

Reducing the inhumani

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 22 Apr 2001

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/1389>

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Nicholas Gevers — 22 Apr 2001, 07:17

One objection to my astral-travel-to-defeat-the-inhumani thesis stands out as strong: the point that Horn describes the Secret as something that can reduce the inhumani to mindless beasts again. How then can attacking the inhumani breeding pools on Green be the application of the Secret, as this would immolate the inhumani, not make them mindless? Well, how about this response:

Only some inhumani have access to human blood; remember the great variety of them Horn saw on his final visit to Green in RTW, some human in aspect, others not. If humans from Blue travel astrally to Green in the company of (intelligent) captive inhumani, they will reach only those pools where human blood has been in supply, and will thus annihilate only the offspring of intelligent inhumani; the rest of the species, still merely animal, will continue in their role as just another of Green's mindless predator species.

--Nick Gevers.

William Ansley — 22 Apr 2001, 17:06 · follows Nicholas Gevers

At 8:17 AM +0100 4/22/01, Nicholas Gevers wrote:

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Nick,

I really don't see how using astral travel to wipe out the inhumani at their breeding pools can work.

1) Can we be absolutely sure that the astral journeys are to real places and not just "places on the astral plane" that resemble real places where one of the travellers has been before? Certainly some of the places resemble real places the we have seen before (the Red Sun Whorl) but the nature of "reality" during these astral visits seems awfully malleable.

2) Assuming astral travel can have physical effects in the "real world," I still don't believe that the inhumani could be wiped out. We haven't been able to wipe out mosquitos on earth even though the same means of attack should theoretically be effective and we have just about the same level of motivation to do so as the human inhabitants of Blue have to finish off the inhumani. I think my mosquito analogy is a good one, since the inhumani seem to produce large numbers of (at least at first) not very intelligent offspring which are left to fend for themselves.

3) Since astral travel requires the presence of an inhumani to work, this method cannot be used to wipe out their breeding pools without inhumani cooperation, at least to some degree. Perhaps the inhumani cannot prevent at least a few of their number from being taken captive, but they could make it difficult. And surely inhumani are capable of suicide upon capture. Of course, since Jahlee was willing to betray her kind, the argument could be made the others like her could be found. On the other hand, one can argue that Jahlee is a unique case.

4) Regarding the argument that only the intelligent inhumani offspring need to be killed: as long as there are humans on Green, intelligent inhumani can arise again very easily, unless all humans on green are completely protected from inhumani predation. The only way to absolutely assure that no more intelligent inhumani will arise is to kill all of them.

Of course you can say, as you have been, that Silk|Horn didn't *really* think the secret could be used effectively, but you talk as if your version of the secret can be so used above.

William Ansley

*This is WHORL, for discussion of Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun.