

Who's Right

The Urth list — 28 messages, 9 voices, 03 Dec 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5797>

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Lee Berman — 03 Dec 2010, 14:53

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premise, where others may not feel that is as central to the story.

I'm with you on that Ryan. My Father Inire ideas can be rendered silly by focusing on the ephemera
like monkeys and hair color and ignoring the central theme which is that Severian is being watched and
steered. It is a common debator's trick.

In my view, Severian is being watched and steered by more than once force, forces which are,
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There are the forces from the sky who are steering Severian toward creating Ushas and thus
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Ryan Dunn — 03 Dec 2010, 15:08 · in reply to Lee Berman

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António Pedro Marques — 03 Dec 2010, 16:19 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman wrote (03-12-2010 14:53):

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It's a trick to point out that there are problems with the evidence for any given thing?!

António Pedro Marques — 03 Dec 2010, 16:22 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

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Well... yes: what makes him so special?

Son of Witz — 03 Dec 2010, 17:38 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

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The book states that he was chosen for his memory.

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However, the nature of the enemies he faces in Sword & Citadel are loaded with commentary on how to align oneself to the Increate, but that is a long essay. I think Wolfe is very serious about that.

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Son of Witz — 03 Dec 2010, 18:02 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

Hey I can relate Ryan. My posts are usually ignored unless I acidently offend Catholics.

Yeah, I didn't quite agree with my friend who turned me onto these when he said, "Everything is in the four books." only on this last read did I realize he was right.

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I keep thinking Agia is the single most important (erm... okay, second most important)
character in the books and there must be so much about her no one has uncovered yet.

Lee Berman — 03 Dec 2010, 18:54 · follows António Pedro Marques

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More specifically, Agia is installed as the Vodalarii leader by Father Inire, replacing Thea who
isn't
doing such a good job. Hm...why exactly does Inire think this enemy of the Commonwealth,
Ascian
collaborator group needs a strong leader?

Prior to her elevation by Inire, Agia has been hanging out with a sexually degenerate little guy
who came
from outer space and is good with mirrors. Within a few hours of meeting Severian, Agia's
actions result
in the theft of the thousand-year old sacred gem of the Pelerines, a trip to Father Inire's creation
and
hangout the Botanic Gardens, some time travel, seeing a couple little bent guys, resurrection of
his dead
grandmother and the death and resurrection of Severian.

That's pretty crazy. And completely weird unless we shift our perception of the events from
random occurrences
to a series of scheduled events, planned by someone with the knowledge, means and ability

to do it.

Gerry Quinn — 03 Dec 2010, 20:07 · in reply to Lee Berman

From: "Lee Berman" <severiansola at hotmail.com>

Ryan Dunn- My perception of the BotNS, in my readings, leads me more down the "we're watching you," premise, where others may not feel that is as central to the story.

I'm with you on that Ryan. My Father Inire ideas can be rendered silly by focusing on the ephemera like monkeys and hair color and ignoring the central theme which is that Severian is being watched and steered. It is a common debator's trick.

And if I question theories in which two and two do not make four, I suppose it is only because I am a mathematician.

I mentioned monkeys, but I also pointed out what I consider to be the flaw in your five main reasons for believing in the Inire theory.

Many of the episodes to which Severian seems steered towards can be interpreted as for the purpose of observing him in action: Dorcas at the lake, avern duel, Little Severian, Typhon, Miles, Leech etc. Leaving Urth then returning, the action resumes with Ceryx and Zama.

On the other hand, isn't something of the sort intrinsic to the structure of *any* novel featuring a main character? [Wolfe has even written a short story 'The Last Thrilling Wonder Story' in which the main character is the plaything of his demigod-like Author. The True God, or at least his faith, sets him free.]

- Gerry Quinn

Ryan Dunn — 03 Dec 2010, 20:27 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

On Dec 3, 2010, at 3:07 PM, Gerry Quinn wrote:

From: "Lee Berman" <severiansola at hotmail.com>

Ryan Dunn- My perception of the BotNS, in my readings, leads me more down the "we're watching you," premise, where others may not feel that is as central to the story.

I'm with you on that Ryan. My Father Inire ideas can be rendered silly by focusing on the ephemera like monkeys and hair color and ignoring the central theme which is that Severian is being watched and steered. It is a common debator's trick.

And if I question theories in which two and two do not make four, I suppose it is only because I am a mathematician.

I mentioned monkeys, but I also pointed out what I consider to be the flaw in your five main reasons for believing in the Inire theory.

