

The Sahûl Chronicle

Turn 6

The Emperor is dead. Long live the Emperor!

1476–1480 SA

No living emperor in his blue hall / Can reign with half the splendour of the old. / In tired memory, it's all been done: / You've drowned the righteous and swallowed up the bold, / Imperial Sardarthion.

AS EVEN THE MOST OBLIVIOUS WILL NOTE, the *Chronicle* has undergone a fairly major revision of visual style, including the standardization of typefaces throughout. The reasons for this have more to do with the increase in trade in Sahûl and the cementing of the Printers' Guild monopoly than with any great political or technological change, of which there are coincidentally several.

There seems to be some confusion about trade and movement in the Byrrin River. Please remember that the *Lower Byrrin* runs from the river's mouth in the Western Gulf of Iphil to the city of Adndar. The *Upper Byrrin* runs from Adndar to Sardarthion. So, for example, if your only outlet to the sea is on Lake Sardath, you cannot trade by sea with someone whose only outlet to the sea is the Western Gulf of Iphil.

QUOTE: Last Turn's quote was from French philosopher Isidore Marie Auguste François Xavier Comte (1798 – 1857). Ed Allen and Paul Flinton got it, so Taneki and Golmath are the proud recipients of 2HC.

NEXT TURN DUE: MONDAY, 21 JULY 2008.

FREE COMPANIES & ERRANTRY &C.

WHITE LOTUS COMPANY–10hi 24mi 20li
Captain: Mistress Exata (L993i) IL age 34
Location: Jorun, Dranmul Province
Min. Bid: 35gp/Turn / HIRED

COMPANY OF THE BLACK CLAW–3sc 25hi 15mc
Captain: Tirabinis Arantes (L995w) YG age 58
Location: at sea...
Min. Bid: 25gp/Turn

RED DRAGON COMPANY–10cv 15pk 30mi
Captain: Tarrid the Fiercer (LA69s) UR age 35
Location: Somewhere in Ingazi
Min. Bid: 30gp/Turn / HIRED

KNIGHTS OF SAINT JARRAD–5hc 25mc 2lc
Captain: Sir Balorri Withini (L976w) TR age 62
Location: Avalow, Kanmul Province
Min. Bid: 25gp/Turn / HIRED

TRANG'S FLEET FOR HIRE–3cr 25wr 20tr 10mr
Commodore: "Mild" Trang (LA94w) YG age 53
Location: Dorkat Coast
Min. Bid: 45gp/Turn

FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

IMPERIAL BANK OF EINANDHU
Location: Einandhu
Available to borrow: 500 GP
(no single borrower may borrow more than 700 GP)

Investors may purchase shares in the Imperial Free City of Einandhu for 200 GP each, all profits to be divided by shares. Rule 10.5.2 investment income accrues normally. The four chief shareholders, together with the Tiger King of Arms, form the board of directors (indicated * below).

Shares:

House Gwariva of Ingazi 2*
House Pangku of Araxes 3*
House Sakkath of Zarkhandu 2*
Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds... 3*
Guilds Council of Adndar 3*
Printers Guild of Zadres 1

Loans: Araxes (360/t8), Ingazi (910/t8)

BANK OF ITAXIK
Location: Itaxik
Available to borrow: 1050 GP
Loans: None outstanding

Western Sahul

THE KIT'IXI COAST

COUNTY OF TOKATL (13 I/TA)

Her Excellency, Tinikatua V, Mistress of the Totek Hive, Countess of Tokatl.

Trade: Averon, Chi'tixi, CM, Kachar, Taneki

DP: None

Tinikatua IV turned forty in 1476, and a huge celebration was held throughout the County. The next year she finally died, having outlasted most of the wagers in the pool. Tza'kapat was expanded into a proper city, and more heavy infantry was raised. The usual investments mostly had the usual results, though to everyone's amazement sorcery actually improved.

DUCHY OF TANEKI (13 I/YG)

Her Grace, Toktoka III, the Mistress of Aketl, Duchess of Taneki, Baroness Ketatl.

Trade: Averon, Chi'tixi, Itaxik, Kachar, Pexiki, Sakkar, Tokatl, Yax'te

DP: None

Taneki found itself oddly at peace. They started rebuilding the infrastructure of the conquered Xinite territories in the south, including hive forts, two priories, assorted public works projects, and colonies in Teutan and Koten. Except in holdout Suntzah, most of the remaining Xinites have now embraced orthodoxy. Trade was extended to the southern realms. Despite widespread investments, only the Duchy's siege quality improved at all.

Mount Tazhi in Tzihm erupted twice.

THE CHURCH MILITANT (13 I/IL)

Her Holiness Aketika VII, Iluvarian Matriarch of the West, Archemandrite of Tikata.

Trade: Araxes, Averon, Tokatl

DP: None

The Church was paralyzed by indecision and inaction as the aging hierarchy aged further. The Matriarch travelled to Kongros in 1477 to per-

form the wedding ceremony of the Electoral Grand Duchess of Averon.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF AVERON (22 SI/IL)

Her Gracious Maješty, Jera III, Lady of Clan Drax, Countess of Darida, Lord Admiral of the Green, Electoral Grand Duchess of Averon.

Tiketua II of Tishrak, Margrave of the North.

Trade: Araxes, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, CM, Taneki, ThaceD, Tokatl

DP: Selid (T), Jalid (F)

The wildly popular (and beautiful and witty) Grand Duchess Jera chose a husband in the person of the pious and charming Lord Larret Crookbeak of Oost. The wedding took place at Duke's Priory near Kongros in 1477 and was presided over by her holiness Aketika VII herself. The couple married late (she was 32, he was 35), and they were the very picture of Saurian bliss. Their wedding ceremony concluded with an altogether different ceremony. Dark clouds gathered as the summoning began, quickly becoming a swirling storm centered above Duke's Priory. Lightning struck the steeple, startling the assorted guests and knocking some of them clear out of their chairs. And then it struck again. And again. The electric air roared with thunder, reaching a crescendo at last in a long, rolling sound as if the Gates of Heaven itself were opening. Then there was silence for a moment, a silence so profound that none breathed for fear of disturbing it. Finally a voice rung out like a tolling bell: "I am the Deva Sirrix of the Court of Iluvar. What is your will, O Maiden?"

The honeymoon began with fireworks over the palace. By a law established by Jera II in 1382, the Grand Duchess' husband is not a reigning Grand Duke, but merely "Duke-Consort". The couple's first daughter, named Derica in honour of the late emperor, was born in 1478. Their second, named Jera after her mother, was born in 1480.

Shortly after the hatching of her first child, the Grand Duchess gave an important address. Some highlights:

The Jorun incident was a dark day for Sahûl. When word of the battle reached Kongros, I was enraged with a righteous anger. As more information came in it quickly became obvious that there had been a horrible misunderstanding, it was my duty to put what went wrong right again.... We will create a new Imperial Free city at the site of so much senseless bloodshed as a memorial to the fallen and a reminder to all of us what our empire cannot—and must not—become. We must remember that first and foremost we are, all of us regardless of faith or kindred, brothers and sisters in the empire. We cannot and should not look to the Emperor for all of our answers. It is not his duty to solve all of our problems; he is the father of our great house in the Family of Sahûl. He guides us upon a good path and maintains the house, but it is up to the children to learn to get along with each other.... It is in this spirit that I have felt the shame of what happened in Jorun. I admit my fault and seek forgiveness from my brother the Duke of Thace, and like a family we rebuild what was torn down, side by side. Why? Because he is my brother.

