

Future passed in the New Sun

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 22 Apr 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3189>

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Paul Duggan — 22 Apr 2002, 13:51

JJ: Is Briah our universe? Or is that a universe that resurrected saints have set up in the world to come as part of the cities that they made?

GW: No. I thought of it as a long past universe. Something that we are repeating rather than something that we are.

Wolfe said this? I'm quite surprised, even shocked. I'm pretty much of an intentionalist, but (without having reread all the books) this strikes me as a pointless complication with no textual warrant. The Appendix to SHADOW (the only one I have on hand at the moment) even says that the book takes place in the future. Of course, the "author" of the appendix could be wrong, but again this seems like a pointless complication. And didn't Wolfe say in another interview that the Commonwealth was South America?

But remeber, the text of the Book of the New Sun came into the hands of Gene Wolfe *after* Severian wrote it and threw it into space in the lead coffer. Wolfe is just the translator. So Severian wrote in the "distant past" prior universe and the manuscript survives the singularity (!) and Wolfe then gets it and tranlastes it

All references to "the future" should just be taken as refering to how Severian is in the future of where "we are" in the past universe's timeline (since the timelines are amazingly similar).

My only objection to this is theological, in that the theoanthropos then comes to save everybody at least 2 if not more times. But its just a novel...

Paul Duggan

Adam Stephanides — 22 Apr 2002, 14:14 · follows Paul Duggan

on 4/22/02 8:51 AM, Paul Duggan at pduggan at Op.Net wrote:
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I have a hard time reconciling this reading with the references in the SHADOW appendix to "a tongue that has not yet achieved existence" (unless we are supposed to believe that the timelines are so similar that the exact same languages will develop) and "the posthistoric world." Also, we would have to accept that some artifacts and even buildings had survived the singularity, as well as Sev's manuscript.

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This, OTOH, could be explained as the Incarnation "casting its shadow" into the past universe.

--Adam

Michael Straight — 24 Apr 2002, 18:11 · follows Adam Stephanides

On Mon, 22 Apr 2002, Adam Stephanides wrote:

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I thought sure those comments in the Appendix were jokes. They made me laugh.

-Rostrum