

# Übermensches [Digest urth.v024.n004]

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 01 Mar 1999

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/1402>

Exported from an unofficial mirror of a public mailing list. Copyright in each message remains with the person who wrote it. Email addresses are obscured as `user at host`, the form the original archive published. This file was rebuilt from parsed fields rather than retained headers, so it is faithful in content but not byte-exact.

---

John Bishop — 01 Mar 1999, 13:41

re "Übermenches" (Übermenschen in German)

I think Latro and Severian, to take the two most obvious examples, are super because otherwise their stories change from the ones Wolfe wants to tell.

Consider an ordinary soldier in Latro's situation: he would find his time and attention fully occupied staying alive, giving us a quite different type of story.

And thus they must be stronger and quicker. They are handsome because this means more romance (thematically important for Severian), but this analysis doesn't explain why Latro isn't just "ordinary looking", for example.

As for smart and perceptive: one of the charms of Wolfe's writing is that he and we both perceive things the protagonist doesn't.

re Salamander and "things are what they are called"

The "fire spirit" meaning of salamander is very old; it's at least medieval. So that still fits.

re Severian

I'm re-reading Shadow; there's a definite statement by Severian that he had sex with Thecla (about the time of the avern duel), which settles a question which arose here a while ago.

Is the "Robert" he meets in the jungle greenhouse Robert Louis Stevenson? Was there a "Marie" in Samoa with him? I can't help but think the couple we see is a reference.

-John Bishop