Ymar's Folly

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 03 Feb 1998

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CRCulver — 03 Feb 1998, 15:41

Friends,

In the Book of the New Sun, the people knew that the Conciliator and the New Sun were one and the same person. This is evidenced by the words that Severian says to Morwenna just before he executes her: "Try to remember that almost everyone who has every lived has died, even the Conciliator, who will rise as the New Sun."
For lack of a better explanation, I will assert that this belief comes from Canog's Book of the New Sun, because he was listening as the man everyone was calling the Conciliator spoke of his role as the New Sun.
My question is this: why would Ymar go and take the test in Yesod if he had met the Conciliator? I have several explanations that may fit:

1) Canog did not finish his BotNS until after Ymar took the test.

2) Canog finished his BotNS before Ymar went to Yesod, but its contents did not become part of common knowledge until long after the test.

3) Ymar believed that the Conciliator was *his* future self.

4) Ymar did not know that castration was 'punishment' for 'failing' the test and figured he had nothing to lose.

Out of these four, I think the third is most interesting, and the fourth is most possible. What do the other denizens of the Urth list think?

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"Ignorance, that light of fools steers a wayward path"
-Brendan Perry