

Early Urth & Other Writ

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 16 May 1997

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/34>

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m.driussi — 16 May 1997, 01:07

Reply: Item #8311763 from URTH at LISTS.BEST.COM@INET01#

Joel,

Slow down a second. You've truncated my point: I didn't write "earliest days of the White Fountain," I wrote "earliest days of White Fountain =starlight= on Urth." You apprehend the difference, don't you? The White Fountain is brought into existence somewhere far away in the galaxy, perhaps in the galactic core itself. It saunters along toward Urth at some relativistic speed, that is, taking years, decades, or centuries of real time to cross each light year--but at the same time, its light is "racing" across space at one year per light year. Obviously the starlight hits Urth long before the White Fountain is in the neighborhood--and this is important because the starlight is the physical (physics) link between the White Hole and Severian. The presence or absence of the starlight upon Severian's body, to be most precise, determines whether or not Severian has his super powers.

Re: "The earliest days of the White Fountain's existence stretch back to the earliest days of humans on Urth"--does the text support this claim? I can see where Famulimus says, "Thus surprised are we, Severian, to find you here where men have scarce begun" (V, ch. , p. 354). Is that the quote that informed you?

"Here where men have scarce begun" can be taken in many ways: scarce begun civilization, for one example. But I myself doubt the sense of "homo sapiens sapiens has just arrived on the scene." If that is the sense in which Famulimus means it, I would take it figuratively rather than literally. But for those who take it literally, here is a handy chronological milestone (35,000 B.C.) to work into the posthistorical ages of Urth!

FWIW, I have a few factoids that point to that scene taking place in Cuzco, South America circa AD 1200. Of course, this is obviously based upon the perhaps fatally flawed viewpoint that Urth is literally an evolved form of Earth after a period of less than one million years from today!

Yes, posthistory =is= a fascinating subject!

Meanwhile, Harrison's THE PASTEL CITY, first of the Viriconium sequence, was first published in 1971--nine years before THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER. (BTW, didn't Ranjit have a separate place for people to list Wolfe-ish books?)

(And hey--where is that Ranjit?)

=mantis=