

Posthistory league-high cliff notes

The Urth list — 3 messages, 3 voices, 13 Mar 2002

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/3032>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 13 Mar 2002, 02:53

G Willickers wrote:

I was not concerned as much with continued pollution greater than human carelessness and lack of concern, more with what happened, or what went wrong. We have witnesses the 'downfall' of our own space program for the sole reason that it's not necessary, and there haven't been any significant developements. I do not partake to this view, but, obviously, some do.

Considering this, my inquiry perhaps should have been the following: "what would possibly motivate us to take the initiative towards leaving Earth". I think that the fact that humanity has attained interstellar technologies, and that Earth is for all purposes medieval, suggests that it has been abandoned for some reason or another, and I ruled out mass attack or invasion (from extraterrestrials, perhaps) because the snippets of history presented in New Sun focus rather on history that's ancient to us, and does not mention outside-in contact.

As a matter of fact Typhon represents an alien invader, and it seems probable that he brought the exultants along with him. From how far afield they came (perhaps as nearby as Skuld or Verthandi; beyond this, the stars) remains unknown.

Air pollution could certainly be a factor, and would not only contribute to the general disdain for living on Earth, but might make the sun appear darker and possibly cooler...(Hey!) Is there any evidence of Apocalyptic ice caps? Could they have even reformed (after o-zone repairs itself) and left the geography similar to what it is today, but have driven many coastside dwellers into space?

Yes, the icecaps seem to be bigger, but this is presumably due to the decreased energy from the Old Sun. Also why the tropical forests are dying, and why ahem, stars can be seen in the daytime.

And still, the other question... what caused the decline of society from interstellar to, well, you know. I doubt that a black hole which has done little in a long time could cause a mass techno-exodus, or that they couldn't handle some new goliaths in the sea (esp. if they started out like Baldanders). I think that there is a strong binding between ecosystem and society in BotNS, and a strong case (strong in the sense that it hasn't been disproven) since they are two of the more important aspects when studying a

culture.

But the "illness" is beyond the (relatively petty) planet eco-systems, it is the sun itself.

I wrote an essay, "Posthistory: 101," published in "Extrapolation" (Summer 1996). To give a sketch of the big picture:

- 1) The Age of Myth
- 2) The Age of the Monarch
The First Empire of 1000 Stars
The Long Decay
The Fall of the Empire
Typhon's failed attempt at Second Empire
- 3) The Age of the Autarch (about 1000 years)
Ymar the Almost Just
Severian the Great
- 4) The Age of Ushas

I guessed the Age of Myth to be 97,500 years before Severian's time, but it could be as much as 1 million years.

The big techno-exodus in recent times was triggered by Typhon's failure, which was also tied in with the big rebellion of some of his children against him. But even this was pale compared to the fall from the First Empire, which seems to have been triggered by the "wild side" working its way on a society founded upon Order alone.

=mantis=

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Jeff Snader — 13 Mar 2002, 12:40 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

-----Original Message-----

From: Michael Andre-Driussi [mailto:mantis at siriusfiction.com] Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2002 9:54 PM To: urth at urth.net Subject: (urth) Posthistory league-high cliff notes

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Jeff

matthew.malthouse — 13 Mar 2002, 16:20 · follows Jeff Snader

On 13/03/2002 12:40:20 Jeff Snader wrote:

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Alien in culture. But Typhon knows that Earth/Urth is the original home of his race.

And from the stars, Typhon says so when talking of his lost empire and the one he intends to rebuild.

As for the exultants I can't recall a reference that would support or refute the idea that they came with Typhon. Then...

It does make sense that the exultants were a spacefaring race. They have a technological superiority over the rest of the populace. They could possibly be from a planet with a weaker gravitational pull, which one could attribute to their height.

It's an interesting thought.

I have in mind that the exultants as a class just bred for height, but I can't say now why I thought that.

Tall people in Science fiction are often a result of low gravity - that could be planets like Lune - or space habitats. But tall for aristocrats is a commonplace, simply because such a class being most consistently well fed and having well fed mothers are likely to be above average height in any stratified society. Eventually this becomes a characteristic *of* the aristocrat so breeding or or more sophisticated manipulation to fix that characteristic in the line might be an end in itself rather than having any other purpose.

Mantis drew up a neat synopsis of relevant stuff in <http://www.urth.net/urth/archives/v0001/0023.shtml>

Matthew