

Patera Inire

The Urth list — 28 messages, 9 voices, 17 Jul 2010

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/5665>

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Roy C. Lackey — 17 Jul 2010, 04:07

I can't say why Inire was addressed as Father, but I have doubts that he was anyone's father in the usual sense of the word, as I am the father of my sons, any more than Silk was anyone's father yet was addressed as Patera, which is just another word for Father.

I don't remember if this angle has ever been brought up before, but Inire's title may be nothing more than a relic of the past. That is, we are told that the Guild's rituals are held in the **ruins** of a chapel in the Citadel, and the Citadel is the nominal seat of the ruler's power, the ultimate stronghold. Obviously the religion the chapel served had fallen upon hard times in Severian's day. That religion, it is clear enough, was based on the Conciliator/New Sun.

At one point Sev mentioned the "thousand-year-old walls of the chapel". That serves to date the religion's inception as approximating the beginning of the autarchy. We are also told that Inire had been vizier to the autarchs since the first autarch, Ymar, and that none of the following autarchs until the Old Autarch had gone to Yesod to try to win a new sun. That last may explain why the chapel in the Citadel had fallen to ruin.

We are given every reason to believe that Inire's mission on Urth was to cause to be delivered a new sun. We are also led to believe that Sev was returned to Urth in Typhon's era, rather than his own, to establish the cult or religion of the New Sun, personified as the Conciliator. This Sev did with his miracles and other superhuman feats, then vanished, while Ymar was still a boy.

Just before he vanished, Sev handed over his bloody thorn to a man on Mt. Typhon. That thorn eventually became the centerpiece of a female-dominated religious order, the Pelerines. The Pelerines seem to be one of the few functioning arms of the religion that once held sway in the autarch's seat of power.

Could it be that the inception of the religion of the New Sun, the autarchy and Inire's first known appearance on Urth are all related? That is, might it be that Inire formally founded or was an early member of the newly-minted religion, and that he pushed Ymar to go to Yesod? When Ymar failed to bring a new sun and a long string of autarchs refused to even try, that the religion faded with the dying sun until Sev's orchestrated rise to power and eventual success?

The religion faded away, but not Inire. He may have kept the title Father, just as the Domnicellae of the Pelerines was addressed as Mother.

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Craig Brewer — 17 Jul 2010, 15:47 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

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This final point really strikes home, methinks. The theory also ties up all the various strands of Inire's manipulations quite well.

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Quite a stretch, but Inire's title always did stand out, and the title/office is so prominent in LS that it seems worth considering.

Craig

----- Original Message -----

From: Roy C. Lackey <rclackey at stic.net>

To: urth <urth at lists.urth.net>

Sent: Fri, July 16, 2010 11:07:34 PM

Subject: (urth) Patera Inire

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Roy C. Lackey — 17 Jul 2010, 17:52 · in reply to Craig Brewer

Craig Brewer wrote:

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translator had it). Could this suggest a connection-to-yet-corruption-of the New

Sun religion, rather than the LS theology being completely Pas, et al.'s creation?

I don't think that is possible. Typhon was stranded on Urth at the time Severian showed up as the Conciliator, meaning that the _Whorl_ was already gone and Typhon was not far from death behind his curtain.

The religion of Viron was said to be a parody of the state religion back on Urth. Whatever that state religion may have been, it cannot have been based on the religion that sprang up surrounding the Conciliator and the desire for a new sun: there had been no need for a new sun before the decline of the old sun observed during Typhon's era.

I intended nothing more by my use of "Patera" in the subject line than to point out that Patera means no more and no less than Father or Padre or any number of other linguistic equivalents.

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 17 Jul 2010, 17:52 · in reply to Craig Brewer

On 7/17/2010 10:47 AM, Craig Brewer wrote:

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If Patera is connected to the Inire, it may be via its Latin usage: a ritual vessel for carrying libations ready to pour or drink but with a dry bump in the middle for steady handling. Given how often people are used as vessels for other people's personas in the Long and Short Sun books...

David Stockhoff — 17 Jul 2010, 17:59 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

That reminds me of the translation of Pankrater as "all-holding." (a krater being a wine cup)

Jeff Wilson wrote:

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brunians at brunians.org — 17 Jul 2010, 18:17 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

On urticator.net, no less.

