

Tzadkiel's form

The Urth list — 30 messages, 6 voices, 11 Sep 2014

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6665>

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Lee — 11 Sep 2014, 16:58

Jeff Wilson:

Remember Tzadkiel's story that the original exalted human race built his from animals, so an association with animals and beastmen and apes as the most humanlike of animals is not inappropriate for Yesodis.

Yet I think it should be remembered that one of the primates Severian encounters (on the Ship) ends up BEING Tzadkiel. Does this provide a link between Inire and Tzadkiel? I think so, along with others links, such as the type of space-time portals they both use.

Biblical angels are often described as having animal characteristics though fallen angels or demons are even more likely to have bestial features.

On the Ship, we see Tzadkiel range in size and form from tiny tinkler bell and ball of fur to a giant winged male humanoid and even larger winged female humanoid. I think the final stage in this progression is seen by Severian in the mirror book found in the Secret House. This Tzadkiel is so large Severian thinks planet Urth would be like a dust mote caught in the wind of its wings.

I think it is clear such a being cannot be biological in the sense we understand it. There are the problems of existing unprotected in the void which have been discussed for Inhum. We must wonder what it could breathe and maybe even more fantastically, what such a being could eat. (the amusing topic of angel poop is actually relevant also).

Given the lack of traditional biology of that version of Tzadkiel, I have recently been considering that we see him/her in another form also. The first time Severian hears Tzadkiel's voice it seems to emanate from everywhere in the Ship. There is the odd ability for the Ship to adjust portions of its internal conditions to the biology of its current resident.

I wondered what the significance of the Ship's unusual seven-sided structure might be. Some random Googling reminded me that there are seven arch-angels, Tzadkiel being one of them. The Ship's multiple sails might in some way be represented in an angel's multiple sets of wings.

I think it is possible that Wolfe meant the Ship to actually be a form of Tzadkiel. I find support for this idea in the story of the Navisaput, in which another very large being is mistaken for, or actually is partially a ship.

I think something similar happens in On Blue's Waters, when Horn sees the black "pirate ship" chasing him which later seems as though it must be the source of Seawrack. If this "ship" were really the gigantic Mother creature in the form of a boat it would explain the loss of Seawrack's arm and demonstrate the relationship between The Mother and Seawrack as the budding process we see elsewhere in the Sun Series.

Daniel Otto Jack Petersen — 11 Sep 2014, 18:26 · in reply to Lee

That's a kind of beautiful theory, Lee. -DOJP

On Thu, Sep 11, 2014 at 5:58 PM, Lee <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:
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james ford — 11 Sep 2014, 20:18 · in reply to Lee

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On Sep 11, 2014 12:58 PM, "Lee" <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:
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Lee — 12 Sep 2014, 13:08 · follows james ford

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So maybe the Naviscaput is Erebus instead of Abaia? Given the odd ways these giant creatures can reproduce themselves I'm not sure there is quite the distinction between their identities as there would be for sexually produced, born creatures such as ourselves.

Also of interest (to me, anyway), one of the mythological offspring of Erebus and Nyx is the boatman of the dead, Charon. I think he makes an appearance in BotNS.

The implication of Tzadkiel and the beasts on Urth sharing a common origin is great and well worth looking into. Why would these monsters, as

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For me, it is a general principle for the whole Sun Series that when Wolfe has left gaps in the story regarding mythologically named beings, that the gaps can often be filled by turning to mythology (or religion, as it were).

So in trying to understand the opposition of the megatherians to the New Sun I think a good starting point is to understand why Lucifer and the fallen angels mutinied and opposed God (and Jesus) and left heaven and fell to earth.

I used that word because a "mutiny" is the primary storyline we see play out while Severian is on Tzadkiel's Ship. Perhaps we cannot understand Ship politics any more than we can understand heavenly politics in the Bible. We may have to just shrug and say pride, power and control are the issues and these guys decided they would rather reign on Urth than serve in heaven (metaphor- Ship).

We are shown one of the mutineers (jibbers) resembling Hethor. Given that the "old sailor" Hethor, in his urthly ramblings, seems to say that he HAD been a mutineer on his vessel, I think we can safely conclude that Severian does see Hethor on the Ship but a younger version of him, from before they encounter each other on Urth.

Given Hethor's mastery of mirrors and monsters, I don't find it a stretch that he is associated with the fallen angels/demons who reside on Urth. My guess is that, in parallel to the Biblical story, all of the monsters fallen to Urth originated as mutineers from Tzadkiel's Ship. By name alone, this would include Typhon.

Marc Aramini — 12 Sep 2014, 18:34 · in reply to Lee

There is a statue of Nox/night in the second chapter of Book of the New Sun after Juturna casts him out, linking that scene directly with Abaia.

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Lee — 15 Sep 2014, 14:02 · follows Marc Aramini

Marc Aramini: There is a statue of Nox/night in the second chapter of Book of the New Sun after Juturna casts him out, linking that scene directly with Abaia.

I'm not fully understanding you Marc. After the scene where Severian is rescued by an undine, a "statue of Night atop the khan (inn) on the opposite bank (of Gyll)" is mentioned. Are you saying this statue is sufficient to dismiss mythology and connect "Night" to Abaia, rather than Erebus?

Abaia and the undine are clearly aquatic creatures but the suggestion is that Erebus is associated with an Antarctic mountain. For me, a statue atop an inn on the bank of a river is more evocative of a mountain than water.