In my own defense, I vehemently represent my assertions as my own viewing of the text. It does nothing to judge or argue for or against someone else's. It does, however, acknowledge that others indeed do take a different "world view" of the book and how it is read. I am curious -- instead of people just rejecting a certain line of thought and then belittling that stance (not you in particular) -- what you, Gerry, might make of the presence of monkeys throughout the BotNS; not just monkey men in caves or apes in the canopy, but of the several

blatant descriptions of characters and objects as monkey-like throughout BotNS, which includes, amongst others, Father Inire.

Latro, for instance, has no monkey-like descriptions of humans, if I remember correctly. I find it hard to believe that they are just coincidences for how Wolfe chose to describe a character.
...ryan

Gerry Quinn — 03 Dec 2010, 20:47 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

From: Ryan Dunn

In my own defense, I vehemently represent my assertions as my own viewing of the text. It does nothing to judge or argue for or against someone else's. It does, however, acknowledge that others indeed do take a different "world view" of the book and how it is read.

Some views contradict other views.

I am curious -- instead of people just rejecting a certain line of thought and then belittling that stance (not you in particular) -- what you, Gerry, might make of the presence of monkeys throughout the BotNS; not just monkey men in caves or apes in the canopy, but of the several blatant descriptions of characters and objects as monkey-like throughout BotNS, which includes, amongst others, Father Inire.

Latro, for instance, has no monkey-like descriptions of humans, if I remember correctly. I find it hard to believe that they are just coincidences for how Wolfe chose to describe a character.

Maybe it's because BotNS is set in an equatorial region, with jungles, whereas SoA is set in Europe, where there aren't any monkeys?

Are you saying all these monkeys and apes are connected? Because many of them seem quite distinct.

- Gerry Quinn

Ryan Dunn — 03 Dec 2010, 20:53 · in reply to Gerry Quinn

On Dec 3, 2010, at 3:47 PM, Gerry Quinn wrote:

Maybe it's because BotNS is set in an equatorial region, with jungles, whereas SoA is set in Europe, where there aren't any monkeys?

Are you saying all these monkeys and apes are connected? Because many of them seem quite distinct.

I'm saying that at least four characters being described as monkeys is noteworthy in the text. Maybe you do not?

And regarding the jungle setting, point taken.

...ryan

Jeff Wilson — 04 Dec 2010, 02:27 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 12/3/2010 2:53 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

On Dec 3, 2010, at 3:47 PM, Gerry Quinn wrote:

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Are you saying all these monkeys and apes are connected? Because many of them seem quite distinct.

I'm saying that at least four characters being described as monkeys is noteworthy in the text. Maybe you do not?

Most of the characters are monkeylike because they are primates, but some are more monkeylike than others. It is the non-primates who still look like monkeys that are significant.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Ryan Dunn — 04 Dec 2010, 02:58 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

If you visualize the dog-ape in the lazaret and the red ape in the jungle in terms of how you would film their presence, there is no escaping the reality is that both of these creatures are very clearly watching/spying on Severian.

I find that, as well, to be significant.

...ryan

On Dec 3, 2010, at 9:27 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:
On 12/3/2010 2:53 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

On Dec 3, 2010, at 3:47 PM, Gerry Quinn wrote:

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Jeff Wilson — 04 Dec 2010, 05:48 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 12/3/2010 8:58 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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I find that, as well, to be significant.

...ryan

I hadn't included those as characters. I suppose that is a prejudice on my part ingrained from being lambasted by my 9th grade English teacher for considering the dog in "There Will Come Soft Rains" a character, since it's an animal in a famously characterless story.

I imagine the watching apes are covert aquastors, which is rather more sporting than making

them invisible. Their lack of invisibility like aquastor Triskele might mean they are agents of a faction with a less skilled operator or poorer equipment.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
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Ryan Dunn — 04 Dec 2010, 05:59 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Dec 4, 2010, at 12:48 AM, Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 12/3/2010 8:58 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

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To be aquastors, don't they have to exist in Severian's memory already, in order to become projections? Or are you saying they are some hybridization of beings Severian already has seen? Where would the ape-headed dog have come from?

...ryan

Jeff Wilson — 04 Dec 2010, 06:46 · in reply to Ryan Dunn

On 12/3/2010 11:59 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

To be aquastors, don't they have to exist in Severian's memory already, in order to become projections? Or are you saying they are some hybridization of beings Severian already has seen? Where would the ape-headed dog have come from?

Aquastors vs Ediolons:

<http://www.urth.net/urth/archives/v0017/0074.shtml>

Obviously, if aquastor Malrubius can watch the play and aquastor Triskele can chase birds, someone else's aquastor ought to be able to see Severian and what he is up to. But in the spirit of the recent watching/following question let us ask, are there any occasions when Severian sees similar simians, either actual animals or their depictions?