<http://www.urticator.net/maze/>

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James Wynn — 17 Jul 2010, 18:30 · in reply to Craig Brewer

Gerry Quinn wrote:

Admittedly he seems to have no problem with calling himself "Father", but then again the word "father" here is clearly (?) being used metaphorically.

And later wrote:

The '?' is to acknowledge that someone has proposed or will propose that Inire is the biological progenitor of nearly all the characters in the story, including himself. Its singleness is intended to indicate that I do not personally find such lines of inquiry terribly useful.

The thing about inquiry is that you don't know if it's useful until you've done it.

Roy wrote:

I can't say why Inire was addressed as Father, but I have doubts that he was anyone's father in the usual sense of the word, as I am the father of my sons, any more than Silk was anyone's father yet was addressed as Patera, which is just another word for Father.

And Later Roy wrote:

I intended nothing more by my use of "Patera" in the subject line than to point out that Patera means no more and no less than Father or Padre or any number of other linguistic equivalents.

Is it? "Pater" means "father" in Latin. "Pateras" means father in medieval Latin. "Patera" is a sort mish-mash Wolfe doesn't seem to typically engage in in the Sun Cycle. In the end, a patera is just a shallow bowl. I could connect it a twisted insult of a religious title by drawing from the Czech language, but that's a real stretch. Whether Silk is anyone's father...well, not directly by seed and copulation...but, I don't want to get off track. I agree that a Darth Vader/Luke Skywalker show-down is unlikely ("Ymar and Severian, I *am* your father").

The thing is, that while Silk had no "son of his body", I don't think he is a good example to under-cut Father Inire's possible "fatherhood".

Roy wrote:

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Craig Brewer:

Quite a stretch, but Inire's title always did stand out, and the title/office is so prominent in LS that it seems worth considering.

I'm not sure it is that much of a stretch that Inire's title associates him with the religion of the Conciliator.

u+16b9

Roy C. Lackey — 17 Jul 2010, 22:23 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn wrote:

The thing is, that while Silk had no "son of his body", I don't think he is a good example to under-cut Father Inire's possible "fatherhood".

I mentioned Patera Silk as an example from the Sun Cycle of a man who is a priest who had no natural children. Priests of the RC Church, and others, also are commonly addressed as Father, even though they are mandated by the laws of their church to be celibate and not to engage in sexual congress. It's Father in English, Padre in Spanish, etc. But you already know that. In LS, priests are addressed as Patera in exactly the same way that priests in the Catholic Church are addressed as Father; I daresay for the same reasons.

Anyway, Inire is stated to be a cacogen, an alien. It is very doubtful that he could have fathered any children on a human woman.

Roy wrote:

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That's not what Craig said was a stretch. You left out this paragraph between the above quotes:

So what of "Patera," then? When we get to Long Sun, are we supposed to tie the "Inire Religion" to what Pas has created? "Patera" (a nice mix of the possibly Spanish/SouthAmerican/Nessus-influenced "padre" and Latin "pater") is of course suitably close to "Father" (the "authentic" word Inire used, or at least as the translator had it). Could this suggest a connection-to-yet-corruption-of the New Sun religion, rather than the LS theology being completely Pas, et al.'s creation?

What he meant was a stretch was his own speculation, the one in the paragraph immediately above.

-Roy

James Wynn — 18 Jul 2010, 04:44 · in reply to Roy C. Lackey

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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Well, Palaemon is also referred to as "Master" in exactly the same way "that priests in the Catholic Church are addressed as Father". That is, it is his title. No one in the Whorl refers to their natural father as his "patera". Nor has anyone else in the world ever done so as far as I know. It doesn't map. I agree that the Chapter priests are intended to call to mind RC priests. But if Wolfe wanted to choose a cognate for "father" he had dozens of actual options. Whatever one thinks he was going for _most_ directly, I don't think "father" is it.

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

Anyway, Inire is stated to be a cacogen, an alien. It is very doubtful that he could have fathered any children on a human woman.

I'm really not trying to prove that Father Inire fathered children by seed and coupling. I'm not trying to prove anything specific at all. Only this: In a Wolfe story, one might be a parent or child or sibling in many ways. A character might call someone "father" (as N5 called Maitre and Hoof called the Rajan) or call someone "son" or "daughter" (as Silk called Blood and the Rajan called Jahlee). Obviously, their relationship is not parent-child in the traditional sense. But that doesn't mean that that is not what Wolfe was angling at. He does it so often, I would beware assuming he does not mean it in any particular instance just because it is not immediately apparent how he would mean it that way.

