

Hieros

The Urth list — 3 messages, 2 voices, 09 Aug 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4685>

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b sharp — 09 Aug 2006, 13:16

Roy C. Lackey takes me to task for using the abbreviation "Hieros" to refer collectively to the groups named Hierogrammates, their larvae the Hierarchs and their servants, the Hierodules. This is a convention used by others in this archive (see Dan'l's most recent post) but Roy has a point. The term "Hiero" is used by Tzadkiel and Apheta to refer specifically to the human cognate race which produced the other three (although Roy, your page references never match up to my edition). I'm not sure what a good substitute abbreviation might be- Hiero-'s H x3's? HHH's?

In his recent posts Roy finds explanation for the origin of the HHH's in Urth and then in Malrubius' "secret of the Universe" speech to Severian in Citadel. These are the most explicit explanations but I find Cyriaca's story in Sword also to be relevant. Her story comes from her...uncle's book which hasn't been opened in a chilliad, but she assumes everyone knows parts of it anyway (they don't).

In her story, humanity expands across the galaxy and evolves into non-animal entities. These entities create servants which seem to be machines/robots/computers of some sort ("thinking engines"). The servants turn on their creators and give them back their animalistic nature by introducing artifacts and knowledge from their past, and by assigning each human a sort of guardian presence that no other human can see or hear to provide knowledge.

Isn't this exactly what the hierodules, Barbatus, Famulimus and Ossipago do? They give Baldanders artifacts and knowledge. They give Severian a personal "Malrubius" (and Triskele) to guide him. (I'll note that the old autarch, Appian, seems to have been given a similar aquastor from his past, Paeon; Gurloes and perhaps some others have invisible presences they talk to...).

Roy says:

The "holy slaves" (of which Barbatus and Famulimus are examples) were a race of beings created by the Hierogrammates to serve them in BriaH. (URTH, 36) They are not humans, as their living quarters on Tzadkiel's Ship clearly shows.

But, Malrubius' story says the "created beings" escaped to Yesod then had to look back to BriaH to find (not create) the Hierodules (and humanity). I notice Roy doesn't include Ossipago in his examples of Hierodules. There are suggestions that Ossipago is a machine (deus ex machina, lol). So, maybe some of the created beings/machines from Cyriaca's story escaped to Yesod, becoming Hierarchs/grammates while some stayed behind?

To me a way to reconcile all these conflicting accounts is to suggest there are two sorts of Hierodules. There is the original machine kind that originated in BriaH, like Ossipago and there is the more fleshly but angelic kind like Barbatus and Famulimus who were created in Yesod and sent back. I think this interpretation jibes with all three sources of information, Urth, Malrubius and Cyriaca. It also explains why Famulimus and Barbatus are stuck in backwards

time, in Briah, while Ossipago isn't.

In Judeo-Christianity, the angels are set in a hierarchy. There are archangels and lower angels. Lofty Seraphim and lowly Cherubim. Interestingly, the Cherubim are said to have four faces. And Famulimus has..let's see, only three? No...stop....must.....not.....over-.....read.....

-bsharp

Roy C. Lackey — 10 Aug 2006, 06:43 · follows b sharp

b sharp wrote:
(although Roy, your page
references never match up to my edition).

Really? Unless otherwise specified, when I give page numbers they are for the original edition, which is usually the hardback; otherwise I indicate the chapter. The book in question here is URTH. I was citing the page numbers in the TOR hardback, which is the same edition cited by Andre-Driussi and Borski in their respective books. A sampling of their relevant citations all agree with my copy. As it happens, the pagination of the TOR mass market paperback is also the same as in the hardback.

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The exact quote is: "The Hierodules they [the Hierogrammates] have found too, and formed more quickly, to serve them in this universe." (CITADEL, chapter XXXIV)

-Roy

b sharp — 11 Aug 2006, 03:49 · follows Roy C. Lackey

Regarding this exchange:

Roy says:

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bsharp says:

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Roy is right of course, as always, but at the risk of hairsplitting I'll note it seems the Hierodules were found then (re) formed in Briah rather than created in Yesod from scratch. They already existed in Briah in some capacity. All the similar statements I find in the text use the word "shape" instead of "create", which may be a purposeful distinction.

I still think Cyriaca's story is important. Searching the archives, I find only Tony Ellis in one post (<http://www.urth.net/urth/archives/v0029/0151.shtml>) suggests he agrees with me that Cyriaca's story has something to do with the Hierogrammates, Hierodules, etc.

In her story, people had thoughts they put behind them because "they could not be written in numbers". Sounds like digital intelligence to me (and the basis for Long Sun Gods?). Anyway, the machines in question, as mentioned before, do very Hierodule-like things like disseminating knowledge, artifacts and aquastors and impacting human development.

Cyriaca's story about the creation of these thinking machines takes place during empire building which stated to be part of Urth's and Severian's past. Malrubius' story also describes an empire building era as the time the Hiero race created the Hierogrammates who escaped to Yesod.

Now, as Roy notes, Apheta and Tzadkiel think their Hierarch/grammate race will be produced by the humans of Ushas. Are we to think that the peaceful priest of The Sleeper or the gentle Green Man produce an Ushas population who forge another bloody, galactic human empire and for whom "Uncountable billions suffered and died under their guiding hands, leaving ineradicable memories of pain and blood"? So much for incremental improvement.

That doesn't seem right to me. Could Tzadkiel (of Yesod planet) be wrong? He/she certainly isn't omniscient, since Severian has to keep explaining stuff to Tzadkiel versions from giantess to tinker bell, each time. Well, we know there is an even higher power at work.

Maybe the Hierodules were produced in Severian's past by (not yet fully formed in Wolfe's mind) empire-creating Whorls. Perhaps these are the digital intelligences of Cyriaca's story. Some hierodules escaped to Yesod to become Hierogrammates, of whom one (Tzadkiel) returned to Briah to shape the remaining Hierodules he/she found into tools to reform the now legendary Urth.

Well, that's my best attempt as synthesis for now, in lieu of throwing up my hands screaming "time paradox"

-bsharp