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The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 02 Jun 1997

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Ron Crown, St. Louis University — 02 Jun 1997, 09:32

While it may be a symbol of the Greek Orthodox Church, the gammadion as it appears in the Book of the Long Sun seems more reminiscent of the T symbol from Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*. In that book, the T of the Model T became the symbol of the state religion; the purely material becomes divine. The gammadion in Long Sun is just a set of screwdrivers that can be joined end to end for ease of storage; again the purely material becomes divine. In *Brave New World* I think it is a case of people having forgotten what the divine really is. As for Long Sun, Comely Kypris herself says that the Chapter was set up as a parody of the state religion on Urth.

But the difference is that the T symbol was not originally part of a state religion but becomes such as part of Huxley's ironic comment on the divinisation of the material (or vice versa?) while, assuming that there is some connection between our Earth (which may be assuming a lot) and the WHORL/URTH, a symbol which was originally religious continues to function in something of a quasi-religious or downgraded religious function. Aren't priests the only ones who carry the gammadion? For that matter, is anyone besides Silk mentioned as having one? Furthermore, the gammadion does function as a tool for working on the 'Windows', the sources of 'revelation' whether you regard that revelation as true or false or (better I think) truth which conceals another truth? And I don't think that Wolfe uses language in a sort of simple equivalence such as gammadion = screwdriver and nothing more; after all, he could have invented some science fictinal gobbledygook for futuristic tools like they do on *Star Trek* (induced phase decoupler or some such nonsense).

Is your question about secondary works related to a desire for an index of them or of obtaining the artifacts themselves?

Both, obviously--but I mean, "Urth-Man Extraordinary" has a very good index. You mentioned "Vector" and "early 80s"--I see listings for Vector #118 (2-84) and #119 (4-84), as well as Vector #65 (5/6-73!).

mantis, thanks for reminding me of "Urth-Man Extraordinary"; I've been meaning to buy a copy from Chris Drumm (who has all the Galactic Central bibs available, I think) but wasn't aware that it included secondary items as well. Eventually, I'd like to obtain copies of the 'artifacts' of course; but for right now I'm satisfied with bibliographic references. As it happens, I've got all three of the Vector items you mentioned.

Ron Crown
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Matthew Freestone — 02 Jun 1997, 17:17 · follows Ron Crown, St. Louis University

The consensus seems to be that there are just the two issues of 'The Book of Gold'. I have copies of both which I can photocopy if anyone is desperate to see them. No. 1 contains mainly 'Soldier of the Mist'-related material. There's a review with a glossary that covers some gaps in the book's own list, and there's a column of chapter-by-chapter analysis of what exactly is going on in SOTM. There's also a short piece on names in 'New Sun'.

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