But as you pointed out, the Domnicellae of the Pelerines was called "Mother". I think that is significant.

u+16b9

Lee Berman — 18 Jul 2010, 05:13 · follows James Wynn

Roy C. Lackey- We are given every reason to believe that Inire's mission on Urth was to cause to be delivered a new sun.

I do agree with this conclusion. Most important in my disagreement is the sense I have that this story was written (and meant to be read) through a Christian lens. Severian may be interpreted as a Christ- or Christian figure but I can't see Father Inire in that light. In UotNS we are told that Inire has been Severian's friend and warmly bid him farewell on his journey to the stars. So perhaps he was not antagonistic toward Severian's quest for a New Sun, no more than Apollo and Mercury were antagonistic toward Jesus. They may have set the stage for the coming of Jesus but they didn't purposefully work toward it.

More specific counter-evidence from the text:

1. Inire has built a Byzantine (pagan) society in which religion has little importance and is based on elaborate ritual rather than faith. If he was highly involved in bringing the New Sun I think we'd see some association of him with the Pelerinnes but we don't.

2. We do not see Inire openly present in Urth's past, at the end of Typhon's rule, when he should have been there getting the New Sun cult started. Borski thinks Ceryx is Father Inire disguised but he hardly seems to be working toward bringing the New Sun. Quite the opposite. He competes with Severian, creates zombies and tries to kill The Conciliator. Not very Christian/New Sunish.

3. Inire's 1000 year rule behind the throne produced only two attempts to bring the New Sun before Severian, both failures. Moreover, both Inire's letter and the words of the Old Autarch make it fairly clear they are maintaining the war with the Ascians in equilibrium, propping up the enemies of the New Sun such as the Vodelarii (and perhaps the Jungle Sorcerers), ensuring they remain to keep balance/stasis between the contending forces.

4. We do not see any hint of Father Inire when Severian returns to the Flood Day the last day of Urth (first day of Ushas). Valeria has been ruling without his assistance. If Inire's sole purpose was bringing the New Sun, doesn't good story telling demand some mention of him at the fruition of his life's work? What does his absence on this important day suggest?

4. It seems implied that the Old Autarch used a version of Father Inire's mirrors to travel to Tzadkiel. Inire shares mirror-using with Hethor (along with some other traits). Using mirrors does not seem to be a good way of impressing Tzadkiel or bringing the New Sun. Severian notes that Inire's mirror chamber is marked with a "terratoid" (monstrous) symbol.

5. Cyriaca gives us this cryptic quote about the mirrors, "...cacogens had landed somewhere in the north [Baldander's Castle, we learn]... I suppose they must have wished to avoid the mirrors at the House Absolute so they could escape the eyes of the Autarch. I think this suggests B, F and O don't like the mirrors, and Inire, either. We certainly never see them working with Inire. The closest they get is watching Eschatology and Genesis and that is probably to see Severian perform. If Inire is the cowed servitor then both he and the hierodules are well wrapped and disguised in their closest encounter.

6. During the story of his travels, Severian's foreshadowing makes it clear he does not use Inire's or the Old Autarch's mirrors to complete his New Sun quest. He travels to the stars on a ship, as UotNS later confirms.

7. Severian has been chosen to bring the New Sun because he has his so-called perfect memory

and/or because he was raised as a torturer and has the capacity for such a genocidal act. Either way, I don't see evidence that Father Inire is working to create or develop or recognize or recruit these talents in Severian before his ascension. (after his ascension there is an interesting exception, listed below). His interest in Severian seems only to serve, once again, as vizier, as the power behind the throne.

8. Inire's letter to Severian is all about war and political intrigues but there actually is one hint of recognition there about Severian's divine role. The letter addresses Severian, among other things as, "Helios, Hyperion, Surya and Savitar". These deity names are Greek and Vedic parallels for the male gods of the sun and of light. This is surely a recognition of Severian's New Sun role. But this recognition does not imply to me that Inire is working toward the New Sun goal, especially light of #1-7. Moreover these are pagan gods and I think Inire (as a pagan god allusion himself) just doesn't get the Judeo-Christian role Severian will play.

