

Canna, Dr.Talos's play

The Whorl list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 04 Mar 1997

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Alice Turner — 04 Mar 1997, 08:29

Tercel was looking up Flier terms. I offer this for "canna" as the only Gaelic definition in the OED. "Glaciaiocht" isn't there.

cannach ("kan@x). Sc. Also canna.

[a. Gaelic cánach.]

The Cotton-grass (Eriophorum).

1803 A. Grant Poems 42 (Jam.) The downy cannach of the wat'ry moors. 1804 Grahame Sabbath 244 Where the leafless cannachs wave their tufts Of silky white. 1810 Scott Lady of L. ii. xv, Still as the canna's hoary beard. 1852 D. Moir Desert. Churchyard, The hoary cannach.

(I pasted that directly from my brand-new OED CD-ROM; it may come out looking odd in your mailboxes, but I hope not.)

Talon, I don't think anything could make you actually *like* Dr. Talos's play, but it's not entirely arbitrary. On one level it is a fairly close following of the Persian creation myth with Dorcas, Severian and Jolenta taking the parts that later Jewish myth assigns to Eve, Adam and Lilith. (Jahi is, quite literally, the Whore of Babylon referred to in Revelation; Gayomart (Nod)--Baldanders--is the unsuccessful First Man that Jewish myth eliminated). BotNS, taken through Book V, is itself a creation myth, with, at the end, Pega, Odilo and Thais standing in in a sort of parody of the play; the Sleeper stands in for Baldanders rather than Sevarian, for Sevarian is at this point the Autarch---God.

Then it is prophetic in a cryptic way; it foretells the drowning of Urth accurately and refers to Apu-Punchau. The Contessa refers backward to Thecla, but she stands for the exultant class in general. Mantis pointed out to me (to my astonishment!) that the scene she describes in Claw,228 actually happens in Urth, 293. I haven't made a true study of the play---and perhaps you're right, it's more for the puzzle-seekers---but I respect it, and I would love to hear it performed, or in a staged reading.

-alga-

Questions or problems to whorl-owner at lists.best.com

Doug Eigsti — 04 Mar 1997, 10:23 · follows Alice Turner

alga,

Thanks for the comments on Dr. Talos's play. Tying it into the Genesis story is an interesting perspective as well as the eschatological connection with the whore of Bablyon. I appreciate the run down on some of the symbolic elements. All this is sure to help my enjoyment of the play. I will be able to read it with new insight. I love little tidbits like this.

I can see how the cd-rom version of the OED would be very useful.

I need to look into one myself.

=Doug=

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