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Is Hidetaka Miyazaki really anti-religious? Probably not

submitted 7 months ago by Gaidnawarrior

I see a few atheists trying to project their real life anti-religious views into the Souls series and Bloodborne noting that there's a few bad religious characters who are shown as manipulators. The Old One "god" in Demon's Souls is shown as being a demon that devours souls and apparently according to one poster here from a month ago, the gods in Dark Souls don't care about people so that game is anti-religious too.

These are simply the views of most people who skipped dialogue through these games and rushed through them, then filled in the gaps with their own beliefs it seems. In Demon's Souls, it's actually revealed the Old One was simply a created being by god as the source for magic and miracles that humanity corrupted in their lust for more power.

In Dark Souls, humanity evolved from mindless darkness but were made into forms of flesh by the gods. Kaathe offers the player the chance to return the world to dark (aka "the age of man" as a world devoid of gods where fire no longer exists and everything reverts to a primitive form) whilst Frampt asks the player to continue the fire to sustain life, meanwhile the gods answer prayers and provide miracles whilst Kaathe's minions wish to destroy the souls of every living thing. Kaathe's age of man is shown as being harmful to every living thing whilst the age of gods/fire is shown as being beneficial.

So the real themes I'm seeing here with these games is that humanity without any guidance is innerly evil, perhaps with the potential to become bigger demons than those the player fights in the game (in fact several bosses throughout the Souls series - i.e four kings - were formally humans that were corrupted).

Whilst there are con-artist religious people in the games such as Licia, Patches, the only atheist in the series who denies prayers and the existence of gods, is shown as a liar, fraud, hypocrite, cheat, thief and murderer. In contrast, Rhea and Solaire (who are both religious) are shown as people who are pure of heart and loyal. As a result, I don't think you can look at the characters in the Souls series as being representative of the series views on religion since characters from religion or lack-thereof in the games are all shown on different moral spectrums.

Bloodborne once again offers the same themes with the Vilebloods (the opponents of the Church) being shown as murderers of Hunters who relish in the blood of beasts and man alike. The Church is little different in their evil but doesn't mindlessly kill humans or Hunters (with several Church Hunters actually fighting against beasts and trying to aid other Hunters, whilst the Vilebloods hunts all). Humanity here is once again shown as being innerly evil (just as with Dark Souls with humanity containing dark inside themselves) with a beastly nature.

So far from From Software games being anti-religious, I simply think they're really "anti-humanity" with the idea that humans are evil. Bloodborne shows the Church as being corrupt but it wasn't always so (as the game hints with one of the chalices that the Church may have tried to heal the plague, they did, after-all, ally with the Hunters once to fight the beats but eventually they became corrupt along with everything else in the world). Bloodborne shows everything in the world as now being corrupt (although even so, The Church remains the only safe place in the game with its priest helping survivors just as the religious covenants in the Souls series helped undead get through the land).

So yeah I think people need to stop reading into the idea that these games are anti-religious since an opposing case can be made that they're not.

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[–] **SeanPWallace** **6 points** 7 months ago

Are you... a Cleric?

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[–] **ImaginaryStar** **6 points** 7 months ago* (last edited 7 months ago)

I agree with you only half way, for it seems that you go on projecting the exact opposite views on lore that is deeply ambiguous, essentially committing the same sin you accuse others of.

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[–] **wickedblight** **9 points** 7 months ago

I think Miyazaki just likes ambiguity, twists, and the idea that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. The church is always a force with good intent but xx happens and they fuck everything up.

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[–] **rqon** psn: rkng-rkng **3 points** 7 months ago

Just because he enjoys using certain themes, concepts, etc. doesn't mean he's trying to push an agenda.

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[–] **Akuze25** **4 points** 7 months ago

I think the idea is that fanaticism or zealotry is dangerous, not religion. Religion gives people something to believe in or hope for, but doing so blindly is perilous.

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[–] **Scrubstadt** **7 points** 7 months ago

These seem like cherrypicked examples in a series full of examples to the contrary. Your strongest argument is with Demon's Souls, where God is truly most like the Christian god(and by far the least fleshed out). And so "was merciful, and created the Old One".

