

IGJ Thoughts

The Whorl list — 4 messages, 3 voices, 09 Aug 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/913>

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Jim Jordan — 09 Aug 2000, 11:14

A few thoughts.

1. The neighbor on Green switches the souls of Silk and Horn. That seemed clear to me. Horn knows he's in Silk's body, but his respect for Silk and his desire to keep his own identity causes him to avoid thinking about this very much. (How can he NOT know it?). As for mirrors, all cultures have polished bronze!

2.. Unless I missed something, the switch means Silk's soul came into Horn's body. Did he die on Green? Or will we meet him again there?

3. Horn's ability to project his soul astrally, and the souls of those around him, is a reflex of what the neighbor did to him. He acquired the ability at that point. But he needs someone who has "been there" to do it with. Thus, when Rigoglio is tripping with him, he winds up on Urth. I don't think he needs input from inhumis to do it, unless he wants to go to Green. We'll see. After all, as someone asked, why doesn't he visit Seawrack or Nettle?

3a. Which implies that the neighbors have also been to the Long Sun, since they could switch Horn and Silk. And that's how the original inhumis got to the Long Sun, IMO.

4. Part of the secret of the inhumis is that they not only take on human characteristics when they drink us, but that they acquire "image of God" souls as well. Thus, when astrally projecting, their human souls become clear; it is what is projected. If they were still animals, they could not join the projection. When our souls are right, theirs will be also. That latter we have known for a long time, as part of the secret. I submit the former is another part of it. I don't know if "do unto others" or "come under law" is the secret, and as noted by someone, Wolfe probably has another rabbit to pull out of his big hat. The question, as noted, is how such a kindly resolution of the problem would "destroy" the inhumis, since those who become "good humans" WANT to do so after a time. But "destroy" can be an ambiguous term....

5. Horn knows that Pas is not God, not the Increate, not the Outsider. But remember, or learn here if you don't know it, that the Bible uses "god" for elder human beings and for angels also. There are, indeed, such lesser gods in the Bible, and in Wolfe's thinking. They are created gods, not the Increated Pancreator Outsider.

5a. Horn's problem, which he is outgrowing as Silk did, is in thinking that it is appropriate to render worship to such created gods, instead of worshipping the Outsider only. By worship I don't mean mere service, which one might have to render and which it might be appropriate to render, but I mean sacrifice. After the death of Jesus, the only acceptable human sacrifice, all animal sacrifice is voided. It becomes an abomination. Wolfe as an environmental conservationist surely believes this strongly. Thus, Horn needs to mature out of offering animals to any gods. The Outsider shows him that bread and wine, not the blood of animals, is what He desires.

5b. Outgrowing the slaughter of animals for religious purposes is going to be part of the healing of the human soul, which will also convert the inhumani into friendly partners. I think the last line of the book hints at the latter. Horn must learn to love the inhumani. He is slowly doing so. "Love your enemies; Do good to those who despitefully use you." -- Jesus.

6. Fernando wrote:

The inhumani seem to be spiritual (as well as physical) chameleons. One might conjecture that they are all semi-human in spirit, but the slave masters in Green wouldn't be very clearly human while the ones who live in Blue are closer.

Nutria: I'd say they learned to be slavemasters from the neighbors. Horn says that the neighbors enslaved the inhumani. As they learn more from humans, they will begin to fight among themselves.

Also, recall that in OBW we have a sad scene of a chained slave girl. Humans also practice slavery. (I'm surprised human sacrifice has not made more of an appearance in these books, as it was common all over the ancient world, and does appear in the Soldier books.)

7. Horn's narrative is so disjointed, compared to the Book of Silk that Nettle edited, that I think Horn never makes it home. His book remains unedited. Sad to think. Hope I'm wrong....

8. Alga wrote: Horn had to clean the sewers, with thousands of people dead from inhuman greed. Unless that was a dream, and I don't think it was.

Nutria: I had the impression that these people had committed suicide rather than serve the inhumani. Wasn't that made clear toward the end of the book?

9. On Scylla. A side-note that is probably pregnant: The scarlet sea-beast of Revelation, and the Great Whore who sits on its back (Rev. 13, 17). Surely that's the imagery. And Seawrack leads men to their doom, as a siren, and "leads" Horn to adultery. Part of what he has to overcome is this sin, obviously, and he has not yet done so. Recall also that Horn's adultery was a violent rape to start with. We're back to the "golden rule" business. Humans have to stop being like this, and have to stop letting themselves be influenced by the daughters of Pas. Yet, Seawrack herself is a likeable character, no? Perhaps she also can be redeemed?

The original Scylla as a daughter of Pas, baldandersed into an undine, seems right to me. She becomes a servant of Abaia. I don't see any reason to think she was a daughter of Abaia adopted by Pas.

And since the plan of redemption of the Outsider is the same for the neighbors as for humans, it stands to reason that they have their own Scarlet Whore to deal with. I don't think we have to think of "downloading" or any such thing to understand this. Rather, it is a matter of parallels between two worlds, each with the same basic history: Each with its own relationship to the Outsider, its own Christ, its own Whore, etc.

10. The transition between the books. I think N. Gevers has a point, but I'd add that spending time with Brother and Sister is also therapeutic for Horn. He gets a family again.

Patera Nutria

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

Kevin J. Maroney — 09 Aug 2000, 12:32 · follows Jim Jordan

At 11:14 AM 8/9/00 -0500, Patera Nutria wrote:

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souls as well. Thus, when astrally projecting, their human souls become clear; it is what is projected. If they were still animals, they could not join the projection.

Oreb projects right along with Incanto and Jahlee, but Oreb isn't "human".

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If I recall correctly, there is some discussion of human sacrifice in _Long Sun_--it's condemned as an abomination, and at the same time is recognized as the most powerful sacrifice. The talking animals--Oreb and the talking cat--are assumed to be valuable sacrifices because they are like humans.

Which, hmm, maybe indicates that Oreb *does* have a human-like soul....

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Jim Jordan — 09 Aug 2000, 13:25 · follows Kevin J. Maroney

At 12:32 PM 8/9/2000 -0400, you wrote:

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Good point. Of course, as you note, Oreb talks. Also, there is a distance between reptiles and mammals that might figure in.

Nutria

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Adam Stephanides — 09 Aug 2000, 22:55 · follows Jim Jordan

Jim Jordan wrote:

1. The neighbor on Green switches the souls of Silk and Horn. That seemed clear to me.

Not to me. What the Neighbor says is "I can send your spirit into someone else, into someone whose own spirit is dying....Then there will be one whole man there, instead of two dying men, one here and another there." (127, my deletion doesn't affect the meaning) Nothing about moving Silk's spirit at all. And the Neighbor doesn't say "there will be one whole man and one dying man," just "there will be one whole man."

--Adam

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