

Failed Candyland?

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 11 Sep 1997

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m.driussi — 11 Sep 1997, 15:53

Reply: Item #8273815 from WHORL at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET03#

Nutria,

Right, I remember that it was Gene Wolfe's responses to you that made you ditch the gnostic reading you had originally formed. So you first rank the author's opinion as godlike, and realign your reading to match what he says; then you accuse him of incompetence for unintentionally writing the reading you read! <g> Hmmm. <G>

Here, for a new angle let's try the Church of Vienna: a Freudian interpretation of the superficial structure might be that Gene Wolfe is working out some of the more complicated historico-religious tangles of the religion he converted to as an adult. The result is the gray-hued world of adult understanding, rather than the black/white rendition appropriate for young children and elderly saints. It may be that everything Gene Wolfe writes is not about Christianity/Catholicism itself, but about his own personal conversion to Catholicism; a verb of radical transformation (the space between "before" and "after"), not a noun (the religion) nor a verb of being in a steady state (for example, one born into a religion and never going through the examination of it).

It may also be that Gene Wolfe brings the hard-nosed questioning of a Protestant to the arena usually reserved for unquestioning faith.

=mantis=

Jim Jordan — 11 Sep 1997, 15:25 · follows m.driussi

At 03:53 PM 9/11/97 GMT, Mantis wrote:

It may also be that Gene Wolfe brings the hard-nosed questioning of a Protestant to the arena usually reserved for unquestioning faith.

I think that may well be true. There is the remark somewhere that the dead do not communicate with the living, else they would rule this world from beyond the grave. Not a very RC thought, but certainly a Protestant one.

I questioned Wolfe pretty carefully (as carefully as I thought I had permission to do), thinking perhaps he was on the liberal wing of Catholicism (a la Teilhard de Chardin); but from all I could tell, he is a conservative Thomist, pretty much in line with the Papacy on all the important matters.

Nutria