Moreover, of all the possible megatherians, Abaia is mentioned the most, but Erebus is a close second. The other candidates (Scylla, Arioeh, Ouroboros, Jurpari) are generally mentioned only once. Given this, I would expect Erebus to make some sort of appearance in the story, somewhere. Otherwise, why would Wolfe mention this particular name so many times?

I'll note that there is an old boatman in the Severian drowning scene who asks about a woman in the river, though Severian (perhaps pretends to) misunderstand him.

Much later in the story, there is another old boatman who tells the story of a giant ship carrying gigantic, notably pale-skinned warriors. There are women's voices coming up from the water and a deeper male voice also. For me, the pale-skin and giant size are hinting at an Antarctic mountain origin for these warriors. Perhaps what lies below the water represents Abaia and undines while

the
ship and warriors above water represent Erebus.

Definitely ambiguous and intended to be. But I continue to think the distinction between Erebus and Abaia is not as great as the distinction between one human being and another (similar connection between the gigantic Mother on Blue and Great Scylla on Urth).

For Tzadkiel, we have animal versions, human versions, angel versions, male versions, female versions,
tiny versions and cosmic-sized versions. Might this not be a clue that there are Urthly creatures who
come in gigantic oceanic versions, smaller lake and river versions, land/mountain versions, cave versions,
human sized versions and animal versions?

Marc Aramini — 15 Sep 2014, 15:55 · in reply to Lee

Okay, all I was implying was that the undines are known as the brides of Abaia. This scene is where Sev is rescued by the undine Juturna, who casts him up, and he sees the statue of Night when he comes back to consciousness. Later, in the story of the Student and His Son, the woman who helps the son is a daughter of Night working against her father, and the naviscaput seems to be like the giant thing issuing orders at the end of Citadel of the autarch - probably Abaia. Undines are associated with Night in that first scene through Juturna's interference. Whether she is actually related to the Lilith like Jahi in Eschatology and Genesis is less clear.

After Sev awakens something in the mine at Saltus, he speculates that he knows why Abaia has tried to enlist him in this battle, or something to that effect. That thing under the mine might very well be one of these Abaia/Erebus/Arioch creatures stirred to wakefulness. The toothy description of the cave formation really does match Baldander's dream pretty well. I agree there is very little distinction between all these guys as they appear in the text.

Spring Wind being half plant caught me a bit off guard - I obviously hadn't read that since I devised the man-tree hybrid scheme of Short Sun. Definitely those embedded stories would have told us the real plot and its denouement in a world in which Urth of the New Sun was never written, but they are still somewhat opaque in their syncretic blending of stories of Mowgli, Moses, myth, and more. What is the Red Flower, the rose without thorns, which gives birth to Spring Wind? Severian's Claw of the Conciliator probably winds up being the thorn of a flower dipped in his blood.

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Jahi is a demon and Wolfe specifically refers to Juturna as a demon in UotNS so I assume that
(and the female gender and temptress role) is your basis of connection. Given the Biblical
nature of demons, I think it is a fair guess to assume they are of the same ilk.

Here is a tummy-turner: Jahi and The Contessa Carina are played by the same actress, Jolenta
(echo of Juturna?). The Contessa is later in UotNS (on the Path Of Air) linked to Severian's
mother Catherine. Does that suggest anything about Severian's ancestry?

That speculation aside, I find a not so speculative connection between the fanged demon
Jahi, played by a busty redhead in BotNS and the vampiric Jahlee who takes the form of a
busty redhead in Short Sun. I definitely think Wolfe is using SilkHorn and his retinue's travels
to Urth to say something about the nature of Severian's unusual and mysterious family tree.

(two of Borski's prime candidates for "Severa" are hinted at in those Silkhorn travels, Merryn the
witch and Jolenta, via Jahi and Jahlee.)

larry miller — 16 Sep 2014, 00:58 · in reply to Lee

Mind Blown!

Is Hethor introduced in the same chapter as Jonah? If Im right this is also where Jonah tells the
story of the "beans" too. The idea that Typhon was on the Ship could be huge. If he originally
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Lee — 16 Sep 2014, 12:01 · follows larry miller

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Hethor is first introduced, (though not by name) at Agilus' execution. At first he seems just one of several sadists who deeply enjoy watching executions. Later, in the antechamber and beyond, Hethor makes it clear that he worships Severian, insistently calling him "Master" and "my Master".

But later, when Severian meets Jonah, he notices that Hethor disappears and there is an implication that Hethor doesn't want to be recognized by his fellow- Shipmate. Moreover, Severian sees characters who resemble both Hethor and Jonah later on Tzadkiel's Ship.

There is the naming convention where mythological names are used for aliens (or more broadly,

Greco-Roman names as for Inire, Cumaeen, Barbatus, Famulimus and Ossipago). Regarding Hethor, we are cryptically told by Agia that:

"His name isn't really Hethor, by the way. He says it's a much older one, that hardly anyone has heard of now."

Why does Hethor go on and on about Severian being his Master and seeming to worship him, but then later try to kill him? Perhaps the worship was all an act but I sometimes think Hethor wasn't really trying to kill Severian. Perhaps, being who he is, Hethor was actually the first to recognize what Severian truly was, and his beasts were more of a series of godhood tests rather than true assassination attempts.

In UotNS, on Yesod, Tzadkiel mentions that he had been Severian's acolyte in a previous iteration. Does this mean he was hidden among the throngs who follow Severian when he is the Conciliator? Or perhaps is Tzadkiel the ancient name which hardly anyone has heard of?

