

Driussis

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 03 Apr 1997

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Jim Jordan — 03 Apr 1997, 00:03

Having receive Mantis's latest three pamphlets (which you should all get):

1. On history of Urth. I still have not found the passage I remember about the flipping of Urth on her axis. But, on 2:83 (hc) Vodalus does say that the men of Urth once leapt "from galaxy to galaxy." Intergalactic travel, with ease, implies a very long chronology. So does the reddening of the sun.

So do the layers of previous civilizations found on the mountains carved by previous tyrants. The process is explained in geology as:

- a. Many thousands of years of civilizations at the mouth of a river.
- b. Submerging of the delta under weight of silt, etc.
- c. Mountain uplift as mantle pushes back.

All of this, in terms of present-day understanding, would take millions of years.

2. Silk's enlightenment:

- a. The beetle that looks like jewelry but lays its eggs in the dung is the Egyptian dung-beetle or scarab (thus jewelry). The Scarab rolls its dung along in front of it, in a ball. The Great Scarab similarly pushes the sun in its path across the sky. Severian catches a glimpse of such scarabs running the suns of the universe as he departs from Yesod.
- b. The man on the scaffold is Christ, and His mother is Mary.
- c. The man on the horse honored with palm branches is Christ at His triumphal entry. Note the next sentences (3:413): "Would Echidna and her children kill the Outsider too? With a flash of insight, he felt sure they were already trying." For Wolfe, of course, the Outsider incarnate was Jesus. Thus the association in Silk's mind. Note also Silk as "Christ-figure": it is as they honor him that he recalls these things. This event shortly precedes Silk's own death, burial, and resurrection (on which see my ancient post on gospel parallels).
- d. Is the enlightenment caused by a brain clot, the Whorl computer, or the Triune God? The answer in Christianity, and especially in Roman Catholicism, can readily be: all three, in term of primary and secondary causation.. Given, however, that Pas sought to suppress the original Catholic religion of Viron, I don't see that the Whorl computer would have been programmed with the information about Christ. Idolatry is a theme in Wolfe, in "There Are Doors" especially, and Gene's comment to me was that the Long Sun would largely concern idolatry. So, I think we should let Gene's religion play a hand here.

3. The foot wound. Surely Claudius is a factor, as well as the Bible. But foolish me, to have forgotten that Wolfe had polio as a child! There's lots of autobiography in Wolfe (in "Peace" especially, of course). See also "The Hero As Werewolf(e)," one of Gene's directly lupine tales.

4. Chrasmmological comes from Greek: oracular speech, or oracular words. I think we can be 99.44% certain of this.

Nutria

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