

Hera and Sphinx / achilles

The Urth list — 13 messages, 5 voices, 01 Apr 2006

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4555>

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aramini1 at cox.net — 01 Apr 2006, 18:16

This is another post I made in May of 2003 that I was most impressed with reading it again. This will be the last repost - just thought this was some important stuff.

"Latro offends Hera or Gaea by fighting in her temple (in the books, Gaea and Hera are blended together and oppose the triple goddess, who is Echidna(enodia)+Moon (Selene) + Huntress) The sphinx is identified by Latro as Gaea (!) in chapter 29 of Soldier of Arete. this would make her Hera, who would be Ares mother (I am your mother, and your mother's mother).

However, I believe that there is an undercurrent here in the soldier series: the Achaens have been replaced by the Dorians (Spartans), who have taken over the old ways. If I'm not mistaken, this would make the ghost of Achilles mad, and he wants the Spartans to be vanquished. The remains of the achaens are symbolically put to rest with Lykaon in the boar hunting segment late in Soldier of Arete, where Latro picks up the shepherd Aglaus, who he then takes into Sparta with him. He keeps Aglaus around because Aglaus reminds him of things, and helps him remember. I don't know if anyone else has said anything, but Aglaus is the goat man who identifies Polos as a centaur (or bull-killer) in chapter 33. He later makes a pipe for io and begins dancing, where Latro says that he is reminded of Elata by Aglaus. Aglaus is a satyr, who chases nymphs, and the same carnal force flows through him. So, Latro is surrounded by a nymph, a satyr, a centaur, and a man named Seven Lions, and he is probably chasing the shape shifting Zalmoxis as well.

Why would a satyr, or a being who resembles Pan, remind Latro so strongly of his past? Notice that after Aglaus shows up, Latro starts to remember. The memory house of Simonides helps, but Latro claims that he bought Aglaus' services after Themistocles no longer required a guide to Sparta because of Aglaus' effect on his memory.

In the boar hunting scene at the middle of part three of Soldier of Arete, we see several things: the Achaens are old and wiped out, replaced by the Spartans, and dying out obscurely in the mountains. Aglaus and Lykaon seems to represent the older forces, while Latro represents the burgeoning triumph of Rome that looms over all Greece (he is the seed of Rome, as has been said).

I need to look up which side was the Achaen side, but I'm pretty sure that Achilles is mad at the Spartans and is working from beyond the grave to insure that they are going to have some big problems in the near future, and that Latro is somehow involved in that effort to thwart them.

Then again, maybe I have it backwards. Aeneas is the survivor of Troy, whose seed goes on to found Rome. Perhaps Achilles wouldn't want that force to rise again, since he vanquished Hector and fought for it. What do you think? Which side would the shade of Achilles take? The Great King of the Medes or the Twin Kings of Sparta? Or would he want both to fail so that Rome could eventually come and take over everything?"

Jeff Wilson — 02 Apr 2006, 08:43 · in reply to aramini1 at cox.net

aramini1 at cox.net wrote:

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It seems inappropriate for Hercules to tutor Ares either on wrestling or on the wisdom of throwing a wrestling match.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

aramini1 at cox.net — 02 Apr 2006, 09:12 · follows Jeff Wilson

Jeff wrote:

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Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Yet this doesn't explain why Latro is explicitly called Pleistorus on two separate occasions, whereas Basias, who bested him, is never identified as a god, despite the fact that he wins the match.

Why would Hercules help a mortal, anyway? Why would Odysseus help him take out three people? Once he hears the advice of Hercules, he is able to implement it. If Hercules gave someone who wasn't born to be a warrior advice, they would still lose the match, no matter how good the advice was. You can tell someone how Mike Tyson fights, but it isn't easy to hear someone else and to just go out there and do it.

Your first argument, about the conventions of naming someone as a child of the gods, is cogent. I don't feel that this one, about it being inappropriate for Hercules to tutor a brain damaged Ares, effectively weighs one way or the other about the possibility of Latro being, in some way, divine.

