To show a pattern is viable in a Wolfe book is like showing there are stars in the sky. "It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis. The real test is 'that pattern is interesting because...'. And what I've asked and haven't yet seen is what follows in that ellipsis.

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 23:11 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (07-07-2010 22:53):

Same with Inire. His physical absence in conjunction with his omnipresence means "LOOK FOR SIGNS" to me, because that is in keeping with the literary style of Grandma Dorcas.

Just as an aside - we follow Severian's trail till he becomes Autarch. I can't find any reason why Inire should appear before that point. Unless it was casually - and here we have someone who should be him at the site of the old Autarch's accident. Later on we have Severian mentioning meeting him while Autarch. Earlier on we have the girls (remebers the girls?) telling their dealings with him. He's not even absent in direct discourse since we have the letter. On the other hand, in what does his omnipresence consist except people mentioning him? In short, I dont see that he is either physically absent or omnipresent.

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 23:15 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 22:54):

On 7/7/2010 4:33 PM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

Whereas you've done the reverse: you think everything in the stpry must serve some purpose, yet speculation is free to roam.

I think his point was "Inire is repeatedly compared to a monkey. This comes up several times with other characters. Are these flags that Inire is or has been in other guises. If not, what does Wolfe's repeated use of these simian signifiers mean? Why do they occur repeatedly?"

I don't know if he's on to something or not. But saying "I don't see how this changes anything" is just not an answer. A lot times, you don't know a plot element changes anything until a good while after you've accepted it as true.

I'm positing it as true - say, Rudesind is Inire. And I'm asking 'and now what?'. And I'm not getting an answer.

As to the significance of the simian signifiers, it could of course be that wherever they're

present we're dealing with an agent of Inire. Never disputed that. Though I find it a wild stretch.

Or maybe they tell us more about the characters' idea of monkeys than of the beings being characterised.

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 23:15 · in reply to James Wynn

Um, yes it is, actually. Unless you can explain how it is that the person not only puts on a mask and changes his clothes but also disguises his voice. Has he learned to control his own habitual gestures and verbal tics? How? Where? Has he practiced the vocabulary and inflections of another age and social level? Where?

If you can answer those questions, you have a theory. If you don't, you're merely asserting and following that up with complaining.

On 7/7/2010 5:02 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Same with Inire. His physical absence in conjunction with his omnipresence means "LOOK FOR SIGNS" to me, because that is in keeping with the literary style of Grandma Dorcas. In fact, it's PRECISELY the type of thing Wolfe is asking of us.

I'm not sure that anyone has said that there's nothing to be found in all the various clues about Inire. The question is whether it makes any sense to assume that every candidate for being Inire-in-disguise is in fact Inire-in-disguise, and the dialogue has gone much like this:

This is not really the course of the argument as I saw it. I can come up with an equally tendentious synopsis of the course of this argument from the other side. To a large extent (not in every case) the course of the argument has been people showing how smart they are by coming up with counter-evidence that is totally beside the point.

"X might be Inire. They both look like monkeys!"

"Well, X doesn't act much like Inire."

Well, that's not really surprising for someone in disguise.

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 23:16 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

If you think you have a theory, stop posting gnomic fragments of thought and lay out your theory.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:
Are you very, very sure about that?

In Russia in the late nineteenth century, a Byzantine system of recruitment was, you think, unlikely to survive?

.

Because Wolfe told us how people become curators. Because that system did not exist in the early 20th century.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Why is it important?

.

You did. But were you finished?
How did Rudesind become a curator?

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From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by Rudesind
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:42 PM

true...
So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

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

John Watkins — 07 Jul 2010, 23:17 · in reply to António Pedro Marques
2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com>

As to the significance of the simian signifiers, it could of course be that wherever they're present we're dealing with an agent of Inire. Never disputed that. Though I find it a wild stretch.

Actually, I think this may be the simplest explanation available. Rudesind probably is Inire's agent.

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 23:21 · in reply to David Stockhoff
And, of course, a person from 1600 can't be recruited for a 2010 job.

David Stockhoff wrote (07-07-2010 23:51):

Because Wolfe told us how people become curators. Because that system did not exist in the early 20th century.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:
Why is it important?

.

You did. But were you finished?
How did Rudesind become a curator?

António Pedro Marques — 07 Jul 2010, 23:26 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote (08-07-2010 00:17):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>>

As to the significance of the simian signifiers, it could of course be that wherever they're present we're dealing with an agent of Inire. Never disputed that. Though I find it a wild stretch.

Actually, I think this may be the simplest explanation available. Rudesind probably is Inire's agent.

Oh, I don't find that a stretch at all, though I'd prefer a little more freedom for him. What I find a stretch is to associate having simian traits (because people with red hair remind monkeys!?!... I think this happens only in the english-speaking world, but Wolfe belongs to that world, even if he of all people might not be subject to such centrism) with being an agent of Inire. If nothing else because it's not that natural, is it? You don't recruit your people based on some such trait, and nothing stops the antagonist from doing the same.

Gerry Quinn — 07 Jul 2010, 23:29 · in reply to James Wynn

From: James Wynn

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother

It creates verisimilitude at least; Severian can raise the dead, but he does not walk around surrounded by a crowd of newly raised returnees. Yet how would he discover he can raise the dead, if it does not happen? The answer is that he inadvertently gets put in a place/position where he spontaneously raises one close to him.

I don't think it is vital or necessarily even important to the overall story that Dorcas is his grandmother.

- Gerry Quinn

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 23:30 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

What the hell do you expect from a protestant?

James Wynn wrote (07-07-2010 22:42):

On 7/7/2010 4:18 PM, Ant??nio Pedro Marques wrote:

But *if* Wolfe had written Superman and the etxt didn't show Superman and Clark were the same guy, our speculation that they might be *would* lead to a richer reading. We would postulate they were the same guy because that would take the story to a whole new level, not because of some esoteric motivation for weaving the alter ego theme into it.

Whereas no one has yet explained just what the considering-that-some-characters-in-the-BNS-are-Inire brings to the table. Lee points to it enlightening Inire's nature and motivations, but I find that sketchy. Could your camp do some more sketching, perhaps?

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Okay. What's the speculative advantage to Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

That has been discussed to death.

I remember when the grandmother theory was posed. There was no more textual evidence for it than this Hairy Inire theory. The only reason it's not sitting on the "Half-baked Theory" pile today is because Wolfe uncharacteristically confirmed it to a questioner.

It's probably the only 'puzzle' in the book that everyone gets. The only way

it could be more transparent would be if instead of Cas the boatman would have called her Dorcas. It's not like the boatman calls her Fifi.

I think the real test is: "Do the accumulated facts form a real pattern or only a perceived pattern?" Almost anything you say about Wolfe's fiction *could* be shunted with "who cares? This won't change my opinion on the story." If you feel that way, fine. Go on to the next post. You have nothing to add. People post these theories because they see what looks like a deliberate pattern. They want someone to say "It couldn't work because..." or "Here's something else that fits that pattern...."

You're *again* trying to find patterns for patterns' sake. That's what's wrong with it.

Patterns come by the dozens. In books as rich in detail as Wolfe's you can get patterns out of anything. It's futile. You think you're clever because you've found a pattern, when in fact the hard thing is not to find them. For the umpteenth time, the *worth* of patterns is what's at stake. Not their viability. To show a pattern is viable in a Wolfe book is like showing

there are stars in the sky. "It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis. The real test is 'that pattern is interesting because...'. And what I've asked and haven't yet seen is what follows in that ellipsis.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 23:33 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Why is this a problem?

People do these things.

I have done all of these things.

I do some of them quite regularly.

What the hell do you think you are saying?

Do you think that the stuff that you describe is somehow esoteric?

Do you believe that everyone in the World is as isolated from Reality as you are?

I assure you that there are several people who are not.

.

Um, yes it is, actually. Unless you can explain how it is that the person not only puts on a mask and changes his clothes but also disguises his voice. Has he learned to control his own habitual gestures and verbal tics? How? Where? Has he practiced the vocabulary and inflections of another age and social level? Where?

If you can answer those questions, you have a theory. If you don't, you're merely asserting and following that up with complaining.

On 7/7/2010 5:02 PM, John Watkins wrote:

Same with Inire. His physical absence in conjunction with his omnipresence means "LOOK FOR SIGNS" to me, because that is in keeping with the literary style of Grandma Dorcas. In fact, it's PRECISELY the type of thing Wolfe is asking of us.

I'm not sure that anyone has said that there's nothing to be found in all the various clues about Inire. The question is whether it makes any sense to assume that every candidate for being Inire-in-disguise is in fact Inire-in-disguise, and the dialogue has gone much like this:

This is not really the course of the argument as I saw it. I can come up with an equally tendentious synopsis of the course of this argument from the other side. To a large extent (not in every case) the course of the argument has been people showing how smart they are by coming up with counter-evidence that is totally beside the point.

"X might be Inire. They both look like monkeys!"

"Well, X doesn't act much like Inire."

Well, that's not really surprising for someone in disguise.

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 23:37 · in reply to David Stockhoff

I have no theory.

I am not you.

.

If you think you have a theory, stop posting gnomic fragments of thought and lay out your theory.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Are you very, very sure about that?

In Russia in the late nineteenth century, a Byzantine system of recruitment was, you think, unlikely to survive?

.

Because Wolfe told us how people become curators. Because that system did not exist in the early 20th century.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Why is it important?

.

You did. But were you finished?

How did Rudesind become a curator?

--- On Wed, 7/7/10, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

From: Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com>

Subject: Re: (urth) The mystery of the image of an astronaut cleaned by

Rudesind

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:42 PM

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net

Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 23:38 · in reply to David Stockhoff

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What am I saying?

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Urth Mailing List
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brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 23:39 · in reply to António Pedro Marques
Or even people who were born in 1881.

They couldn't possibly do the kindsa things us modern guys do.

.

And, of course, a person from 1600 can't be recruited for a 2010 job.

David Stockhoff wrote (07-07-2010 23:51):

Because Wolfe told us how people become curators. Because that system
did not exist in the early 20th century.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Why is it important?

.

You did. But were you finished?
How did Rudesind become a curator?

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 23:44 · in reply to Gerry Quinn
Also - and this is in fact esoteric knowledge - children of incest have interesting abilities.

The children of sibling incest, for instance, are royal, with all that implies.

The children of cross generational incest have other abilities.

The problem is that you people announce that you don't believe this and you don't believe that
and then you ask those of us who do believe this and that to account for ourselves.

You guys can and should pay specific attention to the space where my left testicle used to be

when you kiss my ass.

.

From: James Wynn

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother

It creates verisimilitude at least; Severian can raise the dead, but he does not walk around surrounded by a crowd of newly raised returnees. Yet how would he discover he can raise the dead, if it does not happen? The answer is that he inadvertently gets put in a place/position where he spontaneously raises one close to him.

I don't think it is vital or necessarily even important to the overall story that Dorcas is his grandmother.

- Gerry Quinn

brunians at brunians.org — 07 Jul 2010, 23:48 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

—
In 1923 he emigrated to the United States and landed in New York. He was already well known in the States from canvases sent to American and European exhibitions. In fact, it was his American friends and patrons that helped him leave Russia. His portraits were in demand immediately and he won the first prize at the Academy in New York in 1924 and a medal at the 1926 International Exposition in Philadelphia.

Fechin became well-known for his powerful portraits that always seemed to radiate from the eyes of the subject. Some of his more renowned subjects are Nikolai Lenin, Karl Marx, Frieda Lawrence and Lillian Gish. At an early age he had learned carving and produced impressionistic sculpture primarily from wood. At the Academy he used other materials but he was impatient about the necessary construction of armatures and had no care for the seemingly endless casting processes, while the creative process became the lesser part. With wood he could begin creating immediately.

.

Are you very, very sure about that?

In Russia in the late nineteenth century, a Byzantine system of recruitment was, you think, unlikely to survive?

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

Date: Wednesday, July 7, 2010, 4:42 PM

true...

So, does someone have a theory he'd like to share?

I thought I'd mentioned Fechin = our Fechin already, and Rudesind was
collected along with the paintings of that era to care for them.

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 23:49 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Case in point.

I predict that you will continue to make bizarre assertions and never once explain them or
explain why we should care.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Why is this a problem?

People do these things.

I have done all of these things.

I do some of them quite regularly.

What the hell do you think you are saying?

Do you think that the stuff that you describe is somehow esoteric?

Do you believe that everyone in the World is as isolated from Reality as
you are?

I assure you that there are several people who are not.

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Um, yes it is, actually. Unless you can explain how it is that the
person not only puts on a mask and changes his clothes but also
disguises his voice. Has he learned to control his own habitual gestures
and verbal tics? How? Where? Has he practiced the vocabulary and
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"X might be Inire. They both look like monkeys!"

"Well, X doesn't act much like Inire."

Well, that's not really surprising for someone in disguise.

David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 23:50 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I know you don't.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:
I have no theory.

I am not you.

.

If you think you have a theory, stop posting gnomish fragments of thought and lay out your theory.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

Are you very, very sure about that?

In Russia in the late nineteenth century, a Byzantine system of recruitment was, you think, unlikely to survive?

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David Stockhoff — 07 Jul 2010, 23:50 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Nothing at all.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:
If you are wise, Dr Stockhoff, you will reflect upon what you know of me.

What am I saying?

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Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2010, 00:55 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Because Wolfe told us how people become curators. Because that system did not exist in the early 20th century.

Well, he related how they become librarians. IIRC, curators also oversee the Botanical Gardens. I don't see that the Book of Gold would particularly attract kids suitable to gardening.