(It may be worthwhile to note that in the much smaller citadel of the 1950's A&M campus, at least one building had prominent animal skull relief on the fascia.)

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
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Son of Witz — 04 Dec 2010, 15:19 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Dec 3, 2010, at 10:46 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:
(It may be worthwhile to note that in the much smaller citadel of the 1950's A&M campus, at least one building had prominent animal skull relief on the fascia.)

Might you share an image link, good sir?

Jeff Wilson — 04 Dec 2010, 19:25 · in reply to Son of Witz

On 12/4/2010 9:19 AM, Son of Witz wrote:

On Dec 3, 2010, at 10:46 PM, Jeff Wilson<jwilson at io.com> wrote:

(It may be worthwhile to note that in the much smaller citadel of the 1950's A&M campus, at least one building had prominent animal skull relief on the fascia.)

Might you share an image link, good sir?

I'm still hunting for archived images; there were not many of the older bldgs left when I went back a couple of years ago to document them. Back in my salad days of the class of 91, there were several collections of older images on display at the campus, but they've moved along as well. One I really want to find was about the vanished library - still there, but totally concealed by subsequent additions and remodeling until it was a minor part of the "new" library, seen here:

<http://www.panoramio.com/photo/23570465>

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana
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Son of Witz — 05 Dec 2010, 04:47 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Dec 4, 2010, at 11:25 AM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

On 12/4/2010 9:19 AM, Son of Witz wrote:

On Dec 3, 2010, at 10:46 PM, Jeff Wilson<jwilson at io.com> wrote:

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Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana

That's neat about the library. How is A&M like a citadel? I'm totally ignorant.

Jeff Wilson — 05 Dec 2010, 06:14 · in reply to Son of Witz

On 12/4/2010 10:47 PM, Son of Witz wrote:

On Dec 4, 2010, at 11:25 AM, Jeff Wilson<jwilson at io.com> wrote:

On 12/4/2010 9:19 AM, Son of Witz wrote:

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Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana

That's neat about the library. How is A&M like a citadel? I'm totally ignorant.

It was a military academy as well as a college, various of which have been called citadels, and it has habitually been a clump of buildings of varying styles added at different times by a succession of administrations and patrons, often repurposed considerably from their original form and function. I don't think there's been a time when the campus was completely walled around, so it's not like the citadel of the Autarch in that way, but they have ceremonial cannonades, rites and beatings, symbolic sculpture and architecture, and the underground tunnels. I suppose the guilds could be representative of the various civilian employee departments like faculty, maintenance, administration, etc. and the latinos would have comprised the autochthons and the remnants of the previous empires.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com

Computational Intelligence Laboratory - Texas A&M Texarkana

< <http://www.tamut.edu/CIL> >

Son of Witz — 05 Dec 2010, 18:14 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Dec 4, 2010, at 10:14 PM, Jeff Wilson <jwilson at io.com> wrote:

On 12/4/2010 10:47 PM, Son of Witz wrote:

On Dec 4, 2010, at 11:25 AM, Jeff Wilson<jwilson at io.com> wrote:

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Interesting. Makes me wish I'd had ANY Involvement with traditions. The idea of learning and training in a guild is fascinating in retrospect, though I would have balked at the time I might have been able to be involved. The Art Institute I went to seemed old at 110 years, it's only seeming tradition was that at some point you had to get naked and hurt yourself in front of an audience.

~Witz

Jane Delawney — 07 Dec 2010, 02:57 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On 04/12/10 05:48, Jeff Wilson wrote:

On 12/3/2010 8:58 PM, Ryan Dunn wrote:

If you visualize the dog-ape in the lazaret and the red ape in the jungle in terms of how you would film their presence, there is no escaping the reality is that both of these creatures are very clearly watching/spying on Severian.

I find that, as well, to be significant.

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I hadn't included those as characters. I suppose that is a prejudice on my part ingrained from being lambasted by my 9th grade English teacher for considering the dog in "There Will Come Soft Rains" a character, since it's an animal in a famously characterless story.

I imagine the watching apes are covert aquastors, which is rather more sporting than making them invisible. Their lack of invisibility like aquastor Triskele might mean they are agents of a faction with a less skilled operator or poorer equipment.

Just re-reading BoTLS and wonder now at the reason for the inclusion of a 'dog-headed ape' in the list of creatures viewed by Silk right near the start of the story when he still believes he needs to perform a sacrifice in order to say a proper 'thank-you' to the Outsider.

