

Mound Dwellers

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 07 May 2002

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Josh Geller — 07 May 2002, 19:21

On Mon, 6 May 2002, Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

Josh G. points out that the "brown book" stories...

And in what we are please to call 'our world' the story of Alexander gets overlaid upon the story of Gilgamesh.

I'm afraid I'm blanking on this.

Besides the historical Alexander, recorded by his contemporaries, and used by Arrian and others who wrote the surviving Alexander biographies, there is a mythic Alexander who derives from the oral traditions of the peoples that he conquered, and was not written until medieval times or later.

During the time it was an oral tradition, the story was modified extensively, and incorporated elements that had previously been used in the stories of Gilgamesh and others.

There are these mythic patterns, which historical personalities, as they grow among the Dead, tend to conform to.

Now I'd like to go off on a tangent.

There was an ancient ("pagan" - I really dislike this term) king of Norway, named Olaf, who was buried in a mound at Geierstaad. He was henceforth known as Olaf Geierstaadalf ("Olaf the Elf from Geierstaad"). This happened maybe in the 8th century some time.

A few hundred years later, Olaf the Holy is Christianizing Norway, in the most direct and positive way imaginable. There's a problem, though: King (later Saint) Olaf is well-known to be the reincarnation of Olaf Geierstaadalf. He has Olaf the Elf's sword, for instance, taken out of the mound, there were prophecies about it, some of his companions (in fact) are well-known to be reincarnations of Olaf the Elf's companions. This is very embarrassing for a Christian king, and leads to his public denial, in front of the mound, that he was ever Olaf the Elf, because as good Christians, they all know that people are born once for all time.

The public denial went something like this: Olaf and some of his companions were in front of the mound, and one of them asked him if he remembered when they were there before: Olaf replied that he did not, that it could not be, that it was a lie and stated the Christian dogma in the matter. He was then overcome with emotion and ran away so as to hide his tears.

Yes, this does relate to the Gene Wolfe novel "The Devil In A Forest".