It's not hard to imagine the Vizier and Master Hangsemstrait returning from some obscure province with a flierload of "newly rediscovered" paintings and a surplus apprentice.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 01:17 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Meaning, returning from the past. Right?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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Urth Mailing List

António Pedro Marques — 08 Jul 2010, 01:43 · in reply to Lee Berman

I'll try to present my point of view in more general terms.

When we connect real world dots, we don't do it guided by our impressions of how the order of the universe would be neater. We do it according to how the connections may give us a new understanding of what's going on. You don't address a criminal case, for instance, by asking yourself what given connections might result in a more stylish architecture of the crime.

Imagine if you were reading a mystery and your attempt to find out what had happened was based not on the story itself but on the type of person the author was more likely to prefer as a criminal, or the way a given solution would make the plot fall into some esoteric category you think the author is fond of.

If I were the author I wouldn't like it. I'm here telling you a story, doing my best to make it lifelike or vividder than that, full of hard-crafted uniqueness, and there are you trying to make it all fit some stock model. Of course, a kindly author might not let show disappointment, if after all such exercises make the book enjoyable to you.

I don't think good authors write cryptic books with the intention of having a legion of readers trying to figure out the author's thought processes or raw devices. The clues that are there are meant for the reader to figure out the world being described. The line between the two lies

where the reader's endeavours address the story given (in itself, as if it were not art but a real chronicle), or the inferred artistic process.

If I sound acrimonious it's not on purpose. It's just that I find your efforts quite good - probably better than I'd manage myself - but misguided.

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 01:45 · in reply to David Stockhoff

To ask the answer to questions that have already been answered is a rhetorical tactic typically used with hostile opponents.

It is typically used by lawyers examining witnesses with an audience consisting of the jury.

Juries, as is notorious, are selected for stupidity.

You trick your opponent into saying something false.

You get him to confirm that he believes what he said.

You then proceed to falsify the false belief to which he has committed himself.

This impresses idiots etc.

By using this tactic you are telling your interlocutor(s) that you believe (that) t(he)y is/are stupid.

Do you in fact believe that the people you are talking to are stupid?

Do you, as I suspect, believe that you are much more intelligent than the general run of people on this mailing list?

Or is it just me and a few others that you feel superior to?

.

Meaning, returning from the past. Right?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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It's not hard to imagine the Vizier and Master Hangsemstrait returning from some obscure province with a flierload of "newly rediscovered" paintings and a surplus apprentice.

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 01:47 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

My appreciation for what you say cannot be expressed in words.

.

I'll try to present my point of view in more general terms.

When we connect real world dots, we don't do it guided by our impressions of how the order of the universe would be neater. We do it according to how the connections may give us a new understanding of what's going on. You don't address a criminal case, for instance, by asking yourself what given connections might result in a more stylish architecture of the crime.

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If I sound acrimonious it's not on purpose. It's just that I find your efforts quite good - probably better than I'd manage myself - but misguided.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 01:52 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Brunie, Jeff is capable of letting me know if I understood him correctly.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

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It's not hard to imagine the Vizier and Master Hangsemstrait returning from some obscure province with a flierload of "newly rediscovered" paintings and a surplus apprentice.

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2010, 01:58 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Meaning, returning from the past. Right?

Sure. I'm not too sure how much of a cover story would be needed, though. Tzadkiel's sailors don't seem to treat their time-travel like a deep dark secret, and Rudesind doesn't seem the type who could be counted on to keep it, unless he somehow didn't know it himself. But he had to have been told something to account for the change in the moon, besides "we do things differently in South America."

Roy C. Lackey — 08 Jul 2010, 02:11 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote:

I'm not sure that anyone has said that there's nothing to be found in all the various clues about Inire. The question is whether it makes any sense to assume that every candidate for being Inire-in-disguise is in fact Inire-in-disguise, and the dialogue has gone much like this:

[snip]

At some point in that conversation, the burden of proof was shifted to the skeptic and the argument that X is Inire became non-falsifiable. If Inire is an immortal shapeshifting, time-travelling bilocating liar, it's impossible to demonstrate to anyone's satisfaction that any given character is not Inire.

Excellent! That is exactly the way the argument has gone, both now and in the past.

Ant?nio wrote:

[snip]

To show a pattern is viable in a Wolfe book is like showing there are stars in the sky. "It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis. [snip]

Ditto.

Things that get ignored tend to be anything in the text that that doesn't fit or contradicts the pattern. It's okay to go on about monkey features and noses, but when, say, the old man at Casdow's says of Fechin "His face wasn't a monkey's face at all. Fechin was handsome--the handsomest around.", that gets waved away. The old man also said that Fechin was "A tall, wild boy with red hair on his hands, on his arms. Like a monkey's arms, . . ." (SWORD, chap. XV) But the old Boatman said of Inire, "Just a little man he is, with a wry neck and bow legs." (SHADOW, chap. XXII) "Tall" doesn't fit with "little" and "bow legs", but I guess that's where the lying comes in. Or the shapeshifting.

Fechin seems to connect the old man at Casdow's with Rudesind; that much is in the text, but that doesn't make any or all of the three men Inire.

-Roy

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 02:12 · in reply to David Stockhoff

As I say, those who wish me to perceive them as friendly persons tend to address me as Josh.

I can only think that whether or not I like you is a matter of indifference to you.

This tears at my soul in ways that I cannot express, and so will not attempt to express.

.

Brunie, Jeff is capable of letting me know if I understood him correctly.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

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Meaning, returning from the past. Right?

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David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 02:57 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I don't think any cover story would be needed at all. Do you refer to this:

"This isn't the Citadel," I reminded him again. "How did you come to be here, anyway? Did they bring you here to clean these?" "That's right. That's right." He leaned on my arm. "There's a logical explanation for everything, and don't you forget it. That must have been the way. Father Inire wanted me to clean his, so here I am." He paused, considering. "Wait a bit, I've got it wrong. I had talent as a boy, that's what I'm supposed to say. My parents, you know, always encouraged me, and I'd draw for hours. I recollect one time I spent all one sunny day sketching in chalk on the back of our house." . . . I asked Rudesind who it was who had told him he must tell me about his childhood. "Why, Father Inire," he said, cocking his head up to look at me. "Who do you suppose?"

I take this as some direction Inire gave him upon posting him as a lookout for Severian. But it would explain the mention of Fechin, who is after all not a saint.

Could this also be a clue?

Saint Rudesind: Born in Galicia, Spain, in 907 to a noble family, he was appointed bishop <<http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=1918>> of Mondonedo at the age of eighteen and against his personal wishes.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

Meaning, returning from the past. Right?

Sure. I'm not too sure how much of a cover story would be needed, though. Tzadkiel's sailors don't seem to treat their time-travel like a deep dark secret, and Rudesind doesn't seem the type who could be counted on to keep it, unless he somehow didn't know it himself. But he had to have been told something to account for the change in the moon, besides "we do things differently in South America."

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 03:04 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

How did Casdow's husband get there?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

Meaning, returning from the past. Right?

Sure. I'm not too sure how much of a cover story would be needed, though. Tzadkiel's sailors don't seem to treat their time-travel like a deep dark secret, and Rudesind doesn't seem the type who could be counted on to keep it, unless he somehow didn't know it himself. But he had to have been told something to account for the change in the moon, besides "we do things differently in South America."

Urth Mailing List

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 03:07 · in reply to David Stockhoff

People are often named after saints without themselves being the saints that they are named after.

I believe this to be the case, in any case.

.

I don't think any cover story would be needed at all. Do you refer to this:

"This isn't the Citadel," I reminded him again. "How did you come to be here,

anyway? Did they bring you here to clean these?"

"That's right. That's right." He leaned on my arm. "There's a logical explanation for everything, and don't you forget it. That must have been the

way. Father Inire wanted me to clean his, so here I am." He paused, considering.

"Wait a bit, I've got it wrong. I had talent as a boy, that's what I'm supposed to say. My parents, you know, always encouraged me, and I'd draw for hours. I recollect one time I spent all one sunny day sketching in chalk on the back of our house."

. . .

I asked Rudesind who it was who had told him he must tell me about his childhood.

"Why, Father Inire," he said, cocking his head up to look at me. "Who do you suppose?"

I take this as some direction Inire gave him upon posting him as a lookout for Severian. But it would explain the mention of Fechin, who is after all not a saint.

Could this also be a clue?

Saint Rudesind: Born in Galicia, Spain, in 907 to a noble family, he was appointed bishop <<http://www.catholic.org/encyclopedia/view.php?id=1918>> of Mondonedo at the age of eighteen and against his personal wishes.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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Sure. I'm not too sure how much of a cover story would be needed, though.

Tzadkiel's sailors don't seem to treat their time-travel like a deep dark

secret, and Rudesind doesn't seem the type who could be counted on to keep

it, unless he somehow didn't know it himself. But he had to have been told

something to account for the change in the moon, besides "we do things differently in South America."

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 03:09 · in reply to David Stockhoff

How did Casdove's husband get where?

.

How did Casdove's husband get there?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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told
something to account for the change in the moon, besides "we do things
differently in South America."

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 03:11 · in reply to David Stockhoff

You want to know the plot device?

Is that what you are asking?

This is of a piece with you questioning my gnomonic utterances.

I believe that you believe whatever it is you believe.

You are sincere in your belief.

In whatever you believe in.

Whatever that is exactly.

It's your insisting that everyone use words the way you use them that I dislike.

.

How did Casdow's husband get there?

Jeff Wilson wrote:

Meaning, returning from the past. Right?

Sure. I'm not too sure how much of a cover story would be needed,
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something to account for the change in the moon, besides "we do things
differently in South America."

Mr Thalassocrat — 08 Jul 2010, 03:15 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On Thu, Jul 8, 2010 at 11:41 AM, Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net> wrote:

<sensible stuff>

+1.

Another +1 for Antonio's standard, which I phrase as: does a proposed story enhance the overall story, or not? I enjoy Wolfe because he is not just a creator of "puzzle boxes". Rather, he creates opportunities for discovering and constructing within the white space stories which enrich the narrative-as-told. Not in some cheap hermeneutic, "hidden meaning", explanation-of-everything, whatever, sense; but in the sense of enriching one's sense of the characters, their motivations, their possibilities etc etc.

Sometimes I don't think he pulls it off: eg "An Evil Guest". I just can't find a story-enhancement reward for the effort of trying to work out the white space, in that one.

Another eg: Sev's family. The text seems to have all kinds of hints inviting us to try to figure out his family tree, but I think there is neither enough information nor enough story-potential to do anything with this except drive oneself bat-shit crazy.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 03:24 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

There needs to be a principle of, I don't know, conservation of explanation or something. And we need to call each other on it.

For example, if a mysterious figure gains powers (expert acting, sharpshooting, shapeshifting, timetriping) to explain specific textual features, that in other contexts begin to overlap and become redundant (i.e., a feature can be explained by any of these powers), then we have a condition of overexplanation. There are more explanations than there are problems and they contradict one another. Why would the burglar use his powers of disguise if he could simply go back in time to when the apartment was empty? And so on. Wolfe's characters often address this issue directly.

Overexplanation is a violation of form. Sometimes the most mundane explanations are best, because they require the least effort and never lead to redundancy. One asks questions not to challenge but to test.

I'm afraid I'm not expressing myself well, but does this make sense?

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

John Watkins wrote:

I'm not sure that anyone has said that there's nothing to be found in all the various clues about Inire. The question is whether it makes any sense to assume that every candidate for being Inire-in-disguise is in fact Inire-in-disguise, and the dialogue has gone much like this:

[snip]

At some point in that conversation, the burden of proof was shifted to the skeptic and the argument that X is Inire became non-falsifiable. If Inire is an immortal shapeshifting, time-travelling bilocating liar, it's impossible to demonstrate to anyone's satisfaction that any given character

is not Inire.

Excellent! That is exactly the way the argument has gone, both now and in the past.

Antonio wrote:

[snip]

To show a pattern is viable in a Wolfe book is like showing there are stars in the sky. "It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis. [snip]

Ditto.

Things that get ignored tend to be anything in the text that that doesn't fit or contradicts the pattern. It's okay to go on about monkey features and noses, but when, say, the old man at Casdow's says of Fechin "His face wasn't a monkey's face at all. Fechin was handsome--the handsomest around.", that gets waved away. The old man also said that Fechin was "A tall, wild boy with red hair on his hands, on his arms. Like a monkey's arms, . . ." (SWORD, chap. XV) But the old Boatman said of Inire, "Just a little man he is, with a wry neck and bow legs." (SHADOW, chap. XXII) "Tall" doesn't fit with "little" and "bow legs", but I guess that's where the lying comes in. Or the shapeshifting.

Fechin seems to connect the old man at Casdow's with Rudesind; that much is in the text, but that doesn't make any or all of the three men Inire.

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2010, 04:07 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/7/2010 9:57 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

I asked Rudesind who it was who had told him he must tell me about his childhood.

"Why, Father Inire," he said, cocking his head up to look at me. "Who do you suppose?"

I take this as some direction Inire gave him upon posting him as a lookout for Severian. But it would explain the mention of Fechin, who is after all not a saint.

I've just recalled that Fechin is also known to the old man in the cabin, and am stumped about how to account for that.

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

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2010, 04:13 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/7/2010 10:04 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

How did Casdow's husband get there?

If you mean the old man in Casdow's cabin who talks about having been Fechin's friend as a boy, like I said, I can't explain it. But Wikipedia reports an Irish saint Feichin of the 7th century.

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

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2010, 04:14 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/7/2010 8:52 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

Brunie, Jeff is capable of letting me know if I understood him correctly.

