

Wolfe Forum open and ready for members

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 22 Jul 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5673>

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aaron — 22 Jul 2010, 13:23

Since John Klima's Wolfe forum seems to be done for, I decided to revamp my own Wolfe board and try it one more time. Anyone who was a member of the Solar Cycle Book Club (as I was) is welcome as is everyone else who wishes to visit. The address is <http://usefulphrases.yuku.com/>

I hope we can make this one work for a long time to come.

Aaron Singleton

David Stockhoff — 23 Jul 2010, 18:44 · in reply to aaron

Another reason for the existence of the Wall occurred to me. (Never mind that the fact that the Ascian war used to be farther south is itself sufficient reason, since overwhelming aerial and space attacks were always bound to be unlikely anywhere, and the Citadel has long-range guns.) This one is thematic. It's not a huge deal, but it should be noted for what it's worth.

I have a hunch that the rough circularity of the Wall and Severian's passing through it are, if not symbolic, at least a formal organizational scheme that points to the "true history" laid out in the events of UotNS.

That is, it is significant that Shadow narrates a radial physical path from a center (not necessarily the physical center) straight to a point on the edge, ignoring absolutely everything that may lie to either side. It ends with a passage across a boundary. Severian describes Shadow as a road from gate to gate (necropolis to Wall), and to a new road. This theme continues:

Claw is described as tracing a line from gateway to gateway---from Saltus to the stone town, which was a different kind of gate, a gate to the past and other dimensions.

Sword is described as tracing a line from fortress to fortress ---from Thrax to Diuturna. A fortress may be a kind of gate if it guards a pass or road. A closed gate may need forcing.

Citadel is described as completing a line from gate to gate---from necropolis to sky. But of course it starts in the North at the frontier and ends back at the Citadel, which, again, is a center in more than one way. So it repeats and reverses the journey from center to periphery, as well as containing smaller circles; the Citadel itself is a circle, with a breach in it.

To some degree, these convenient divisions are obvious and superficial. There are plenty of other divisions in Severian's life, as for example when he moves from body to body, or when he betrays. But some of these never become plain until UotNS, and therefore I suspect that this repeated geometric structure, however simple, is part of Wolfe's "open conspiracy" of clues.

Much as a center suggests a periphery---the simplest form being a circle---a circle suggests a center as well as other circles. One circle is Nessus; another is the Commonwealth, and another

is Urth. There other worlds in their orbits. Another is the universe, and there are other universes and universal "years," as has been discussed thoroughly on this forum. Severian's path is suspected to be circular in time, and we know he moves through past and future. If you think as I do that the black worm and the New Sun are two sides of the same phenomenon (from a supradimensional perspective), then this supports that idea.

Yesod is another center---or another circle suggesting yet another center. The House Absolute is another kind of center that suggests another kind of circle---a center hidden in plain sight. Are there circles hidden in plain sight? Other centers?