

5HC: Annese primitives

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 30 Nov 2000

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 30 Nov 2000, 11:15

I know we've all been through this before, but here's a new catalogue drawn mainly from "A Story."

Each group has a biome or environment that they stay in, and other biomes that they make incursions into.

"Trees" are found at desert oases. They can talk in real time; they can send dreams. They are lords of their little patch of green. They are like Tolkein's Ents, in a way, but I don't know if they can move (anecdotal evidence at Frenchman's Landing makes them sound like dryads). I get the sense that Hill People socially sanctioned procreative activities are usually conducted at an oasis: thus the oasis is their mating ground.

"Priest" is found in a cave. Like a Tree, he is lord of his area, but also a dispenser of wisdom for boys-becoming-men. Gives very powerful dreams in exchange for offerings of food.

"Hill People," aka "Free People" are in the hills in Winter, in the mountains in Summer. They are tribal, organized into small groups. Pre-agricultural hunter/gatherers in a harsh landscape. Their skin color is described as "dust" and "brown"; their hair is dark, fine, and straight; their eyes are green. They definitely will not eat Marshmen, but maybe they will eat Shadow Children (the Shadow Children seem to chide Sandwalker for his boast that he will eat them; then again, maybe Flying Feet ate most of the one he killed?). The oasis is their mating ground, the cave is their college, the cliff is where they run any of their members who talk theocratic stuff. They leave night offerings for Shadow Children. They are thus something like fairies, more like oreads (hilly nature).

"Marshmen" aka "Wetlanders" are in the meadowmeres. Their skin color seems lighter than that of the Hill People. As boys become men they are seared with fire on the sides of their heads (so their hair grows in a "Mohawk" crest) and scarred on shoulders and thighs. They are slavers, taking Hill People for sacrifice (with ritualized cannibalism) and priesthood. They are trappers rather than hunters: they lure Shadow Children (for "everyday-style" feasting). They have a larger scale of organization than any of the other groups, having many people (a hundred?); they have a star-oriented theocracy, with contempt for the mundane world around them. They are proto-scientists, experimenting with dissection of human corpses; they are arboreal architects, building their woodhenge-style observatory; they are the most "technologically" (such as it is) developed of the groups. They are trolls, more or less. (In a "colonial" reading they might be seen as Europeans.)

"Shadow Children" aka "mock men." They seem dark and weak. They are organized into small bands of odd (or is it prime?) numbers (1, 3, 5, 7, etc.). (It isn't clear what happens when they have an even number, due to loss: but I suspect that the names "Hunter" and "Hatcher" are always assigned to such oddmen out--that is, they aren't names in the "5 member" set of names.) They move through all the biomes, it seems. Nocturnal. Telepathic and doped to the

gills. They go into the rocks when day comes in the desert. They will eat Marshmen quite happily, and they will likely eat Hill People. They project the planet cloaking spell/song. They are ghouls, pretty much; but they avoid the ghoul-bear (or maybe that makes perfect sense!).

=mantis=