Please do not feed the energy creatures.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
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James Wynn — 08 Jul 2010, 04:46 · in reply to Mr Thalassocrat

For the record, I don't give a hoot about Rudesind and only a little bit about Fechin. Whatever Inire is, is fine with me. But what I don't like is cheap shots. And that is what this post is about for me.

say, Rudesind is Inire. And I'm asking 'and now what?'. And I'm not getting an answer.

Actually, I have answered you. I've explained that the question cannot be answered. I've made a request of you: Replaced "Rudesind is Inire" with "Doras is Severian's grandmother" and answer the same question. The answer is the same in both instances. You've dodged this challenge repeatedly.

"It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern..." is essentially gratis.

It's not ignored. When someone proffers a theory, he feels obliged to ride it until it breaks down. It's just how it works. And just because someone posits an explanation that is shown to be problematic does not mean there is nothing there. Putting it out there and taking the beating over it is part of the game. But sitting on your backside and drawling "I don't see it" is about as offensive a response as I've seen. And I see it every time someone pieces together an argument.

Patterns come by the dozens. In books as rich in detail as Wolfe's you can get patterns out of anything. It's futile. You think you're clever because you've found a pattern, when in fact the hard thing is not to find them.

This POV is lazy. And it's not even true. Not even close to true. Wolfe does not say the same thing over and over or reference the same physical trait over and over for no point. You more of his stories and you'll see that's true.

Nor is it true that solid patterns are hard not find. Wolfe's problem is in the other direction. He doesn't leave nearly ENOUGH clues. His work often tends to appear to be randomly lackadaisical until you read it a second time or talk to someone about it. And then you find out it was a different story from the one you thought you were reading.

And *no one* who enjoys reading Wolfe thinks reading him verrry carefully and then taking a conclusive leap is futile. Well, it's rare anyway. I don't care what anyone says. Pick the most textually rigorous person on this list. If he's been here long that person has proffered wild, even bizarre, explanations at times based on the thinnest of evidence. You'll do it too, Antonio. Textual rigor is important. Priding yourself on it is arrogant and lacking in any self-awareness.

In short, I don't think everything in a book should serve some purpose within that book. But reader speculation must, because with all the stuff that Wolfe left lying there to toy with, if you don't set some standard, then you can go on indefinitely at random.

There is no objective standard. This standard itself is purely subjective. But that's not the problem with it in practice. The problem with this standard you've laid down is that it is simultaneously "know-nothing" and presumptive. It's presumptive, in practice, because it declares that everything in the story of significance is already known. Which is ridiculous. It was only a few years ago that someone pretty convincingly argued that the tunnels Severian walks through to reach Valeria move through Time. It's know-nothing because it declares anything one doesn't know already must not be important since, after all, we've got along alright without it until now.

When you agree with someone's theory, it seems to have all kinds of "speculative significance". When you don't or (more often) when the explanation is above your head, it seems pointless.

It's not as though I've never seen this standard before. It's an easy trump card someone pulls out whenever laying out a detailed rebuttal seems too hard, but not saying anything at all seems harder.

u+16b9

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 04:55 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Allow me to defend myself here.

I am finding puzzle pieces and asking someone to help me solve it. I do deem them to be puzzle pieces, though, before I serve them to this group. Meaning, I don't just look for random patterns and decide to throw the noodle on the wall to see if it sticks.

The monkey descriptions are clear as day to me, and warrant investigation. I am aware this has been discussed in the past, but I feel like the second part has not been considered.

The only think I've drawn from this discourse, and my own deduction, is that Inire is watching over Severian throughout his journey. Is he shaping it? Is Severian nothing more than the puppet controlled by Inire? There is certainly text to suggest that ("When I first came to court I was told, as a great secret, that it was Father Inire who really determined the policy of the Commonwealth. When I had been there two years, a man very highly placed - I can't even tell you his name - said it was the Autarch who ruled, though to those in the House Absolute it might seem that it was Father Inire.").

And if that is the case, doesn't it turn the entire "hero quest" on its head? To me, that is reason enough to look for evidence that supports this notion of Inire being a watcher throughout this journey, and the more 'under our nose' he is, the better.

I don't know where that puts me in your silo structure, but I believe that anything a book **does** to a person cannot be quarantined as invalid or inappropriate. I am sure Wolfe appreciates all and any pondering over his canon.

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 5:33 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

Maybe I should point out in more detail how the two things you are confusing are quite distinct.

- One is the author having a purpose for including something in the story. The thing is there because it serves some end. That is its narrative advantage.

- The other is the reader having a purpose for making assumptions about what happens in the story, i.e., speculation. Speculation is justified because it enables a novel or in some way extended reading.

In fact, the reason you've provided yourself for justifying speculation is that it serves to find a narrative advantage to things which otherwise you think don't have any.

Now, I'm not a fan of the idea that everything must provide narrative advantage. In fact I think a decent lengthy book should have detail in it that is there only for its own sake. Maybe it could provide

narrative advantage in a parallel story. Maybe the fact that the character forded 3 instead of 2 brooks could be significant in some untold story about that place. Maybe the story can even be written one of these days.

In short, I don't think everything in a book should serve some purpose within that book. But reader speculation must, because with all the stuff that Wolfe left lying there to toy with, if you don't set some standard, then you can go on indefinitely at random.

Whereas you've done the reverse: you think everything in the story must serve some purpose, yet speculation is free to roam.

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 05:01 · in reply to James Wynn

On Jul 8, 2010, at 12:46 AM, James Wynn wrote:

Nor is it true that solid patterns are hard not find. Wolfe's problem is in the other direction. He doesn't leave nearly ENOUGH clues. His work often tends to appear to be randomly lackadaisical until you read it a second time or talk to someone about it. And then you find out it was a different story from the one you thought you were reading.

I think you've summarized what I've felt about Wolfe for some time. The first reading (if you've read him before) you are on high alert, and analyzing everything. This usually leads to a stiff first reading that sort of weaves together near the end. And this almost ALWAYS elicits a feeling of... "what the hell did I miss? Because I know it was significant, whatever it was."

At that point, you re-read it, and many of the clues you missed were perfectly placed, fully intentional, and clever to the hilt.

That is what separates Wolfe from most other mortals for me. Not to laud him overly idyllically, but I don't think many other authors attempt or could achieve if they DID attempt this sort of layered literary approach.

Hence the pondering of people who have monkey traits as not just some throwaway piece of scrap that I or someone else may be obsessing over.

It is the same with my assertion that he told us Agia's skull hit the stone with the sound of a hammer, despite her full head of hair. That, to me, was not just colorful description. It was a clue about the nature of her skull, and thus HER, and thus her affect on Severian, and thus her effect on his journey, and the whole book for that matter.

...ryan

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 05:02 · in reply to David Stockhoff

There needs be no such principal and we have no need to so call any such nonexistent principal.

Here, you see?

You are mistaken in your beliefs.

.

There needs to be a principle of, I don't know, conservation of explanation or something. And we need to call each other on it.

For example, if a mysterious figure gains powers (expert acting, sharpshooting, shapeshifting, timetriping) to explain specific textual features, that in other contexts begin to overlap and become redundant (i.e., a feature can be explained by any of these powers), then we have a condition of overexplanation. There are more explanations than there are problems and they contradict one another. Why would the burglar use his powers of disguise if he could simply go back in time to when the

apartment was empty? And so on. Wolfe's characters often address this issue directly.

Overexplanation is a violation of form. Sometimes the most mundane explanations are best, because they require the least effort and never lead to redundancy. One asks questions not to challenge but to test.

I'm afraid I'm not expressing myself well, but does this make sense?

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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to assume that every candidate for being Inire-in-disguise is in fact Inire-in-disguise, and the dialogue has gone much like this:

[snip]

At some point in that conversation, the burden of proof was shifted to the

skeptic and the argument that X is Inire became non-falsifiable. If Inire

is an immortal shapeshifting, time-travelling bilocating liar, it's impossible to demonstrate to anyone's satisfaction that any given

character

is not Inire.

Excellent! That is exactly the way the argument has gone, both now and in the past.

Ant?nio wrote:

[snip]

To show a pattern is viable in a Wolfe book is like showing there are stars in the sky. "It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as

in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis. [snip]

Ditto.

Things that get ignored tend to be anything in the text that that doesn't

fit or contradicts the pattern. It's okay to go on about monkey features and

noses, but when, say, the old man at Casdow's says of Fechin "His face wasn't a monkey's face at all. Fechin was handsome--the handsomest around.",

that gets waved away. The old man also said that Fechin was "A tall, wild

boy with red hair on his hands, on his arms. Like a monkey's arms, . . ."

(SWORD, chap. XV) But the old Boatman said of Inire, "Just a little man he

is, with a wry neck and bow legs." (SHADOW, chap. XXII) "Tall" doesn't fit with "little" and "bow legs", but I guess that's where the lying comes in.
Or the shapeshifting.

Fechin seems to connect the old man at Casdoe's with Rudesind; that much is in the text, but that doesn't make any or all of the three men Inire.

-Roy

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 05:07 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Wilson, you know, just because you don't name a forfeit doesn't mean one won't be taken.

That's not the way it works.

You've benefitted from associating with me, like it or not.

Get out of David's way, now.

.

On 7/7/2010 8:52 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

Brunie, Jeff is capable of letting me know if I understood him correctly.

Please do not feed the energy creatures.

--

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

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 05:10 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I find Wolfe to leave the exactly correct number of clues.

.

On Jul 8, 2010, at 12:46 AM, James Wynn wrote:

Nor is it true that solid patterns are hard not find. Wolfe's problem is in the other direction. He doesn't leave nearly ENOUGH clues. His work often tends to appear to be randomly lackadaisical until you read it a second time or talk to someone about it. And then you find out it was a different story from the one you thought you were reading.

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...ryan

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 05:13 · in reply to James Wynn

I think Dunn's ideas are good.

A breath of fresh air.

What amazes me, James, is your attitude.

I would have said I knew what you thought about this stuff.

.

For the record, I don't give a hoot about Rudesind and only a little bit about Fechin. Whatever Inire is, is fine with me. But what I don't like is cheap shots. And that is what this post is about for me.

> say, Rudesind is Inire. And I'm asking 'and now what?'. And I'm not getting an answer.

Actually, I have answered you. I've explained that the question cannot be answered. I've made a request of you: Replaced "Rudesind is Inire" with "Doras is Severian's grandmother" and answer the same question. The answer is the same in both instances. You've dodged this challenge repeatedly.

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>impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as
>in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that
>pattern...." is essentially gratis.

It's not ignored. When someone proffers a theory, he feels obliged to ride it until it breaks down. It's just how it works. And just because someone posits an explanation that is shown to be problematic does not mean there is nothing there. Putting it out there and taking the beating over it is part of the game. But sitting on your backside and drawling "I don't see it" is about as offensive a response as I've seen. And I

see it every time someone pieces together an argument.

>Patterns come by the dozens. In books as rich in detail as Wolfe's you can

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>you've found a pattern, when in fact the hard thing is not to find them.

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When you agree with someone's theory, it seems to have all kinds of "speculative significance". When you don't or (more often) when the explanation is above your head, it seems pointless.

It's not as though I've never seen this standard before. It's an easy trump card someone pulls out whenever laying out a detailed rebuttal seems too hard, but not saying anything at all seems harder.

u+16b9

I expect Stockhoff to be an unpleasant fool and Wilson to be as he is.

That they act the way they act does not in any way surprise me.

You, James, surprise me.

.
For the record, I don't give a hoot about Rudesind and only a little bit about Fechin. Whatever Inire is, is fine with me. But what I don't like is cheap shots. And that is what this post is about for me.

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It's not as though I've never seen this standard before. It's an easy trump card someone pulls out whenever laying out a detailed rebuttal seems too hard, but not saying anything at all seems harder.

u+16b9

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 05:44 · in reply to James Wynn

On Jul 8, 2010, at 12:46 AM, James Wynn wrote:

For the record, I don't give a hoot about Rudesind and only a little bit about Fechin.

To change tacts here...

Is it possible Rudesind was intentionally steering Severian away from the Reading Room? Is the Book of Gold in there? What would happen if Severian found it? Any other motive to avoid the direction the armiger laid forth?

"The old curator blew those directions to the winds with a puff of sour breath. "What he laid down would only get you to the Reading Room. From there it'd take you a watch to get to Ultan, if ever you did."

We're going on Rudesind's word that the armiger's directions were indeed faulty, no? We are also to trust Rudesind at HIS word, though Severian doesn't know him from the next man. Or all may simply be as it seems here. I just want to settle the unease I feel with the Rudesind encounter.

...ryan

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 06:26 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David,

I want to add that my experience with BotNS is that the whole journey is caught in a time loop of sorts. Not exactly, but what we are witnessing is the journey of Severian, but it is not his first pass through this journey. It is a refined pass, however, and the one that inevitably leads him to success (to becoming the New Sun).

Here are two passages which prove the loop, to me, and suggest that Severian and Inire, cronies by the time of the manuscript's writing, are walkers of the corridors of time, and shaping Severian's (the apprentice and onward) journey from hilt to tip...

. .

"Rudesind, we already know the answers to the question you think we are going to ask. We know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeen is another such, though perhaps you did not know that. We even know that your master was with us in the jungles of the north, where he tried until it was too late to rescue my predecessor. We only want to say that if a young man with an errand comes past again while you are on your ladder, you are to send him to Master Ultan. That is our order."

. .

"I am not the first Severian. Those who walk the corridors of Time saw him gain the Phoenix Throne, and thus it was that the Autarch, having been told of me, smiled in the House Azure, and the undine thrust me up when it seemed I must drown. (Yet surely the first Severian did not; something had already begun to reshape my life.)"

