

Digest whorl.v011.n025

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 23 Aug 2000

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/970>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

akt — 23 Aug 2000, 23:45

From Alex

:

Hmmm... Alga's mapping to Origen's ideas is interesting, but I'm not convinced. Universalism doesn't strike me as being particularly Wolfean, given the number especially of short stories that are quite comfortable in damning a protagonist ("Bed and Breakfast" certainly doesn't carry much hint of demonic free will). Also, despite some obvious intentional points, a simple mapping of the inhumans to demons or the Neighbors to angels seems false--the Neighbors seem more like post-Urth Severian, of the "human" order of creation, but transfigured. The inhumani are different in that their nature is a mirror of their prey (their will is reduced but present) but they are in this a biological analogue also of Wolfe's chems and machine intelligences--a mirror in this case of their prey rather than their makers, of course. This doesn't strike me as very Origenist, in that except in Severian's visit to get the New Sun I don't think we see anything that is really meant to be of an angelic nature.

OK, I didn't say that it was a template, only that it reminded me of Origen's system. Regard: a dynamic system is inherently more interesting than a static one, and even the Rat admitted that Wolfe as a novelist might be attracted to Origen's ideas while rejecting them as a believer. A plain view of Wolfe's system here seems to me to follow my simplified Origenic pattern. But I'm not going to fight for it.

And by the way, unless I'm recalling incorrectly (which is quite possible) Origen wasn't precisely "consigned to hell"--a number of his propositions (from *De Principis* mostly, I think) were condemned, but a number of church figures have defended him as a fundamentally orthodox fellow carried away with intellectual speculation at times, and certainly no rebel against Church authority in his day.

Au contraire, mon frere, they consigned him to eternal flames at the Synod of Constantiople in 543 and then, just to make sure he didn't escape from his fate, again in 553, 680, 787 and 869. That's a crispy kind of guy.

From Tim Bolas:

Just a note on Origen. His heresy charges did not have to do with the redeemability or not of demons (that is in line with Orthodox Theology), rather with the "pre-existence" of souls and a sort of cosmic recycling that Alga alluded to, among other things. Origen was only considered a heretic towards the end of his life. His early teachings are still held in regard among theologians.

I never said it did, only that it was a fact. Of course they are. They make a lot of sense theologically.

-akga

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