Marc Aramini — 16 Sep 2014, 13:39 · in reply to Lee

Hethor the perverted and debased sailor who keeps his little sex doll in the closet and is manipulated by Agia, always motivated by a terrible need for revenge, is not a good character fit for being related to the actual paragon of Urth. (Tzadkiel pretty much serves as proxy for Sev in the trial).

Characterization in Wolfe is important. You can't have a stuttering blood thirsty persecution complex easily manipulated guy actually be the guardian angel of Urth without really ignoring characterization wholesale.

As far as published work on New Sun, my problem with Borski is he wants to collapse all the characters into one or two and doesn't really think logically and my issue with Wright is he thinks every moment of transcendence is a hard determined lie, that Severian's claim that even devils serve the increate is a weak excuse, which is a very misrepresentational view of Wolfe in general.

Wright's reading of The God and His Man as a metafictional criticism of readers killing the author's intention is ironically about as far off as a reading can get, too.

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Jeffery Wilson clueland.com — 17 Sep 2014, 04:25 · in reply to larry miller

On 9/15/2014 7:58 PM, larry miller wrote:

Mind Blown!

Is Hethor introduced in the same chapter as Jonah? If Im right this is also where Jonah tells the story of the "beans" too. The idea that Typhon was on the Ship could be huge. If he originally was a lifeform akin to Tzadkiel, this would certainly line up with Wolfes naming schema that any mythological name indicates an alien origin.

On Fri, Sep 12, 2014 at 9:08 AM, Lee <severiansola at hotmail.com

<mailto:severiansola at hotmail.com>> wrote:

>Daniel Otto Jack Petersen: That's a kind of beautiful theory, Lee

Thanks, DOJP. Ship's sails as angel wings does work rather poetically. Credit to

Wolfe for that. I am wondering if this theme of large beings being mistaken

(or conflated) with ships might be related to the theme of large, fish-monster

mouths being mistaken for caves.

>james ford: I was always under the assumption that the tale of the naviscaput was

>about Abaia.

Yes, I think Severian himself muses on that. But here is an interesting consideration:

The daughter of the Naviscaput, Noctua, reports that her father had taken her mother,

"Night" by force. In Greek mythology, Night or Nyx is mated with her primeval god-

brother Erebus.

So maybe the Naviscaput is Erebus instead of Abaia? Given the odd ways these giant

creatures can reproduce themselves I'm not sure there is quite the distinction between

their identities as there would be for sexually produced, born creatures such as ourselves.

Also of interest (to me, anyway), one of the mythological offspring of Erebus and Nyx is

the boatman of the dead, Charon. I think he makes an appearance in BotNS.

>The implication of Tzadkiel and the beasts on Urth sharing a common
>origin is great and well worth looking into. Why would these
monsters, as
>possible offshoots of the Hierogrammates, work against the coming

of the

>New Sun? What caused the schism? Or is it really as simple as the monsters

>being "fallen" versions of Tzadkiel?

For me, it is a general principle for the whole Sun Series that when Wolfe has left gaps

in the story regarding mythologically named beings, that the gaps can often be filled by

turning to mythology (or religion, as it were).

So in trying to understand the opposition of the megatherians to the New Sun I think a

good starting point is to understand why Lucifer and the fallen angels mutinied and

opposed God (and Jesus) and left heaven and fell to earth.

I used that word because a "mutiny" is the primary storyline we see play out while

Severian is on Tzadkiel's Ship. Perhaps we cannot understand Ship politics any more

than we can understand heavenly politics in the Bible. We may have to just shrug and

say pride, power and control are the issues and these guys decided they would rather

reign on Urth than serve in heaven (metaphor- Ship).

We are shown one of the mutineers (jibbers) resembling Hethor. Given that the "old sailor"

Hethor, in his urthly ramblings, seems to say that he HAD been a mutineer on his vessel,

I think we can safely conclude that Severian does see Hethor on the Ship but a younger

version of him, from before they encounter each other on Urth.

Given Hethor's mastery of mirrors and monsters, I don't find it a stretch that he is

associated with the fallen angels/demons who reside on Urth. My guess is that, in parallel

to the Biblical story, all of the monsters fallen to Urth originated as mutineers from Tzadkiel's

Ship. By name alone, this would include Typhon.

This would explain Typhon's rapid apprehension of the time displaced Conciliator, but other Hellenic names do **not** relate to Ship-sailors, Nessus for one.

Jeff Wilson - < jwilson at clueland.com >
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Lee — 17 Sep 2014, 13:02 · follows Jeffery Wilson clueland.com

Marc Aramini:

Hethor the perverted and debased sailor who keeps his little sex doll in the closet and is manipulated by Agia, always motivated by a terrible need for revenge, is not a good character fit for being related to the actual paragon of Urth. (Tzadkiel pretty much serves as proxy for Sev in the trial).

I disagree on two counts. First, Hethor makes a great urthly version of Tzadkiel if the purpose of the form is disguise. Naturally if it really is a literary disguise we, the readers, will need some means of penetrating that disguise. I find Tzadkiel's otherwise inexplicable revelation that he had been Severian's acolyte to be one such means of identification. I find Hethor's mastery of mirrors and monsters, connecting him to Father Inire to be another clue that we are meant to look more closely at Hethor's identity. (Hethor and Inire also share a lecherous yen for young women). The fact that Hethor's real name is hinted at but never revealed is another clue that we should be asking "who is this, really?"