. .

[TWO PARTS]

1. "There is really no describing the sensation of being watched. I have heard it called a prickling at the back of the neck, and even a consciousness of eyes that seem to float in darkness, but it is neither - at least, not for me. It is something akin to a sourceless embarrassment, coupled with the feeling that I must not turn around, because to turn will be to appear a fool, answering the promptings of baseless intuition. Eventually, of course, one does. I turned with the vague impression that someone had followed me through the hole at the base of the dial."

2. "I crossed to the door and tapped on it. The timorous old woman who had served us appeared, and I, stepping into that musty room in which I had warmed myself before, told her to bring Valeria to me."

. .

Okay, so the final one seems to be the young Severian sensing Severian the Lamé entering that Atrium, right? And he is not the first Severian. And he admits something had begun to reshape his life. And we now know that Inire (Rudesind's master) was with Severian in the jungles, trying to rescue Appian. And Severian gives an order to direct his younger iteration to Ultan, though he doesn't say by which means.

So... in as far as I can see. Any sightings of Inire along Severian's journey are not mission critical. But they DO reenforce what is revealed at the end. That Inire (and probably Severian shows up) are active participants in the reshaping of the journey of "Severian Who Succeeds".

Their entire mission is to get the damn sun back, and Severian turns himself into a puppet with Inire's time traveling help. That, to me, is the shell of the nut that we are trying to crack.

Yay? Nay?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

There needs to be a principle of, I don't know, conservation of explanation or something. And we need to call each other on it.

For example, if a mysterious figure gains powers (expert acting, sharpshooting, shapeshifting, timetriping) to explain specific textual features, that in other contexts begin to overlap and become redundant (i.e., a feature can be explained by any of these powers), then we have a condition of overexplanation. There are more explanations than there are problems and they contradict one another. Why would the burglar use his powers of disguise if he could simply go back in time to when the apartment was empty? And so on. Wolfe's characters often address this issue directly.

Overexplanation is a violation of form. Sometimes the most mundane explanations are best, because they require the least effort and never lead to redundancy. One asks questions not to challenge but to test.

I'm afraid I'm not expressing myself well, but does this make sense?

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 06:38 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

For what it's worth, I have only minor and equivocal disagreements with Ryan.

David,

I want to add that my experience with BotNS is that the whole journey is caught in a time loop of sorts. Not exactly, but what we are witnessing is the journey of Severian, but it is not his first pass through this journey. It is a refined pass, however, and the one that inevitably leads him to success (to becoming the New Sun).

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1. "There is really no describing the sensation of being watched. I have heard it called a prickling at the back of the neck, and even a consciousness of eyes that seem to float in darkness, but it is neither - at least, not for me. It is something akin to a sourceless embarrassment, coupled with the feeling that I must not turn around, because to turn will be to appear a fool, answering the promptings of baseless intuition. Eventually, of course, one does. I turned with the vague impression that someone had followed me through the hole at the base of the dial."

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lead to redundancy. One asks questions not to challenge but to test.

I'm afraid I'm not expressing myself well, but does this make sense?

James Wynn — 08 Jul 2010, 10:49 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I think Dunn's ideas are good. A breath of fresh air. What amazes me, James, is your attitude. I would have said I knew what you thought about this stuff.

I expect Stockhoff to be an unpleasant fool and Wilson to be as he is. That they act the way they act does not in any way surprise me. You, James, surprise me.

err...thank you? or I'm outraged! Please accept whichever response is most appropriate. ;-)

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brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 10:57 · in reply to James Wynn

I shall and in fact am doing so.

.

I think Dunn's ideas are good. A breath of fresh air. What amazes me, James, is your attitude. I would have said I knew what you thought about this stuff.

I expect Stockhoff to be an unpleasant fool and Wilson to be as he is. That they act the way they act does not in any way surprise me. You, James, surprise me.

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António Pedro Marques — 08 Jul 2010, 11:55 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (08-07-2010 05:46):

For the record, I don't give a hoot about Rudesind and only a little bit about Fechin. Whatever Inire is, is fine with me.

Great, then he is a Disney character, friends with Roger Rabbit. Let's work out the implications of that (oh, wait, what for? we only need to come up with the guess, not actually show any substance to it).

But what I don't like is cheap shots. And that is what this post is about for me.

But that just means you didn't understand it, assuming you're being honest.

say, Rudesind is Inire. And I'm asking 'and now what?'. And I'm not getting an answer.

Actually, I have answered you. I've explained that the question cannot be answered.

Well, in the brand of english I studied, 'I'm not getting an answer' in my sentence means 'no one has provided that information'. If you said the information doesn't exist, you still haven't provided it.

I've made a request of you: Replaced "Rudesind is Inire" with "Doras is Severian's grandmother" and answer the same question. The answer is the same in both instances. You've dodged this challenge repeatedly.

? You've asked it ONCE, I've reported you to the endless discussions on that at the time it was put forward, and I've explained how it isn't a good analogy.

"It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis.

It's not ignored.

Of course it's ignored. 'Ignored' here means 'brushed aside', not 'victim of oversight'.

When someone proffers a theory, he feels obliged to ride it until it breaks down. It's just how it works. And just because someone posits an explanation that is shown to be problematic does not mean there is nothing there. Putting it out there and taking the beating over it is part of the game.> But sitting on your backside and drawling "I don't see it" is about as offensive a response as I've seen. And I see it every time someone pieces together an argument.

'I don't see it' is the only sincere reply you can give to weaseling.

How may more times must I repeat that I'm not worried about the *plausibility*? I'm granting you the premise! I'm taking your guess for good! (Here I just mention that there is little point in not taking it for good because the text is so rich that it allows pretty much anything - you then feel insulted because that amounts to telling you that what you've found there isn't extraordinary) NOW that I've taken your guess for good, what? DO something with it! That's what I'm asking. By its fruit you shall know it.

The essence of 'what-if?' is in the 'then'. There's a reason that call 'what-if?' 'alternate history'. Because if 'if', 'then' something novel.

Patterns come by the dozens. In books as rich in detail as Wolfe's you can get patterns out of anything. It's futile. You think you're clever because you've found a pattern, when in fact the hard thing is not to find them.

This POV is lazy. And it's not even true. Not even close to true. Wolfe does not say the same thing over and over or reference the same physical trait over and over for no point. You more of his stories and you'll see that's true.

Nor is it true that solid patterns are hard not find. Wolfe's problem is in the other direction. He doesn't leave nearly ENOUGH clues.

That's precisely why patterns are had not to find.

The issue may be with 'solid'. You think you got solid material. Well, you don't.

His work often tends to appear to be randomly lackadaisical until you read it a second time or talk to someone about it. And then you find out it was a different story from the one you thought you were reading.

You don't tell me.

And *no one* who enjoys reading Wolfe thinks reading him verrry carefully and then taking a conclusive leap is futile. Well, it's rare anyway. I don't care what anyone says. Pick the most textually rigorous person on this list. If he's been here long that person has proffered wild, even bizarre, explanations at times based on the thinnest of evidence. You'll do it too, Antonio. Textual rigor is important. Priding yourself on it is arrogant and lacking in any self-awareness.

I've yet to decide whether yall simply have not read what I've written or are just being dishonest.

In short, I don't think everything in a book should serve some purpose within that book. But reader speculation must, because with all the stuff that Wolfe left lying there to toy with, if you don't set some standard, then you can go on indefinitely at random.

There is no objective standard. This standard itself is purely subjective. But that's not the problem with it in practice. The problem with this standard you've laid down is that it is simultaneously "know-nothing" and presumptive. It's presumptive, in practice, because it declares that everything in the story of significance is already known. Which is ridiculous. It was only a few years ago that someone pretty convincingly argued that the tunnels Severian walks through to reach Valeria move through Time. It's know-nothing because it declares anything one doesn't know already must not be important since, after all, we've got along alright without it until now.

Now if you can just provide a single argument of mine that can be interpreted in the way you put above, we'll all be happy.

This isn't even a case of strawmanship. When you build a strawman, you at least start from the other person's ideas. Here you have the nerve to talk about 'this standard [I]'ve laid down' with no relationship at all to anything I have said, but rather your idea of what you don't think is a sensible position.

When you agree with someone's theory, it seems to have all kinds of "speculative significance". When you don't or (more often) when the explanation is above your head, it seems pointless.

Again your obsession is with theory for the sake of theory. Ur doin it wrong.

It's not as though I've never seen this standard before. It's an easy trump card someone pulls out whenever laying out a detailed rebuttal seems too hard, but not saying anything at all seems harder.

You can't rebutt nothingness.

In all your drivel, about the only thing you've said that relates to what I've said is that patterns are hard to find in Wolfe's books. And it's wrong.

Now if you should go to the trouble of actually addressing what I wrote instead of some preconceived idea of what you would think if you objected to idle speculation, I may take the trouble to read what you have to say.

António Pedro Marques — 08 Jul 2010, 12:04 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 05:55):

The only think I've drawn from this discourse, and my own deduction, is that Inire is watching over Severian throughout his journey. Is he shaping it? Is Severian nothing more than the puppet controlled by Inire?

There is certainly text to suggest that ("When I first came to court I was told, as a great secret, that it was Father Inire who really determined the policy of the Commonwealth. When I had been there two years, a man very highly placed - I can't even tell you his name - said it was the Autarch who ruled, though to those in the House Absolute it might seem that it was Father Inire.").

(I think this view has flaws, but as I've said I'm not out to get them.)

And if that is the case, doesn't it turn the entire "hero quest" on its head?

Now you've produced something. So, if Inire guides Severian's whole journey (I still don't see why he must be Rudesind for that, but...), what does that mean for Severian and the 'quest' (if indeed there is a quest)? This is what I want to read about in copious amounts, not just one sentence.

To me, that is reason enough to look for evidence that supports this notion of Inire being a watcher throughout this journey, and the more 'under our nose' he is, the better.

I don't know where that puts me in your silo structure, but I believe that anything a book ***does*** to a person cannot be quarantined as invalid or inappropriate. I am sure Wolfe appreciates all and any pondering over his canon.

If you bake this quite elaborate cake and what the people go on endlessly about is whether or not you used some given ingredient, you may appreciate it as well inasmuch as that expresses their satisfaction with your work, but that doesn't mean you feel rewarded by your effort.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 12:05 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Yup.

I actually had no idea Fechin was mentioned twice until it was brought up. It's a stumper.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/7/2010 10:04 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

How did Casdow's husband get there?

If you mean the old man in Casdow's cabin who talks about having been Fechin's friend as a boy, like I said, I can't explain it. But Wikipedia reports an Irish saint Feichin of the 7th century.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 12:06 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I fear not Hethor's minions.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/7/2010 8:52 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

Brunie, Jeff is capable of letting me know if I understood him correctly.

Please do not feed the energy creatures.

António Pedro Marques — 08 Jul 2010, 12:06 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 06:01):

It is the same with my assertion that he told us Agia's skull hit the stone with the sound of a hammer, despite her full head of hair. That, to me, was not just colorful description. It was a clue about the nature of her skull, and thus HER, and thus her affect on Severian, and thus her effect on his journey, and the whole book for that matter.

And that's why I think your reducing it to determining at all costs whether she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

António Pedro Marques — 08 Jul 2010, 12:09 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 06:44):

Is it possible Rudesind was intentionally steering Severian away from the Reading Room? Is the Book of Gold in there? What would happen if Severian found it? Any other motive to avoid the direction the armiger laid forth?

"The old curator blew those directions to the winds with a puff of sour breath. "What he laid down would only get you to the Reading Room. From there it'd take you a watch to get to Ultan, if ever you did."

We're going on Rudesind's word that the armiger's directions were indeed faulty, no? We are also to trust Rudesind at HIS word, though Severian doesn't know him from the next man.

Go on. This may lead to something. What may it connect to?

António Pedro Marques — 08 Jul 2010, 12:13 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 07:26):

Their entire mission is to get the damn sun back, and Severian turns himself into a puppet with Inire's time traveling help. That, to me, is the shell of the nut that we are trying to crack.

The more power and intentions you give to Inire, the more it becomes unclear why he'd need such convoluted steps to reach his goals.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 12:13 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

That was never the approach. The approach was to try to explain the passage in a way that added significance, that justified itself.

António Pedro Marques wrote:

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 06:01):

It is the same with my assertion that he told us Agia's skull hit the stone with the sound of a hammer, despite her full head of hair. That, to me, was not just colorful description. It was a clue about the nature of her skull, and thus HER, and thus her affect on Severian, and thus her effect on his journey, and the whole book for that matter.

And that's why I think your reducing it to determining at all costs whether she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 12:16 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

That is an example of what I was trying to say with my principle of minimal explanation.

But to respond, I guess the obvious answer is: to hide the plan from Severian, who might take advantage of it, or fail, or just run away.

Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 07:26):

Their entire mission is to get the damn sun back, and Severian turns himself into a puppet with Inire's time traveling help. That, to me, is the shell of the nut that we are trying to crack.

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Ant?nio Pedro Marques — 08 Jul 2010, 12:17 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff wrote (08-07-2010 13:13):

That was never the approach.

I didn't say it was your David's approach.

The approach was to try to explain the passage in a way that added significance, that justified itself.

Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

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she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 12:30 · in reply to Ant?nio Pedro Marques

Not if he needs a human Autarch to enter the White Fountain with the proper belief in himself and the things he has done.

If I read Severian's memoir as though he is naive to Inire's "interferences", it does two things at once: 1) It turns Severian into a proper puppet, pulled along by Inire and future Severian from the first page; and 2) it explains why there is a lack of clarity and overt context when a possible "interfering moment" occurs or is observed.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 8:13 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques <entonio at gmail.com> wrote:

The more power and intentions you give to Inire, the more it becomes unclear why he'd need such convoluted steps to reach his goals.