The cynocephalus isn't even close to being the creature Silk wants to buy, and could have been dismissed in a few words like the sheep; but instead it's described in some detail (trained to act as link-boy and bodyguard, this adding to its value and to its desirability, in the value-system of Viron, as a potential sacrifice) and of course there's the standout feature that it is a fantasy animal in a market of mostly real-world creatures.

(Yes, IMO an ape with the head of a dog - ! - is a tad more fantastic than a monkey that can make a few human-like vocalizations, let alone than a talking night-cough.)

The last time I came across a dog-headed ape in any of these books was at the barracks of the Blue Dimarchi near the Sanguinary Field, as Ryan points out. Severian first thinks he's delirious and seeing things, then realises that this fantastical-looking creature is actually quite real. The significance of this episode isn't explored at all at the time - but then one meets all the various other ape-like beings in the story.

What the heck?

JD

Ryan Dunn — 07 Dec 2010, 03:44 · in reply to Jane Delawney

Might all of the ape references simply be carry over from Urth when it was Earth? Or some other Darwinian symbolism? A previous Urth Cycle. I dunno.

...ryan

On Dec 6, 2010, at 9:57 PM, Jane Delawney <jane_delawney at sky.com> wrote:

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What the heck?

JD

Mo Holkar — 07 Dec 2010, 08:44 · in reply to Jane Delawney

At 02:57 07/12/2010, Jane wrote:

The cynocephalus isn't even close to being the creature Silk wants to buy, and could have been dismissed in a few words like the sheep; but instead it's described in some detail (trained to act as link-boy and bodyguard, this adding to its value and to its desirability, in the value-system of Viron, as a potential sacrifice) and of course there's the standout feature that it is a fantasy animal in a market of mostly real-world creatures.

(Yes, IMO an ape with the head of a dog - ! - is a tad more fantastic than a monkey that can make a few human-like vocalizations, let alone than a talking night-cough.)

I assumed this dog-headed ape was just an ordinary baboon (albeit rather well trained), as they're generally referred to by Classical authors as cynocephalid:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yellow_Baboon

That seems more likely to me than it being an out-of-place fantasy animal,

Mo

~ # ~

Andrew Mason — 07 Dec 2010, 15:18 · follows Mo Holkar

Jane Delawney wrote:

(Yes, IMO an ape with the head of a dog - ! - is a tad more fantastic than a monkey that can make a few human-like vocalizations, let alone than a talking night-chough.)

It isn't just that it can make human vocalisations; it clearly means what it says (as does Oreb). Both seem to have an intelligence which is sub-human but very real. There are a couple of Oreb's-eye-view passages which bear this out. (Severian says at some point that some animals have learnt a few words, so this is in keeping with the future setting. There are also the writing rats.)

I'm not sure if the dog-headed ape is just a baboon, as Mo Holkar suggests, or a strange hybrid; but given the human-animal hybrids of Severian's time, it's not too surprising that there were would also be animal-animal hybrids.

Lee Berman — 07 Dec 2010, 16:03 · follows Andrew Mason

Andrew Mason: It isn't just that it can make human vocalisations; it clearly means what it says (as does Oreb). Both seem to have an intelligence which is sub-human but very real.

I don't remember the cynocephalus making any noise. It just seems to look in on Severian then leave. There are revelations about Oreb at the end of RttWhorl which do involve the limits on its intelligence, I think

Severian says at some point that some animals have learnt a few words, so this is in keeping with the future setting. There are also the writing rats.)

Yes. Now I sorta like the legendary wolf family who adopt Frog. They can talk a lot and are able to carry swords.

I'm not sure if the dog-headed ape is just a baboon, as Mo Holkar suggests, or a strange hybrid; but given the human-animal hybrids of Severian's time, it's not too surprising that there were would also be animal-animal hybrids.

Well, the thing is that *Papio cynocephalus* is the name for a species of baboon. If we were told there is a tiger shark in BotNS we wouldn't need to assume there is species hybridization going on.

There are the human-animal hybrids you mention (created by Father Inire). But they serve a particular function suited to their hybridization- like dog-men set to guard the gold wagon at Orithya. I don't see how a dog-ape is specially suited for hospital work.

I think the creature is there to do what we see it do- look in on Severian. It was at a crucial juncture in his life. The Claw/Severian did its first acknowledged public miraculous work. It freaked out Dorcas. Freaked out

Agilus even more. Resurrection from an avorn wound is worth looking in upon a guy. Especially if one has
"a presentiment of his future".