Second, it makes sense within the religio/mythological model I have presented. If an angel falls to earth, it becomes, by definition, a demon. And one of the primary characteristics of Judeo-Christian fallen angels (and their cognates, the Greco-Roman gods) is that they became obsessed with mating with human women. It was one of the main things they do.

Characterization in Wolfe is important. You can't have a stuttering blood thirsty persecution complex easily manipulated guy actually be the guardian angel of Urth without really ignoring characterization wholesale.

Disguised identity and extremely subtle hints for seeing through the disguise is surely a pervasive theme in Wolfe's writing. Consider Tzadkiel, perhaps the single most widely-disguised character in all of Wolfe's work. Severian is eventually able to recognize Tzadkiel's forms ranging from a furry animal to several human forms to several angelic forms while he is on the Ship. Let's not forget the saucy "tinker bell" version, who would seem to share no personality traits whatsoever with the larger, male versions of Tzadkiel but is still, unquestionably, a version of Tzadkiel.

But we, the readers, are expected to see MORE than our unreliable narrator Severian reports. If he can see that many versions of Tzadkiel on the Ship (and Yesod and Brook Madregot) then surely we are invited to detect further versions of him/her on Urth. And if we start looking for fallen angels on Urth, the search surely does not end with Hethor.

As far as published work on New Sun, my problem with Borski is he wants to collapse all the characters into one or two and doesn't really think logically.

I generally agree. Borski has a great literary "eye" for "dots" but he isn't the best at connecting them. For example, he takes the single Mt. Nebo reference as a sign that Father Inire is a

"moses-figure" without any attempt to connect that to the many, many other hints that Wolfe is using a broad palette of pre-Christian mythology to create the characters and setting for BotNS. If there was any doubt about that, the continuation of the trend in Long Sun and Short Sun is sufficient confirmation for me.

Wright's reading of *The God and His Man* as a metafictional criticism of readers killing the author's intention is ironically about as far off as a reading can get, too.

I think Wright also has a good literary eye, but interpreting Wolfe from atheistic perspective is a virtual guarantee of missing much of the author's intentions. It ends up being more about Wright than Wolfe.

Lee — 17 Sep 2014, 13:24 · follows Lee

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Jeffrey Wilson: This would explain Typhon's rapid apprehension of the time displaced Conciliator, but other Hellenic names do **not** relate to Ship-sailors, Nessus for one.

I find Wolfe's usage of the name "Nessus" to be multi-layered brilliance. First it is a plausible derivation of the name "Buenos Aires", the geographical and literary (Borges) model for the city of Nessus.

Next, Buenos Aires mean "good air" or "fresh breezes" but "Nessus" invokes the concept of poison. A not-so-subtle commentary on the effects of long history, overpopulation and technology.

Finally, Nessus invokes the Greek story of Heracles, whom I find to be a surprisingly apt model for Severian. Like Heracles, Severian is born of mysterious ancestry who finds himself endowed with divine power but spends his life being pushed into dangers and arduous tasks because of godly politics from above which manipulate him without he being able to clearly understand why. And, of course, ultimately both Heracles and Severian are elevated to godhood themselves. In a sense, Nessus can represent the poisoned cloak that both Heracles and Severian had to shed before their ultimate elevation.

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Marc Aramini — 17 Sep 2014, 13:55 · in reply to Lee

Speaking of Hercules

Romulus and Remus (Frog and Fish) are in one story fathered by Mars and in another by Heracles, by the way, which might tie in to Nessus - in every version a servant is tasked with killing them and places them in a basket to let them go downstream instead, though. Mars' birth was to Juno alone - Flora attained a magic flower to impregnate her. I can't believe there was argument on the list about Spring Wind being Mars, whose ceremonies are primarily in March. Making it a red flower is Wolfe's innovation, I think, that links the story to fire (and perhaps the

sun) in the tale of Frog and Fish.

The problem is that there are two origin stories for the monster Typhon, too. In one he is born of Mother Earth and Tartaros, in the other ... he springs from Hera (who is Juno) alone, without a father, just as Mars did from her. Perhaps there is a conflation in the story between Mars and Typhon, which would be unfortunate.

The fish association with the lake island people is very strong - they have the god Oannes and fish is continually mentioned as the motivation for the strife between the shore people and the floating island folk of Pia. When Severian is captured by the shore people, he cannonballs and into the water to activate the incendiary bullets on the boat and then swims upward like a frog (which is what Mowgli's name is supposed to mean). [Pia is his age, has dark hair and a slender waist, and in love is like a "sister" to Dorcas]

The battle between Baldanders and the Severian is actually referred to in the embedded tales in at least three places as well as the dream in which the little stick figures are submerged after their weapons break. In the Story of Frog and Fish, when Frog is challenged as a true man, the large Shere Khan smilodon character (the butcher?) starts to challenge the he-wolf who adopts Frog, and he is much bigger and stronger (he is burned by the fire Frog identifies as the Red Flower when he steals Frog from his real family)

In Eschatology and Genesis when Nod engages the autarch, there are two demons present who indicate that the seed must be destroyed - and while Ossipago et al are three in number, one of them is different than the others - a robotic servant. Even the tale of the Student and His Son, with its naval battle, echoes the battle between Severian and Baldanders (though it is the least related, with the naviscaput matching the description of the thing coming down the river giving instructions at the end of Citadel of the Autarch.

