

Abo Artifacts

The Urth list — 2 messages, 2 voices, 10 Jun 1998

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Robert Borski — 10 Jun 1998, 14:48

Several dispatches ago, Tony Ellis wrote:

We're shown that VRT lacks the manual dexterity to have made the fake flint tools RT shows Marsch. That leaves RT. How did he make them, if he's an abo too?

Victor comes right out and says such tools are made with one's teeth

No he doesn't. He says "With their teeth." Like any sulky adolescent confronted by the embarrassing stupidity of adults, Victor is getting his revenge by providing the most minimal, unhelpful response possible. He's saying two things. He's saying "You think my people made stuff like that? What with, their teeth?" And he's saying "When they wanted to cut something they used their teeth. You morons. "Only a few lines further on, he clarifies this: "The Free People didn't use those things. ...if they wanted to cut something they used their teeth."

You don't -seriously - think it's possible to fashion flint tools with your teeth, do you Robert?

Marsch later adds such tools require little manual dexterity to chink out.

Absolutely. That's why RT can make them with his arthritic hands. VRT still can't because he's a hopeless ham-fisted abo. He doesn't have this skill because none of his people have any tool-using skills. How many times do you count Sandwalker using a flint knife? And the other Hill People? And the Marshmen? Anyone?

I'm now willing to concede you the wisdom of your arguments here, Tony. But then where do these artifacts come from if at the same time I wish to hold true to my Roy-is-an-abo theory (as opposed to your own nihil alienum)?

Well, consider the following entry in VRT's notebook, somewhat after he's killed Marsch:

"By sisterworld's light I have been looking among the rocks for implements--eoliths. I have found none." (p. 239)

Eoliths are chipped stones of the late Tertiary Period formerly held to have been made by humans, but now known to be products of a natural, nonhuman agency (weathering, volcanic action, erosion, etc.). I submit these are the so-called Annese artifacts he and Pop sell at their stand. Roy never made them because he has the same ham-fisted clumsiness you attribute to Victor. Personally I can think of no other reason why Victor would be searching for eoliths, but if you can I'd be happy to hear you out. After all I was clearly wrong the first time.

I also contend this bit of text suggests that Victor may have returned to Roncevaux after killing Marsch and did not spend all of his claimed three years in the back of beyond.

Notice also how Victor's search has not been conducted by daylight, but the light of Sainte

Croix. This suggests the museum artifacts Number Five sees are either eoliths or replicas of eoliths.

Robert Borski (who is still looking for xanthic exculpation in the yellow aspect of Eve's buttoned dress)

Tony Ellis — 11 Jun 1998, 08:15 · follows Robert Borski

Robert Borski wrote:

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Sorry, but the artifacts the Trenchards sell are clearly manufactured fakes. Dr Marsch notes "several... I am fairly sure had been made from coloured glass, probably from pieces of broken whisky bottles. They were new, as was shown by their razor-sharp edges (genuinely old flint or volcanic glass implements have always lost their keenness by friction with soil or grit);"

Notice also how Victor's search has not been conducted by daylight, but the light of Sainte Croix. This suggests the museum artifacts Number Five sees are either eoliths or replicas of eoliths.

They're replicas of Trenchard's fakes. We're told that the museum artifacts are plastic replicas, and Trenchard boasts of his items that "castings have been made of them so they could be sent all over the world, and even to Sainte Croix."