

Calendars

The Urth list — 5 messages, 3 voices, 19 Aug 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1755>

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Peter Westlake — 19 Aug 1999, 14:31

How are all the deductions about calendars and saints' days affected by the idea of the Commonwealth being in the Southern Hemisphere? Personally I'm convinced that it's North of the Equator. Does that change anything?

SBear.

Michael Straight — 20 Aug 1999, 14:33 · follows Peter Westlake

On Thu, 19 Aug 1999, Peter Westlake wrote:

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True North or magnetic North?

-Rostrum

Peter Westlake — 22 Aug 1999, 21:34 · follows Michael Straight

At 14:33 1999-08-20 -0400, Michael Straight wrote:

On Thu, 19 Aug 1999, Peter Westlake wrote:

How are all the deductions about calendars and saints' days affected by the idea of the Commonwealth being in the Southern Hemisphere? Personally I'm convinced that it's North of the Equator.

True North or magnetic North?

True North. Quite possibly magnetic South, but I don't insist on that. The fauna and flora of the Commonwealth are all South American, but not all of South America is in the Southern Hemisphere. When Severian is walking along the coast in *_Citadel_*, chapter XXXII, "The Samru", he says that the land is to the East and the sea to the West [1]. So he's on the West coast. Then he walks North, with the sun rising on his right. There would be nothing wrong with that if it were true, but I don't think it is. Severian has a perfect memory, but seems unable to follow directions. He **always** gets lost. Every single time. If he hasn't misremembered the directions, he must be misinterpreting them, and I believe he has left and right mixed up. In that case the Sun is on the left, and he is heading what we would call "South". This idea has the advantage that it explains "the isles of the South" where Hellvard's people hunt walruses. The ones in our South are close to the coast, and too close to the expanded icecap of the cooling world; Hellvard hunts in the Caribbean.

SBear.

[1] conclusively disproving the theory of Nessus as Buenos Aires,

I think?

Roy C. Lackey — 23 Aug 1999, 01:05 · follows Peter Westlake

SBear. wrote:

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The Gyoll flows roughly north to south. It's mouth is on the southwestern coast of the continent, it's headwaters near Thrax. Yes, Severian can't follow directions, but he does get where he's going, eventually! Nessus has been creeping upriver for millennia, as the river gets too polluted. The Citadel was once north of the city, but in Sev's day is on the southern fringes of the living city. Whenever Sev failed to follow directions he compensated, after beginning his journey to Thrax, by tending to keep traveling north. He went first from Nessus to Saltus, then to Thrax, eventually ending up in the jungles of the equatorial zone, always going north, following, roughly, the course of the Gyoll upstream. From the penultimate paragraph of SHADOW:

"And surely when I entered this second gate, I began again to walk a new road. From that great gate forward, for a long time, it was to lie outside the City Imperishable and among the forests and grasslands, mountains and jungles of the north."

Agia said, on the last page of SHADOW, chapter XIX, "The real jungle is dying in the north as the sun cools."

Hallvard lived in very cold climes on the southern isles in polar-chilled waters. He mentions the growing season being short because of the icy wind. As he says in the first paragraph of his story: "...many strange things happen in the isles of the south that you northern people never dream of."

Both Agia and Hallvard can't be wrong about their directions, too. No doubt about it: the Commonwealth is in the Southern Hemisphere, in what we call South America.

Roy

Peter Westlake — 23 Aug 1999, 09:01 · follows Roy C. Lackey

At 01:05 1999-08-23 -0500, Roy wrote:

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They aren't wrong about North and South, nor is Severian. I don't claim he gets compass directions wrong, just left and right. As you say, he doesn't get lost when he's going North; but I challenge you to find a single instance of his following instructions and not getting lost. On reflection, I shouldn't have said he can't follow "directions" because that means both compass directions and instructions, and it would be hard to think of an ambiguity more likely to cause confusion in this context than that - sorry! Does it make more sense now?

Hallvard lived in the Caribbean, "South" of Central America. Keep going "North" and you pass through the jungles, through Ecuador, and on "North" towards the Antarctic icecap, which **must** extend further than it does now. The ice at the other pole stretched right down into Britain during the ice ages, and that was with the Sun at full strength.

SBear.