James Wynn — 08 Jul 2010, 12:30 · in reply to Ant?nio Pedro Marques

James Wynn said:

I've made a request of you: Replaced "Rudesind is Inire" with "Doras is

Severian's grandmother" and answer the same question. The answer is the same in both instances. You've dodged this challenge repeatedly.

On 7/8/2010 6:55 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

? You've asked it ONCE, I've reported you to the endless discussions on that at the time it was put forward, and I've explained how it isn't a good analogy.

???

Here are the following threads you've responded to on this:

Me:

What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

On 7/7/2010 4:18 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

I'm not talking about narrative advantage. I'm talking about speculative advantage. And as a side note I'm against the idea of narrative advantage. I don't see that real life employs it, why should fiction?

Me again:

Okay. What's the speculative advantage to Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

On 7/7/2010 6:05 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

That has been discussed to death.

Additionally, I've continued to pose the question on this thread. You didn't take the opportunity to explain how this bit of information is different from what Ryan has been toying with. But by my count, this is the third time you have directly dodged providing a straightforward answer to this question.

Me:

Actually, I have answered you. I've explained that the question cannot be answered.

On 7/8/2010 6:55 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

Well, in the brand of english I studied, 'I'm not getting an answer' in my sentence means 'no one has provided that information'. If you said the information doesn't exist, you still haven't provided it.

I don't know what kind you studied but in the conventional kind I assure you that these statements are not equivalent.

"It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis.

It's not ignored.

Of course it's ignored. 'Ignored' here means 'brushed aside', not 'victim of oversight'.

Perhaps you should provide a glossary.

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It wasn't my approach. Mine is simpler, and more benign...

I was hoping to glean some insight from this knowledgeable group as to my suspicion about a potentially overlooked passage, in an attempt to categorize that insight and use it (or not) to found/confound/expound upon a theory.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 8:17 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com> wrote:
David Stockhoff wrote (08-07-2010 13:13):

That was never the approach.

I didn't say it was your David's approach.

The approach was to try to explain the passage in a way that added significance, that justified itself.

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And that's why I think your reducing it to determining at all costs whether she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 13:03 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I agree. Inire's actual role is murky, but it seems likely.

Ryan Dunn wrote:
David,

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"Rudesind, we already know the answers to the question you think we are going to ask. We know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeon is another such, though perhaps you did not know that. We even know that your master was with us in the jungles of the north, where he tried until it was too late to rescue my predecessor. We only want to say that if a young man with an errand comes past again while you are on your ladder, you are to send him to Master Ultan. That is our order."

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"I am not the first Severian. Those who walk the corridors of Time saw him gain the Phoenix Throne, and thus it was that the Autarch, having been told of me, smiled in the House Azure, and the undine thrust me up when it seemed I must drown. (Yet surely the first Severian did not; something had already begun to reshape my life.)"

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[TWO PARTS]

1. "There is really no describing the sensation of being watched. I have heard it called a prickling at the back of the neck, and even a consciousness of eyes that seem to float in darkness, but it is neither - at least, not for me. It is something akin to a sourceless embarrassment, coupled with the feeling that I must not turn around, because to turn will be to appear a fool, answering the promptings of baseless intuition. Eventually, of course, one does. I turned with the vague impression that someone had followed me through the hole at the base of the dial."

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Yay? Nay?

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Overexplanation is a violation of form. Sometimes the most mundane explanations are best, because they require the least effort and never lead to redundancy. One asks questions not to challenge but to test.

I'm afraid I'm not expressing myself well, but does this make sense?

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 13:20 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

OK, but I don't think that was Ryan's approach either. I just like to be totally sure what people are talking about.

Anyway, I agree with you generally, and yet I also agree with James, who is able to put theories out there and let them suffer abuse, and is also able to consider rival theories.

It would be nice to elucidate principles for general application, so you don't have to go on explaining how NOT to generate and test theories.

António Pedro Marques wrote:

David Stockhoff wrote (08-07-2010 13:13):

That was never the approach.

I didn't say it was your David's approach.

The approach was to try to explain the passage in a way that added significance, that justified itself.

António Pedro Marques wrote:

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 06:01):

It is the same with my assertion that he told us Agia's skull hit the stone with the sound of a hammer, despite her full head of hair.

That, to

me, was not just colorful description. It was a clue about the nature of

her skull, and thus HER, and thus her affect on Severian, and thus her effect on his journey, and the whole book for that matter.

And that's why I think your reducing it to determining at all costs whether

she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 13:21 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

It's true that Severian's motives need to be pure for the test on Yesod---one might say naive. And yet ... Severian pretends naivete all the time.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

Not if he needs a human Autarch to enter the White Fountain with the proper belief in himself and the things he has done.

If I read Severian's memoir as though he is naive to Inire's "interferences", it does two things at once:

1) It turns Severian into a proper puppet, pulled along by Inire and future Severian from the first page; and 2) it explains why there is a lack of clarity and overt context when a possible "interfering moment" occurs or is observed.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 8:13 AM, António Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com> wrote:

The more power and intentions you give to Inire, the more it becomes unclear why he'd need such convoluted steps to reach his goals.

David Stockhoff — 08 Jul 2010, 13:23 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan---Try getting text files of the books and keep searching them for clues. More textual evidence is always welcome!

See you all after the weekend.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

It wasn't my approach. Mine is simpler, and more benign...

I was hoping to glean some insight from this knowledgeable group as to my suspicion about a potentially overlooked passage, in an attempt to categorize that insight and use it (or not) to found/confound/expound upon a theory.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 8:17 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com> wrote:

David Stockhoff wrote (08-07-2010 13:13):

That was never the approach.

I didn't say it was your David's approach.

The approach was to try to explain the passage in a way that added significance, that justified itself.

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That, to

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And that's why I think your reducing it to determining at all costs whether

she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 14:44 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Now I'm getting a little uncomfortable.

.

I agree. Inire's actual role is murky, but it seems likely.

Ryan Dunn wrote:

David,

I want to add that my experience with BotNS is that the whole journey is

caught in a time loop of sorts. Not exactly, but what we are witnessing is the journey of Severian, but it is not his first pass through this journey. It is a refined pass, however, and the one that inevitably leads him to success (to becoming the New Sun).

Here are two passages which prove the loop, to me, and suggest that Severian and Inire, cronies by the time of the manuscript's writing, are walkers of the corridors of time, and shaping Severian's (the apprentice and onward) journey from hilt to tip...

. .

"Rudesind, we already know the answers to the question you think we are going to ask. We know your master is what the people call a cacogen, and that for whatever reason, he is one of those few who have chosen to cast their lots entirely with humanity, remaining on Urth as a human being. The Cumaeon is another such, though perhaps you did not know that. We even know that your master was with us in the jungles of the north, where he tried until it was too late to rescue my predecessor. We only want to say that if a young man with an errand comes past again while you are on your ladder, you are to send him to Master Ultan. That is our order."

. .

"I am not the first Severian. Those who walk the corridors of Time saw him gain the Phoenix Throne, and thus it was that the Autarch, having been told of me, smiled in the House Azure, and the undine thrust me up when it seemed I must drown. (Yet surely the first Severian did not; something had already begun to reshape my life.)"

. .

[TWO PARTS]

1. "There is really no describing the sensation of being watched. I have heard it called a prickling at the back of the neck, and even a consciousness of eyes that seem to float in darkness, but it is neither - at least, not for me. It is something akin to a sourceless embarrassment, coupled with the feeling that I must not turn around, because to turn will be to appear a fool, answering the promptings of baseless intuition. Eventually, of course, one does. I turned with the vague impression that someone had followed me through the hole at the base of the dial."

2. "I crossed to the door and tapped on it. The timorous old woman who had served us appeared, and I, stepping into that musty room in which I had warmed myself before, told her to bring Valeria to me."

. .

Okay, so the final one seems to be the young Severian sensing Severian the Lame entering that Atrium, right? And he is not the first Severian. And he admits something had begun to reshape his life. And we now know that Inire (Rudesind's master) was with Severian in the jungles, trying to rescue Appian. And Severian gives an order to direct his younger iteration to Ultan, though he doesn't say by which means.

So... in as far as I can see. Any sightings of Inire along Severian's journey are not mission critical. But they DO reenforce what is revealed at the end. That Inire (and probably Severian shows up) are active participants in the reshaping of the journey of "Severian Who Succeeds".

Their entire mission is to get the damn sun back, and Severian turns himself into a puppet with Inire's time traveling help. That, to me, is the shell of the nut that we are trying to crack.

Yay? Nay?

...ryan

On Jul 7, 2010, at 11:24 PM, David Stockhoff wrote:

There needs to be a principle of, I don't know, conservation of explanation or something. And we need to call each other on it.

For example, if a mysterious figure gains powers (expert acting, sharpshooting, shapeshifting, timetriping) to explain specific textual features, that in other contexts begin to overlap and become redundant (i.e., a feature can be explained by any of these powers), then we have a condition of overexplanation. There are more explanations than there are problems and they contradict one another. Why would the burglar use his powers of disguise if he could simply go back in time to when the apartment was empty? And so on. Wolfe's characters often address this issue directly.

Overexplanation is a violation of form. Sometimes the most mundane explanations are best, because they require the least effort and never lead to redundancy. One asks questions not to challenge but to test.

I'm afraid I'm not expressing myself well, but does this make sense?

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 14:46 · in reply to David Stockhoff

The only thing that is certain about David is that he will never be caught dead agreeing with me.

He may be perverse enough to agree once or twice starting now that I've mentioned it.

I don't know.

I don't think so.

I could be wrong I suppose.

.

OK, but I don't think that was Ryan's approach either. I just like to be totally sure what people are talking about.

Anyway, I agree with you generally, and yet I also agree with James, who is able to put theories out there and let them suffer abuse, and is also able to consider rival theories.

It would be nice to elucidate principles for general application, so you don't have to go on explaining how NOT to generate and test theories.

António Pedro Marques wrote:

David Stockhoff wrote (08-07-2010 13:13):

That was never the approach.

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The approach was to try to explain the passage in a way that added significance, that justified itself.

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That, to

me, was not just colorful description. It was a clue about the nature of

her skull, and thus HER, and thus her affect on Severian, and thus her

effect on his journey, and the whole book for that matter.

And that's why I think your reducing it to determining at all costs whether

she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 14:51 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 10:46 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

The only thing that is certain about David is that he will never be caught dead agreeing with me.

He may be perverse enough to agree once or twice starting now that I've mentioned it.

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James Wynn — 08 Jul 2010, 15:09 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 7/8/2010 9:51 AM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

...ryan

What would be worse? The threat of spontaneous combustion should be sufficient.

u+169b

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 15:11 · in reply to James Wynn

The two apricots? That never sounded right to me.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 11:09 AM, James Wynn wrote:

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What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

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u+169b

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 15:13 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I'm not sure what would happen!

Say, and apropos of nothing, has it occurred to anyone besides David who has read McCarthy's Blood Meridian that the Judge is could very well be a larval form of Baldanders?

Note that this would require McCarthy to have read Gene Wolfe.

.
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...ryan

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And that's why I think your reducing it to determining at all costs whether she is a robot or not is not the correct approach.

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 15:14 · in reply to James Wynn

Death by burning is something that worries you?

James, James, James.

How did you go so far and so badly wrong?

.

On 7/8/2010 9:51 AM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

...ryan

What would be worse? The threat of spontaneous combustion should be sufficient.

u+169b

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 15:15 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

You don't really want to know.

What part of a man's anatomy resembles two apricots in a little bag?

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The two apricots? That never sounded right to me.

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On Jul 8, 2010, at 11:09 AM, James Wynn wrote:

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What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

...ryan

What would be worse? The threat of spontaneous combustion should be sufficient.

u+169b

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 15:22 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

You mean besides siamese plantar warts? I think I have a good guess.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 11:15 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
You don't really want to know.

What part of a man's anatomy resembles two apricots in a little bag?

.

The two apricots? That never sounded right to me.

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u+169b

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 15:23 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

I think you probably do have a good guess.

.

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...ryan

What would be worse? The threat of spontaneous combustion should be sufficient.

u+169b

Ryan Dunn — 08 Jul 2010, 15:27 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

I probably do.

And it still doesn't sound right to me.

I'd rather be run over by a wheeled cart and trampled to death.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 11:23 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I think you probably do have a good guess.

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...ryan

What would be worse? The threat of spontaneous combustion should be sufficient.

u+169b

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 16:00 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

You certainly would prefer for this to happen.

It is over much faster, and while whether it is objectively more or less unpleasant is certainly arguable, just having less time to think about things and (paradoxically) more pain and so less clarity of thought makes it less unpleasant subjectively.

.

I probably do.

And it still doesn't sound right to me.

I'd rather be run over by a wheeled cart and trampled to death.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 11:23 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

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...ryan

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What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

...ryan

What would be worse? The threat of spontaneous combustion should be sufficient.

u+169b

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 16:09 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

No one could call it right.

It's a good thing I was sick to my stomach before we started talking about this.

.

I probably do.

And it still doesn't sound right to me.

I'd rather be run over by a wheeled cart and trampled to death.

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 11:23 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I think you probably do have a good guess.

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You mean besides siamese plantar warts? I think I have a good guess.

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On 7/8/2010 9:51 AM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

...ryan

What would be worse? The threat of spontaneous combustion should be sufficient.

u+169b

James Wynn — 08 Jul 2010, 16:12 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

The word "avacado" derives directly from the Aztec word for testicle and the fruit. Perhaps there are no avacados in the cooling Urth.

