

Latro Thoughts

The Urth list — 12 messages, 8 voices, 29 Jul 2013

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/6403>

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.

Antonin Scriabin — 29 Jul 2013, 16:06

I had been putting off the Latro books for a while so that I would always have an unread Wolfe series to look forward to, but my curiosity has finally gotten the better of me. I am nearly done with *Soldier of the Mist*, and have been enjoying it. It has a number of parallels with the *Long Sun* books, such as the (apparent) reality of gods, detailed discussions of blood sacrifice, a just-outside-of-view threat from non-humans like vampires and werewolves, etc. It actually seems like a prototype version of what became *The Book of the New Sun*; a central male hero suffers some kind of mental "event" (on the one hand, severe brain trauma, and on the other, enlightenment) that opens the door to gods (or to what appear as gods). In both works, these gods are petty, prone to infighting, and in many ways offer more questions than answers to the hero. He has only been mentioned twice so far, but I also feel that the Unknown God / Outsider similarity can't be a coincidence. Anyways, I know that you guys have all probably been over these topics plenty, I just wanted to air a few thoughts. I do have one question: does the series conclude with *Soldier of Sidon*? I would, of course, like to avoid spoilers, I am mostly interested in the possibility of more Latro novels. Thanks!

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes — 29 Jul 2013, 16:14 · in reply to Antonin Scriabin

"Does the series conclude with S.o.Sidon?" -- That depends on whether Wolfe writes another one or not. The series is open-ended.

On Mon, Jul 29, 2013 at 9:06 AM, Antonin Scriabin

<kierkegaudian at gmail.com> wrote:

I had been putting off the Latro books for a while so that I would always have an unread Wolfe series to look forward to, but my curiosity has finally gotten the better of me. I am nearly done with *Soldier of the Mist*, and have been enjoying it. It has a number of parallels with the *Long Sun* books, such as the (apparent) reality of gods, detailed discussions of blood sacrifice, a just-outside-of-view threat from non-humans like vampires and werewolves, etc. It actually seems like a prototype version of what became *The Book of the New Sun*; a central male hero suffers some kind of mental "event" (on the one hand, severe brain trauma, and on the other, enlightenment) that opens the door to gods (or to what appear as gods). In both works, these gods are petty, prone to infighting, and in many ways offer more questions than answers to the hero. He has only been mentioned twice so far, but I also feel that the Unknown God / Outsider similarity can't be a coincidence. Anyways, I know that you guys have all probably been over these topics plenty, I just wanted to air a few thoughts. I do have one question: does the series conclude with *Soldier of Sidon*? I would, of course, like to avoid spoilers, I am mostly interested in the possibility of more Latro novels. Thanks!

Sergei SOLOVIEV — 29 Jul 2013, 16:59 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

Dear Antonin, and All -

just to share my impressions, I was greatly impressed by first two books (Soldier of the Mist and Soldier of Arete), and was waiting with impatience for Soldier of Sidon, but in the end was rather depressed by it - my overall impression is that the ending of Soldier of Arete is great, I think that Latro in some sense wins against these "petty" gods in spite of his injured memory - and he goes home! There are also other great pages in the first two books (e.g., the meeting with Proserpina, the falanga's attacks in the end of the "Soldier of the Mist"). But the third book was a sad conclusion, because we see that Latro failed with his plan to find a cure at home, and his adventures in Egypt and in black Africa look as a slow drowning into chaos - his meeting with the Seven Lions tribe is a sad story etc -

Regards -

Sergei Soloviev

Dan'l Danehy-Oakes wrote:

"Does the series conclude with S.o.Sidon?" -- That depends on whether Wolfe writes another one or not. The series is open-ended.

