

# The Sahûl Chronicle

Turn 10

Published by the Printers Guild of Zadres

1496–1500 SA

“Yiannis? Do we even own that?”

Gwariva Trememeres III, Count Palatine of Ingazi

**I**MPORTANT RULES NOTE: Due to the continuing recovery of the credit and banking system, for this turn the formula for calculating International Trade is as follows:  $GP_{IT} = (TV1 \times TV2) / 6$ . Normal trading maximums apply.

Since I keep having to answer this question: I generally don't mention failed DP in the Chronicle. If you performed diplomacy on a region, and there's no mention of it, odds are good it's because it failed.

## UPCOMING PUBLICATIONS:

*The Chronicle, Volume I* will be out imminently. It contains the compiled Sahûl Chronicle from Turns 0 through 10 inclusive, plus some other nifty bits including a compendium of all Imperial decrees and proclamations since Turn 0 and a handy list of Universities and other important institutes of higher learning throughout Sahûl. Available in both paperback and hard cover.

*Atlas of Sahûl, Second Edition* will be out within a few weeks as well, containing updated maps and some other supplemental material, including an index of all regions (thanks, Paul!)

NEXT TURN DUE: FRIDAY 15 MAY 2009.

## FREE COMPANIES & ERRANTRY &C.

WHITE LOTUS COMPANY—10hi 25mi 8li 12mc  
Captain: Mistress Exata (L993i) IL age 59  
Location: Atch'tik, Artier Province  
Min. Bid: 130gp/Turn

DAREIN'S DESTROYERS—3hc 35mi 20li 19mc  
Captain: Darein Gorthes (LA84w) TR age 51  
Location: Dramûl, Sardior Province  
Min. Bid: HIRED

RED DRAGON COMPANY—10cv 15pk 30mi  
Captain: Tarrid the Fiercer (LA69s) UR age 60  
Location: Urdrahâhn  
Min. Bid: HIRED

## FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

### IMPERIAL BANK OF SAHÛL

Location: ..... Einandhu

Available to borrow: ..... 1720 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\*

Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds... 3\*

Guilds Council of Adndar ..... 4\*

Printers Guild of Zadres ..... 1\*

Loans: None outstanding.

### BANK OF ITAXIK

Location: ..... Itaxik

Available to borrow: ..... 1156.3 GP

Loans: Itaxik (180/t11), Tokatl (480/t12)

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## Western Sahul

### THE KIT'IXI COAST

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#### COUNTY OF TOKATL (14 I/TA)

*Her Excellency, Tinikatua VI, the Mad, Mistress of the Totek Hive, Countess of Tokatl.*

**Trade:** Averon, CM, Itaxik, Taneki, ThaceD

**DP:** None

Tokatl raised the port town of Karatz in Chapat on the Bay of Duhrl, and a very peculiar priory in Yak'in, perhaps inspired by the very name of the region.

*I'll build me a windmill on Yak'in's high hill,  
Where the wild beasts can't reach me or hear me disgorge  
For here the gods come, come to stay a little while  
In puddles of puke that extend on for miles.*

Countess Tinikatua V ruminated deeply on the devouring of the would-be imperial assassin, apparently finding some message from the gods in this awful event. "Some of my most trusted seers," she reasoned, "have devoted themselves to the study of hariolation as it pertains to entrails. There must be a power to our insides I have not fully appreciated!" Determined that the science of entrails prognostication must be carefully explored though without, perhaps, resorting to the death of those involved, she commanded the construction the *Windmill of the Technicolour Yawn* on a high hill in Yak'in. This new priory is dedicated to hariolation through the medium of, well, vomit. The priory's main building is graced with an array of enchanted blades painted in violent colors. When the windmill is spun mechanically by the combined efforts of the faithful, it produces a kaleidoscopic strobe effect that induces vomiting in the supplicants. Venerable seers are then free to look into the misty realms of the future by roaming the fields of regurgitation.

Shortly after its completion, the Countess died, only to be succeeded by a hive-daughter perhaps even more mad than she.

Tokatl's government expanded even as Chi'tixi cut their trading ties.

#### DUCHY OF TANEKI (13 I/YG)

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

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

**DP:** None

Toktoka IV continued the Taneki tradition of doing little and talking less. As the treasury filled, the vast throngs of underemployed youths began wandering the countryside tipping cows and frightening livestock.