You don't really want to know. What part of a man's anatomy resembles two apricots in a little bag?
The two apricots? That never sounded right to me.

Adam Thornton IO — 08 Jul 2010, 19:11 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Thu, 8 Jul 2010 11:13:25 -0400, brunians at brunians.org wrote:
I'm not sure what would happen!

Say, and apropos of nothing, has it occurred to anyone besides David who has read McCarthy's Blood Meridian that the Judge is could very well be a larval form of Baldanders?

Note that this would require McCarthy to have read Gene Wolfe.

Well, yes indeed Judge Holden is reminiscent of Baldanders.

But the creepier thing is that the Judge, well, he's not really a fictional character. Or if he is, he's Chamberlain's fictional character. The height, the albinism, the baldness, and the terrifying and lethal appetites towards children are all there in Chamberlain.

The Wikipedia article is a decent summary:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judge_Holden

Now, I would personally be surprised if Wolfe had not read Chamberlain.

Adam

brunians at brunians.org — 08 Jul 2010, 20:54 · in reply to Adam Thornton IO

Yeah, I got Chamberlain's memoirs next to Blood Meridian on the shelf here.

I've also met guys like Judge Holden.

Not physically like him.

.

On Thu, 8 Jul 2010 11:13:25 -0400, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

I'm not sure what would happen!

Say, and apropos of nothing, has it occurred to anyone besides David who has read McCarthy's *Blood Meridian* that the Judge is could very well be a larval form of Baldanders?

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The Wikipedia article is a decent summary:

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Now, I would personally be surprised if Wolfe had not read Chamberlain.

Adam

Jeff Wilson — 08 Jul 2010, 23:50 · in reply to Adam Thornton IO

Well, yes indeed Judge Holden is reminiscent of Baldanders.

But the creepier thing is that the Judge, well, he's not really a fictional character. Or if he is, he's Chamberlain's fictional character. The height, the albinism, the baldness, and the terrifying and lethal appetites towards children are all there in Chamberlain.

Albinism and baldness? Doesn't Baldanders have grey hair?

Adam Thornton — 09 Jul 2010, 03:15 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On 07/08/2010 06:50 PM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

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But the creepier thing is that the Judge, well, he's not really a fictional character. Or if he is, he's Chamberlain's fictional character. The height, the albinism, the baldness, and the terrifying and lethal appetites towards children are all there in Chamberlain.

Albinism and baldness? Doesn't Baldanders have grey hair?

Oh, crossed wires:

Those are among the characteristics of Judge Holden in *Blood Meridian* which are not invented by McCarthy but narrated or invented by Chamberlain.

Adam

António Pedro Marques — 09 Jul 2010, 10:56 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (08-07-2010 13:30):

James Wynn said: I've made a request of you: Replaced "Rudesind is Inire" with "Doras is Severian's grandmother" and answer the same question. The answer is the same in both instances. You've dodged this challenge repeatedly.

On 7/8/2010 6:55 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote: ? You've asked it ONCE, I've reported you to the endless discussions on that at the time it was put forward, and I've explained how it isn't a good analogy.

??? Here are the following threads you've responded to on this:

Me: What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

On 7/7/2010 4:18 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote: I'm not talking about narrative advantage. I'm talking about speculative advantage. And as a side note I'm against the idea of narrative advantage. I don't see that real life employs it, why should fiction?

This is 'I've explained how it isn't a good analogy'.

Me again: Okay. What's the speculative advantage to Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

On 7/7/2010 6:05 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote: That has been discussed to death.

This is 'I've reported you to the endless discussions on that at the time it was put forward'. (This is the ONCE, since your previous question was about 'narrative advantage'.)

Additionally, I've continued to pose the question on this thread. You didn't take the opportunity to explain how this bit of information is different from what Ryan has been toying with.

One key difference is that Dorcas being Severian's grandmother tells us something about a character we knew nothing about (Dorcas as Severian's grandmother) and Severian's family tree, i.e. the level of data increases. Whereas Rudesind being Inire actually decreases the amount of data by dropping one character. And again, the identity of Dorcas is all but spelled out. When discussing whether or not she was Severian's grandmother, it's more of a debate between 'she obviously is' and 'it's so obvious maybe it's wrong'.

But by my count, this is the third time you have directly dodged providing a straightforward answer to this question.

I simply don't understand how anything I can say will add to what is in the archives.

Me: Actually, I have answered you. I've explained that the question cannot be answered.

On 7/8/2010 6:55 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote: Well, in the brand of english I studied, 'I'm not getting an answer' in my sentence means 'no one has provided that information'. If you said the information doesn't exist, you still haven't provided it.

I don't know what kind you studied but in the conventional kind I assure you that these statements are not equivalent.

Of course the statements are not generally equivalent. But here they are. 'Nobody knows', 'nobody can know' aren't answers, they're justifications for not answering. They're short for 'I

can't answer that because...'.

"It couldn't work because..." is all but impossible - especially when all contrary evidence can be just ignored, as in this Rudesind/Inire case - and "Here's something else that fits that pattern...." is essentially gratis.

It's not ignored.

Of course it's ignored. 'Ignored' here means 'brushed aside', not 'victim of oversight'.

Perhaps you should provide a glossary.

I don't go out of my way to write for people who don't read for context. That you can call laziness.

António Pedro Marques — 09 Jul 2010, 10:59 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

You'll be taken to a cave in Mercury.

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 15:51):

What happens if I agree with both of you? Will I spontaneously combust, or worse?

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 10:46 AM, brunians at brunians.org wrote:

The only thing that is certain about David is that he will never be caught dead agreeing with me.

He may be perverse enough to agree once or twice starting now that I've mentioned it.

I don't know.

I don't think so.

I could be wrong I suppose.

.

OK, but I don't think that was Ryan's approach either. I just like to be totally sure what people are talking about.

Anyway, I agree with you generally, and yet I also agree with James, who is able to put theories out there and let them suffer abuse, and is also able to consider rival theories.

James Wynn — 09 Jul 2010, 14:38 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

James Wynn said: I've made a request of you: Replaced "Rudesind is Inire" with "Doras is Severian's grandmother" and answer the same question. The answer is the same in both instances. You've dodged this challenge repeatedly.

On 7/8/2010 6:55 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote: ? You've asked it ONCE, I've reported you to the endless discussions on that at the time it was put forward, and I've explained how it isn't a good analogy.

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Me: What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

On 7/7/2010 4:18 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote: I'm not talking about narrative advantage. I'm talking about speculative advantage. And as a side note I'm against the idea of narrative advantage. I don't see that real life employs it, why should fiction?

On 7/9/2010 5:56 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote:
This is 'I've explained how it isn't a good analogy'.

Actually, I'm pretty sure you haven't. Cite the email where you did. And it won't count unless you use the words "Dorcas" and "grandmother". If you have, I can't understand why you haven't cited it. Perhaps your answers are in code.

Unless you can properly cite your explanation, you've dodged the challenge a FOURTH time.

Incidentally, by your specialized English, explaining "how it isn't a good analogy" isn't an "answer". But since I'm pretty sure you haven't done this in relation to "How does Dorcas being Severian's grandmother provides any 'speculative advantage'? ", that fact is irrelevant.

I said:

I remember when the grandmother theory was posed. There was no more textual evidence for it than this Hairy Inire theory. The only reason it's not sitting on the "Half-baked Theory" pile today is because Wolfe uncharacteristically confirmed it to a questioner.

On 7/7/2010 6:05 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

It's probably the only 'puzzle' in the book that everyone gets. The only way

it could be more transparent would be if instead of Cas the boatman would have called her Dorcas. It's not like the boatman calls her Fifi.

This "transparent" puzzle was only understood some 20 years after the book was published. I'm sure you would have been on the list explaining it a week after the SotT was published if you had had the opportunity.

u+16b9

António Pedro Marques — 09 Jul 2010, 15:16 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Ryan Dunn wrote (08-07-2010 13:30):

Not if he needs a human Autarch to enter the White Fountain with the proper belief in himself and the things he has done.

If I read Severian's memoir as though he is naive to Inire's "interferences", it does two things at once: 1) It turns Severian into a proper puppet, pulled along by Inire and future Severian from the first page; and 2) it explains why there is a lack of clarity and overt context when a possible "interfering moment" occurs or is observed.

But are you saying that Inire interferes in Severian's life or that he shapes his personality? Those are different claims, I think. What are the concrete turns in Severian's life that you think are dependent on Inire's action?

...ryan

On Jul 8, 2010, at 8:13 AM, António Pedro Marques<antonio at gmail.com>

wrote:

The more power and intentions you give to Inire, the more it becomes unclear why he'd need such convoluted steps to reach his goals.

António Pedro Marques — 09 Jul 2010, 20:04 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (09-07-2010 15:38):

James Wynn said: I've made a request of you: Replaced "Rudesind is Inire" with "Doras is Severian's grandmother" and answer the same question. The answer is the same in both instances. You've dodged this challenge repeatedly.

On 7/8/2010 6:55 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote: ? You've asked it ONCE, I've reported you to the endless discussions on that at the time it was put forward, and I've explained how it isn't a good analogy.

James Wynn wrote (08-07-2010 13:30):

??? Here are the following threads you've responded to on this:

Me: What's the narrative advantage of Dorcas being Severian's grandmother?

On 7/7/2010 4:18 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote: I'm not talking about narrative advantage. I'm talking about speculative advantage. And as a side note I'm against the idea of narrative advantage. I don't see that real life employs it, why should fiction?

On 7/9/2010 5:56 AM, António Pedro Marques wrote:
This is 'I've explained how it isn't a good analogy'.

Actually, I'm pretty sure you haven't. Cite the email where you did. And it won't count unless you use the words "Dorcas" and "grandmother". If you have, I can't understand why you haven't cited it. Perhaps your answers are in code.

Can't you even understand quotes now?

Breathe a little, read again, then come back.

Unless you can properly cite your explanation, you've dodged the challenge a FOURTH time.

Incidentally, by your specialized English, explaining "how it isn't a good analogy" isn't an "answer". But since I'm pretty sure you haven't done this in relation to "How does Dorcas being Severian's grandmother provides any 'speculative advantage'? ", that fact is irrelevant.

I said:

I remember when the grandmother theory was posed. There was no more textual evidence for it than this Hairy Inire theory. The only reason it's not sitting on the "Half-baked Theory" pile today is because Wolfe uncharacteristically confirmed it to a questioner.

On 7/7/2010 6:05 PM, António Pedro Marques wrote:

It's probably the only 'puzzle' in the book that everyone gets. The only way

it could be more transparent would be if instead of Cas the boatman would have called her Dorcas. It's not like the boatman calls her Fifi.

This "transparent" puzzle was only understood some 20 years after the book was published.

Is this an intentional lie or a sign that you're just too uninformed and full of yourself to be worth talking to?

I'm sure you would have been on the list explaining it a week after the SotT was published if you had had the opportunity.

You're apparently sure of many things that are wrong.

António Pedro Marques — 16 Jul 2010, 11:34 · in reply to John Watkins

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 19:12):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
<mailto:antonio at gmail.com>

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 19:00):

But we're supposed to understand that he's a hierodule.

Why not some other kind of being?

I'm eager to consider any kind of being that there is textual evidence for. He himself refers to his own kind in his letter, though, doesn't he? So unless he's lying, or there's some more direct set of information to rely on, what kind of being other than humans has Severian encountered?

I finally got around to revisiting the letter.

First thing of, he refers to himself as 'Inire'. That suggests against mangling of the name, at least including word boundaries.

Second, he twice mentions his 'cousins'. Not his brothers nor his makers. I suspect he's not a hierodule. Something related to them, but not one. Not that it matters terribly.

David Stockhoff — 16 Jul 2010, 12:18 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Of course, if he has accepted a name given him, he has had centuries to learn how to spell it. But certainly there is no overt suggestion that he does not identify as Father Inire.

"Cousins" is ambiguous. I took it to mean beings who would be his brothers except he has distanced himself from them by going native on Urth. But it could mean anything.

Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 19:12):

2010/7/7 Ant?nio Pedro Marques <antonio at gmail.com
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John Watkins wrote (07-07-2010 19:00):

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Second, he twice mentions his 'cousins'. Not his brothers nor his makers. I suspect he's not a hierodule. Something related to them, but not one. Not that it matters terribly.

David Stockhoff — 16 Jul 2010, 13:04 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Some of my favorite passages in Severian's narration involve commentary on literary style. In *Shadow*, he compares writing to execution of the condemned.

What do you all make of the following mention of Master Ultan's Library?

Similarly *you, who will some day delve in Master Ultan's library,* will require of me no long delays; personages who are permitted to speak only briefly yet do it well; certain dramatic pauses which shall signal to you that something of import is about to occur; excitement; and a sating quantity of blood.

Adam Thornton — 16 Jul 2010, 13:16 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 07/16/2010 08:04 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:
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I assumed Severian was just assuming his book would end up on the Library's shelves, and that is where the reader would most likely encounter it.

Adam

Lee Berman — 16 Jul 2010, 14:34 · follows David Stockhoff

A.P.M.- Second, he twice mentions his 'cousins'. Not his brothers nor his makers. I suspect he's not a hierodule. Something related to them, but not one. Not that it matters terribly.

I agree. If Inire was described as really tall and beautiful there might be an obvious case for him being a hierodule. But he seems significantly different than B, F and O. Severian just doesn't seem to be sharp enough to be able to identify the distinction between various different classes of cacogens/aliens/angels- whatever they are. And B, F and O are not inclined to educate or correct him on this.