The agreement reached with the Duchy of Thace was similar to the arrangement reached by Ingazi and Tiryowglas at Deriháhn. Thace constructed the port town of Khorassan in Jorun, and Averon built a road from the town into Ensar to the Thacian town of Herrûnd*. Unfortunately, the expected Charter has yet to arrive from the Imperial Chancery, so Khorassan remains for the moment isolated from the rest of Thace.

The Emperor *did*, however, hire the White Lotus Company, and they more or less behaved themselves. In 1480, a Chi'tixi fleet of 300 warships and 90 transports arrived in Jorun and boarded the mercenaries. There were some nervous moments, particularly between the local police and the Chi'tixi sailors on shore leave, but no major incidents.

Averon extended the Tueteen road into Verris and constructed the port town of Drannhír in Sandír. Averon's diplomatic success in the east was mixed at best. And then there was Pantun. Air Marshal

Gnurð's mighty airfleet was sent to support the diplomatic efforts of the luckless Baron of Goorin and his 8,000 "advisors". While attempting to find the nomad leader in the trackless and hostile deserts, the Baron was murdered in his sleep, stabbed repeatedly through the heart. With his advisors in disarray, the nomads suddenly attacked, launching a firebolt (!) into Gnurð's airfleet, destroying some 35 vessels. With orders to withdraw rather than offer combat, the Averese attempted to do just that. The troops fled to their ships as the airfleet beat a hasty retreat to Selid.

Mount Tazhi in Zinneron erupted twice.

COUNTY OF PEXIKI (19 I/YG)

Her Excellency, Ixix IV, Mistress of the Coactoka Hive, Countess of Pexiki, Lady Amoxcali.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Taneki

DP: Naualpilli (F)

The Pexiki colonized Uitzetla and scavenged the ruins of Tatol in Ocut to build the port town of New Tatol. Despite across-the-board investments, life in Pexiki didn't change much. Ixix III died in 1476 and was succeeded by Ixix IV, a brilliant administrator. The weather warmed up.

ELECTORAL PRINCIPALITY OF ITAXIK (27 I/UR)

Her High Majesty, Princess Chass'ika II, Mistress of the Tis'chak, Countess of Takkikik, Elector of Itaxik, Golden Beetle of the West.

Trade: Kachar, Pexiki, Sakkar, Taneki, Yax'te

DP: Omei (T)

The Grand Duchess recalled her envoy to the Imperial Court for debriefing. The new envoy was informed by the ailing Deric in 1477 of the elevation of the Electoral Grand Duchess Chass'ika to the dignity of Electoral Princess of Itaxik. Chass'ika died the following year, and one of her jillions of hive-daughters became the new Princess. A road was built between Molko and Akshoya, and many strange glass houses were constructed in the capital. Most broke.

* Averon also built roads from the town into Sandír and Graidir. You can't have too many roads.

Diplomats cautiously began their work in the valley of the Miçtia. Lady Notekua attempted to sway the eight shepherds of Poliuz to the Itaxi cause, but they were too busy chasing their sheep.

Reverend Mother Verilia toured Itaxik and, after paying a courtesy call on the Princess and imparting the Matriarch's blessing, she ensconced herself in Timalla and began the arduous process of reforming the Church administration in the West. Some very comfortable mid-level bureaucrats have suddenly retired following the start of the audit. The Reverend Mother preached the new discipline* of fasting, feasting, and prayer. Everywhere, her message was the same:

Prepare the way, listen within yourselves to the call of Urda and follow the path to Balance. Fasting, prayer and feasting will aid you to find the true path to Urda. The call has come, if you were waiting for the knock upon your door, wait no longer.

Thanks to heavy investment, Itaxik's airship quality and sorcerous learning both advanced.

Although the weather did improve, the summers remained shorter than usual. Sporadic crop failures continue.

COUNTY OF KACHAR (15 I/UR)

Her Excellency, Kassa V, the Wily, Mistress of Calpolli, Lady Tchantli, Countess of Kachar, Protector of the Fair Isles.

Trade: Itaxik, Sakkar, Taneki, Tokatl, Yax'te

DP: None

Kachar entered a new era with the huge investments in their navy. It paid off, as their navigational and shipbuilding abilities improved. It was a good thing, too, as in early 1476 Countess Kassa IV and 150 ships set off on an epic voyage to the west. Only a handful of ships returned to tell the tale. The Countess died shortly after her return.

The new library in Tchantli have proven very popular; at one point there was an eight month waiting list for library cards. Ice fishing as a recreational activity has fallen sadly out of favour.

BARONY OF SAKKAR (11 IS/IL)

Baroness Neallatalah III of Sakkar, the Vehement, Mistress of Nelhuayotl, Heir of the Prophet, Beloved of the Light of Iluvar.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Taneki, Yax'te

DP: None

The frugal and pious Sakkar expanded the frigid port town of Kuauinochitla into a proper city and built two priories. A vast public works program was instituted throughout the realm to get people back to work. The Naval Academy at Yeyeçtin was expanded. Neallatalah II died and was succeeded to no one's great surprise by Neallatalah III.

ICEMARK OF YAX'TE (13 S/IL)

Margrave Tillein the Silent, Grand Master and Knight-Commander of the Champions of the Renewal.

Trade: Itaxik, Kachar, Sakkar, Taneki

DP: Teotel (T), Tat'ia (at war!)

Yax'te's weather improved markedly. Nevertheless the army built granaries in Potem'te, while civilians constructed a town in Soren named Kirrek. The colony in Soren, buoyed by the influx of burghers and the slightly better weather, prospered (2131).

Diplomacy continued in the Urdan north. The Malebolge of Tat'ia were so insulted by the dour old Saurian diplomat who visited that they chased her out of their forest. She died shortly thereafter. It might have had something to do with the funny mushrooms she ate.

Thacia & Aret

THE HIGH PLAINS & NORTHERN COAST

ELECTORAL QUEENDOM OF THE GREAT HIVE OF CHI'TIXI TIRRIX KI (30 I/YG)

Her Most Puissant Majesty, Antaxi IV, Mistress of Tirrix & the Great Hive, Duchess of Chax and

* Really, it's an ancient discipline that had long been forgotten. Still, there are those calling it the *Ardonan Reform*.

Tix'itikata, Countess Itax, Electoral Queen of Chi'tixi, &c., &c.

Her Excellency, Tannix III, Lady Ch'tort, Countess of Cærrat, Vice-regent of Western Chi'tixi.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Averon, Cappargarnia, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Iekat (T), Hazekat (T), Renedír (F)

The mighty Chi'tixi cut trade with Golmath and recalled their envoy from Sardarthion in order to issue her some new instructions.

In accordance with the vassalage agreement between the Queen of Chi'tixi and the Baroness of Cærrat, Renedír was deeded to Cærrat.

Despite their heavy investments, there was no appreciable change in the Queendom's military or governmental efficiency. A single priory was built.

DUCHY OF THACE (16 S/UR)

His Grace, Biard XIV, Lord Goshtikka-Ourane, Baron of Brennadein, Duke of Thace.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Averon, Chi'tixi, Ingazi, Hyrágec, ID, Kicitchat, ThaceE, Urdraháhn

DP: Anderim (T), Nottesan (T), Senetar (T)

Duke Biard stepped back from the brink of war with Averon. The town of Khorassan was built in Jorun, and Averon built a road connecting it with the rest of Thace while they retained control of the region. Unfortunately, an expected Imperial Charter failed to materialize, so the town remains cut off and isolated for now.