FWIW- Inire's letter also calls Severian "Messenger of Dawn". In context, this must refer to the female god of the Dawn, the Greek Eos/Roman Aurora, daughter of Hyperion, sister to Helios. Is this Inire's acknowledgement of Severian's Thecla side? Perhaps even more interesting is that the Vedic cognate to Eos is the Sanskrit for dawn: ?????; u?as or Ushas.

I think the answer to the question of where Father Inire goes just before and after the New Sun arrives is the same as the answer for how a flood can destroy large creatures that live in the ocean. I think the answer is not easily found in the text as in Judeo-Christian allegory. Abaia and Erebus went to the same place that the Nephilim and lamia and other demons went after Noah's Flood. And Father Inire went to the same place Helios and Zeus and Aurora went after Christianity replaced their religion.

brunians at brunians.org — 18 Jul 2010, 05:15 · in reply to Lee Berman

Byzantine society was Christian.

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The New Busy is not the too busy. Combine all your e-mail accounts with
Hotmail.

http://www.windowlive.com/campaign/thenewbusy?tile=multiaccount&ocid=PID28326::T:WLMTAGL:ON:WL:en-US:WM_HMP:042010_4

Lee Berman — 18 Jul 2010, 06:06 · follows brunians at brunians.org

brunians- Byzantine society was Christian.

Yes, thanks, that is correct. Sorry, confused with
Ottoman.

Roy C. Lackey — 18 Jul 2010, 07:31 · in reply to James Wynn

James Wynn quoted and wrote:

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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a
priest who had no natural children. Priests of the RC Church, and
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laws of their church to be celibate and not to engage in sexual
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it is his title. No one in the Whorl refers to their natural father as
his "patera". Nor has anyone else in the world ever done so as far as I
know. It doesn't map.

I agree. If I had said any such thing I would have been wrong. I didn't say any such thing. Quite
the opposite.

I agree that the Chapter priests are intended to
call to mind RC priests. But if Wolfe wanted to choose a cognate for
"father" he had dozens of actual options. Whatever one thinks he was
going for _most_ directly, I don't think "father" is it.

Again, I agree. I'm not the one who thinks Inire is anyone's father. In so far as this subject has
anything to do with the thrust of this thread I started, I have said that the titles "Father" and
"Patera" are religious titles that have nothing to do with either being a biological father.

Roy C. Lackey wrote:

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And just because a priest addresses a member of his congregation as "my son" or "my daughter" does not imply that he is the father of either.

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 18 Jul 2010, 07:41 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 7/18/2010 12:13 AM, Lee Berman wrote:
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1. Inire has built a Byzantine (pagan) society in which religion has little importance and is based on elaborate ritual rather than faith. If he was highly involved in bringing the New Sun I think we'd see some association of him with the Pelerinnes but we don't.

This seems ambiguous to me; the religion doesn't have to be sincere or true to achieve the ends of the people that promulgate it. Perhaps the Pelerines are on the opposite side of some scism or reformation, and are now fellow travelers, like the Eastern Orthodox and Roman catholic churches. Inire's objective seems to be the literal bringing of the New Sun, which can be served by a front in the religious sphere as well as the impasse with the Ascians in the secular sphere, and the subversion of Vodalus' movement in the political sphere.

2. We do not see Inire openly present in Urth's past, at the end of Typhon's rule, when he should have been there getting the New Sun cult started.

He doesn't need to get the New Sun cult started, the Conciliator did a good job of that himself.

3. Inire's 1000 year rule behind the throne produced only two attempts to bring the New Sun before Severian, both failures. Moreover, both Inire's letter and the words of the Old Autarch make it fairly clear they are maintaining the war with the Ascians in equilibrium, propping up the enemies of the New Sun such as the Vodelarii (and perhaps the Jungle Sorcerers), ensuring they remain to keep balance/stasis between the contending forces.

This can be a form of cynical cold war strategem, to keep the hot war at the fringes while letting both sides appear to their masters to be doing something productive while trying to bankrupt the other side's economy or stall for time to have some greater strategem put in place. Once the Yesodis had a report of Sev on the Throne at some time, it was all about keeping the path open for him and preparing him for the judgment, with less than a century before the white fountain's advent it was either Severian or the hawkfaced guy.

And while Inire only delivered three candidates to Yesod, that doesn't mean there weren't other candidates that Master Ash's posse might have gotten rid of, like the mysteriously unreturned Sulpicius.