On Mon, Jul 29, 2013 at 9:06 AM, Antonin Scriabin
<kierkegardian at gmail.com <mailto:kierkegardian at gmail.com>> wrote:

I had been putting off the Latro books for a while so that I would always have an unread Wolfe series to look forward to, but my curiosity has finally gotten the better of me. I am nearly done with /Soldier of the Mist, /and have been enjoying it. It has a number of parallels with the /Long Sun /books, such as the (apparent) reality of gods, detailed discussions of blood sacrifice, a just-outside-of-view threat from non-humans like vampires and werewolves, etc. It actually seems like a prototype version of what became /The Book of the New Sun/; a central male hero suffers some kind of mental "event" (on the one hand, severe brain trauma, and on the other, enlightenment) that opens the door to gods (or to what appear as gods). In both works, these gods are petty, prone to infighting, and in many ways offer more questions than answers to the hero. He has only been mentioned twice so far, but I also feel that the Unknown God / Outsider similarity can't be a coincidence. Anyways, I know that you guys have all probably been over these topics plenty, I just wanted to air a few thoughts. I do have one question: does the series conclude with /Soldier of Sidon/? I would, of course, like to avoid spoilers, I am mostly interested in the possibility of more Latro novels. Thanks!

Fernando Gouvea — 29 Jul 2013, 17:04 · in reply to Dan'l Danehy-Oakes

From what Wolfe has been saying, another /Soldier/ seems very unlikely.

The interaction with the gods is central to the Latro books in way that go way beyond the /Long Sun/ books, I think.

Fernando

On 7/29/2013 12:14 PM, Dan'I Danehy-Oakes wrote:
"Does the series conclude with S.o.Sidon?" -- That depends on whether Wolfe writes another one or not. The series is open-ended.

On Mon, Jul 29, 2013 at 9:06 AM, Antonin Scriabin
<kierkegaurdian at gmail.com <mailto:kierkegaurdian at gmail.com>> wrote:

I had been putting off the Latro books for a while so that I would always have an unread Wolfe series to look forward to, but my curiosity has finally gotten the better of me. I am nearly done with /Soldier of the Mist, /and have been enjoying it. It has a number of parallels with the /Long Sun /books, such as the (apparent) reality of gods, detailed discussions of blood sacrifice, a just-outside-of-view threat from non-humans like vampires and werewolves, etc. It actually seems like a prototype version of what became /The Book of the New Sun/; a central male hero suffers some kind of mental "event" (on the one hand, severe brain trauma, and on the other, enlightenment) that opens the door to gods (or to what appear as gods). In both works, these gods are petty, prone to infighting, and in many ways offer more questions than answers to the hero. He has only been mentioned twice so far, but I also feel that the Unknown God / Outsider similarity can't be a coincidence. Anyways, I know that you guys have all probably been over these topics plenty, I just wanted to air a few thoughts. I do have one question: does the series conclude with /Soldier of Sidon/? I would, of course, like to avoid spoilers, I am mostly interested in the possibility of more Latro novels. Thanks!

Jeff Wilson — 29 Jul 2013, 18:39 · in reply to Fernando Gouvea

On Mon, July 29, 2013 12:04, Fernando Gouvea wrote:
From what Wolfe has been saying, another /Soldier/ seems very unlikely.

The interaction with the gods is central to the Latro books in way that go way beyond the /Long Sun/ books, I think.

Yes, and I believe the the pagan gods in the SOLDIER books are intended to be literally that, as Wolfe has professed his belief in the existence of lesser gods like those recorded as inferior rivals of the Old Testament God.

Jeff Wilson - <jwilson at clueland.com >
A&M Texarkana Computational Intelligence Lab
< <http://www.tamut.edu/cil> >

Christopher Simon — 29 Jul 2013, 22:58 · follows Jeff Wilson

It does seem like the gods are real. The obvious alternative (albeit an un-Wolfean one) is that Latro's head trauma causes him to hallucinate, but enough of the other characters verify his ability in various ways that we can discount this.

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

From: "Jeff Wilson" <jwilson at clueland.com>
Sent: 7/29/2013 2:39 PM
To: "The Urth Mailing List" <urth at lists.urth.net>

Subject: Re: (urth) Latro Thoughts

On Mon, July 29, 2013 12:04, Fernando Gouvea wrote:
From what Wolfe has been saying, another /Soldier/ seems very unlikely.

The interaction with the gods is central to the Latro books in way that
go way beyond the /Long Sun/ books, I think.