Chris — 02 Apr 2006, 13:21 · in reply to aramini1 at cox.net

Another possibility is the fact that wrestling is sport, not war, and thus perhaps only secondarily in the realm of Ares - the techniques necessary to win a wrestling match are not entirely the same as the ones you would need to kill or incapacitate an opponent in battle.

As far as the lineage comments go, I don't see how Hera's statements establish anything. She is, in a sense, everyone's mother - and thus, as she says, everyone's mother's mother as well.

Jeff wrote:

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Jeff Wilson — 02 Apr 2006, 21:40 · in reply to aramini1 at cox.net

aramini1 at cox.net wrote:

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I'm not sure such frailty is in character for a Greek god. Perhaps it is the damage that makes Latro subject to direct divine manipulation.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Jeff Wilson — 02 Apr 2006, 21:44 · in reply to Chris

Chris wrote:

Another possibility is the fact that wrestling is sport, not war, and thus perhaps only secondarily in the realm of Ares - the techniques necessary to win a wrestling match are not entirely the same as the ones you would need to kill or incapacitate an opponent in battle.

It's still a lesson in conflict, and allowing the other man to win is a lesson in sacrifice and deception, both principles of warfare easily as important as skill with arms.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Chris — 03 Apr 2006, 00:39 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

True to an extent, but it really sounds more like Athena's kind of warfare than that of Ares; and we know that sometimes she can beat him in the open field.

Jeff said:

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important as skill with arms.

aramini1 at cox.net — 03 Apr 2006, 04:02 · follows Chris

From: "Chris" <rasputin_ at hotmail.com>

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I never understood the importance of Latro throwing the match. Maybe it does have some thematic importance in terms of Latro's development: going from a bloodthirsty mercenary to someone who knows when it is acceptable to fight well without destroying your enemy (something the spartans don't understand, and something that disgusts Latro so much that he becomes suicidal).

Or, as I said before, maybe it is an important lesson for the war god to learn: sometimes you must lose and NOT use your full power to avoid greater destruction. (which is what I believe the significance of the poem Latro quotes when entering the Olympics: "Ares quits the spear proud throng". Remember that Latro wins the boxing and Pankration events, even though they occur off screen, because they expect him to win the chariot races, too.)

Marc

Jeff Wilson — 03 Apr 2006, 23:39 · in reply to aramini1 at cox.net

aramini1 at cox.net wrote:

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I'm really not sure it's in keeping with the character of the gods for them to learn such life lessons. Since they embody natural forces and human psychology, a god leearning a new

behavior would literally be a world-changing event, or signal a change in human nature.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

David Duffy — 04 Apr 2006, 00:28 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

On Mon, 3 Apr 2006, Jeff Wilson wrote:

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Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

Stanislaus — 07 Apr 2006, 16:35 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Hello Jeff,

Sunday, April 2, 2006, 11:40:40 PM, you wrote:
aramini1 at cox.net wrote:

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I'm not sure such frailty is in character for a Greek god. Perhaps it is the damage that makes Latro subject to direct divine manipulation.

Some Titans once imprisoned Ares by cutting out his tendons, so that he couldn't move and had to be rescued. It always seems to me that Greeks really disliked Ares, I don't remember them saying one good thing about him. Romans very much loved Mars, of course.

Best regards,
Stanislaus [mailto:sbocian at poczta.fm](mailto:sbocian@poczta.fm)

Pan pozna Pania. Czeka... ;-) >>> <http://link.interia.pl/f1922>

Jeff Wilson — 08 Apr 2006, 07:25 · in reply to Stanislaus

Stanislaus wrote:
Hello Jeff,

Sunday, April 2, 2006, 11:40:40 PM, you wrote:
aramini1 at cox.net wrote:

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If you mean Ares could be injured by other exalted beings, that agrees with the Illiad. But it raises the question, what other exalted being was present in the temple to strike the blow against Latro that wounded Ares?

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
< <http://www.io.com/~jwilson> >

aramini1 at cox.net — 09 Apr 2006, 06:59 · follows Jeff Wilson

If you mean Ares could be injured by other exalted beings, that agrees with the Illiad. But it raises the question, what other exalted being was present in the temple to strike the blow against Latro that wounded Ares?

His mother was mad at him for desecrating the temple. She influenced the wound.