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The Whorl list — 5 messages, 4 voices, 15 Mar 1997

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Alice Turner — 15 Mar 1997, 11:56

ranjit:

I am somewhat in favor of just one list, but I can understand your reasons for a distinct Whorl list for archival purposes. How about two, for the Whorl and one for all else. It stands to reason that those of us who have found our way here (there aren't *that* many of us) are pretty well acquainted with the oeuvre and would like to be able to segue.

Jim:

I'd like to know if the ladies in our discussion feel Wolfe did a good job of getting into the head of a young girl.

I'm the only lady in our discussion, and I thought it was adequate on a YA level, no more. Not as appalling as Heinlein similar efforts.

Nessus is Buenos Aires. Say "Nos Aires" fast ten times. Location is part of the evidence, but so is the fact that Blind Ultan is the famous blind librarian of Buenos Aires, Horky-Borky (Jorge Borges), known for his labyrinth fiction, tying in to the labyrinthian library, etc.

Do you have this from the Wolfe's mouth? If you don't, I'll beg to differ with you. In my opinion, Nessus is, in a general way, Alexandria. Will back this up if you don't have the tap from the source---otherwise, of course, will concede.

-alga-

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

Derek Bell — 16 Mar 1997, 15:02 · follows Alice Turner

In message <199703152101.NAA12180 at lists1.best.com>, Alice Turner writes:

[on Nessus==Buenos Aires]

Do you have this from the Wolfe's mouth? If you don't, I'll beg to differ with you. In my opinion, Nessus is, in a general way, Alexandria. Will back this up if you don't have the tap from the source---otherwise, of course, will concede.

I agree - there's a resemblance between both Nessus and Alexandria. Nessus has a large library and is the principal city of the Commonwealth. I'm not convinced about the "Nos Aires" link, but that may be more convincing in some accent other than mine. I agree that Master Ultan is a Borges figure and Wolfe said once that if Borges didn't exist, any author who created him would deserve a Nobel Prize for literature. (FWIW, I like Borges' writings, too.)

Terrel

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Patera Jack — 16 Mar 1997, 19:42 · follows Derek Bell

On Sun, 16 Mar 1997 15:02:47 +0000, Derek Bell wrote:

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: [Posted from Whorl, the mailing list for Gene Wolfe's Book of the Long Sun] : : In message
<199703152101.NAA12180 at lists1.best.com>, Alice Turner writes: : >[on Nessus==Buenos
Aires] : >Do you have this from the Wolfe's mouth? If you don't, I'll beg to differ : >with you. In
my opinion, Nessus is, in a general way, Alexandria. Will : >back this up if you don't have the
tap from the source---otherwise, of : >course, will concede. : : I agree - there's a resemblance
between both Nessus and : Alexandria. Nessus has a large library and is the principal city of the
: Commonwealth.

I was under the impression that Nessus was below the equator, and that one had to travel north
to reach the hot jungles at "the waist of the Urth". Urth's magnetic fields may have flipped
several times, but I don't think that civilization would globally agree to swap the designations
"north" and "south" at those times.

J

revjack at radix.net

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Jim Jordan — 17 Mar 1997, 11:44 · follows Patera Jack

At 11:56 AM 3/15/97 -0500, you wrote:

Concerning Nessus:

Do you have this from the Wolfe's mouth? If you don't, I'll beg to differ
with you. In my opinion, Nessus is, in a general way, Alexandria. Will
back this up if you don't have the tap from the source---otherwise, of
course, will concede.

-alga-

No, I don't recall Gene's having told me that. I've assumed it from the beginning, and have
never questioned it. We are in the southern hemisphere, and the civilization is undergirded by
the Word of the Borgesian library. The only problem I've had is that at one point Vodalus (as I
recall) says that Urth has flipped on its axis once. Well, if that be correct, it must have
happened twice for the Buenos Aires connection to be correct.

I took Nessus as (Bue)Nos Aires in the same way that Cordwainer Smith's Meeya Meefla is
Miami Fla. But, that was me, not Wolfe. Smith is not a major influence on Wolfe, despite
appearances. (It seems that they both think along the same lines, and that creates the
appearance of some dependance.)

What I have never done is try to "solve the crossword puzzle" (to use Mantis's felicitous
analogy) by looking for evidence of the direction of flow of the river, whether Urth flipped more
than once, etc. If the river flows west instead of east, and if we are in South America, then
perhaps Nessus is Santiago.

Now, one other point: Pas has loaded the cargo of Starcrosser with locals. These locals sip mate
and are generally (in Viron) a South American culture. This would indicate that Typhon's domain

is in the Argentine area, not in an Egyptian area. AHA, but the Trivigauntes speak a kind of Arabic, so maybe they and not the Vironese were the local population around Typhon's throne. So, okay. I give up. Gene has defeated me. Where's my .357 Magnum....

If Urth flipped only once, then the Alexandria suggestion makes more sense; especially since Alexandria is noted for its library. In that case, the Ultanian nod to Borges would just be a nod, and not a Clew!

So then: What do you see as evidence for Alexandria?

JBJordan (Hmmm. What shall I be? How about Nutria!)

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Derek Bell — 17 Mar 1997, 18:42 · follows Jim Jordan

In message <199703161940.LAA15782 at lists1.best.com>, Patera Jack writes:

I was under the impression that Nessus was below the equator, and that one had to travel north to reach the hot jungles at "the waist of the Urth".

Urk - I wasn't clear enough in what I said - I meant it as a metaphorical similarity. I agree that the Commonwealth is most likely in South America, though I don't know the area well enough to say which city is the most likely candidate.

Tercel

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