

Vodulus sez Urth flipt?

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 17 Mar 1997

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/218>

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m.driussi — 18 Mar 1997, 00:01

Reply: Item #7558985 from WHORL at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET02#

Nutria (aka JBJordan),

I'm curious as to the text wherein Vodulus said that the Urth has flipped on its axis--where would that be located?

Re: Cordwainer Smith and Wolfe, well sure, the similarities come down mainly to the coincidences of: 1) a fairy-tale style over a science fictional core; 2) some beastmen appropriated from H.G. Wells (who in turn took them from animal fables via FRANKENSTEIN); 3) a sense of Big History, lifted from Stapledon, or Toynbee, et al.; 4) a sense of Religion as a positive force; 5) a use of pagan elements to explore the mysteries of Religion (for example: the axis mundi part of Smith's QUEST OF THREE WORLDS is remarkably similar to what Severian sees on Yesod).

Which I guess is a round about way of saying that there is more than one way to make banana nut bread, but certain key elements will distinguish said loaf from zucchini bread or pound cake.

=mantis=

Questions or problems to whorl-owner at lists.best.com

Jim Jordan — 17 Mar 1997, 19:33 · follows m.driussi

At 12:01 AM 3/18/97 GMT, Mantis wrote:

I'm curious as to the text wherein Vodulus said that the Urth has flipped on its axis--where would that be located?

Aw, man! I don't know! Gimmeabreak!

I've read the Urth novels thrice, but I did not take notes. I dimly recall it from the alzabo feast when Severian eats Thecla and brings her back to life inside of himself -- but that might not be the place. Maybe someone else can remember. Or maybe I'm offbase.

Re: Cordwainer Smith and Wolfe, well sure, the similarities come down mainly to the coincidences of: 1) a fairy-tale style over a science fictional core; 2) some beastmen appropriated from H.G. Wells (who in turn took them from animal fables via FRANKENSTEIN); 3) a sense of Big History, lifted from Stapledon, or Toynbee, et al.; 4) a sense of Religion as a positive force; 5) a use of pagan elements to explore the mysteries of Religion (for example: the axis mundi part of Smith's QUEST OF THREE WORLDS is remarkably similar to what Severian sees on Yesod).

There's a bit more. Fifth Head explores what it means to be human, and that is a large part of Smith's work also. I started with Fifth Head, and that is why I thought there was a good deal of

Smith influence. Moving to the Severian books, I saw the same kind of sacramental/symbolic concerns that also run through Smith. Also, both have a real interest in psychoanalysis (as in the stories in *Island of Dr Death &c.*). These, to me, were more striking than the things you mention. At any rate, the coincidences seem to arise from similar religious beliefs, and some similar interests (religion, sacrament, political theory, war, human psychology).

Curiously, there are lots of coincidences between Smith's *Norstrilia* and Herbert's *Dune*, but both were written at the same time, so they are just coincidences!

Nutria

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