

Eoliths (II); alga vs Aubrey Veil

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 10 Jun 1998

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Robert Borski — 10 Jun 1998, 23:20

To Tony Ellis:

I found out some more information about eoliths and it is possible they have the sharper, fresher edge Marsch describes. According to the *ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARCHAEOLOGY* (ed. by Glyn Daniel; Thomas Y. Crowell), sharp edges are perfectly consistent with the nature of eoliths, where the primary force involved in their production is thermal fracturing via frost. They don't become eroded unless the shattered rock winds up in running water or covered with soil. And many 20th century archeologists were originally convinced enough by their appearance to vet them as authentic: i.e., genuine artifacts.

Also remember the conditions under which Victor is searching for eoliths--not by daylight, but the light of sisterworld. In other words the pieces would have to be rather large and on the surface for him to see. I submit that Victor and Roy make an annual pilgrimage into the back of beyond to replenish their "artifact" stores, probably right after the spring thaw.

Re: the Gondwanaland vs. Convergence debate. Actually Wolfe utilizes both and may want us to make our own choices the same way he did when he had Dr. Crane posit organic causes for Silk's mystical visions. Something for everybody, right? My primary opposition to the nihil alienum thesis is that it's been used to discredit my Roy Trenchard, Alien Homeboy assertions. That's all.

alga subsequently wrote about the four-armed slave:

We don't know that those limbs are transplanted; they're just as likely a mutation. It happens, >especially with the kind of help Maitre provides.

Actually there's no evidence at all that this is a mutation (and whatever do you mean by "especially with the kind of help Maitre provides"? Almost all mutagenic changes--from macroscale to point--are caused by radiation, and I see no evidence of this in Maitre's laboratory. Moreover, directed mutation--i.e., specifically inducing certain changes that would involve this extensive of a change thoracically--may never be possible.) What also are we to make of Number Five's remark (remember, he's a clonemaster in training): "I told her I supposed they had transplanted the extra pair after suppressing his body's natural resistance to the implanted foreign tissue, and that the operation had probably replaced some of his ribs with the donor's shoulder structure. 'I've been teaching myself to do the same thing with mice.'" (p. 56) Perhaps this is boyish swag, you might argue; but I see no previous examples of this. In fact, Number Five seems like one of the few honest people in 5H and I can cite no other examples made by him of outright braggadocio.

Re the attendance of Jeannine at the play, you wrote:

Yes, Wolfe wants the sideshow of her futuristic prosthetic device, but I thought her presence indicated that she has begun to feel like family to the boys--Maitre would never attend an event like this, but Jeannine has unbent

to them. She loves them. I like this; I don't think it's odd at all, plot or no plot, but simply part of a kind of richness of writing that allows a maiden aunt to love and be loved.

I happen to agree with you here, but I also feel that every time one of the sisterworlds rises and casts its light down on the other, it's meant to signify a link of some sort from world to world. Ask me for examples, I'll be glad to provide further. You also apparently fail to see a link between the crippled daughter played by Phaedria and the wheelchair-bound Jeannine in the audience--again, I don't see this as a coincidence. Nor do I later when David is stabbed not in the arm or the chest, but the leg. He also has an avaricious side as well, the same as Phaedria and Jeannine. Surely not all three are simply stock French thriftaholics?

Re your dismissal of my Clute clue, the "'girls,' as you like them."

I agree. Editors can be and are occasionally sloppy. I still hold to my original difficulty with this scene, however. ("Psst," says one hooker. "That Levi-Strauss guy they're talking about? He's the guy who invented bluejeans, right?")

Moreover, the eidolic Shadow Children scene along with its linked titaness walking through walls hologram scene is adumbrated in the very last paragraph of VRT's junglebook diary. All the dreams in 5H, I maintain, are prefigurative (as indeed most dreams, pre-Freud and modern biology, were accorded); witness how Victor describes what he dreams as "Children, twisted Shadow children that are neither children nor men, and a tall girl with long, straight hair that hung almost in my face when she bent over me." (p. 240) I maintain this is yet another unifying link with the eidola-and-hologram tandem I cite.

Re: the using of Robert my earthy given name, as opposed to something of solar coinage: I'll make you a deal, alga. Whether it's to skewer me, or cite my more gaseous nature, it's nice to see you finally contributing some of your extended thoughts to the list. So here's my challenge: if you can critique what I feel is the strongest piece of evidence in my Jeannine-as-abo theory, and not just casually dismiss it, I will choose an alternate long sun type name. Deal?

Here's what I feel is the strongest point in my argument--my contention that Jeannine is the baby in the picture of the photo, which would make her 140 years old.

Notice how when he sees the picture Number Five assumes the child is a male, but has difficulty >seeing the face because it's nearly smothered by white wool blankets.

Recall as well Number Five's description of Aunt Jeannine as the Black Queen

in chess: "a chess queen neither sinister nor beneficent, and Black only as distinguished from

some White Queen I would never encounter." The White Queen Number Five never encounters, I >submit, is the real Jeannine--clearly linked by color with the white wool blanket that smother's the baby's face in the picture.

I simply do not believe Gene Wolfe would use "white" here except to establish association, the same kind of matching he does for "obscured face" and "Queen I would never encounter."

Disagree here and I'm afraid we may never reach accord on anything because clearly we are using different interpretive primers--not that that's a bad thing. Diversity, after all, is the essence of life, both intellectually and phenomenologically.

Looking forward to your response, alga. And feel free to spank me any time you feel it's

necessary. I appreciate the attention.<g>

Robert (who's busy looking over his medical tomes for a suitable bioname)