In Dark Souls, the "gods" are pretty much just humans who were lucky enough to be first in line to the soul party so they got the biggest ones. They're repeatedly shown to be fallible and and even erroneous in their approach to life(witch of izalith, four kings, Seath) and are only really gods in name. They're pretty much false idols in a godless world, that's the whole point of Kaathe's spiel. DS2 is the same deal.

As far as Bloodborne goes, cosmic horror in general is kind of an antithesis to most creation stories, especially the christian one. BB, as everyone knows by now is HEAVILY influenced by Lovecraft and his themes. Lovecraft was a vehement atheist during a time when atheists weren't all too popular, so his views really bleed through his writing. This is evident when you look at the central deity of his mythos, Azathoth. Who, completely unlike the christian god, basically farted out the universe completely on accident, and is so cosmically beyond human comprehension and beyond that which makes up our universe, that he doesn't even know the universe or its inhabitants even exist. It's for this reason that he's sometimes referred to as the blind idiot god.

Of course, this is BB's universe and not Lovecraft's, but I mention all of this to try and illustrate just how fundamentally opposed cosmic horror is to the concept of religion. BB's deities are no different. Most of the game is spent trying to tell us that the healing church had the wrong idea and got in over their heads, worshipping these beings. Seems Willem had this realization before he died, if these notes and their correlation are anything to go by: "Master willem was right. evolution without courage will be the ruin of our race" and "hunt the Great ones. Hunt the great ones"

The Mensis ritual beckons the Moon, a Great One, which further fucks over Yharnam with the Scourge and literally devolves humanity. So overall, faith in Bloodborne doesn't seem like something that's rewarded very consistently. Patches seems to be the sole example of faith ending.. Not horribly for someone in this game.

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[–] **The_Magic_Pickle** **3 points** 7 months ago

1.Petrus of Thurolund- religious, murderer 2.Gwyn, Lord of Sunlight had a prison for hollows 3.Humanity a.k.a.the dark souls gives hollows flesh/human form not the gods. 4.Anor Londo is a huge lie created by a god to deceive you.

There are probably more I'm just not remembering.

Not saying the game is anti-religious. Not that I particularly care if it is, but don't leave out plausible information to make your argument look better. These games are meant to be ambiguous and interpreted differently.

TL;DR: It's a game play it and have fun.

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[–] **SunBorne187** PS4 Already dead **3 points** 7 months ago

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Ah but can that idea of "anti-humanity" not be expanded to include the fact that religion/covenants/factions are a construct of humanity and a cause of division and strife?

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[–] **LiveLongDieHappy** **1 point** 7 months ago

"Acts of goodness are not always wise, and acts of evil are not always foolish. but regardless. we shall always strive to be good."

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[–] **SneerValiant** **1 point** 7 months ago

There are a ton of things in all the games that are reminiscent of Buddhism. Not saying it has a message, but the themes might have Buddhist influences simply by way of Japanese culture.

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[–] **PigKnight** **1 point** 7 months ago

I mean sure Alfred is a nutter, but he's super friendly and never threatens you even when you bat for the other team. Sure he brutalizes someone, but that was the only way he can make sure she's "dead."

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[–] **Underwhere_Overthere** **-2 points** 7 months ago

By "a few atheists," you mean me, right? Are you going to have your other two alt accounts that you created today come in to agree with yourself?

You must know me. I'm not sure what you're really trying to do, but you certainly have my interest.

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[–] **The_Magic_Pickle** **2 points** 7 months ago

Filthy Atheist!

How could you not believe in our lord and savior Amygdala?!

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[–] **krumhur** **4 points** 7 months ago

Oh Amygdala, have mercy on the poor bastard!

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[–] **SunBorne187** PS4 Already dead **3 points** 7 months ago

Heathen!

Everyone knows that you curs added bones to our great lord Flying Spaghetti Monster in order to create your false one Amygdala.

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[–] **Fut-Boy** Fut-Boy (psn ID) **1 point** 7 months ago

How about Kos...or some say Kosm
Does he hear our prayers?

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[–] **The_Magic_Pickle** **2 points** 7 months ago

Grant us eyes!

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