The Thacian leadership, including the charismatic and brilliant Lord Willor Agröeš, were all very, very busy in the deep desert doing, you know, stuff. The Duchy's government expanded.

A younger generation gained power in Nottesan and renounced their Iluvarianism for Urda. The region is bitterly divided, and when the young Lord there paid tribute to Thace, there was rioting.

THE GREAT STEPPE WAR (1469-1476)

Araxes, Electoral Thace vs. Tigers of Urda

In 1476, the Tiger Sar Tahník essentially sued for peace. All sides retrenched as a general armistice was declared. The Sar has called for the return of the Tiger homeland of Carcë, but he is otherwise willing to accept the current borders.

Mother Berthilde of the Noënian Order has offered herself as a facilitator of the peace negotiations. She reportedly is seeking a permanent solution to the steppe disputes.

ELECTORAL COUNTY-PALATINE OF THACE (22 S/UR)

His Most Excellent Majesty, Ebalondrir IV, Lord Goshtikka-Snamarthis, Marshal of Thacia, Governor of Thacia Maior & Minor, Electoral Count Palatine in Thace.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Averon, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, Tigers, Urdraháhn

DP: None

Ebalondrir proved much more laid back than his immediate predecessors. He did order the recall of his envoy to Sardarthion to provide him with new instructions, but other than that life in the County Palatine was peaceful and the treasury was extremely fat.

Trade with the Tiger abbey of Tíogar began.

THE TIGERS OF URDA (2 S/TU/UR)

Sar Tahník the Wise, Master of the Horseclans, Scourge of Urda the Fierce.

Trade: ThaceE

DP: Zannemeth (F), Herrek (T), Slazjun (T)

Sar Tahník wisely proposed peace. Treaty negotiations are underway. Talks with various Urdan missionaries, including those of the Noënian and Melkonian Orders, were held. Those in the Tiger abbey of Tíogar were particularly intense, involving theology, history, and flagons of koumiss.

Near the site of the Urdan Priory of Saint Nöena in Pivrassa the Tigers raised a town, Gortahnes.

GRAND DUCHY OF ARAXES (25 w/UR)

His Grace, Pangku Tramandes the Valiant, Baron Pinyerrel, Grand Duke of All Araxes.

Sir Ronnel Rannes, Lord Protector of the Realm.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averon, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, CM, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Gorice (F), Eremeth (F), Zayana (A), Nairin (T)

Araxes took a loan from the Imperial Bank. They used it to build four priories and a new sorcery academy. Well, that and a tremendous number of new public works projects, the vast majority of which were clustered in Thudu. Many of the other projects involved grain storage and distribution in some way.

Various intellectuals, adventurers, and travellers have found a warm welcome in Pinyerrel. Some of the more capable (or charming) adventurers have found backing for a few small expeditions into the unknown. Fewer still have returned.

As part of this renewed emphasis on learning, Tramandes the Younger was beset by tutors, teaching him the basics of Araxean statesmanship, including etiquette, diplomacy, single combat, warfare and strategy, religion, honour, duty, intrigue, law, stewardship, piety, courtly love, politics, mediation, justice, heraldry, and noblesse oblige for a start. So far, he excels in the military art, though as he's so young, it's perhaps premature to draw any firm conclusions about his abilities. He has, however, a great love of the sea and has expressed an interest in entering the Naval Academy.

Parliament took up the issue of military reform. The discussion was contentious, and little was resolved. Most agreed that the reliance on feudal forces, particularly the reliance on cavaliers as the sole arm of war, had been less than ideal for the conditions of the Steppe War. Unfortunately, without the Grand Duke's presence, few wished to propose the sorts of radical reforms that many think

necessary, and the highest levels of the nobility are loathe to accept any proposal that lessens their authority or tampers with their traditions.

Meanwhile, the Grand Duke continued his war in the steppe, leading a mixed force of infantry and Yuken Longbowmen into Tishark to (re)secure their tribute. Count Otta's army forced tribute from the Islargyn horseclans.

Thanks in part to the continuing work of the Noënian Order, the Galingdri relented and declared their allegiance to the Grand Duke.

COUNTY OF KICITCHAT (18 I/YG)

Hér Excellency, Xant'ki IX, Lady Tchac'at, Countess of the Kicitchat Hive and Associated Dominions.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: None

Xant'ki ordered that trade with Golmath cease, and so it did. In true Kicitchat tradition, many more pike were trained. Despite heavy investment, particularly in sorcery, nothing really changed.

A Chi'tixi goodwill fleet of about 50 warships called in Tchac'at for a friendly visit in 1478.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ATUBURRK (22 w/YG)

His Gracious Majesty, Adhanggar Challik III, Count of Odol, Elector & Grand Duke of Atuburrk, Imperial Governor of Ardebon.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Katch (F), Darchi (F)

Challik turned his eye toward the long-neglected economic development of Atuburrk. Huge investments, particularly in the interior of the country, have made him very popular indeed. The Wild Coast was colonized, making it only slightly less wild. The large Tarotist minority mostly shrugged their shoulders and dutifully went to work for their new Yagnarist Overlords.

Atuburrk expanded their capital of Inh Odol, and the new port town of Wottadrongo rose in humid Barringal.

Central Sahûl

THE HEART OF EMPIRE

ELECTORAL REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA (29 M/TA)

His Sublime Majesty, Steene Dronex II, Lord Admiral of the Blue, Electoral Prince of Cappargarnia.

His Great Holiness, Carberic VI, the Obscure, Pontiff of the Hidden Lords at Golluz.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Kicitchat, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas

DP: No.

Steene Dronex let no one forget that he was descended from an Emperor. In addition to encouraging Pontiff Carberic to send missionaries into Duedhyn, he also sent them into the lands of the Imperial Demense. He set Cappargarnia's military forces in motion, and the very instant he had command of it, he ordered the Imperial Blue Fleet up the Byrrin into Lake Sardath. Although her orders were secret, it was no secret that Vice-Admiral Tiribissi Enya disapproved of them. Nevertheless, she obeyed her Prince. When the "situation" in Duedhyn (*which see*) escalated into holy war, the Prince professed surprise and stated that he was "sure that this absurdity is not in any way endorsed by Urdraháhn."

In less violent news, Cappargarnia's airship and sorcery quality improved, and a military breakthrough in siege technology was noted. It beats frogs, I guess. A lovely new priory was built.

IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF ADNDAR (20 M/TA)

His Excellency Tiribissi Lanharnes, Guildmaster of the Innkeepers, Chancellor of the Guilds Council, and Hereditary Burgrave of Adndar.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec,

Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: None.

Burgrave Tiribissi personally supervised the completion of the *Moonstar Gardens and Imperial Field of Honour*. The weather improved a little, and as various events were scheduled at Moonstar, it proved an amenable distraction for the Adndar burghers.

Foreign investment poured into Adndar, and in return the Guilds Council purchased a second round share in the Imperial Bank. The caliber of Adndar's cavalry, infantry, naval, and sorcery all improved. The Town of Montoya was constructed in Carlon just north of Sardarthion, and Pakhandar expanded. The Adndar Air Academy, already one of the premier skyship schools in Sahûl, expanded its campus.

