

Legion of unmanned Autarchs?

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 26 Jan 1998

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/305>

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.

Dan Rabin — 26 Jan 1998, 21:14

Alice Turner states, in urth.v0006.n020.1:

Besides, it wasn't the one Autarch, it was the whole string of them.

Christopher R. Culver concurs:

Yep, we specifically learn that Ymar and the Autarch's predecessor were also unmanned, as well as the other autarchs in between. What about Typhon?

Could we have citations, please?

I'll accept the statement as concerns Ymar and Severian's predecessor, on the strength of the passage in `_Citadel_`, XXXI:

"If you fail, your manhood will be taken from you, so that you cannot bequeath the Phoenix Throne to your descendants. Your predecessor also accepted the challenge." [aquastor Malrubius `_dixit_`]

"And failed. That is clear from what you said." [quoth Severian]

"Yes. Still, he was braver than many who are called heroes, the first to go in many reigns. Ymar, of whom you may have heard, was the last before him."

Since we learn in `_Urth_` that Ymar was the first Autarch (as opposed to Monarch), this passage would seem to deny that castration was usual for Autarchs.

I am unable to find another citation I seek: a passage in which Severian notes how many of his predecessors met their violent ends by foolish exposure to danger.

Christopher also asks,

BTW, someone in `_Citadel_` refers to the Autarch as "Legion," because he is many (Biblical reference, Luke 32, I think). Is this his real name? If not, what is?

It was one of the woman-cats in `_Citadel_`, XXIV.

There's another passage (again, I've misplaced it) in which the application of the term is explained. It's certainly not his real name. Michael Andre-Driussi assigns him the name Appian based on a mention of a recent Autarch by that name in the short story "The Cat", but I don't recall the evidence being conclusive that Severian's predecessor reigned at the time of the events there recounted.

-- Dan Rabin