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The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 17 Oct 1999

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Alice Turner — 17 Oct 1999, 15:58

Well, Ratty, you're wrong, I do agree. My very point was that Horn, exactly like Mathew (the most egregious of the gospeleers, IMO--and I will happily cite how), when he wasn't present at an event, made free to invent, but with the sincerity of love and the drive of evangelism, which is, I suppose, what Alex means by the Holy Spirit. That, however, doesn't quite make it fact. Ah, but Rat & I would attribute to the Holy Spirit the result that Matthew never actually _gets it wrong_--contradictions are only apparent, resulting from reading things in the wrong sense. How exactly this applies to things like "who WAS the high priest at time X?" and such I forget at the moment and is probably out of the list's scope, anyway.

How do you know that? I think Matthew gets it very wrong, and on purpose. I think he totally invents the ties to Zoroastrianism (the Magi) and Osiris (the flight to Egypt) for the very understandable reason that he wants to emphasize the afterlife (there being no real Jewish connection, and that of the Persians and the Egyptians being strong and powerful). There is absolutely no evidence for Herod's slaughter of baby boys. Matthew is a fabulator, much like Wolfe. The other gospeleers are quite different.

Which is highly relevant to OBW/The Book of Silk if we (as I would assume we all do) think Horn & Nettle writing are meant to be analogous to writing a Gospel. In other words, sure Horn wanted to get it right out of "love and the drive of evangelism"--but if you take the model Wolfe's probably using, he really DID get it right. Which, as far as I know, just the desire doesn't guarantee. That's where we seem to differ. Given Wolfe's penchant for having "secular" things act suspiciously as if at the behest of the Outsider, this strongly suggests Horn had help (from Mainframe or something) to guarantee he got it right. On the other hand, since in Long Sun the Outsider does directly Enlighten Silk it can't be ruled out that Horn really does have direct supernatural aid in writing the Book of Silk.

I do **not** think that Horn had help from Mainframe. Horn is clearly, at first anyway, before "merging," a "frail vessel." The analogy is with Paul, about whom Christian factions are still fighting. I must say, I think the computer model is downright brilliant, especially considering Wolfe's age; not to be unPC, but people over 60 have a hard time with computers, generally.

-alga

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

Alex David Groce — 17 Oct 1999, 16:31 · follows Alice Turner

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What Nutria and I are saying is that whatever the truth value of "Matthew invented some stuff" is, it's unlikely that WOLFE thinks he did, which is an argument for giving THE BOOK OF THE LONG SUN a huge benefit of the doubt as to whether it matches up with the "real" events (never mind the fact that we're all discussing events that, of course, are purely fictional--the question is if the fiction is that "The Book of Silk" tells what really happened to Silk). Which also brings in the possible notion of other actors than Horn and Nettle in the composition of "The Book of Silk," acting in a Holy Spirit-type role, although that's more debateable. Much as Wolfe plays with -coy- narrators who don't tell everything that's going on, I'd be surprised if it turns out that "The Book of Silk's" version of events doesn't actually match up with what people say in Short Sun--meanings may change, but the events I'll bet stay the same.

Hmm... The Paul analogy might be really fruitful--isn't Paul's illness mentioned in Galatians sometimes supposed to have been a vision problem or even the _loss of an eye_?

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32

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