In 1477 Burgrave Tiribissi Lanharnes married Dorinn Terebithna, scion of a good family and a noted scholar in the emerging field of botany. The couple are well-matched and close. Their first child, a boy, was born the next year.

The Blue Fleet and their Cappargarnian auxiliaries under the command of Vice-Admiral Tiribissi Enya passed through the Adndar Canal in 1477, paying a hefty toll. The Adndar Riverman's Guild was quite confused by the whole procedure, since there is currently no toll in place. They did not, however, return the money.

The Guild of Shadows conducted a massive purge of foreign influence in the city's government and guilds. Very little was found, but they like to keep in shape.

THE DUELS AT ADNDAR (1478)

Not, perhaps, the combat you were expecting...

The continuing and contentious correspondence between the venerable King Onin Zhur of Zarkhandu and the crippled Emperor Deric finally resulted in short tempers. In the spring of 1476, a herald arrived in Sardarthion with a demand by

Onin Zhur for an apology. The Emperor had, he claimed, called him a liar. Not only was no apology forthcoming, but Deric, cantankerous and impatient in his infirmity, had no interest in even working out what it was that Onin Zhur was getting worked up about.

After consulting with the heralds, King Onin Zhur of Zarkhandu challenged the emperor, in his person as King Deric of Aradéc, to a duel by champions. The Emperor eventually accepted, with the terms set at cold steel to the death.

Onin Zhur sent Confessor-General Torzyx of Iruasa as his champion, a keen fighter and a better sorcerer. The Emperor put out a call for someone to champion him, and he promised to make it financially worth their while. From among the two applicants he chose a Golmathi military leader: a certain Captain-General Biswajit Bandji, otherwise known amongst the Urdans as “the Butcher of Walu”. The Emperor’s standing among the Urdan realms fell precipitously as news of his choice spread. Any remaining esteem that Deric might have enjoyed in Urdan circles vanished when it was revealed that the other, rejected volunteer was the Urdan Lord Jagroff of Withywandi, an ally of Ingazi.

The Imperial Free City of Adndar offered to host the event in their newly constructed *Moon-Star Gardens and Imperial Field of Honour*. In the confusion of setting the rules for gambling on said duel, the Guilds of Adndar withdrew their offer. Of course, both champions showed up anyway. By the time they actually met in a sheep pasture outside the walls of Adndar, however, both principals of the duel were already in their graves.

Nevertheless, a small crowd of perhaps a hundred had gathered to witness the event. The Tiger King of Arms himself carefully examined the champions’ credentials, pronounced himself satisfied, and then announced that both parties to the duel having died, honour had been satisfied by the gods themselves and there was little that could be resolved on the field. The champions shook hands and made an appointment to share several bottles

of Araxean port at Adndar’s justly famous *White Horse Inn*.

As he was leaving the field, Captain-General Biswajit was accosted by a hooded Wenemet.

“Your business with Arkhandu may be complete, but I believe that we have business as well.”

Puzzled, Biswajit replied, “do I know you, sir?” And then to his Adjutant, “do I know him?” The Adjutant shook his head, and the Wenemet threw back his hood to reveal his face. He was an older gentleman, of perhaps sixty winters, with a grey muzzle and green eyes.

“My name is Gwariva Razhim, the ninth of that name, and you sir are the Butcher of Walu. Ten thousand martyrs and more scream for vengeance. They scream for your blood, sir, and I mean to secure it for them.”

Some members of the crowd gasped, for here was none other than the Count Palatine of Ingazi himself. A point of order was quickly raised by Biswajit’s Adjutant, Lieutenant Arihant, and the Tiger King of Arms was consulted. Surely a Count must outrank a Captain?

Razhim replied, “I have abdicated. My cousin rules Ingazi in my place. As a Captain of the East Riding (wherever that is), my rank is equal to that of the Butcher.”

Again the crowd gasped and chattered, trying to digest this latest morsel of information. The Tiger King of Arms consulted with two other heralds, both experts in Imperial law and protocol. Eventually, they agreed. The duel could not be denied on these grounds. Did the Captain-General wish to choose weapons?

Biswajit laughed. “I came here with cold steel. Cold steel it shall be. Hopefully Torzyx won’t have finished the wine before I finish this Urdan.”

And so combat was joined.

Razhim never had a chance. Whatever intelligence or bravery he might possess, he was clearly not a duelist. He was outclassed from the start by Biswajit. They fought for some few moments before the Golmathi soldier cut his Ingazi foe a long,

straight cut across his chest. It was not deep, but Razhim bled mightily and fell heavily to his knees.

“Kill me then, Tarotist. I only pray that I might be deemed worthy to feast in the Summerlands with those you killed in Walu.”

Biswajit sheathed his sword. “You’ll not be joining them today. First blood is enough for old men. Right now all I want is a decent wine and a warm bed.” The medics attended to Gwariva Razhim as Biswajit Bandji left the field.

Captain-General Biswajit of Golmath retired to the *White Horse*, where he spent scandalous amounts of silver, drank good port, and smoked his pipe for a great many years.

Once his wound had sufficiently healed, Gwariva Razhim went to Sardarthion to pay his respects to the new Emperor. He was prevented from visiting Pareis by the Cappargarnian blockade.

As for Biswajit’s adjutant, he was promoted to Captain in the Golmathi army.

IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF EINANDHU (4 M/UR)

Sir Graxes Aratan, Tiger King of Arms.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Elphárec, Golmath, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Tiryowglas

DP: Constantly

The Tiger King of Arms himself went to Adndar to supervise the duel(s) there. As is often the case in these situations, nothing went according to the participants’ plans.

THE IMPERIAL DEMENSE (11 M/UR)

His August & Imperial Majesty, Onin Zho, Lord Sakkath, Count of Uúhlath & Mlideen, Duke of Hyáglión, Electoral King of Zarkhandu, Sovereign of Sahûl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi’tixi, Einandhu, Elphárec, Kicitchat, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC, Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: None

IIP: 25

For appointments, see Gazette.

Emperor Sansollen Deric languished in his sickbed, but even in his decline he made a flurry of appointments. Perhaps the most surprising was the elevation of the Electoral Grand Duchess Chass’ika of Itaxik to the dignity of Electoral *Princess* of Itaxik. Kamua Symaril, Lord Magister of Araxes, arrived and conferred with the Emperor.

Tarotist missionaries swarmed through Torsi and Sondrim. They made little enough headway in Sondrim, due in part to the strong presence of the Urdan Cathedral there, but in Torsi about a third of the population embraced Tarotism.

When Emperor Deric was told in Council in 1478 that the Imperial Blue Fleet was being used by Cappargarnia to blockade Pareis in conjunction with an invasion of Duedhyn, he flew into a rage. He sputtered and he shouted, and then he clutched at his heart and fell heavily upon the table. Immediately, his physicians were summoned, but there was little they could do. On the evening of the next day, December 8, 1478, the Emperor Deric died, having never regained consciousness.

He was entombed next to his father Paharnes VII in the Iluvarian chapel of the Mausoleum of Paharnes the Great. A figure of fierce controversy, the Emperor had few friends in attendance, but they were vociferous and true in their support.

Thirty days after the Emperor’s death, the Electoral proxies and representatives descended on the Imperial Palace at dawn. They were met on the palace steps by Count Kwilkyn Sarrik II of Tiryowglas, Chancellor of the Empire, flanked by armed guards of the Emerald Watch. In the frigid morning air, the Chancellor administered the oath to the envoys and then led them inside to that ancient imperial audience hall known as the Blue Chamber.

