

Names and Pacific Specifics

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 10 May 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3992>

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Nigel Price — 10 May 2003, 16:42

Special thanks to mantis, who comments...

Wow, Nigel, you have suddenly burst into high activity!

Yeah...Won't last!

I can help you there:

Baden

Rev. Rob Robbins (his first name is really "Mervyn")

Annys (witch in L.A.)

Julius R. Christmas (Mary's dad)

Hanga

Langi, the native girlfriend (seems to be the pet form of "Langitokoua" which is also used in the text)

Brilliant! Thank you, Michael.

Seeing the names like this, I wonder whether the significance of Rob's name is its connection with Christmas. That would make him a Christmas Robin...But no, this really isn't a very Christmassy story, either in theme or date. Though perhaps Wolfe has a geographic joke going on, placing the February events on his fictitious island not only mid way between Christmas and Easter in the calendar but half way between Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean south of Java and Easter Island in the eastern Pacific.

Don't know what to make of Annys, the Internet witch from L.A. Guess I'll have to listen to the story again.

Ah...OK, the shark's name is spelled "Hanga". Rob and Baden compare the ruined palace in the forest to Stonehenge in some place called Wiltshire. I wondered whether there was supposed to be some connection between the shark and the standing stones, but in the story they seem to exist in some sort of antithesis.

Looking on the web, I discover that "Hanga Roa" is the name of the only town on Easter Island. It also seems to be the Maori word for "building", which would tie in with Hanga being the guardian spirit of the sunken building. Rob specifically mentions the Polynesians sailing from Hawaii to New Zealand, a distance of 4,000 miles.

I'm going to ignore the fact that "hanga" is Japanese for a print (picture), and that there is a Benedictine abbey in Africa, though not in Uganda, named after a "St. Maurus Hanga".

I've got nowhere with the names "Langi" and "Langitokoua". There's a Mount Langi Ghiran in Victoria in Australia, but that doesn't seem to get us anywhere. (I quote: 'Pronounced "Mount Langee Jeeran", the name is Aboriginal for "Home of the Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoo".')

Finally, a couple of further comments on my own meandering thoughts on the story.

After telling how he met with Rob in the ruined jungle temple, Baden specifically writes in his journal that they split up and went home by different ways. This also seems to be a fairly clear, symbolic reference to Baden's rejection of the faith which Rob the missionary represents.

As for the flickering shark, ignoring my own whimsical ruminations on hyperdrives, Baden's explanation of the phenomenon seems to imply that the vision has an independent spiritual reality, although the perception of it is subjective and individual, and a response to an effort at manifestation in the mind of the subject on the part of Hanga. I speculated earlier on whether Baden's illness made him more susceptible to Hanga's spiritual evil. Perhaps his fever enables him to receive Hanga's "broadcasts" more clearly or in a more sustained fashion?

Nigel
Minety, Wiltshire

Michael Andre-Driussi — 10 May 2003, 18:36 · follows Nigel Price

Nigel wrote:

I'm going to ignore the fact that "hanga" is Japanese for a print (picture), and that there is a Benedictine abbey in Africa, though not in Uganda, named after a "St. Maurus Hanga".

Normally I'd agree with you about ignoring all that stuff, but for the odd detail that the Japanese Army had occupied the island during the Pacific War. I don't know if this tidbit made it to the audio or not. Probably coincidental, but there it is. (I don't know about the audio, but the text is clear that hanga means shark.)

I've got nowhere with the names "Langi" and "Langitokoua". There's a Mount Langi Ghiran in Victoria in Australia, but that doesn't seem to get us anywhere. (I quote: 'Pronounced "Mount Langee Jeeran", the name is Aboriginal for "Home of the Yellow-Tailed Black Cockatoo".')

The big nearby settlement seems to be Kololahi, connected by telephone wires but transport by boat. The island is in the Takanga Group. Nearest leprosarium in the Marshalls.

=mantis=

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