

Against Literalism

The Whorl list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 18 Oct 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/whorl/697>

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David_Lebling — 18 Oct 1999, 09:20

alga wrote:

<<Yes, indeedy-dooddy. The four gospeleers of the NT come to mind instantly, writing decades, and dubiously, after the death of their biographee. If you throw Thomas in, five gospeleers.>>

Nutria responded:

<<Each of us has her/his own view of the origination of the gospels. What matters here is what Wolfe's view is, and it's not what you describe. Since BLS and OBW are highly theological novels, its important to assess what the author had in mind....>>

Whoa, there, R.O.U.S.! Silk isn't Christ. There need be no direct parallelism with the Gospels, regardless of Wolfe's religious views. _The Book of Silk_ is _like_ a gospel, but isn't one. Silk is Christ-like (or Moses-like, a closer match in my opinion, with Auk as Aaron). Wolfe has played around with these religious analogies before: _Urth of the New Sun_ is full of stuff that would probably have gotten him a visit from the Inquisition four hundred years ago. Wolfe may hold all sorts of specific beliefs anent the validity and accuracy of the Gospels, but he's an educated man, and certainly is aware of the dissenting views, and can use them to "inform the narrative," as the saying goes. He spends a lot of time joking on exactly this theme with respect to Silk's enlightenment: was it a god, or was it a burst blood vessel? Similarly, the authorship of _The Book of Silk_ may be entirely mundane, as described by Horn in the current volume, or divinely inspired; Horn wouldn't necessarily know that he had been inspired!

It's much more fun this way.

-- Dave Lebling
(aka vizcacha)

ps: Nutria, if you check out vizcachas in the appropriate reference material, you will find that they are small rabbity sorts of things which live in the high Andes. A Nutria's blood-flecked fangs would probably freeze before it got a chance to devour one of the innocent little creatures.

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