Floored in the deep blue Kranthic marble that gave the room its name and lit with the sorcerous lights of nine great hanging lanterns, it stood three stories tall. Delicately cracked blood red columns

supported two balconies and a choir loft on their dizzying way to the vaulted ceiling. At one end of the great hall were massive doors, ornately carved from a single Aradécan cedar. At the other end of the hall, facing the ancient doors, was a deceptively simple iron chair flanked by golden lion statues. It was set upon a stone dais cut with three shallow steps, worn round and smooth by millennia of supplicants.

Like many other wonders of the ancient palace, the simplicity of the throne was a lie. The envoys had all seen it when the works were set into motion during Imperial audiences on state occasions. They had seen the bronze branches with their chirping mechanical birds unfold from the sides of the throne as it rose majestically into the air. They had seen the golden lion statues on either side roll their eyes and roar with opened mouth and quivering tongue. But just now, the magnificent mechanical marvel was silent and still.

All other furniture had been cleared from the Chamber except for nine roughly-hewn chairs set around a circular table, carved with an intricate design depicting the Nine Sacred Animals. After each envoy had taken their seat, the Chancellor read the Golden Edict to them and then set his badge of office in the center of the table. With the Emperor dead, and his electoral duties fulfilled, the Chancellor's term of office had run its course. He left the Chamber, and soldiers of the Emerald Watch sealed the great door behind him.

Some six hours later, the great doors creaked open and the envoy from Zarkhandu (traditionally the ceremonial head of the Convocation) intoned the customary formula: "long live the unanimously elected Sovereign of Sahûl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World, His August and Imperial Majesty, Onin Zho of Zarkhandu!"

During the mild winter of 1480, the new Saurian Emperor arrived in Sardarthion. Few of the locals were of sufficient age to remember the horror that was the reign of the last Yagnarist Emperor, Sydath

of Atuburrk, but the stories had grown to legends and many were fearful of what was coming.

Emperor Onin Zho proved to be young, handsome, and charming, and the population of the city was quickly put at ease. He and his youngest son installed themselves in the Imperial palace in advance of the coronation rite.

For the first time since the reign of Frenthes the Pious (1124-1146), the Urda Matriarch was present in Sardarthion for an Imperial Coronation. She herself preached the coronation homily. Excerpts:

Citizens of Sahûl! Our history is steeped in a tradition of Urda. The Emperor is the Champion of Urda and as such, his coronation has been left lacking acknowledgment from the Church for too long. Sahûl, the empire, the sophonts that dwell within, stand on the precipice of a great age of discovery. We must, for the future of our citizens and our land, we must join together in the spirit of cooperation, to find a way, balanced or in chaos, in light or dark, to combine these elements of our cultures in the delicate alchemy that brings all to happiness and all to a balance satisfactory to all of our Gods. Urda recognizes a need for all of these to bring happiness to the land of Sahûl.

I stand before this august gathering today to beg all to put aside the days before and begin anew, to seek each other as new allies in this passing from an age of light which was cloaked in shadow into the age ruled by the dark and destined to be the brightest.

So it was that Her All-Holiness Ardonia XIV, Claw of the Dragon, First Matriarch of Urda, and Protector of Sahûl placed the Imperial Crown upon the brow of the Yagnarist Emperor Onin Zho.

PRINCIPALITY OF DUEDHYN (11 S/RA)

His Highness, Prince Dallyn III, the Young, of Duedhyn, Baron Dhanos, Hereditary Marshal of the Order of the Sacred Raven.

Trade: Adndar

DP: Teylek (F), Tawesek (F)

Prince Tewas sought peace with Kommolek, and after a long series of tough and loud negotiations, they have at least arrived at a truce. Garowdyr

reverted to Duedhyn's control when Kommolek withdrew their army. Namrades subsequently began rumbling, having two minor lava flows on its westernmost slopes. The weather improved somewhat, which proved a blessing to the peoples of the Principality. Three new Raven fortresses were constructed in the southern forests: Fowydh in Glas-tanen, Prysken in Gwydhen, and Derow in Koes. Two priories were also constructed.

Duedhyn's northern reaches again were subject to Tarotist missionaries in Kothonan, Lowarthow, Avalow, Glasdor, and even Urda Tythyen. The authorities were shoing them out of the country (as usual), but the people, already roused-up from the Kommolek incident, took matters into their own hands. Tarotists were attacked in the streets, and in some cases beaten to death. The police began arresting them for their own safety, prompting howls of protest from the oppressed majorities in Adément and Dramûl. Supported by the mercenary Knights of Saint Jarrad, the Tarotists of Adément rose in rebellion in 1477. In Dramûl, Tarotist rebels offered to join Adndar (or anybody else who wasn't involved in the war), but then completely failed to overthrow the Raven garrison.

There was rioting in the streets of Pareis, as various pamphleteers tried to outdo each other in vilifying the Tarotists in general and Cappargarnia in particular. Many called for war. A few called for Holy War. A ragged preacher called Barugh gained a large following for his message that the Raven lives for war. Many hailed him as a prophet. The Prince convened a council and sent for the Grandmaster of the Order for advice.

A Cappargarnian infiltration was discovered in Pareis in 1478. The agents were rooted out, but in the course of the crackdown, Prince Tewas III himself was attacked. One late night, coming back from a meeting with his advisors, the Prince was set upon by three armed assassins, two Saurians and a Wenemet. Each plunged two knives into the Prince, killing him instantly. The assassins were quickly caught and, under "persuasion" administered by the Grandmaster of the Order of the Ra-

ven himself, admitted to being in the employ of Cappargarnia. The Prince's nephew and heir took the throne at the age of 14, under the careful eye of the Grandmaster.

It was at this point that the Imperial Blue Fleet and its Cappargarnian auxiliaries, a total force of some 15 caravels, 410 warships, and 45 transports hove into view. The fleet proceeded to blockade Pareis (and the Darriow River), effectively cutting off Duedhyn's sea bourne trade. When Emperor Deric was advised of the Blue Fleet's participation in this attack, he was positively livid.

At this point, all possibility of holding back the tide of religious violence was at an end. When the Grandmaster of the Order of the Raven solemnly pronounced Holy War, he was merely stating an obvious fact, not making a decision.

Nearly lost in the shuffle was an improvement in siege quality.

THE CRUSADE OF THE SIX KNIVES (1479–1480)

Duedhyn vs Cappargarnia

1479: In carefully coordinated attacks, Cappargarnian troops crossed the border into Bufalein while the Knights of Saint Jarrad invaded Tewynn.

In Bufalein, the army of Jareb, Swordmaster of Cappargarnia, numbered 10,000 dragoons, 23,000 pike, and another 16,000 miscellaneous forces. It was preceded by an ensign bearing the legendary Banner of Malygris and accompanied by a pillar of fire. They were barely slowed down by the garrison. The scattered keeps that littered the steppe were fairly well consumed by the pillar of fire, which swept the ground clear before it as it moved. The Urda priory of Skeuswydhenn was similarly incinerated.

While Adément declared its independence behind them, the Knights of Saint Jarrod rode hard into undefended Tewynn. They looted the region, burned the Urda priory of Gudhys to the ground, and pressed on.

