

Origin of abos

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 07 Aug 1998

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mary whalen — 07 Aug 1998, 21:54

This is Sean Whalen (prion).

Sorry. I seem to have sent this to the Whorl list first.

I've been thinking about FHC, and I think that I can modify my previous ideas to fit in with what I now think happened.

Humanity originated on Sainte Anne, gained a large amount of technology, and left for Earth. Either the shapeshifters on the planet were unrelated to the humans, or else they were some form of humans who stayed behind and had or gained this ability.

The humans on Earth may have mated with the native hominids. In any event, their technology was either destroyed, lost, or became confined to a small group (Aztecs, Illuminati, whatever your paranoia of choice happens to be).

Some group of humans gained greater technology or used what they already mostly had to leave Earth and at least some, if not all, arrived on Sainte Anne.

The shapeshifters saw them, and some of them took on their forms because they were impressed with the technology, and some stayed the way they were before. The ones who changed forgot that they had ever been shapeshifters, probably because they imitated the human minds to some degree as well (Wolfe may have wanted to indicate that souls are linked to material form, or something, instead). They might have just liked living as humans and never changed, then not have told their children.

The humans found out that a plant on Sainte Anne had attributes that they wanted to experience, became addicted, and as a result of this addiction changed into Shadow Children. They might have changed because of the chemical effects of the drug, or as a result of Lamarckism. They also gained telepathic power (the manipulation of empty space) and used it to keep other humans from coming to the planet.

The shapeshifters retained their imitated forms, and went about life without any technology, which they had never had. They begin to lose the use of shapeshifting (through Lamarckism) because they never use it. They don't notice, because they never use it, and they don't even know that they have it. They might also have lost the ability of tool use in the same way, if they had gained this from the humans they imitated. Some primitive culture develops, and some live in the hills, some in the meadowmeres. They eventually only have enough shifting ability to change basic appearance, and regrow limbs and things (poorly).

Eventually, the French came. Modern humans become aware of Sainte Anne. They Hillmen and Marshmen may now realize their shapechanging ability, possibly from being told by Sandwalker. They mostly hide, along with the Shadow Children, and modern humans take over

the planet.

Here's why I believe this. The first, and, I feel, fairly minor, point is that Sainte Anne and not Earth is the original place of origin for humans and possibly others. I think this because of the Garden of Eden imagery and symbolism in the book. Many characters refer to it as like a paradise, or the last paradise they have, or something. There's no concrete support, only the symbolism. This is all there is, however, so I think it's what I have to go by. He might have put this in as misdirection, but I don't think so. Even if I'm wrong, this is unimportant to the picture of events I have, anyway.

Why do I think that the Shadow Children came to Sainte Anne in ships and the Hillmen and Marshmen changed into human form rather than vice versa, as the Old Wise One eventually says? Well, for many reasons. Pink is the color of the sun, and the dawn. The only people associated with pink are the Hillpeople (and probably Wetlanders) who have pink skin and give the name Mary Pink Butterfly and others to one's child. The light (pink) must come before a shadow forms. The shadows also cannot exist unless a true form exists beforehand. They shadow (repeat) the actions the Hillpeople's ancestors performed (assuming they came from Earth, or at least from another planet). Also, the Hillmen/Marshmen have green eyes, the color of Sainte Anne. Color symbolism is very important in the books, and I think it says a lot that the H/Ms are associated with the two native colors of where they live.

The Shadow Children are really like children (small, younger). The Hillmen are older because they're as old as the HILLS.

More important than this symbolism is the fact that if the H/Ms are really the descendents of humans from Earth, why did they become primitive? No reason is given, implied, etc. However, if the SC are humans who came from Earth with technology, they would have lost this technology because of their drug use. If they are the more original inhabitants, they wouldn't have lost anything when they started drug use, but we know that someone's technology was lost for some reason, and the only implied reason for which any information or clues are given is that drug use.

This scenario is also approximately what the Old Wise One first told Sandwalker. However, at the end, he becomes confused about who came first and says that the Shadow Children were there first and the H/Ms came from Earth in ships. So why do I think it's what he said first? When he tells it originally there are many SC and only one Hillman, so he can distinguish which is which and knows what the SC think happened. He can tell because six are different than one, and that's how the SC think. All the SC think the same thing and so that's what forms the group norm. When there's only one Hillman and one SC he can't tell which is which, one and one are the same, right? He can't figure out what parts of the story go with which half. As alga has said, the SC have a real problem with determining identity normally. Also, in a normal (non-Wolfe) story the information that a character knows at the end should be more true than what it was at the beginning because they've learned more. Wolfe uses turnabout (again) and has the information at the end be worse than near the beginning. Remember how Wolfe once complained about how readers ask why a character describes something differently than how it was seen to happen? He said that they're wrong or lying, it's just not stated. Of course, it's possible that the OWO was just confused first for some other reason, but this is not supported by the rest of the evidence I presented. The additional evidence supports the H/M first conclusion, and the OWO's statements could support either one, so it probably supports the one that has other evidence.

And if the SC first theory is right, why don't SC use mental powers to prevent Hillmen from coming? Why do Hillmen devolve? Why does Old Wise One first think SC are more recent? Why

called SHADOW Children? Why do eaters go if others who eat it stay, or if later eaters eat what may be the same thing and don't have to go at that time?

prion