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Marc Aramini — 17 Sep 2014, 14:11 · in reply to Marc Aramini

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Marc Aramini — 17 Sep 2014, 15:32 · in reply to Jeffery Wilson clueland.com

I rather fancy that what Wolfe was doing there is related to the metaphor of the Amphisbaena related by Ossipago et al. The head of creation is being worried and eaten by the head of destruction, but if the head of destruction is killed, the entire serpent dies completely. Man as we understand him will die, but something continues ... perhaps the two futures, save for the ice, are not actually as disparate as they at first appear.

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Lee — 17 Sep 2014, 18:21 · follows Marc Aramini

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I thought it might be worth a mention to any who may not be so familiar with Kipling that the "red flower" is used in the Jungle Book, with Mowgli-Frog, Shere Khan, etc. to refer to fire, it being Man's special gift.

The special gift of fire as conferred by a superior being is best known in the Prometheus story but that story has echoes in the Judeo-Christian tales of Lucifer, the light bringer and Azazel the (scape)goat god/demon who, like Prometheus is chained to a rock for his interference with humanity.

I'm pretty sure Wolfe is aware of these alternately sympathetic and nefarious views of the fire/light bringing deity among ancient peoples. I think this may be part of what is behind the admonition to Severian that what is happening to him and Urth is more than just a battle between "good" and "evil". There has been much recognition on this board in the past that both "good" and "evil" end up serving God's plan equally.

Another thing from Eschatology and Genesis that strikes the reader is that the Autarch is confused with God by Meschia. Even though the autarch is not played by Sev in that scene.

He is played by Dr. Talos who also plays the part of archangel Gabriel. When you consider Dr. Talos' detailed familiarity with cosmic knowledge, his knowledge of Earth, his skills in beautification, his amazing artistic and literary skills, his association with the "godling" Baldanders and his mythological name, I find little doubt that he is in some way associated with the other pagan gods/aliens/fallen angels who roam the Urth.

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More broadly, I would mention that when Severian travels the Brook Madregot, he finds that it only branches travelling upstream, not downstream. Leading me to the conclusion that in this universe, a common past may indeed lead to multiple futures which all exist. Master Ash disappears when Severian drags him into the branching in which the New Sun appears. If he had somehow dragged Ash across the frozen plain of Urth's atmosphere, I presume he would not have disappeared.

Marc Aramini — 17 Sep 2014, 18:29 · in reply to Lee

One thing I wanted to mention is Wolfe's reliance on Remembrance of Things Past ... some of the greatest lines "time turns our lies into truths" "love is the only divinity" "the real world is a construction of the mind" etc. are taken directly from the volume titled The Fugitive (instead of eating a madeleine to attain memories, he eats a Chatelaine, and the letter Marcel perceives as one from dead Albertine leads him to believe she is not dead just as the Agia/Thecla letter let Severian fool himself) But there is a very important scene in the novel where Gilberte has married St. Loupe, and the two paths that Marcel had romanticized in his youth (Swann's Way and the Guermentes Way) are revealed to be ultimately the same path, leading to the same place.

The future of the New Sun is ironically one which would probably be little different than the one Abaia wants: mankind dead, the Urth flooded. Who really won? the paths are almost the same in the final analysis, serving the will of the pancreator, though even the incomprehensible hieros themselves are infinitely below Him.

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Baldanders and his mythological name, I find little doubt that he is in some way

associated with the other pagan gods/aliens/fallen angels who roam the Urth.

Also, the last man's name of Ash (teutonic Ask) whose wife Embla had a name which meant vine.

They were supposedly created from a dead tree and its dead parasite by Odin and crew. Which

leads me to believe that both futures came true simultaneously, somehow. [the trees and lianas of Green]

More broadly, I would mention that when Severian travels the Brook Madregot, he finds that it

only branches travelling upstream, not downstream. Leading me to the conclusion that in this

universe, a common past may indeed lead to multiple futures which all exist. Master Ash

disappears when Severian drags him into the branching in which the New Sun appears. If he

had somehow dragged Ash across the frozen plain of Urth's atmosphere, I presume he would

not have disappeared.

Mark Millman — 18 Sep 2014, 14:56 · in reply to Jeffery Wilson clueland.com

Folks,

On Monday 15 September 2014, Larry Miller wrote:
... Wolfe's naming schema that any mythological name indicates an alien origin. ...

Let's be clear before there's any more confusion: Wolfe writes, on page 43 of the book-club edition of *The Castle of the Otter*, on the first page of his essay, "Onomastics, the Study of Names":

"The names of human beings in *The Book of the New Sun* are just human names. (I can think of only one exception--Loyal to the Group of Seventeen, the Ascian who appears in *The Citadel of the Autarch*.) ... The monsters are named for monsters."

So any mythological quality of a human name should not affect the character's human identity. Ones named Oedipus, Atreus, Agamemnon, Menelaus, Patroclus, Odysseus, or even Theseus, for example, would still be human. For that matter, some people might consider Dorcas and Jonas mythological names--though not from Greek mythology, of course.

Similarly, Typhon is certainly a monster, whether his origin is human (and, like Baldanders, he made of himself a monster, as I believe) or otherwise.

And on Wednesday 17 September 2014, Marc Aramini wrote:
The problem is that there are two origin stories for the monster Typhon, too. In one he is born of Mother Earth and Tartaros, in the other ... he springs from Hera (who is Juno) alone, without a father, just as Mars did from her. Perhaps there is a conflation in the story between Mars and Typhon, which would be unfortunate.

[snip]

It is very very unfortunate that Typhon and Mars are possibly both born of Hera/Juno without a father, but then again ... Typhon does say "No, I was not born as I am, or born at all, as you meant it."