Meanwhile, the crusaders started gathering. At first, it was simply more recruits for the already

mighty Order, but then yeomen, burghers, and even peasants started gathering. Every village, every town, every city, every Raven fortress became a training ground. First it was thousands, then it was tens of thousands. Without instruction, they moved vaguely north, following the river.

1480: The main Cappargarnian force in Bufalein marched south into Tythyen. They obliterated all resistance and found themselves staring at two very imposing structures: the walls of Balyow and the ancient Urdan Cathedral of Logosenn. Here it was that the spinning pillar of fire revealed itself in another form at last.

It stopped in front of the mighty barred gates of Logosenn. As it ceased to spin, it resolved into a mighty figure with burning coals for eyes and a tongue of flame. A great sere wind tore across plains as it bellowed, "Know, fools, that I am the mighty Efreet Rejmoos! Those who try to thwart me shall perish in eternal flame!"

While Tewynn reverted to Duedhyn control behind them, the Knights of Saint Jarrod rode into Avalow. Though they occupied the land, they lost some forces to the forts there. The presence of the Raven fortress of Skrifys prevented them from doing much of anything else except torching the priory of Mirjyn.

By now, most of the holy troops had gathered into two large bands on either side of the river. The eastern group naturally fell under the command of the Prophet Barugh, who marshalled them in Lowarthow. The western group, gathered in Tio-gyon, chose an obscure young knight named Sir Spennenn Wynn to lead them. There are several small isolated bands of holy troops scattered about the realm as well.

BARONY OF FELL KOMMOLEK (20 w&cs/YG)

Baron Goesek Terthynn of Kommolek, Lord Treskaw, Burgrave of Fair Belsûnd.

Trade: Aradéc, Kicitchat, Hyrágec, ID, Zarkhandu

DP: None.

Fell Kommolek sent aid to their prefectures worst hit by famine, as well as the nearby independent areas of Resek, Marneeth, and Húduł. This helped mitigate the great suffering in these lands. The improvement in the weather, however, was even more welcome. Although there were still crop failures throughout the Barony, particularly the southernmost reaches, they were not nearly so severe as in years past.

As Kommolek's army withdrew from Garowdyr, the region renounced its tribute. Regardless, a truce was concluded with Duedhyn.

Namrades rumbled a bit, and there were three minor lava flows on its northern slopes.

COUNTY OF TIRYOWGLAS (19 s&w/IL)

His Excellency, Count Sarrik II, Baron Kwilkyn, Count of Tiryouglas, Defender of the Faith.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Murali

DP: None.

Count Sarrik, his duties as Chancellor fulfilled, returned home in 1479 accompanied by his youngest son, Lefans. The Count's son (and Regent) Kerens spent some time frantically spiffing up the place for his father's return. No less than four towns were built: Talimor in Herrel, Trent in Nin, Miriz in Ujek, and Mitra in Umaseth.

With the Count's arrival, a great family reunion was held in Bronnow. All of the Count's six children were present. Unfortunately, the Countess was still stationed with the army and could not attend, though rumours abound that there will be another sort of reunion shortly. Lefans was afterwards commissioned into the army, and he has been sent to the frontier. Shortly thereafter, the Count's youngest daughter, Diwskovlas (Diwy to her friends) ran off to sea. Her family was not exactly surprised, given her defiant and nomadic personality, but they are hoping to hear from her again at some point.

Four volcanic eruptions were noted in Tamris.

ILUVARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (22 IL)

His All Holiness, Pope Sanguine XIV, Pontiff of Siſtrameides, Archemandrite of Ilúhir.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Einandhu, Elphárec, Hyrágec, ID, Tiryowglas

DP: Mawali (T)

Sanguine XIV (no relation to those sanguine folks in Elphárec) spent his time in academic and theological pursuits. Brother Schlegel's 6,000 knightly friends wandered over into Urdan Mawali to see if they might consider paying tribute to the IOC. They arrived in the middle of a civil crisis between the native Urdans and hordes of Tarotist missionaries. The Urdans agreed to pay tribute if the Pope could just make the Tarotists go away.

The Church's sorcerous learning advanced.

MOST SANGUINE DUCHY OF ELPHÁREC (27 W/IL)

His Grace, Eparreb Caranthes IV, the Pious, Count of Angúron and Siddhan, Duke of Elphárec.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Tiryowglas

DP: None.

Duke Caranthes the Pious continued the now venerable tradition of having the heads of the Great Houses meet over lunch in Epadh. Many call these gatherings the "Duke's Great Council". Although they meet in secret, it's obvious that many of the great decisions affecting the Duchy are taken at these meetings. Plus, the roast beef is excellent.

Elphárec's sorcerous and scientific learning took a great leap forward, joining Pexiki and Zarkhandu in a new era. Cavalry quality also improved, and the town of Port Wrase rose in Kalipara.

With great fanfare, the Duke created the *Ducal Order of Engineers, Ditch-Diggers, & Artillerists*. They started off by building a road between Epadh and Kronoth in Grimás.

Baron Ilkurr Valdiss graduated from the University of Epadh with a degree in alchemy. Unlike his forbearers, however, he is not a miner or an alchemist. In fact, his primary area of interest seems to be toys, earning him the sobriquet of "Toymaker

of Mungg". In 1479 he published a thin pamphlet titled *A Treatise on Practical Applications of Arcane Engines & Automata*. In it, he claims it possible to build a machine that can play chess.

KINGDOM OF HYRÁGEC (22 W/UR)

Her Valiant Majesty Irrjir Sardira, the Virgin Queen, Reigning Queen of Hyrágec, Beloved of Urda.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Elphárec, Golmath, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, ThaceD, ThaceE, Urdraháhn

DP: Elbun (F), Zhedaveg (F)

Queen Sardira endowed many new public works projects in her capital of Pahasar. Wise investments paid off, as sorcery improved and the government expanded. The sorcery academy in Pahasar was also improved. Diplomats and bureaucrats crossed the Kingdom in an effort to centralise administration. They had mixed results with Hyrágec's notoriously independent feudal lords.

Two priories were built, as was the port town of Gawyandra in Imilam. Aybon expanded.

The Gawan Peninsula

THE FEUDAL NORTHEAST

COUNTY PALATINE OF INGAZI (21 W/UR)

His Most Urdan Excellency, Gwariva Laharnes V, the Farsighted, Overlord of Gawan, Captain of the East Riding, Count Palatine of Ingazi.

Trade: Adndar, Aradéc, Araxes, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Kicitchat, Murali, Murrugapa, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, (z)Arkhandu

DP: Watti (F), Gudhar (F), Yali (F)

Count Razhim IX bid a long and tearful farewell to his family and his realm, as he prepared to take the First Matriarch to Sardarthon in his speedy ships. Why the Count himself was going was unknown, though most of his subjects assumed

he couldn't pass up the opportunity to spend some quality time conversing with the Holy Mother.

Investments paid off in siege technology.

In 1478, Count Razhim IX abdicated to assuage a point of honour in Adndar. His cousin was duly crowned by the Abbess of Dinkumbi, who continued to provide him with much-needed counsel.

The Red Dragon Company vigilantly patrolled the Golmathi border, looking for incursions. There still aren't any. Best gig in the world.

CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT (45.2 UR)

Her All-Holiness ArdonaxIV, Claw of the Dragon, First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sabûl.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kitchat, ThaceD, ThaceE, Zarkhandu

DP: None

First Matriarch Ardonax appointed Mother Lasiora to run the show while she hopped an Ingazi ship to Sardarthion. She apparently returned by some other means in 1480.