I think it can matter a lot. Borski assumed Inire was a hierodule and consequently short-lived and consequently only able to move backwards in time and consequently an obedient servant of the hierogrammates, etc. He took his error (I believe it to be one, though Andre-Driussi doesn't) and ran so ridiculously far with it, he undercut much of the credibility of his *Solar Labyrinth* book

IMHO.

As is obvious, I find an exploration of pagan gods and hierarchy of angels, fallen or not, to be more heuristic than Borski's simple Moses analogy for Inire. How could he so thoroughly ignore Eschatology and Genesis?

So, where does The Cumaean fit into the scheme of things? Borski casts her as sort of a Mother Inire, a paired, parallel but less important than Inire hierodule character. But she isn't tall and beautiful nor short-lived. Any others have thoughts on her?

Perhaps Ossipago is worth discussing here. Borski thinks he is Inire. I don't. I think he is one of the machines that humanity built which then created the hierogrammates. The phrase "deus ex machina" is hinted at toward the end of Citadel and I've always liked how Ossipago's role in the story fits both the literal and theatrical meaning of that phrase.

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 16 Jul 2010, 14:52 · in reply to Adam Thornton

Perhaps. In other words, "you, the reader, who will one day find this book on a shelf and read it." But underwhelming. Why "delve into Ultan's library" when all you need to do is ask for a copy of the Autarch's latest picaresue novel?

Are we to assume that (1) Severian expects to place the book in the Library and ONLY there (2) that it will stay there for a long time (3) that it will be read at all, in HIS future? That he knows nothing of the Flood to come? Is that future revealed to him only during UotNS?

Bummer. No one will read his book, since it will survive in neither past nor future, unless the Library itself travels through time, or its holdings do.

Who goes into the stacks? Who reads Ultan's books? Anyone other than librarians and seekers after the Book of Gold?

Does this really add up?

--- On Fri, 7/16/10, Adam Thornton <adam at io.com> wrote:

From: Adam Thornton <adam at io.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) Master Ultan's Library
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Friday, July 16, 2010, 9:16 AM

On 07/16/2010 08:04 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:
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Adam

James Wynn — 16 Jul 2010, 15:31 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

On 7/16/2010 9:52 AM, DAVID STOCKHOFF wrote:

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Master Ultan's Library is expansive and extends though Time as well. Your local library is an extension of M. Ultan's Library. Same with your local bookstore and the bookshelves in your home.

u+16b9

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 16 Jul 2010, 15:35 · in reply to James Wynn

On Fri, Jul 16, 2010 at 8:31 AM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

Master Ultan's Library is expansive and extends though Time as well. Your local library is an extension of M. Ultan's Library. Same with your local bookstore and the bookshelves in your home.

...but only through L-Space.

Oook.

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 16 Jul 2010, 15:45 · in reply to James Wynn

Er, in what sense do you mean that?

Actual? Symbolical? Sarcastical? Fantastical?

--- On Fri, 7/16/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>

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

Date: Friday, July 16, 2010, 11:31 AM

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James Wynn — 16 Jul 2010, 15:46 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

On 7/16/2010 6:34 AM, Ant?nio Pedro Marques wrote:

First thing of, he refers to himself as 'Inire'. That suggests against mangling of the name, at least including word boundaries.

I think you *might* be right. I mean, we are still left with the fact that his name does not match any naming convention in the book. However, even if you are right, this does not preclude Fr. Inire being an intended anagram of Fenrir in the same sense that the characters' saintly namesakes are intended to parallel their actions in the story. The existence of a River Gyll

almost requires the existence of a Fenrir in the story.

And, whether you are right or wrong, we are surely being invited to ask who Father Inire's child or children are.

Second, he twice mentions his 'cousins'. Not his brothers nor his makers. I suspect he's not a hierodule. Something related to them, but not one. Not that it matters terribly.

In the New Testament there are references to Jesus' "brothers". Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox exegesis declares that this refers to his "cousins".

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James Wynn — 16 Jul 2010, 15:50 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

Actually and symbolically.

That is the way I think Wolfe intended the parable of the Golden Book to be read. Have you not found and read Severian's autobiography? Have you not therefore been in Master Ultan's Library?

On 7/16/2010 10:45 AM, DAVID STOCKHOFF wrote:
Er, in what sense do you mean that?

Actual? Symbolical? Sarcastical? Fantastical?

--- On *Fri, 7/16/10, James Wynn /<crushtv at gmail.com>/* wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) Master Ultan's Library
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
Date: Friday, July 16, 2010, 11:31 AM

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Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 16 Jul 2010, 15:51 · in reply to James Wynn

On Fri, Jul 16, 2010 at 8:46 AM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:
The existence of a River Gyll
almost requires the existence of a Fenrir in the story.

That would be a rock Gyll (Gjoll). The _river_ Gyll was one of the rivers surrounding Hel, land of the dead (except for those who went to Valhalla). It is therefore significant that the river Gyll runs through a necropolis.

In the New Testament there are references to Jesus' "brothers". Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox exegesis declares that this refers to his

"cousins".

Or other relatives. It isn't that specific.

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

James Wynn — 16 Jul 2010, 16:04 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

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On 7/16/2010 10:51 AM, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

That would be a rock Gyll (Gjoll). The _river_ Gyll was one of the rivers surrounding Hel, land of the dead (except for those who went to Valhalla). It is therefore significant that the river Gyll runs through a necropolis.

The homonymous naming is not incidental, neither in mythology nor, I believe, on Urth. In the cosmological sense, Gyll is sometimes a river and sometimes a rock, but it is the same entity.

The Gyll is not the only river in Hel. It does not _only_ run through a necropolis. And it is not the river associated with the centaur Nessus (which is Evenus). I think Wolfe does a better job at naming than that.

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DAVID STOCKHOFF — 16 Jul 2010, 17:17 · in reply to James Wynn

It makes perfect sense. I just have never heard this interpretation.

--- On Fri, 7/16/10, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

From: James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com>
Subject: Re: (urth) Master Ultan's Library
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>
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Actually and symbolically.

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Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net

Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

-----Inline Attachment Follows-----

Ant3nio Pedro Marques — 16 Jul 2010, 17:34 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (16-07-2010 16:46):

On 7/16/2010 6:34 AM, Ant3nio Pedro Marques wrote:

Second, he twice mentions his 'cousins'. Not his brothers nor his makers. I suspect he's not a hierodule. Something related to them, but not one. Not that it matters terribly.

In the New Testament there are references to Jesus' "brothers". Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox exegesis declares that this refers to his "cousins".

Yeah, I wouldn't draw strong conclusions from the usage of a term that apparently means 'brother'. But I think it's suggestive that a term meaning 'cousins' was employed here.

brunians at brunians.org — 16 Jul 2010, 18:03 · in reply to DAVID STOCKHOFF

Actual.

.

Er, in what sense do you mean that?

Actual? Symbolical? Sarcastical? Fantastical?

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brunians at brunians.org — 16 Jul 2010, 18:04 · in reply to James Wynn
Catholic means universal.

.
Actually and symbolically.

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Roy C. Lackey — 16 Jul 2010, 19:13 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

Ant?nio wrote:

I finally got around to revisiting the letter.

First thing of, he refers to himself as 'Inire'. That suggests against mangling of the name, at least including word boundaries.

Second, he twice mentions his 'cousins'. Not his brothers nor his makers.

I

suspect he's not a hierodule. Something related to them, but not one. Not that it matters terribly.

A holy slave need not be any particular species. BF&O are hierodules. The former are biological creatures; Ossipago is a machine. The biological hierodules, at least, were developed by the Hierogrammates to do the grunt work in Briah, in much the same way that the Hieros had developed the Hierogrammates. Inire told Severian that the Cumaeen was a hierodule, whether or not she was a member of the same short-lived species as Barbatus and Famulimus.

There is no doubt at all that Severian believed that Inire was a member of a short-lived kind -- he said so. I suspect that Inire's use of "cousins" in the letter was just a generic, euphemistic term for his short-lived kind, in much the same sense that a Christian may speak of his fellow believers as "brothers in Christ".

-Roy

Gerry Quinn — 16 Jul 2010, 20:14 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

From: "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net>

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Also, we don't know anything about how hierodules are born / constructed / hatched. Maybe he feels "brother" is too suggestive of a human-like reproductive system.

Admittedly he seems to have no problem with calling himself "Father", but then again the word "father" here is clearly (?) being used metaphorically.

- Gerry Quinn

DAVID STOCKHOFF — 16 Jul 2010, 20:20 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

"Cousins" could indicate a certain distance, political, cultural, motivational, or otherwise.

As in "our American cousins..." in a Le Carre novel.

--- On Fri, 7/16/10, Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie> wrote:

From: Gerry Quinn <gerryq at indigo.ie>

Subject: Re: (urth) Inire as a hierodule

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

Date: Friday, July 16, 2010, 4:14 PM

From: "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net>

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- Gerry Quinn

James Wynn — 16 Jul 2010, 20:30 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

On 7/16/2010 3:14 PM, Gerry Quinn wrote:
Admittedly he seems to have no problem with calling himself "Father",
but then again the word "father" here is clearly (?) being used
metaphorically.

Are you really so sure about the use of the word "clearly" that you only require a single "?" ?

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Jane Delawney — 16 Jul 2010, 23:40 · in reply to Lee Berman

Just a couple of quick thoughts.

On 16/07/10 15:34, Lee Berman wrote:
I think it can matter a lot. Borski assumed Inire was a hierodule and consequently short-lived and consequently only able to move backwards in time and consequently an obedient servant of the hierogrammates, etc. He took his error (I believe it to be one I do too, I don't see the evidence for it. Borski relies entirely too much on the alleged naming conventions IMO.
, though
Andre-Driussi doesn't) and ran so ridiculously far with it, he undercut much of the credibility of his Solar Labyrinth book IMHO.

agreed.

So, where does The Cumaeen fit into the scheme of things? Borski casts her as sort of a Mother Inire, a paired, parallel but less important than Inire hierodule character. But she isn't tall and beautiful nor short-lived. Any others have thoughts on her?

Regarding the Cumaeen, there seems to be an assumption (based primarily upon the vision of her as a many eyed serpent during Sev's first experience at the Stone Town) that she's an alien; that while the Witches regard her as one of their own she's not human but a representative (hierodule? Hierogrammate?) of the hieros upon Urth.

I'm inclined to disagree with this, invoking Occam's Razor; it's simply unnecessary. Sev's vision is entirely in accordance with the Hindu/Buddhist cosmology Wolfe invokes in many places (manvantaras and all that) and represents a vision of the 'Long Body' of an 'occult' initiate ie. in BOTNS terms, a witch. 'Long Body'? well, that would be the body of a human or other living being seen from a four-dimensional POV; from that POV your body, mine, everyone else's, would definitely seem many eyed and snake-like!

To elaborate: since Time is the fourth dimension, the 'body' appears as a snake-like form from

the 'outside' as it were; from (perhaps) the 'divine' point of view which Sev seems to achieve, momentarily, during this experience. 'Divine'? Well maybe that's a bit tendentious. 'Outside of the temporal universe' perhaps; Sev adverts to this point of view a few times, stating that every being that has ever lived is alive 'somewhere / when', and also asserting strenuously that he believes his Autarchia, Valeria, is still alive ... *somewhere*. Yes she is; from one who can perceive directly, or imagine, the temporal universe from some place 'outside' time, she is alive indeed in her own segment of the four-dimensional world. It's learning to jump into and out of this world at the desired / destined points, that is the real trick; learning to navigate the Corridors of Time, in other words.

Perhaps Ossipago is worth discussing here. Borski thinks he is Inire. I don't. I think he is one of the machines that humanity built which then created the hierogrammates. The phrase "deus ex machina" is hinted at toward the end of Citadel and I've always liked how Ossipago's role in the story fits both the literal and theatrical meaning of that phrase.

I find I'm in disagreement not only with Borski, but with Andre-Driussi about the three known and named Hierodules. Both seem to assume that since Ossipago can be translated as 'bone grower', he, although basically a mechanism, is the nurse / guardian of both Famulimus and Barbatus. I think it makes far more sense in the context of the New Sun opus that all three names have some relevance to a role vs. Severian himself: Ossipago being the 'demigod' who oversees his growth from babyhood; Barbatus the one who sees him through puberty (Barbatus = name of minor Roman deity responsible for the sprouting of the first beard of the adolescent boy) and Famulimus the one who keeps him on the moral (as opposed to traditional) straight and narrow: the famulimus is the Roman minor deity responsible for a person's reputation, and s/he is presumably rooting for Sev as he makes the very difficult decision to go for basic good vs. evil morality rather than for guild tradition (which kind of turns good and evil on their heads in this context) as he grants mercy to Thecla at his own future's expense (he had every reason as he did what he did to expect that he would be executed for his 'crime'; this is therefore a real sacrifice of self for the greater good).

don't know if any of this is of any interest, but I've been mulling over the statements of the various commentators on all of these questions and given the thread, this seemed a good place to comment.

Again forgive me please for modifying the header a little, I really really want to get my list posts sent back to me, and my ISP won't do it unless I start a 'new' thread.

regards

JD

Hotmail has tools for the New Busy. Search, chat and e-mail from your inbox.
http://www.windowslive.com/campaign/thenewbusy?ocid=PID28326::T:WLMTAGL:ON:WL:en-US:WM_HMP:042010_1

Gwern Branwen — 17 Jul 2010, 01:29 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On Fri, Jul 16, 2010 at 9:04 AM, David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net> wrote:
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gwern

David Stockhoff — 17 Jul 2010, 02:52 · in reply to Gwern Branwen

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On Fri, Jul 16, 2010 at 9:04 AM, David Stockhoff <[dstockhoff at verizon.net](mailto:dstockhoff@verizon.net)> wrote:

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David Stockhoff — 17 Jul 2010, 02:53 · in reply to Jane Delawney

That explanation of the Cumaean makes an amazing amount of sense.