#### THE CHURCH MILITANT (13 I/IL)

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

**Trade:** Araxes, Averon, ThaceD, Tokatl

**DP:** Huh, what?

Several elderly Archemandrites died in rapid succession. The most recent set off for a big meeting in Sistrameides, leaving the Church Militant to continue its rudderless drift into corruption and irrelevance.

#### ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF AVERON (23 SI/IL)

*Her Gracious Majesty, Derica I, Lady of Clan Drax, Countess of Darida, Electoral Grand Duchess of Averon.*

*Tiketua III of Tishrak, Margrave of the North.*

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

**DP:** Dorria (A)

The wildly popular (and charming and wise and regal and resplendent and gosh darn pleasant) Grand Duchess Jera fell gravely ill in 1498. She died the next year, still wearing the mourning dress for her consort Larret, who died twelve years before. Their eldest daughter, the princess Derica, ascended the throne and proclaimed a year of mourning for her mother. Since Derica is unmarried and (thus far) uninterested, the Clan Mothers proclaimed her

younger sister Jera as her heir for the moment. Jera, who was at University studying for her history degree, was reportedly amused at the turn of events.

In 1496, the Malebolge Captain Zhikkeek and 36,000 Averese troops stormed through the Gate into Dorozhand, joining the 7,000 cavalry under the venerable Gnurd the Incoherent already there. They rode through the desert, intimidating nomads and generally causing a ruckus until a messenger arrived at Zhikkeek's command tent, bearing a message: the nomads of Dorozhand would pay tribute to Averon, to be delivered each year to a specified location in the dead of night. There was to be no physical contact between the nomads of Dorozhand and their Averese overlords. The note detailed locations and signals to be used by both sides during the transfers.

Captain Zhikkeek agreed to the peculiar terms. The messenger, having never said a word, saluted her and left the Averese camp. He waved a red cloth in the direction of the far-off dunes. A flash of red from the distant summit answered. Then, the messenger took out his knife and slit his own throat. He fell to the ground and bled out into the sand. Some of the Averese astonished veterans were unnervingly reminded of Jorun. The garrison kept close to the ruins, choosing the relative safety of quasi-shelter to the harsh and unforgiving desert. Even so, there were plenty of casualties to the sun and heat regular sandstorms, as well as the occasional desert raider. The presence of the raiders has limited patrols to no less than 5,000 horse.

Averon began the process of withdrawing their fleets from the Byrrin theatre, though the Green Fleet had a small task in Einandhu to complete. With the death of the Grand Duchess and loss of the Green Fleet, Lord Níder of Episma (now in his nineties) found himself and his forces stranded.

Averese engineers completed a trade road from Mardahn in Tueteen southwards through the mountains and into Cozcapilla. They also built a monument in Dorria to commemorate those brave souls who lost their lives at what is now called the Doro-

zhand Massacre. It went a long way in convincing the new Lord of Dorria to ally himself with Averon.

Naval quality improved and the government expanded.

#### COUNTY OF PEXIKI (23 I/YG)

*Her Excellency, Xitar I, Mistress of the Coactoka Hive, Countess of Pexiki, Lady Amoxcali.*

**Trade:** Itaxik, Taneki

**DP:** Nomiuh (F), Tlicata (F), Exiya (F)

Countess Ixix IV died in 1496 at the age of 34 and was succeeded by Xitar I. The young new Countess roused her sleepy realm to life and put the idlers to work. Public works projects were initiated throughout the County, particularly in some of the more troublesome prefectures. Amoxical expanded, and three new towns were founded: the ports of Tlayacali in Tetoma and Cholca in Sahmi, and the lovely little mountain villa of Montola in Kisar.

Heavily armed diplomats visited Tlicata, a formerly Xinite region. The population was nominally Yagnarist, the Xinite leadership corps having fled during the closing days of the Second Xinite War. In the highlands and in the isolated fishing villages of the coast, however, a strong underground Xinite presence remains.

Restive peasants in the form of colonists were sent to settle in Ocut (2231) and Kisar (2122).

Infantry and airship quality both improved.