During her absence, Mother Lasiora was mindful of the ill and raving Emperor Deric's promise to "riddle the streets of Urda's holy city with drunkards", and she constantly trained the city's defenders, both physical and spiritual.

The Church continued to focus on the regions near Iathedek, sending many thousands of missionaries to shore up the faith of the people, not just in Shuden, but in the surrounding Urdan Prefectures. The Church reached an agreement with Zarkhandu about the disposition of the area, which is being termed *The Concordat of Wyrms*.

Many investments were made to little effect. Once again, Mount Pupini erupted several times.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF GOLMATH (43 W/TA)

His Gracious Majesty, Walarrî Sardhan III, the Glorious, Baron of Madran and Kamadhi, Count of Agdora, Imperial Governor of Kaparis, and Elector & Grand Duke of Golmath.

His Great Holiness, Mordican I, Hierarch of the Fellowship of Connate Tarotists and Pontiff of the Hidden Lords at Serri.

His Excellency, the Volpel Zhogian the Fearless, Baron Volpel & Count of Runazar.

Margrave Volpel Tregarion of Ebalon.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, Murali, Sidith (2), ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdrahahn

DP: Runazar (see below)

Grand Duke Sardhan the Glorious ordered the construction of a road from Kalikadra to Dalkurnu and three new port towns: Susa in Dalkurnu, Anshan in Khunurri, and Lagash in Warraki. A stadium was constructed near the capital. Rugby has become popular throughout the Grand Duchy, and Sardhan established the "Ducal Cup" for a championship tournament to be held every five years. In 1480, the first such championship was won by the Thunarr Thunder.

Huge amounts of foreign aid was spent on famine relief throughout nearby Runazar. Both Grand Duke Sardhan and Pontiff Mordican at various times visited Runazar to meet with Count Volpel Zhogian and some of the other Clan heads. Runazar made what could charitably be called a marriage of convenience.

The government expanded, as well it might, considering that Golmath now has two dependencies and a march. Still, the whole edifice is fairly well cobbled together, and the Runazar Clans in particular are most dubious about the arrangement.

Vast sums were spent in sacrifice to the Hidden Lords. Alas, any effects were hidden as well. Perhaps out of spite, Golmath then cut trade and diplomatic relations with Zarkhandu.

The city of Golmath is the center of a religious and cultural renaissance. In 1480 the Grand Duke himself met with one of the more popular of the wandering mendicants, a popular barefoot healer named Distahn, who preaches "the Way of the

Fool". Over the course of a weekend visit, the Grand Duke was treated to wisdom involving whoopee cushions, seltzer, and pies. The Grand Duke, not a humourless Wenemet by any stretch, was nevertheless unamused.

ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ARADÉC (35 w/IL)

His Royal Majesty, Sansollen Dirharn I, Baron of Wanumarra, Electoral King of Aradéc.

Trade: Adndar, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, Murali, Murrugapa, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: Karruni (F)

For the first time in forty years, the King of Aradéc found himself bereft of the Imperial Crown. Thanks to continuing and generous investment, Aradéc's cavalry and siege quality improved, their sorcerers started catching up, their already impressive Naval Academy at Darnuldeis was expanded, as did the Cathedral School at Kityara.

Aradéc's road network was extended from Darayi to Rereyi and to Bidigapa. Susanna was expanded and the new port town of Kuwinyi was built on the north shore of Rereyi.

The summoning of Devas in Darnuldeis has become something of a tradition by now. People turned out in droves for the fireworks that accompanied the summoning of the Deva Dral in 1477. Some even picnicked.

BARONY OF MURRUGAPA (1 w/IL)

Baron arYarwain Didrel of Murrugapa.

Trade: Aradéc, Ingazi, Murali

DP: None.

Baron Dirdel was quite disappointed at the low turnout at the spring fair in his fair little town of Yandhu Maybe next year.

COUNTY OF MURALI (12 w/TA)

His Excellency, Kihyara Torthes I, Baron of Karrka, Count of Murali, Lord Admiral of the Red.

Trade: Aradéc, Golmath, Ingazi, Murrugapa, Sidith (2), Tiryowglas, Zarkhandu

DP: Dinsadon (F), Kefádhu (F), Inzana (F)

Murali once more, this time by invitation, sent Narynn Yustomon into the Wyrmwaste to speak with the Wyrms Friebæld.

Even though Murali made investments, the only thing that improved was infantry quality, in which they'd not invested at all. Funny old world.

Murali missionaries used their persuasive powers to convince the Urdans of Treal to give up their wild, heathenish ways.

Following Yustomon's return in 1480, Murali definitively closed its border with Iathedek, making all who would try to enter Friebæld's realm from Murali outlaw.

IATHEDEK: THE PROTECTORATE OF FRIBÆLD

Yustomon arrived in the lair of the Wyrms in 1478. It was a cordial conversation. Though Yustomon was fifteen years older, Friebæld continued their conversation where it had left off, practically mid-sentence. They spent several months together deep in conversation. She asked that several items be brought to the general attention of the Kindreds of Sahûl, including the following:

The lands of my protectorate are held from the Queen of Iathedek. That she does not live concerns me little. Her heirs may live, and when I am done with my mission here, I shall seek them out. Although I confess I enjoy our conversations, speaking with you tires me. There is much work yet to be done, and there is little time for amusements. In another century or so my work will be complete, and then we may speak.

I do not know what will stop the Winter, no more than I know what will stop any other season in its turn. Can it be done? Surely, if it is the Will of Urda. You tell me of prophecies that say it can be stopped, very well. If they are prophecies of Urda, I cannot doubt them, but prophecy is rarely such a simple thing as it appears. Ask the Holy Mother if she understands a quarter of what the Sibyl tells her! The minds of the Kindreds cannot hold the Divine Radiance for long, and many times it simply breaks.

I have been to Urda's Court. I have spoken with Her myself, and you and I are her children in equal

measure. If I am greater than you, Yuštomon, such differences are so slight to Her as to be invisible, and yet She knows every leaf that falls in Sahûl and grieves every Kindred their wounds.

COUNTY OF RUNAZAR

The Grand Duke of Golmath teleported to a meadow near the Volpel fortress of Callam in 1476. Following intense negotiations (and more than a few wee drams), Count Volpel Zhogian of Runazar agreed to swear fealty to the person of Grand Duke Sardhan. Zhogian is a Golmathi governor, and Runazar itself is now a Golmathi dependency. Runazar's island conquests (and some of northern Runazar proper) are now the *Ebalon March*, under command of one of Zhogian's many cousins with its capital at Bratarak in Zadok.

The two nobles took leave of each other, and Zhogian gathered the Clan armies as one to take back the festering hole in the middle of their realm: the Prefecture of Slith and the City of Morcannis, Runazar's putative capital. Count Zhogian led the armies in person, only to find that the *Hand* had abandoned the region. The ruins of the fortress there were still smoking, the priory of Vradon had been disassembled stone by stone, and the naval and land forces that had been in Morcannis had sailed for points unknown. The locals treated the Count and the Clans as liberators, for so they were.

Many Clans were unhappy with the arrangement with Golmath, but the Count assured them that it was only to protect and defend the independent culture of Runazar. They remain unconvinced.

ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ZARKHANDU (39 s/YG)

Queen Kwadan the Pious, Vice-Regent for...

His Majesty, Sakkath Sharret Radohl the Really Very Young Yet, Prince-Regent of Zarkhandu.