Yes, and I believe the the pagan gods in the SOLDIER books are intended to be literally that, as
Wolfe has professed his belief in the existence of lesser gods like those recorded as inferior
rivals of the Old Testament God.

Jeff Wilson - <jwilson at clueland.com >
A&M Texarkana Computational Intelligence Lab
< <http://www.tamut.edu/cil> >

Marc Aramini — 30 Jul 2013, 00:30 · in reply to Christopher Simon

Yeah the trauma is only the most superficial touch of realism- gods and the wellsprings of
human faith are as real as they can be in those books, but the religious scheme is syncretic. The
triple goddess, the sublimation of Pleistorus into Ahura Mazda- these are all pointing to a
recrystallization and refocus of the divine identities into something more uniform once their
ideological differences are resolved. Wonderful books.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 29, 2013, at 3:58 PM, Christopher Simon <kierkegaurdian at gmail.com> wrote:
It does seem like the gods are real. The obvious alternative (albeit an un-Wolfean one) is that Latro's
head trauma causes him to hallucinate, but enough of the other characters verify his ability in
various ways that we can discount this.
From: Jeff Wilson
Sent: 7/29/2013 2:39 PM
To: The Urth Mailing List
Subject: Re: (urth) Latro Thoughts

On Mon, July 29, 2013 12:04, Fernando Gouvea wrote:
From what Wolfe has been saying, another /Soldier/ seems very unlikely.

The interaction with the gods is central to the Latro books in way that
go way beyond the /Long Sun/ books, I think.

Yes, and I believe the the pagan gods in the SOLDIER books are intended to
be literally that, as Wolfe has professed his belief in the existence of
lesser gods like those recorded as inferior rivals of the Old Testament
God.

--

Jeff Wilson - <jwilson at clueland.com >
A&M Texarkana Computational Intelligence Lab
< <http://www.tamut.edu/cil> >

David Stockhoff — 30 Jul 2013, 11:53 · in reply to Marc Aramini

And those differences are if anything made even more clear among the gods of the /Whorl./

On 7/29/2013 8:30 PM, Marc Aramini wrote:

Yeah the trauma is only the most superficial touch of realism- gods and the wellsprings of human faith are as real as they can be in those books, but the religious scheme is syncretic. The triple goddess, the sublimation of Pleistorus into Ahura Mazda- these are all pointing to a recrystallization and refocus of the divine identities into something more uniform once their ideological differences are resolved. Wonderful books.

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 29, 2013, at 3:58 PM, Christopher Simon

<kierkegardian at gmail.com <mailto:kierkegardian at gmail.com>> wrote:

It does seem like the gods are real. The obvious alternative (albeit an un-Wolfean one) is that Latro's head trauma causes him to hallucinate, but enough of the other characters verify his ability in various ways that we can discount this.

From: Jeff Wilson <mailto:jwilson at clueland.com>

Sent: 7/29/2013 2:39 PM

To: The Urth Mailing List <mailto:urth at lists.urth.net>

Subject: Re: (urth) Latro Thoughts

On Mon, July 29, 2013 12:04, Fernando Gouvea wrote:

From what Wolfe has been saying, another /Soldier/ seems very unlikely.

The interaction with the gods is central to the Latro books in way that go way beyond the /Long Sun/ books, I think.

Yes, and I believe the the pagan gods in the SOLDIER books are intended to

be literally that, as Wolfe has professed his belief in the existence of lesser gods like those recorded as inferior rivals of the Old Testament God.

--

Jeff Wilson - < jwilson at clueland.com <mailto:jwilson at clueland.com> >

A&M Texarkana Computational Intelligence Lab

< http://www.tamut.edu/cil >

Lee Berman — 31 Jul 2013, 14:15 · follows David Stockhoff

Jeff Wilson: Yes, and I believe the the pagan gods in the SOLDIER books are intended to be literally that, as Wolfe has professed his belief in the existence of lesser gods like those recorded as inferior rivals of the Old Testament God.

I agree.