Note that later in the essay, on page 45, Wolfe also writes:

"Are Typhon and Piaton one monster? Their names say they are not. Piaton has a human name. Typhon bears the name of a classical giant who breathed fire and was one of the chief enemies of the gods. The typhoon has blown his name into the modern world. Some commentaries make him the son of Zeus and Niobe (well, that's what Niobe said), and the wicked brother of the Egyptian Osiris, whom he murdered. ... Other commentaries--and in mythology, there are always others--say he was conceived by Hera without male assistance. (My own bet is that she just wanted to forget that guy.) He is often confused with Typhoeus, son of Gaea and Tartarus, who had wings and the body of a snake. When two boys look so much alike, you're bound to get them mixed up."

So we at least know what background Wolfe was using when he named Typhon, and that he distinguished Typhon, who may be born of Hera alone, from Typhoeus, who is the offspring of Gaea and Tartaros.

Incidentally, in the same essay, on page 44, Wolfe writes: "If Erebus is a cold monster, his partner Abaia is his opposite. The original Abaia was a giant eel inhabiting the waters of the South Pacific. Never one to overlook the obvious, I've supplied our Abaia with giant undines for concubines."

I hope that this information proves helpful.

Best,

Mark Millman

Lee — 19 Sep 2014, 02:53 · follows Mark Millman

Marc Aramini: Another thing from Eschatology and Genesis that strikes the reader is that the Autarch is confused with God by Meschia..... Even though the autarch is not played by Sev in that scene

The Autarch is played by Dr. Talos as is the Archangel Gabriel. I find this to be especially significant given Talos' name as a mythological monster. Talos' character has preternatural knowledge of cosmic history and of Earth. Add to that his amazing literary and stagecraft gifts and his powers of beautification and I find it easy to associate him with other mythological god/demon/monster characters.

Despite the mythological connection of angels to demons (cognate to pagan gods), I know some find it difficult to consider that the lofty archangel-name Tzadkiel might be related to some of the more loathsome beings found on Urth. But for me, Dr. Talos playing Gabriel is another clue to the connection.

Lee — 19 Sep 2014, 03:27 · follows Lee

Mark Millman: I hope that this information proves helpful.

It is Mark.

Though I will disagree with one of your interpretations from it.

Gene Wolfe: Typhon bears the name of a classical giant who breathed fire and was one of the chief enemies of the gods. The typhoon has blown his name into the modern world. Some commentaries make him the son of Zeus and Niobe (well, that's what Niobe said), and the wicked brother of the Egyptian Osiris, whom he murdered. . . . Other commentaries--and in mythology, there are always others--say he was conceived by Hera without male assistance. (My own bet is that she just wanted to forget that guy.) He is often confused with Typhoeus, son of Gaea and Tartarus, who had wings and the body of a snake. When two boys look so much alike, you're bound to get them mixed up."

MM: So we at least know what background Wolfe was using when he named Typhon, and that he distinguished Typhon, who may be born of Hera alone, from Typhoeus, who is the offspring of Gaea and Tartaros.

I disagree that Wolfe is truly distinguishing these two. I think, by mentioning Typhon Seth from Egyptian mythology (a hot desert wind god) he is invoking the concept of "epithets" i.e. the idea that a certain god often had multiple names reflecting geographic and historical variations in the focus of worship of the god.

If Wolfe truly meant to distinguish Typhon from Typhoeus, why, in Long Sun, would he give Pas/Typhon a wife named Echidna? She is the wife of the son of Gaea and Tartaros, Typhoeus, not the "Typhon" identified above. I think Wolfe's overall purpose is to recognize conflation of the gods not to emphasize their separate, distinct name/nature. These guys, (like angels, like Tzadkiel) were giant, plural beings with multiple names and multiple forms. This is important to Wolfe and his religious philosophy for reasons mentioned below.

FWIW, Wikipedia says this: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typhon>

Typhon (/ˈtɑːfən, -fən/; Greek: Τυφών, Τυφῶν [typʰón]), also Typhoeus (/ˈtɑːfiːs/; Τυφῆεύς, Τυφῆεύς), Typhaon (Τυφαῖον, Τυφαῖον) or Typhos (Τυφός, Τυφός) was the deadliest monster of Greek mythology. The last son of Gaia, fathered by Tartarus, he was known as the "Father of All Monsters"; his wife Echidna was likewise the "Mother of All Monsters."

Why would Wolfe choose the alternate name "Pas" for Typhon, explicitly explaining that the word is grammatically associated with the word/god Pan? Why would he explicitly explain that The Outsider is associated with Dionysus, who is associated with Pan.....etc.

I truly think Wolfe used the idea of electronic cards to represent Whorl gods as a metaphor meaning that gods are able to be shuffled and redealt as history progresses. Thus the pagan gods the ancients worshiped were not just imaginary or entirely disconnected from the Judeo-Christian God. They were, in some way, an earlier version of Him.

If the ancients made the mistake of worshipping fallen angels/demons instead of Jehovah, Wolfe appears sympathetic and finds it an easy mistake for them to have made. They were large, supernatural beings who demanded to be worshipped. The Flood and the coming of Jesus were steps toward helping humanity recognize the true God.

Mark Millman — 20 Sep 2014, 00:39 · in reply to Lee

Dear Lee,

On Thursday 18 September 2014, you wrote:
... I will disagree with one of your interpretations ...

... [W]e at least know ...
Wolfe ... distinguished
Typhon ... from Typhoeus ...

I disagree that Wolfe is truly distinguishing these two. ...