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http://www.windowslive.com/campaign/thenewbusy?ocid=PID28326::T:WLMTAGL:ON:WL:en-US:WM_HMP:042010_1

Jerry Friedman — 17 Jul 2010, 03:51 · in reply to David Stockhoff

From: David Stockhoff <dstockhoff at verizon.net>

Gwern Branwen wrote:

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Similarly *you, who will some day delve in Master Ultan's library,*

He thinks we'll read the copy in the library, not knowing that it will probably be destroyed by the flood and that we're in a later universe, so we're reading a translation of the copy he plans to set adrift.

My favored interpretation in this: we all agree that Master Ultan is Jorge Luis Borges. What was one of Borges's most famous short stories? "The Library of Babel"*, containing all possible books. From a certain point of view**, there is no writing or creation, but finding - or 'delving' - inside the infinite library.

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(This is an out-of-universe explanation, yes, but I don't think the in-universe explanations are tenable, since when Severian writes it, doesn't he already plan to set it adrift in the void?)

That's exactly my concern: if he throws it into the void, how is it found?

Mysteriously, the same way it's translated. If we want to imagine the involvement of powers above the stage, there's no shortage in the books.

But I agree---there seems to be a Borgesian aspect to the Library, for sure.

Certainly. I wouldn't say that Master Ultan IS Borges--that would mean Wolfe thinks the real Jorge Luis Borges would be greedy to eat the flesh of the dead to get their memories and would reveal this greed though hypocritically trying to deny it. The idea that Borges would have wanted to use the alzado may not be ridiculous, but I think Wolfe admires him too much to show him this way.

This doesn't weaken your argument, though, Gwern. We certainly agree that Master Ultan is supposed to remind us of Borges, so the strangely extensive library can remind us of the Library of Babel. But I thought the Library of Babel contained all books, not all libraries. I'd say the thought that all libraries in our universe are part of Master Ultan's library is there for us to enjoy, and I wouldn't have thought of it myself, but I don't see it as the explanation of Severian's comment.

Jerry Friedman

Gwern Branwen — 17 Jul 2010, 05:28 · in reply to Jerry Friedman

On Fri, Jul 16, 2010 at 11:51 PM, Jerry Friedman

<jerry_friedman at yahoo.com> wrote:

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I wouldn't want to defend this identification too literally; no more than I would Baldanders=Frankenstein.

But I think Borges's library is all libraries; how the pages are split over volumes isn't really important. (If Ultan's library has the text of *The Count of Monte Cristo* in one volume, and Borges's library has it split over 2 volumes because its volumes are smaller/fixed lengths, does that really matter?) Content is king, and Borges's library has it all, eventually.

gwern

Jeff Wilson — 17 Jul 2010, 06:51 · in reply to Gwern Branwen

On 7/16/2010 8:29 PM, Gwern Branwen wrote:

(This is an out-of-universe explanation, yes, but I don't think the in-universe explanations are tenable, since when Severian writes it, doesn't he already plan to set it adrift in the void?)

That depends on if we are reading the translation of the first copy, left behind, or of the second, written aboard the Ship.

I personally think he wrote the second to keep his mind(s) occupied with a diversion instead of dwelling on his likely emasculation, and the notional provenance of the ms translated by G.W. as well as the artifacts he has examined includes apportionment by mirror or transportation through the Botanic Gardens.

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

Jeff Wilson — 17 Jul 2010, 06:58 · in reply to Jane Delawney

On 7/16/2010 6:40 PM, Jane Delawney wrote:

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Where do the many eyes come in? Why don't other people share the same snakelike appearance when looked at in the same way by Sev?

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Gerry Quinn — 17 Jul 2010, 08:12 · in reply to James Wynn

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

On 7/16/2010 3:14 PM, Gerry Quinn wrote:

Admittedly he seems to have no problem with calling himself "Father", but then again the word "father" here is clearly (?) being used metaphorically.

Are you really so sure about the use of the word "clearly" that you only require a single "?" ?

The '?' is to acknowledge that someone has proposed or will propose that Inire is the biological progenitor of nearly all the characters in the story, including himself. Its singleness is intended to indicate that I do not personally find such lines of inquiry terribly useful.

- Gerry Quinn

David Stockhoff — 17 Jul 2010, 12:53 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

I'd guess something happened at that moment to put Severian into that perspective. Perhaps it wasn't Severian who slipped into 4 dimensions but the Cumaean.

Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 7/16/2010 6:40 PM, Jane Delawney wrote:

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Craig Brewer — 17 Jul 2010, 13:15 · in reply to Jane Delawney

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

Sent: Fri, July 16, 2010 6:40:55 PM

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Urth Mailing List

To post, write urth at urth.net

Subscription/information: <http://www.urth.net>

brunians at brunians.org — 17 Jul 2010, 13:56 · in reply to Craig Brewer

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(A) Why awesome, particularly?

(B) Your reaction is odd. No aliens are known to exist. Both Hindu/Buddhist cosmology and four-dimensional perception exist.

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Craig Brewer — 17 Jul 2010, 14:10 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

A) Awesome because the "simpler" example is obviously *way* more complex, as far as explanations go.

B) This is science fiction, and, in TBotNS, aliens quite obviously do exist.

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

From: "brunians at brunians.org" <brunians at brunians.org>

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

Sent: Sat, July 17, 2010 8:56:16 AM

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temporal universe from some place 'outside' time, she is alive indeed in her own

segment of the four-dimensional world. It's learning to jump into and out of

this world at the desired / destined points, that is the real trick;
learning to
navigate the Corridors of Time, in other words.

Perhaps Ossipago is worth discussing here. Borski thinks he is Inire. I don't.

I think he
is one of the machines that humanity built which then created the hierogrammates. The phrase "deus ex machina" is hinted at toward the end of Citadel and I've always liked how Ossipago's role in the story fits both the literal and theatrical meaning of that phrase.

I find I'm in disagreement not only with Borski, but with Andre-Driussi about the three known and named Hierodules. Both seem to assume that since Ossipago can be translated as 'bone grower', he, although basically a mechanism, is the nurse / guardian of both Famulimus and Barbatus. I think it makes far more sense in the context of the New Sun opus that all three names have some relevance to a role vs. Severian himself: Ossipago being the 'demigod' who oversees his growth from babyhood; Barbatus the one who sees him through puberty (Barbatus = name of minor Roman deity responsible for the sprouting of the first beard of the adolescent boy) and Famulimus the one who keeps him on the moral (as opposed to traditional) straight and narrow: the famulimus is the Roman minor deity responsible for a person's reputation, and s/he is presumably rooting for Sev as he makes the very difficult decision to go for basic good vs. evil morality rather than for guild tradition (which kind of turns good and evil on their heads in this context) as he grants mercy to Thecla at his own future's expense (he had every reason as he did what he did to expect that he would be executed for his 'crime'; this is therefore a real sacrifice of self for the greater good).

don't know if any of this is of any interest, but I've been mulling over the statements of the various commentators on all of these questions and given the thread, this seemed a good place to comment.

Again forgive me please for modifying the header a little, I really really want to get my list posts sent back to me, and my ISP won't do it unless I start a 'new' thread.

regards

JD

Hotmail has tools for the New Busy. Search, chat and e-mail from your inbox.

http://www.windowslive.com/campaign/thenewbusy?ocid=PID28326::T:WLMTAGL:ON:WL:en-US:WM_HMP:042010_1

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Urth Mailing List

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brunians at brunians.org — 17 Jul 2010, 14:28 · in reply to Craig Brewer

A) Awesome because the "simpler" example is obviously *way* more complex, as far as explanations go.

Awesome because you were being an asshole, and wanted to show how any reasonable person thinks that aliens are more likely than religion.

B) This is science fiction, and, in TBotNS, aliens quite obviously do exist.

This is the World.

In the World, Hindu/Buddhist cosmology and four dimensional perception undoubtedly exist.

Do you doubt that these things exist?

.

Craig Brewer — 17 Jul 2010, 15:23 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

A) You're over-reacting. I like irony. Consequently, I actually liked the post and specifically said I wasn't criticizing the ideas put forward about the Cumean. Yet somehow you accuse me of being an asshole.

B) I thought we were interpreting a novel. In that novel, aliens seem like a much more likely explanation since they are much more prevalent in the novel than the theory put forward. That doesn't make it impossible, of course. But it does make it simpler, which I thought was the

entire point of Occam's Razor.

That's all. I'm done. I'm sure Josh will find offense in something I've posted and respond by trying to ask me simple questions about "facts" or "definitions" as he sees them. I'll let him have the last word.

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

From: "brunians at brunians.org" <brunians at brunians.org>
To: The Urth Mailing List <urth at lists.urth.net>
Sent: Sat, July 17, 2010 9:28:40 AM
Subject: Re: (urth) Fr Inire + Cumean + others (was: Re: Inire as a hierodule)
A) Awesome because the "simpler" example is obviously *way* more complex,
as far as explanations go.

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David Stockhoff — 17 Jul 2010, 15:55 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

Regardless, they exist in the universe of Urth.

So do aliens, but that doesn't mean talking cabbages can be assumed to exist in the universe of Urth.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

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brunians at brunians.org — 17 Jul 2010, 16:39 · in reply to David Stockhoff

The World of Urth depends upon this World.

Someone was discussing this concept in another context.

The World of Urth takes place within this World.

Regardless, they exist in the universe of Urth.

So do aliens, but that doesn't mean talking cabbages can be assumed to exist in the universe of Urth.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

A) Awesome because the "simpler" example is obviously **way** more complex,
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This is the World.

In the World, Hindu/Buddhist cosmology and four dimensional perception undoubtedly exist.

Do you doubt that these things exist?

brunians at brunians.org — 17 Jul 2010, 16:39 · in reply to David Stockhoff

All fictional and historical Worlds take place within the real World.

Regardless, they exist in the universe of Urth.

So do aliens, but that doesn't mean talking cabbages can be assumed to exist in the universe of Urth.

brunians at brunians.org wrote:

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Jeff Wilson — 17 Jul 2010, 17:43 · in reply to David Stockhoff

On 7/17/2010 7:53 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:

I'd guess something happened at that moment to put Severian into that perspective. Perhaps it wasn't Severian who slipped into 4 dimensions but the Cumaean.

He sees 4D on several occasions, generally whenever something departs into the Corridors of Time "in that direction I had never seen until I watched the ship vanish into it from the top of Baldanders's castle and could only see, it seemed, when there was something there. Immediately he turned and began to run, and despite the dimness of the dawn sky I could see his running figure for a long time, illuminated by intermittent but regular flashes. At last he faded to a point of darkness; but then, just when I expected that point to disappear utterly, it began to grow, so that I had the impression of something huge rushing toward me down that strangely angled tunnel."

I've seen the snake/pink worm metaphor used before with higher dimensionality, particularly Heinlein's "Lifeline", but Sev's visions of objects in the corridors seem more literal.

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

brunians at brunians.org — 17 Jul 2010, 18:03 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

There's an application on the web that you can use to learn how to see four dimensions.

Hold on I'll post the link.

.

On 7/17/2010 7:53 AM, David Stockhoff wrote:

I'd guess something happened at that moment to put Severian into that perspective. Perhaps it wasn't Severian who slipped into 4 dimensions but the Cumaean.

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

Roy C. Lackey — 17 Jul 2010, 18:24 · in reply to Jane Delawney

Jane Delawney wrote:
[snip]

I find I'm in disagreement not only with Borski, but with Andre-Driussi about the three known and named Hierodules. Both seem to assume that since Ossipago can be translated as 'bone grower', he, although basically a mechanism, is the nurse / guardian of both Famulimus and Barbatus. [snip]

I suppose both men made that assumption because that is what the text says. Sev is speaking to Ossipago on the Ship:

"And yours [Ossipago's name] means bone-grower. You took care of Barbatus and Famulimus when they were small, saw to it that they were fed and so on, and you've remained with them ever since. That's what Famulimus told me once." (URTH, chap. V, 33)

-Roy

Jane Delawney — 20 Jul 2010, 23:14 · in reply to Craig Brewer

On 17/07/10 14:15, Craig Brewer wrote:
I'm inclined to disagree with this, invoking Occam's Razor; it's simply unnecessary.

Not criticizing the theory of the Cumean, but I just find it awesome that you invoke Occam's Razor to eliminate the possibility that she's an alien in favor of the vicissitudes of four-dimensional perception as related to Hindu/Buddhist cosmology.

Oh my, Craig, what an awesome response! I don't know whether to do 'I am not worthy' or ... what, actually!!

However - the four-dimensional perception thing is not restricted to Hindu/Buddhist cosmology; I mentioned that only because *as far as I know* it is only that philosophical structure that uses the (cosmological shorthand) term 'long body', and that was my main point here.

I still think that there is less of a disruption to current knowledge / beliefs in seeing this vision of the Cumean as a vision of a four-dimensional entity than there is in the notion that this 'proves' that she is an alien. All of us exist in four dimensions (including time needless to say) and from a point of view 'outside' of time would appear somewhat serpentine (I really hate to contemplate how much of my 'long body' is currently knotted around a certain UK town :)). I think that's a given, known already, however you like to put it. But the existence of aliens is still purely theoretical. Therefore if you posit the Cumean as alien vs. the vision of her as a human

seen in his full four dimensional reality, I think Occam's razor still applies and still favors the latter.

usual reason for monkeying with the header, sorry about that

cheers

JD