4. We do not see any hint of Father Inire when Severian returns to the Flood Day the last day of Urth (first day of Ushas). Valeria has been ruling without his assistance. If Inire's sole purpose was bringing the New SUN, doesn't good story telling demand some mention of him at the fruition of his life's work? What does his absence on this important day suggest?

Er, that he died before Sev got back?

4. It seems implied that the Old Autarch used a version of Father Inire's mirrors to travel to Tzadkiel. Inire shares mirror-using with Hethor (along with some other traits). Using mirrors does not seem to be a good way of impressing Tzadkiel or bringing the New Sun. Severian notes that Inire's mirror chamber is marked with a "terratoid" (monstrous) symbol.

...meaning "Danger", perhaps, like the skull and cross bones used to warn people from household poisons. As for mirrors not impressing Tzadkiel, perhaps they don't but he is not adverse to using them himself as Zak.

5. Cyriaca gives us this cryptic quote about the mirrors, "...cacogens had landed somewhere in the north [Baldander's Castle, we learn]... I suppose they must have wished to avoid the mirrors at the House Absolute so they could escape the eyes of the Autarch. I think this suggests B, F and O don't like the mirrors, and Inire, either. We certainly never see them working with Inire. The closest they get is watching Eschatology and Genesis and that is probably to see Severian perform. If Inire is the cowled servitor then both he and the hierodules are well wrapped and disguised in their closest encounter.

We know there is some sort of complicated double masquerade going on both literally and figuratively at the House Absolute apparently involving both galactic aliens (the proper cacogens) and the Yesodis who find it convenient to adopt their guise. If Cyriaca's guesswork is revelatory, that doesn't require it to be straightforward or even particularly insightful. Perhaps FB&O want to give the appearance of cacogen activity in the north to allow Inire to pressure the Exultants of that region to concede to searches or increased garrisons or higher taxes, or just to take the heat off of some other region that has been more cooperative, or...*insert spy novel intrigue here*

6. During the story of his travels, Severian's foreshadowing makes it clear he does not use Inire's or the Old Autarch's mirrors to complete his New Sun quest. He travels to the stars on a ship, as UotNS later confirms.

The mirrors have a transformative element - once Severian is at his peak of readiness, they would not want to risk turning him into a ghost or a caveman or Good Kirk/Evil Kirk twins. The ship gets you there the way you are, even if where you come back to is kind of different.

7. Severian has been chosen to bring the New Sun because he has his so-called perfect memory and/or because he was raised as a torturer and has the capacity for such a genocidal act. Either way, I don't see evidence that Father Inire is working to create or develop or recognize or recruit these talents in Severian before his ascension. (after his ascension there is an interesting exception, listed below). His interest in Severian seems only to serve, once again, as vizier, as the power behind the throne.

Does Inire need to do this in a way that would be detectable? They know there's a "Severian the Torturer" who ascends the throne, and if they have to take steps to make sure Sev is born with perfect recall, that job's obviously done before Severian is available to observe and narrate it.

8. Inire's letter to Severian is all about war and political intrigues but there actually is one hint of recognition there about Severian's divine role. The letter addresses Severian, among other things as, "Helios, Hyperion, Surya and Savitar". These deity names are Greek and Vedic parallels for the male gods of the sun and of light. This is surely a recognition of Severian's New Sun role. But this recognition does not imply to me that Inire is working toward the New Sun goal, especially light of #1-7. Moreover these are pagan gods and I think Inire (as a pagan god allusion himself)

just doesn't get the Judeo-Christian role Severian will play.

He can't call him J-C names because the conceit of the Book is that this is a world where they are unknown. Pagan and non-specific labels like "Theoanthropos" are all that's left to compare with.

FWIW- Inire's letter also calls Severian "Messenger of Dawn". In context, this must refer to the female god of the Dawn, the Greek Eos/Roman Aurora, daughter of Hyperion, sister to Helios. Is this Inire's acknowledgement of Severian's Thecla side?

Oy, I am reconfronted with the image of John Hurt as Caligula prancing about as Dawn in the BBC's I, Claudius.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
IEEE Student Chapter Blog at
< <http://ieeetamut.org> >

brunians at brunians.org — 18 Jul 2010, 07:54 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Wilson writes:

the religion doesn't have to be sincere or
true to achieve the ends of the people that promulgate it.

I think it does.

I think that if it is not sincere or true it will achieve ends other than those those intended.

What was Communism but one of these religions?

.