Well, fair enough. It's also possible that Wolfe distinguished between them while writing New Sun, but later changed his mind and decided to conflate them in Long Sun and Short Sun.

I truly think Wolfe used the idea of electronic cards to represent Whorl gods as a metaphor meaning that gods are able to be shuffled and redealt as history progresses. Thus the pagan gods the ancients worshiped were not just imaginary or entirely disconnected from the Judeo-Christian God. They were, in some way, an earlier version of Him.

Or, at least, the impulse to worship them was a step toward worshipping the true G-d, as you go on to suggest:

If the ancients made the mistake of worshipping fallen angels/demons instead of Jehovah, Wolfe appears sympathetic and finds it an easy mistake for them to have made. They were large, supernatural beings who demanded to be worshipped. The Flood and the coming of Jesus were steps toward helping humanity recognize the true God.

I disagree with you on many, many issues in interpreting Wolfe, but I agree that Wolfe sees progress toward religious enlightenment (and probably most other desirable ends as well) as incremental and contingent (in the historical sense; i.e., that actions and events are shaped by and reflect their environments).

Best,

Mark Millman

Marc Aramini — 20 Sep 2014, 13:59 · in reply to Lee

Changed my mind about the mine thing. The man apes serve the autarch and guard his treasure there, as the pandours in the wall at the Piteous Gate do, built as defense against the presumptuous "throwing black beans in the sea" lady from offworld, as Jonas was getting at before they were so rudely interrupted.

Severian asks Jonas about BOTH events after his return from the mine at Saltus, and asks how man sized soldiers could ever fight enormous beasts. The chains clanking in the dark, though they evoke a binding, could also be the chains which move an enormous mechanical thing, like the walking tower which Severian sees in chapter XXI or thereabouts in Citadel (don't have the book with me right now). In the next chapter the Autarch shows up on a giant elephantine steed and the footsteps make Sev think of the thing he awoke in the cave near Saltus. The footsteps are of a beast bound to the autarch's will in that chapter, and perhaps the proximity to the giant tower and the fact that the man-apes, the pandours at the wall, and the cave as a treasure horde of the autarch, even though it seems to indicate a binding, is in fact a hidden last line of defense that allows the autarch to fight the giants with something beyond man-sized soldiers. Thus, it is Baldanders' nightmare because it will serve Severian and the Autarch. Perhaps his closed lipped reticence to discuss the gate and the mine involve the security measures of the Autarch, something he is reluctant to go over in detail. (First Sev sees the man-apes as enemies - perhaps all of the powers that the autarch binds to himself have this slightly inimical quality to them).

Also, in hindsight it is pretty clear Jahi is supposed to be Juturna ... at one point in the play she metafictionally says something to the effect, "in real life I'm bigger than everyone!" I don't know how that didn't consciously register with me before. So the talk of the demons to the autarch reveals Juturna's motivations and mission.

On Mon, Sep 15, 2014 at 11:13 AM, Lee <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:
Marc Aramini: That thing under the mine might very well be one of these

Abaia/Erebus/Arioch creatures stirred to wakefulness. The toothy description

of the cave formation really does match Baldander's dream pretty well. I agree

there is very little distinction between all these guys as they appear in the text.

I think we are on the same page.

Undines are associated with Night in that first scene through Juturna's interference.

Whether she is actually related to the Lilith like Jahi in Eschatology and Genesis is less

clear.

Jahi is a demon and Wolfe specifically refers to Juturna as a demon in UotNS so I assume

that (and the female gender and temptress role) is your basis of connection. Given the

Biblical nature of demons, I think it is a fair guess to assume they are of the same ilk.

Here is a tummy-turner: Jahi and The Contessa Carina are played by the same actress,

Jolenta (echo of Juturna?). The Contessa is later in UotNS (on the Path Of Air) linked to

Severian's mother Catherine. Does that suggest anything about Severian's ancestry?

That speculation aside, I find a not so speculative connection between the fanged demon

Jahi, played by a busty redhead in BotNS and the vampiric Jahlee who takes the form of a

busty redhead in Short Sun. I definitely think Wolfe is using SilkHorn and his retinue's travels

to Urth to say something about the nature of Severian's unusual and mysterious family tree.

(two of Borski's prime candidates for "Severa" are hinted at in those Silkhorn travels, Merryn

the witch and Jolenta, via Jahi and Jahlee.)

Marc Aramini — 20 Sep 2014, 14:01 · in reply to Marc Aramini

"presumptuous", of course - sorry. And I never gave any credence to Jolenta's possibility as a sibling. At all.

On Sat, Sep 20, 2014 at 6:59 AM, Marc Aramini <marcaramini at gmail.com> wrote:
Changed my mind about the mine thing. The man apes serve the autarch and guard his treasure there, as the pandours in the wall at the Piteous Gate do, built as defense against the presumptuous "throwing black beans in the

sea" lady from offworld, as Jonas was getting at before they were so rudely interrupted.

Severian asks Jonas about BOTH events after his return from the mine at Saltus, and asks how man sized soldiers could ever fight enormous beasts. The chains clanking in the dark, though they evoke a binding, could also be the chains which move an enormous mechanical thing, like the walking tower which Severian sees in chapter XXI or thereabouts in Citadel (don't have the book with me right now). In the next chapter the Autarch shows up on a giant elephantine steed and the footsteps make Sev think of the thing he awoke in the cave near Saltus. The footsteps are of a beast bound to the autarch's will in that chapter, and perhaps the proximity to the giant tower and the fact that the man-apes, the pandours at the wall, and the cave as a treasure horde of the autarch, even though it seems to indicate a binding, is in fact a hidden last line of defense that allows the autarch to fight the giants with something beyond man-sized soldiers. Thus, it is Baldanders' nightmare because it will serve Severian and the Autarch. Perhaps his closed lipped reticence to discuss the gate and the mine involve the security measures of the Autarch, something he is reluctant to go over in detail. (First Sev sees the man-apes as enemies - perhaps all of the powers that the autarch binds to himself have this slightly inimical quality to them).

