

Early Urth

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

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Joel Priddy — 16 May 1997, 14:10

mantis say:

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? <<

Yes, I do, and didn't mean to misquote you. I was just having trouble with my editor, so I couldn't quote you directly. But now that I'm thinking of it, here's a question regarding the starlight... Doesn't Severian find that his star is invisible from outside Dis' orbit when he disembarks from Tzadkiels ship? This is presumably centuries before the Apu-Incident. Is it just that a minute amount of starlight, less than the human eye can pick up is hitting the Urth? But doesn't he see his star with his eyes when he's Apu? Was his star blocked in the former case? By the object that caused the eclipse? And Severians connection to his other self in the form of the White Fountain... does this "sympathy" work at lightspeed, or is it instantaneous?

mantis say:

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?<<

Yes, this is the quote I was referring to.

mantis say:

"Here where men have scarce begun" can be taken in many ways:

scarce begun civilization, for one example.<<

Yes, I had taken the quote to refer to the earliest days of civilization. I think (and I'm real shakey on this one) that someone, maybe the Hierodules talking to Severian in their stateroom, made a distinction between humans as they are then and humans when they were little more than beasts. I'm not being much help to myself by stubbornly refusing to remember the quote, but it's phrasing led me to believe that the speaker was referring to a distinction within homo sapiens sapiens.

mantis say:

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!<<

It's certainly built, whole-cloth, from meso-american culture, although I, personally, didn't take that to mean that it was meso-america any more than I took the language precedent to what Severian spoke to actually be Latin. BTW, the structure that Severian built... was it a dome of true arches, or stepped arches? I believe the pre-Columbian cultures had the latter, but not the former.

Mantis conclude:

(BTW, didn't Ranjit have a separate place for people to list Wolfe-ish books?)<<

Oops, is there? Sorry about that, then. But just one quick question before the posting-police descend upon my head: Are the Harrison books good? Do you recommend them?

-cephalothorax-

(whose penchant for misspelling sometimes even extends to his own name)