

Levels of meaning (was Re: Green Is Urth Redux)

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 12 Jan 2011

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5894>

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Dan'I Danehy-Oakes — 12 Jan 2011, 17:55

Lee Berman wrote:

I preferred Wolfe's

explanation of how the Alzabo was a metaphor for his former mega-corp employer, Procter and Gamble. For

me that's where the true human understanding of the *meaning* of the text is found)

Oh, aye. We're in agreement there; I was just tweaking this whole silly argument about whether there are domes on Lune or what. What really matters is that Lune stands green in the sky as a symbol of man's past engineering glory, to which Vodalus foolishly thinks he can restore the world. It is a doubled symbol of decadance: the technological decadance that has fallen so far from the ability to do such things; and the moral decadance that said "just because we can, we should."

Agreed also that Wolfe's not going to let a hard-science difficulty stand in the way of a cool story point. (The alzabo itself is patently ridiculous on a hard-science basis, but chilling as hell as a monster and neat as a symbol of being devoured by The Machine.) But, he does take pains to make a lot of his story at least surface-plausible. (Well, maybe the alzabo isn't completely ridiculous: if it isn't a native animal of some far world, but bioengineered by humans to produce the analeptic...)

Dan'I Danehy-Oakes