John Watkins — 18 Jul 2010, 11:15 · in reply to brunians at brunians.org

On Sun, Jul 18, 2010 at 3:54 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:
Wilson writes:

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true to achieve the ends of the people that promulgate it.

I think it does.

I know I keep pointing this out, but I think the correct resolution of this question in the New Sun universe and in Wolfe general is that insofar as a false religion achieves its ends it does so because it has been hijacked by the true religion.

.

brunians at brunians.org — 18 Jul 2010, 12:58 · in reply to John Watkins

The false religion doesn't achieve its intended ends.

It achieves the ends of the true religion that has hijacked it.

.

On Sun, Jul 18, 2010 at 3:54 AM, <brunians at brunians.org> wrote:

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.

antonio at gmail.com — 18 Jul 2010, 15:01 · in reply to James Wynn

No dia 2010/07/18, ?s 05:44, James Wynn <crushtv at gmail.com> escreveu:

I agree that the Chapter priests are intended to call to mind RC priests. But if Wolfe wanted to choose a cognate for "father" he had dozens of actual options. Whatever one thinks he was going for _most_ directly, I don't think "father" is it.

I've never given it much thought. The names in Viron's religion seem Greek so I just assumed patera and maytera were to be understood as such - the Greek for father is stressed on the er and patera would be a way to suggest that stress. Istr that somewhere in the text someone says that those terms are meant to show respect though the adresssed isn't the biological father or mother of the addressing one.

I say Viron's religion because it isn't at all clear to me that the other cities in the Whorl follow similar ideas, e even if they draw from the same source.

Roy C. Lackey — 18 Jul 2010, 18:01 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee Berman wrote:

4. It seems implied that the Old Autarch used a version of Father Inire's mirrors to travel to Tzadkiel.

To his trial? No, he went to Yesod the same way Sev did.

"Soon I recalled that when the old Autarch had been brought to Yesod, just such a ship had come for him." (URTH, chap. XV, 109)

-Roy

Jeff Wilson — 18 Jul 2010, 22:29 · in reply to John Watkins

On 7/18/2010 6:15 AM, John Watkins wrote:

I know I keep pointing this out, but I think the correct resolution of this question in the New Sun universe and in Wolfe general is that insofar as a false religion achieves its ends it does so because it has been hijacked by the true religion.

Yes, that's what I was thinking, which can coexist with usual SF trope of the Fake Religion As a Secular Tool (see Dune, Foundation, The Day After Tomorrow, Cat's Cradle) even as it subverts it.

Pas and the Outsider both want to get the people of the Whorl where they are going, Inire and the Increate both want to deliver the Urth and the Human Race back into their natural condition under a healthy sun - thus the bad serves good, and the false proves faithful to the higher truth, like Severian says over and over again.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
IEEE Student Chapter Blog at
< <http://ieeetamut.org> >

brunians at brunians.org — 18 Jul 2010, 22:37 · in reply to Jeff Wilson

Why not?

This is the way things go in the real World.

In India it is expressed a different way: the third member of the Indian trinity is the Lord of Destruction.

.

On 7/18/2010 6:15 AM, John Watkins wrote:

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Lee Berman — 19 Jul 2010, 03:34 · follows brunians at brunians.org

John Watkins: I think the correct resolution of this question in the New Sun universe and in Wolfe general is that insofar as a false religion achieves its ends it does so because it has been hijacked by the true religion.

Jeff Wilson: Yes, that's what I was thinking, which can coexist with usual SF trope of the Fake Religion As a Secular Tool.....thus the bad serves good, and the false proves faithful to the higher truth, like Severian says over and over again.

This is all good but not (I think) answering the question which is being asked. Perhaps we've all seen the Christian bumper sticker which reads: "I know the Future. God wins". So fine, we know that. No matter the triumph of evil, we know God eventually uses that victory to His final ends. Does this mean Satanists and Hindus and atheists are purposefully working toward Christian goals because their actions will eventually lead to God's victory?

The question that is posed is whether Father Inire is consciously working toward bringing the New Sun. Of course whether the New Sun is an evil event or not has been debated in other threads. But let's assume that the New Sun is, ultimately, a "good" thing intended to happen by the Increate. By what direct evidence do we know that Inire is consciously working toward making it happen? His mirrors, his vizier-hood, his architectural exploits, his war and procurement of weaponry from his alien cousins, his distance from B, F and O and Tzadkiel etc.; none seem to suggest Inire has the direct purpose of helping Severian bring the New Sun. He seems to be playing his own game.