Vahl, Margrave Draconis, Commander of the Horse Guards.

Trade: Ingazi, Kommolek, Murali, Sidith (2), Urdrahahn

DP: Shuden (T), Kiaf (T), Sital (T), Zhîn (T)

Zarkhandu did its best to feed the hungry. Waystations were prepared for an anticipated flood of refugees from the worst-hit areas, but they did not come. The weather improved quite a bit, and though its still nowhere near optimal, it improved each year and gave the people much-needed hope.

Old King Onin Zhur died in the winter of 1477. His son Prince Sharret-Grol was in Iodeth at the time, so he could not participate in the special Rending Day festivities that traditionally follow the death of a King. It is a testament to the honour accorded to both him and his father that there were no hints of rebellion or strife. He took the throne name *Onin Zho*, meaning "sublime razor".

The Royal family were on their way home when news reached them of Onin Zho's election to the imperial throne. The Emperor called in his advisors in Zarkandine law and tradition and consulted closely with them for several hours. When all emerged, the Emperor declared that, in accordance with both Imperial Law and an obscure precedent dating back to a land dispute in Zyleen in the fifth century, Onin Zho was appointing his wife Vice-Regent of Zarkhandu. She will reign until their son, the Prince-Regent, was of age. After a tearful farewell, the Queen and her oldest son continued back to Vùhlath, while the Emperor and his youngest son sailed to Sardarthion.

Zarkhandu announced the Draconic March:

Zarkhandu, in association with the Church Universal & Triumphant, announces the creation of a March, consisting of those Urdan regions who wish to retain their religion and way of life and would in turn pay tribute to the Kingdom of Zarkhandu. The March will be governed from Arrendeis in Haidek. The Prefectures available to join are Sital, Tyldek, Yannek, Derridon, Kiaf, Shuden, Treal, Kefadhu and Mawali. May the warmth of our associations temper our minds during these dark days.

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Imperial Gazette

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Emperor Onin Zho

APPOINTMENTS

To Marshal of Thacia, Governor of Thacia Maior & Minor: Electoral Count Palatine Ebalondrir IV.

To Admiral of the Blue, Governor of Artier: Electoral Prince Dronex II of Cappargarnia.

To Admiral of the Red: Count Torthes of Murali.

To Governor of Belegaridor, Dorthacia, Lambris, Mondahan, Nauatidran, Tramelis: *by exam.*

ENNOBLEMENT

The Electoral Grand Duchess Chass'ika of Itaxik, her Hive and her Realm, are elevated to the dignity of Electoral Princess of Itaxik.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS OF THE EMPIRE

Province	Governor	Province	Governor
Agador	bureaucrat	Kembul	bureaucrat
Anabreis	vacant	Kiermon	vacant
Aradaun	vacant	Kinsidan	bureaucrat
Arador	vacant	Kordier	bureaucrat
Ardebon	Atuburrk	Kumarand	vacant
Artier	Cappar.	Lambris	bureaucrat
Balashan	bureaucrat	Larloc	bureaucrat
Belegaridor	bureaucrat	Mondahan	bureaucrat
Biralis	bureaucrat	Muralis	bureaucrat
Chos	Itaxik	Narchoal	vacant
Dorthacia	vacant	Nauatidran	vacant
Dranchaal	bureaucrat	Orinos	bureaucrat
Dranmul	Averon	Sachon	bureaucrat
Drazhan	bureaucrat	Sardior	bureaucrat
Endior	bureaucrat	Sistramidor	bureaucrat
Iantier	bureaucrat	Tepalis	vacant
Iasedior	bureaucrat	ThaciaMaior	ThaceE
Kaidu	bureaucrat	ThaciaMinor	ThaceE
Kanapad	vacant	Thebia	vacant
Kanmul	bureaucrat	Tramelis	bureaucrat
Kaparis	Golmath	Withidan	bureaucrat
Kassaria	bureaucrat	Yann	vacant
Kastier	bureaucrat		

OPEN OFFICES

Due to death or incapacitation of the previous office-holders, the following are now vacant::

Chancellor of the Empire and governors as indicated.

Imperial Strength Index

<i># Realm</i>	<i>Player</i>	<i>Forum Name</i>	<i>E-mail</i>	<i>ISI</i>
<i>The Great Powers</i>				
1	Golmath	Paul Flinton.....	Free Beer	cruentidei@gmail.com1,115.7
2	Zarkhandu / Emperor..	Theo Moriarty	Mandala of Blood	tmoriarty@gmail.com1,063.1
3	Aradéc	Charles Hurst.....	Xanthi.....	charlesh@teleport.com1,052.8
4	Cappargarnia.....	David Adams.....	seattleda	seattleda@yahoo.com.....1,005.7
5	Averon	Kevin Lawrence.....	Averon Inc.....	privatej67@yahoo.com981.0
<i>Major Powers</i>				
6	Thace, Elector	Nuno da Silva.....	Nuno.....	ndasilva23@hotmail.com 946.5
7	Araxes.....	Darren Quinn	Demantiae	demantiae@gmail.com..... 868.3
8	Chi'tixi	Steve Cagg.....	Priest King	ragnarstation@hotmail.com865.9
9	Duedhyn	Alex James	Clan Dhanos of Duedyn..	ClanDhanos@yahoo.com816.0
10	Atuburrk.....	Adam Sherman.....	Gonnagal	steel.weasel@yahoo.com735.5
11	Church U&T.....	Jacqueline Brasfield.	Amphigori.....	crabbycupcakes@gmail.com.....723.1
12	Itaxik	Michael Warner.....	Galen	me1451@comcast.net 708.3
<i>Minor Powers</i>				
13	Taneki	Ed Allen	Malathion	tgroove@earthlink.net 630.3
14	Elphárec.....	Josh Buchanan.....	joshb	joshinstl@yahoo.com629.7
15	Ingazi.....	Harry Jago.....	jago	jagoh@yahoo.com612.4
16	Pexiki.....	John Schmid.....	Magus	magus@spellcaster.org.....610.0
17	Kicitchat.....	James Hazeltine.....	Von Malvalken.....	jhazeltine@pleiadesmm.com583.0
18	Adndar	Steven Lloyd.....	Blackheart.....	slloyd13@gmail.com556.8
19	Kommolek.....	Cortlandt Winters..	Cortah	cwinters@notebookmargins.com ..549.4
20	Tiryowglas.....	Mike Johnson	Minister of Defense.....	printermanmj@aol.com..... 546.9
21	Thace, Duchy	Jake Roberts	Jake	jakeroberts1@cox.net.....521.1
22	Hyrágec	Frank Thein.....	Frank	fthein@gmx.de.....520.1
<i>Miscellaneous Rabble</i>				
23	Murali	Corey Snow	Cyclometh.....	cyclometh@gmail.com.....391.9
24	Church Militant	open for a player381.1
25	IOC	Nelson Merritt.....	hemmy	hemmymerritt@yahoo.com..... 346.4
26	Tokatl	open for a player326.1
27	Kachar	Jim Granata	Kovah.....	dingoeseightmybaby@yahoo.com . 317.2
28	Yax'te	Tyler Baumgartner .	rawhidekid	tylerbaumgartner@gmail.com..... 284.6
29	Sakkar	open for a player250.1
30	Tigers.....	open for a sensitive poet who enjoys long walks on the beach.....	202.4
31	Murrugapa.....	seriously?59.9