Marc Aramini: Yeah the trauma is only the most superficial touch of realism- gods and the wellsprings of human faith are as real as they can be in those books, but the religious scheme is syncretic. The triple goddess, the sublimation of Pleistorus into Ahura Mazda- these are all pointing to a recrystallization and refocus of the divine identities into something more uniform once their ideological differences are

resolved.

I agree

David Stockhoff: And those differences are if anything made even more clear among the gods of the /Whorl./

I doubly agree. Dr. Crane's assessment mirrors that conflation of head trauma with receiving divine inspiration/communication with God/the gods.

And I think Marc's discussion of the "recrystalization and refocus of divine identities into something more uniform" is mirrored in Long/Short Sun as the "cards" of the gods seem to become shuffled and redealt into more unified entities, i.e. the godling Pig seems to have components of Phaea, Tartaros and Pas incorporated. Pieces of Pas, Scylla Echidna, Kypris, Sphygx, Molpe, Thelxiepeia and maybe Hierax seem scattered here and there within various characters.

Given Jeff's consideration of Wolfe's assessment of the reality of pagan gods, this re- combining theme makes Wolfe's personal theology very interesting with regard to pagan gods, the Trinity and Christianity.

Marc Aramini — 31 Jul 2013, 14:38 · in reply to Lee Berman

Lee wrote:

"Given Jeff's consideration of Wolfe's assessment of the reality of pagan gods, this re- combining theme makes Wolfe's personal theology very interesting with regard to pagan gods, the Trinity and Christianity. "?"

????????????????????

I actually fancy that the Latro books are an exploration of the pre-Christian zeitgeist leading up to the time of the Pax Roman that becomes something of the ultimate philosophical moment of Christian history - mankind is at last ready for divine revision, and that readiness creates a scenario were immutable God takes on a mutable human nature. Wolfe's gnostic play is here in full force - it is impossible to ignore the ideological differences between the Creator God and the God who is fully human and fully divine; the relationship between what people believe in and their own character no doubt shapes their perception of the world of the divine.

The paradox of pagan gods being "real" in a Christian world view is something that bears thinking about, but I think that trite coin motto works: e pluribus unum ... but mankind must be unified, too.

Lee Berman — 31 Jul 2013, 18:34 · follows Marc Aramini

Marc Aramini: I actually fancy that the Latro books are an exploration of the pre-Christian zeitgeist leading up to the time of the Pax Roman that becomes something of the ultimate philosophical moment of Christian history - mankind is at last ready for divine revision, and that readiness creates a scenario were immutable God takes on a mutable human nature. Wolfe's gnostic play is here in full force - it is impossible to ignore the ideological differences between the Creator God and the God who is fully human and fully divine;

Interesting Marc. The first thoughts which came to my mind when reading your post Were about Wolfe's willingness to create species who seem to be on a higher spiritual plane than humans

(Neighbors and Hiero-types, e.g.).

Might it be in Wolfe's mind that we humans still remain unready for some higher divine revelation than that of Christ? And eventually something beyond that?

David Stockhoff — 31 Jul 2013, 23:30 · in reply to Marc Aramini

On 7/31/2013 10:38 AM, Marc Aramini wrote:

Lee wrote:

"Given Jeff's consideration of Wolfe's assessment of the reality of pagan gods, this re-combining theme makes Wolfe's personal theology very interesting with regard to pagan gods, the Trinity and Christianity. "

I actually fancy that the Latro books are an exploration of the pre-Christian zeitgeist leading up to the time of the Pax Roman that becomes something of the ultimate philosophical moment of Christian history - mankind is at last ready for divine revision, and that readiness creates a scenario were immutable God takes on a mutable human nature. Wolfe's gnostic play is here in full force - it is impossible to ignore the ideological differences between the Creator God and the God who is fully human and fully divine; the relationship between what people believe in and their own character no doubt shapes their perception of the world of the divine.

The paradox of pagan gods being "real" in a Christian world view is something that bears thinking about, but I think that trite coin motto works: e pluribus unum ... but mankind must be unified, too.

Trite as it may be, that idea lies behind the "obsession" with cloning and explains why the Ascians and megatherians are not as repugnant to the Yesodis as one would expect. One side must unify mankind, and it may not matter which one.