This gap of purpose for Inire has left me dissatisfied and forced to seek another interpretation of the guy. Casting him in the role of pagan god in the face of impending Christianity ties the story together for me. Not just Inire's governmental role but the veiled references to shapeshifting, monstrous beings, half-man half beasts, incest, angels etc. all tied together in a nice pagan package.

The Greek and Roman gods were associated with their respective empires. Greek and Roman civilizations were the creche and nursery of a now globe-spanning religion. If the Olympian gods were actual, real beings (as Wolfe believes they were) would we want to say that Zeus and Hermes and Vulcan etc. spent their immortal lives consciously working toward the goal of Christianity? That's why they promoted the Greek and Roman empires, because they knew it would lead to Jesus? Did Pas set up the Whorl because he knew it would lead to the ascendance of the Outsider? I really can't see that.

Likewise, while I can see Father Inire advancing the Commonwealth, it is without purposefully working toward the New Sun. My sense is that higher powers made Inire's Urthly efforts work for them. Bottom line, this guy isn't Typhon but he is just too creepy and ugly to be an angel. Perhaps the fall damaged him. Likely Inire's various corrupting influences are a big part of the reason a Flood is needed.

FWIW, this works for me. Understood if it makes no sense to others.

Jeff Wilson — 19 Jul 2010, 05:28 · in reply to Lee Berman

On 7/18/2010 10:34 PM, Lee Berman wrote:

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Zeus and Pas might not, but Prometheus would like he did during the last divine regime change.

The old Autarch is a double agent for the Commonwealth and for Vodalus; Inire can do an even better job of hiding his true loyalties, and even the unlikeliest plot or plan can go swimmingly

with time travel suspending the laws of probability when the person carrying them out has already seen his success ensured.

Jeff Wilson - jwilson at io.com
IEEE Student Chapter Blog at
< <http://ieeetamut.org> >

David Stockhoff — 19 Jul 2010, 11:44 · in reply to Lee Berman

Does Inire ever do anything without being commanded so by the Autarch?

Lee Berman wrote:

This is all good but not (I think) answering the question which is being asked. Perhaps we've all seen the Christian bumper sticker which reads: "I know the Future. God wins". So fine, we know that. No matter the triumph of evil, we know God eventually uses that victory to His final ends. Does this mean Satanists and Hindus and atheists are purposefully working toward Christian goals because their actions will eventually lead to God's victory?

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FWIW, this works for me. Understood if it makes no sense to others.

brunians at brunians.org — 19 Jul 2010, 12:01 · in reply to David Stockhoff

Does Satan ever do anything without being commanded to by God?

The servant of the Great King does the Great King's will.

The will of the Great King is the will of the servant.

There is no God where I am.

.

Does Inire ever do anything without being commanded so by the Autarch?

Lee Berman wrote:

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needed.

FWIW, this works for me. Understood if it makes no sense to others.

António Pedro Marques — 19 Jul 2010, 13:02 · in reply to David Stockhoff

David Stockhoff wrote (19-07-2010 12:44):

Does Inire ever do anything without being commanded so by the Autarch?

This question ties in with something that's been bothering me, namely the notion that Inire is a very important character that mandates everything.

I think the problem people are having in determining Inire's intentions is that he has none. I don't see evidence that Inire has any purpose of his own. All I see him doing is upholding the Autarchy, as if he had been assigned that singleminded task. His letter to Severian reminds me of what AIs in SF reply when their master asks them to give a report of the situation and the options available.

Lee Berman — 19 Jul 2010, 13:10 · follows António Pedro Marques

would we want to say that Zeus and Hermes and Vulcan etc. spent their immortal lives consciously working toward the goal of Christianity? Did Pas set up the Whorl because he knew it would lead to the ascendance of the Outsider?

Jeff Wilson- Zeus and Pas might not, but Prometheus would like he did during the last divine regime change.

Yes, Prometheus is the perfect example to help me clarify what I am trying to get to. Thanks.

To his Greek believers Prometheus is the one who created humanity, invented arts and sciences for them and of course stole fire for them. For his favoring of humanity, Zeus chained Prometheus to a rocky mountain (Gyoll? Urth? Mt. Nebo?) until Heracles freed him. Prometheus' sister-in-law, Pandora, (cognate to Eve and Meschianne) is surely referenced in BotNS. Prometheus sounds like a pretty good guy but I'm not sure he can be seen as purposefully preparing humanity for Christianity. Are there religious scholars who see Prometheus as a knowing Christian agent?