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That speculation aside, I find a not so speculative connection between the fanged demon

Jahi, played by a busty redhead in BotNS and the vampiric Jahlee who takes the form of a

busty redhead in Short Sun. I definitely think Wolfe is using SilkHorn and his retinue's travels

to Urth to say something about the nature of Severian's unusual and mysterious family tree.

(two of Borski's prime candidates for "Severa" are hinted at in those Silkhorn travels, Merryn

the witch and Jolenta, via Jahi and Jahlee.)

Jeffery Wilson clueland.com — 20 Sep 2014, 15:31 · in reply to Lee

On 9/18/2014 10:27 PM, Lee wrote:

If Wolfe truly meant to distinguish Typhon from Typhoeus, why, in Long Sun,

would he give Pas/Typhon a wife named Echidna? She is the wife of the son of

Gaea and Tartaros, Typhoeus, not the "Typhon" identified above.

Perhaps to subtextually indicate that something is not right with the false divinities of the Whorl.

Jeff Wilson - < jwilson at clueland.com >

A&M Texarkana Computational Intelligence Lab

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

Lee — 22 Sep 2014, 12:51 · follows Jeffery Wilson clueland.com

I disagree that Wolfe is truly distinguishing these two. . . .

Mark Millman: Well, fair enough. It's also possible that Wolfe distinguished between them while writing New Sun, but later changed his mind and decided to conflate them in Long Sun and Short Sun.

Agreed, this is a possibility.

Thus the pagan gods the ancients worshiped were not just imaginary or entirely

disconnected from the Judeo-Christian God. They were, in some way, an earlier version of Him.

Or, at least, the impulse to worship them was a step toward worshipping the true G-d, as you go on to suggest:

I agree there is a mixed message sense on this issue. On the one hand, Wolfe seems to make clear in his writing and in interviews that he considers the worship of pagan gods (including the fictional Abaia and Pas) as false, wrongful worship.

On the other hand he continues to include mythological elements which seem to herald or presage Christianity such as The Cumaean (Sibyl) and linking The Outsider explicitly to Dionysus, syncretic worship (especially the Roman version) etc.

Given his emphasis on the importance of names, I would like to ask Wolfe what connection he sees between the Jupiterian epithet "Jove" and the name of the Judeo-Christian God Jahweh or Jehovah. It is just a naming similarity or is there more to it?

I disagree with you on many, many issues in interpreting Wolfe, but I agree that Wolfe sees progress toward religious enlightenment (and probably most other desirable ends as well) as incremental and contingent (in the historical sense; i.e., that actions and events are shaped by and reflect their environments).

Yes, full agreement from me there.

Lee — 22 Sep 2014, 14:10 · follows Lee

If Wolfe truly meant to distinguish Typhon from Typhoeus, why, in Long Sun, would he give Pas/Typhon a wife named Echidna? She is the wife of the son of Gaea and Tartaros, Typhoeus, not the "Typhon" identified above.

Jeffrey Wilson: Perhaps to subtextually indicate that something is not right with the false divinities of the Whorl.

Urgh. I hope that isn't true. If so, it would have Wolfe predicating a really major theme in his work on his audience knowing that he considers Typhon and Typhoeus to be different god/monsters and ignoring that most mainstream sources consider them to be the same.

Marc Aramini: In the next chapter the Autarch shows up on a giant elephantine steed and the footsteps make Sev think of the thing he awoke in the cave near Saltus...

In UotNS, during the end of Typhon's rule, Saltus mine is just starting to be dug. Later, back in SotL, Typhon seems surprised and unaware of the powers in the ocean so I don't suppose he started digging Saltus mine to house protectors against giant megatherians. You are suggesting an Autarch co-opted the mine for this purpose?

Given its placement, the opposite seems more likely to me. The wall was built to protect Nessus from such creatures as the gigantic presence below the Saltus cave. Of course there are always the Ascians to consider. But if the circular wall around Nessus protects from giant sea-beings why not also giant land beings from the other direction?

Also, in hindsight it is pretty clear Jahi is supposed to be Juturna ... at one point in the play she metafictionally says something to the effect, "in real life I'm bigger than everyone!" ...So the talk of the demons to the autarch reveals Juturna's motivations and mission.

I think this is a reasonable assessment. Large size is a hallmark of all pagan gods/demons but Jahi

and Juturna are both of the succubus variety, being in a seductive, female form.

And I never gave any credence to Jolenta's possibility as a sibling. At all.

I still do. Merryn remains a candidate also but we have to wonder why she is fully grown when Severian visits the Witches' Tower when he is a boy. Same in RttW. How can she be a twin if she is older?

Jolenta is Severian's age. Plus if Jolenta is a stage name it would explain why she isn't named "Severa". There is also the incest angle. Do Severian's incestual encounters begin and end with Dorcas? If there are others, more grist to the "Jolenta as Severa" mill.

Borski's hair color scheme for determining Severian's family by itself is pretty sketchy. But added to other evidence, I have to give the theory a definite maybe.