

On Jesus in Briah and other dead horses

The Urth list — 5 messages, 4 voices, 30 Dec 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5864>

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Jordon Flato — 30 Dec 2010, 01:09

So, not to pick a scab, but Witz and I were chowing down burgers today, and talking about our favorite subject, BotNS. We both are more amenable to the idea of Severan being a 'Christ like' figure or 'instantation of the Logos' than many on this board, to be sure, so we're apt to look at the books through that lens.

With that in mind, for those who feel that these books indicate a world that never knew Jesus, how do we get the myth of Saint Catherine that is so important to the Order of the Seekers of Truth and Penitence? Sure, the name may have simply been a translation choice by the fictional Gene Wolfe, but the ritual of elevation clearly lays out the actual story of Saint Catherine, at least in some guise. How do you have a Saint Catherine if there is no Christianity? What mental gymnastics do we need to put ourselves through to posit a world where such an event could be orally transmitted (or otherwise) down through the ages to end up as the rites of the Guild of Torturers without that event having some basis in far far far distant truth?

Certainly our world today is considered 'fallen' by some, and many Christians. Yet our world decidedly DID know Jesus. So why is it impossible to think that the influence of Jesus on Urth would be so far gone and diluted as to be only extant in the most second hand of myth and hearsay? It seems possible to me, and in fact partially supported textually. Of course, it could be an earlier instantiation of Briah, in which the life of Christ and Earth was slightly different, leading to the Urth we see in New Sun, but it can't have been so different that Jesus didn't spawn a movement which engendered saints the likes of Saint Catherine, said saint's stories surviving the aeon's to end up as the elevation rights of the guild of torturers.

Perhaps this has already been answered in the pages of this list. Anyone care to take a crack at that?

James Wynn — 30 Dec 2010, 02:06 · in reply to Jordon Flato

Well, I'm not inclined to squint at the stories to see if they are theologically correct, but I did take a stab at this here:

<http://lists.urth.net/pipermail/urth-urth.net/2010-December/019620.html>

In short, I would say, in the construct I've offered above, that St Catherine is a myth. Naming people after saints is equivalent to naming your child Thor or Freya. You could no more go back in Time and meet Jesus than you could go back in Time and meet Cinderella. The same with Jesus. u+16b9

On 12/29/2010 7:09 PM, Jordon Flato wrote:

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António Pedro Marques — 30 Dec 2010, 02:53 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote (30-12-2010 02:06):

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(...)

For example,

Green noticed that Lara's universe doesn't have ice cubes. Green explains that this is because the universes are like strings on a guitar tuned to the same note. Pluck one and those next to it vibrate. So the parallel universes keep each other in line. Men in Lara's universe wear black tuxedos to their wedding because they die after sex. Men in Green's universe do the same only because the men in Lara's universe do.

So in Severian's cycle, there was a Christian Church because there was in _our_ universe. The Jesus mentioned in Silk's Holy Book is a figure of myth. Neither Severian nor the Rajan could any more go back in time and meet him than you or I could go back in Time and meet Cinderella or Jason or Thor.

Unplausible. Again, it's one thing for un consequential stuff to ripple across universes. Quite another for structured ideas to be imported wholesale. Grooms may dress in black all they want without fear. People don't build churches based on nothing. Myths have a source in real life, even if it's only previous myth (something must have established the first).

The Severian's-cycle-echoes-ours can mean that Severian's cycle's Jesus wasn't God the Son, or that Severian's cycle's christians failed. The latter seems to me the best candidate given the whole Urth-is-what-will-become-of-Earth-if-we-don't-take-heed theme. Severian's flood becomes God's second chance for Urth's Humanity after Humanity failed.

James Wynn — 30 Dec 2010, 04:07 · in reply to António Pedro Marques

J Wynn-

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There's not much discussion of religion in Green's world, but assuming his is ours there is a Christian Church. If there were no equivalent in Lara's world, their world would be vastly different or huge rationalizations would be necessary in Lara's world to keep the two in alignment. But you don't imagine there was ever a Zeus do you? Who had his sinews cut and battled Typhon? A Thor who went to the underworld to bring back Balder? In There Are Doors people spoke the same languages. Based on Wolfe's example of imitation-leads-to-genuity (Long Sun) any religion in Lara's world would tend to mimic the _true_ religion and thus, by little changes along the way, the world's align. They would have rationale for the changes, but the changes would actually occur for unrelated reasons (I can give several examples of this in _New Sun_ and other stories. But the most obvious example would be CS Lewis' claims about why ancient religions bore similarities to Christianity.

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It could. But it is totally unnecessary for there to have been a Jesus at all. Anymore than it is necessary for there to have actually been a Hercules or Dionysus in order for people to keep their feasts.

u+16b9

Son of Witz — 30 Dec 2010, 06:55 · in reply to James Wynn

On Dec 29, 2010, at 6:06 PM, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> wrote:

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We're asking, "How does the essence of the myth come through?" It is NOT just the name, it is the same story.

If there is a metaphysical TRUTH in a myth, perhaps this truth is an archetypal base for the instantiated story. At a one level, we have a deluge and the legends it inspired. On another, we have the idea of a healing aspect of God that enters physical time and flesh that instantiates In different avatars.

So, as you, Wynn, lay out, there might be all these clear echoes of christ in a christ-less creation because he existed in another creation. That's fair enough to suggest. What I, and I think Jordon feel is that this above mentioned healing aspect of God a force is TRUER than the myths it inspired. Thus any creation or emanation of God's would have the potential to manifest a saviour that carried similar messages.

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