(FWIW, Heracles is the son of Zeus and Alcmene. She is Zeus' great granddaughter. I hope it is clear why this is relevant to me).

Now, from a different perspective it seems the Judeo-Christian version of Prometheus is Azazel.

According to the Book of Enoch, Azazel was a grigori (also known as "watchers"), a group of fallen angels who mated with mortal women, giving rise to a race of hybrids known as the Nephilim. As one of the leaders of the rebellious Watchers in the time preceding the flood; he taught men the art of warfare, of making swords, knives, shields, and coats of mail, and women the art of deception by ornamenting the body, dyeing the hair, and painting the face and the eyebrows, and also revealed to the people the secrets of witchcraft and corrupted their manners, leading them into wickedness and impurity; until at last he was, at the Lord's command, bound hand and foot by the archangel Raphael and chained to the rough and jagged rocks of [Ha] Duduael (= Beth ʔadudo), where he is to abide in utter darkness until the great Day of Judgment.

The name Azazel means "the rugged" and can be derived to mean the "mightiest mountain". He was the fallen angel most likely to take human form and is especially known as a seducer of both women and men. Goat associations also connect Azazel with Pan and we have learned in the other thread about the Melek Taus connection between Pas/Pan, Azazel and Typhon.

I think the BotNS connections of Azazel to Abaia and Typhon, mountains, witches, beautification, war, wickedness and impurity and the Flood are striking.

To me, this illustrates the subtext of BotNS. It is like a Necker Cube or other optical illusions. Shifting one's perspective gives a different view of the same thing. Heroic, self-sacrificing Prometheus to the Greeks is the corrupt, fallen angel Azazel to Judeo- Christians. The helpful, skillful architect of the Commonwealth, Father Inire, is also a corrupting influence and (in some manner) cousin to the all the evil presences on Urth and working with them, if also against them.

I think BotNS was written from a Judeo-Christian perspective and this explains the need for a purifying Flood. Doesn't matter if Father Inire is viewed as Prometheus or Azazel, he is pagan and needs to go, to make way for something better.

John Watkins — 19 Jul 2010, 14:22 · in reply to Lee Berman

On Mon, Jul 19, 2010 at 9:10 AM, Lee Berman <severiansola at hotmail.com> wrote:

Yes, Prometheus is the perfect example to help me clarify what I am trying to get to.
Thanks.

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Well...Azazel's role has been usurped for Christians at least by Lucifer, who, if he's read as the Serpent, sort of more directly maps to Prometheus anyway.

But here the Hercules/Christ analogy breaks down pretty terribly. Christ defeats Satan, the fallen Lucifer. Hercules rescues Prometheus. If Wolfe is using these concepts in New Sun, and it isn't clear to me he is, then either he is segregating Lucifer and Prometheus or they are both Abaia/the black hole in the heart of the Sun.

The name Azazel means "the rugged" and can be derived to mean the "mightiest mountain".

I know this is a common reading, but I dislike any reading of an angel's name that does not prioritize the "-el" suffix. Azazel is "the might of God."

He was the fallen angel most likely to take human form and is especially known as a seducer of both women and men. Goat associations also connect Azazel with Pan and we have learned in the other thread about the Melek Taus connection between Pas/Pan, Azazel and Typhon.

I think this is fairly weak, to be honest.

I think the BotNS connections of Azazel to Abaia and Typhon, mountains, witches, beautification, war, wickedness and impurity and the Flood are striking.

Where do you see Azazel in the Book of the New Sun?

To me, this illustrates the subtext of BotNS. It is like a Necker Cube or other optical illusions. Shifting one's perspective gives a different view of the same thing. Heroic, self-sacrificing Prometheus to the Greeks is the corrupt, fallen angel Azazel to Judeo-Christians. The helpful, skillful architect of the Commonwealth, Father Inire, is also a corrupting influence and (in some manner) cousin to the all the evil presences on Urth and working with them, if also against them.

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Hotmail has tools for the New Busy. Search, chat and e-mail from your inbox.

http://www.windowslive.com/campaign/thenewbusy?ocid=PID28326::T:WLMTAGL:ON:WL:en-US:WM_HMP:042010_1
