

Dead Languages; Literally, "Apu-Punchau"? and Glyphs,

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 02 Apr 1999

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Mark Millman — 02 Apr 1999, 08:56

On Friday 2 April 1999 at 5:47 am GMT, Mitchell A. Bailey wrote:
[snip]

Until some points made in the recent "Thorn" discussions, however, it never occurred to me to question the literal authenticity of the name "Apu-Punchau". The name is Quechua, the tongue of the Incas of Peru, and means roughly "Lord Sun-God". I'm not a Quechua scholar, but I am interested enough to own a book which includes a Quechua glossary.

I'm wondering if the use of Quechua is a substitution of the same sort for some future autochthonous language, or whether Sev actually traveled back in time to live among the pre-imperial Inca, c. 1200 AD?

[snip]

My guess would be (and from this I'm sure that you can tell I tend toward the conservative in Wolfean criticism) that your first suggestion (i.e., that Quechua is a stand-in for some post-historic language) is the correct explanation. If the cities of the twentieth century are vanished into dust, I think it unlikely--though I admit not impossible--that any Incan city would remain to serve at the Stone Town. Furthermore, if there had been an "unscheduled" (so to speak) total solar eclipse in the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, I'd imagine there would be some sort of record of it. Even if Tzadkiel had managed the Ship so that the eclipse were seen only in the Western Hemisphere, we could expect the Maya to have recognized it as unusual and to have recorded it, though of course the Inca or proto-Inca wouldn't have left such a record. I suppose it's possible that the Ship was so located that the eclipse was strictly local, but I don't think this likely; I'd argue for greater Ship size and distance from Urth during the eclipse, as mantis discussed yesterday.

In other news, on Friday 2 April 1999 at 4:35 am GMT, Roy C. Lackey

wrote:
While we're at it, these "glyphs" from "The Tale of the Rose and the Nightingale (And What Came of It)":

"...a bent object that might be a whip, a human leg and a foot, a shallow cup, and a crocodile."

The story, if I recall correctly, is set in Egypt, so these could actually be classical hieroglyphs and look very much as they're described, rather than merely being suggestive of objects, as S, T, and Mr. Ansley's letters (which I won't give away) are.

And Mr. Lloyd, welcome to the list! Your explication is an excellent one, especially for someone like me who, ah, doesn't necessarily recognize Christian themes without a little prompting. That's not to say that I agree completely (I don't see Kevin Malone as being very much the willing servant; his attitude smacks more of an assumed, and false, humility to me), but then on this list, who does?

Mark Millman