#### ELECTORAL PRINCIPALITY OF ITAXIK (46 I/UR)

*Her High Majesty, Princess Yautlatoaya II, Mistress of the Tischak, Countess of Takkikik, Elector of Itaxik, Golden Beetle of the West.*

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

**Trade:** Averon, Carcë, Pexiki, Sakkar, Taneki, Tokatl, Urdrahahn, Yax'te

**DP:** Cozcapilla (T)

Itaxik continued its breakneck development pace. The road network was extended from Yua,

through Yagnarist Co'atepec and into Yagnarist Cozcapilla, where it connected to the Averese trade road there. A new priory was built in Koatetel by and for the Church Universal & Triumphant.

The age-old ruins of Nikka were rebuilt into a town. Slowly, slowly, life and trade is returning to the forlorn Miçtia.

Border disputes with Sakkar were addressed in a document known as *the Pehuatoka Protocol*. Sakkar relinquished their claims to Poliuz and Pehuatoka, with their Urdan Cathedrals, to Itaxik, while Itaxik relinquished their claims to Onnok, Pekka, Tonnok, and Iutl. Unfortunately for Itaxik, the Countess of Pehuatoka reasserted her independence the moment Sakkari forces withdrew from the area. Negotiations between the Countess and the Itaxik army are ongoing.

Princess Chass'ika died of a nasty cough in 1497 in Sardarthion, having never returned to her homeland. Former Regent Yautlatoaya briefly ascended the throne, but she soon died, some say of an ulcerated mesenteron<sup>1</sup>. The new Princess is a great deal younger than her two predecessors and presumably in better health.

In 1498 a Sakkari ally with a bodyguard of about 2,500 visited Itaxik and attended the military academy there.

The House of Lady Nabari was granted lands and titles in the Miçtian Valley to honour her memory and her service.

#### BARONY OF SAKKAR (14 IS/IL)

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

**Trade:** Itaxik, Taneki, Yax'te

**DP:** Totoch (F)

**T**he pious Sakkar concluded *the Pehuatoka Protocol* with Itaxik, giving up those regions containing Urdan cathedrals in exchange for others.

<sup>1</sup> A not-uncommon malady amongst high caste Malebolge, it is often caused by an unhealthy amount of meat in the diet or by prolonged stress.

The town of Akolopa was built in Urdan Popuks, causing quite a bit of friction between the locals and the new Iluvarian burghers. The great port city of Kuauinochitla grew. Combined, this urbanization made up for the loss of Pehuatoka.

Sakkari forces annexed both Tonnak and far away Rossilion. Sakkar's government expanded.

#### ICEMARK OF YAX'TE (16 S/IL)

*Margrave Cleon the Solemn, Grand Master and Knight-Commander of the Champions of the Renewal.*

**Trade:** Itaxik, Sakkar, Taneki

**DP:** Kwetatl (F), Kikua (F), Tat'ia (T)

**T**he Ice-mark expanded the city of Firreltet and saved their grain against future hardship. Hardy Saurian settlers began a colony in Elowen.

Iluvarian missionaries flooded tributary Kwetatl, converting the vast majority of the population.

The great Margrave Tillein the silent died in 1500 at the age of 71. His grandnephew Cleon ascended the throne. Cleon, hoping to reverse the shrinking size, if not fortunes, of Clan Gorrne, has married. He and his wife are busy producing potential heirs.

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## Thacia & Aret

### THE HIGH PLAINS & NORTHERN COAST

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#### ELECTORAL QUEENDOM OF THE GREAT HIVE OF CHI'TIXI TIRRIX KI (38 I/YG)

*Her Most Puissant Maješty, Antaxi V, the Pleasant, Mistress of Tirrix & the Great Hive, Duchess of Chax and Tix'itikata, Countess Itax, Electoral Queen of Chi'tixi, &c., &c.*

*Her Excellency, Tannix IV, Lady Ch'tort, Countess of Cerrat, Vice-regent of Western Chi'tixi.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Averno, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Kommolek, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Udraháhn

**DP:** Kirikat (F), Chekkah (T)

Chi'tixi finished cleaning up after their foreign adventures. Taporin in the Byrrin Valley was turned over to fellow Twilight March compatriot Kommolek, and the Company of the Black Claw were plied with treasure with the idea that they would become part of Chi'tixi's army. Captain Tirabinis Tirrit accepted a vacant Baronial title in Tichir and the majority of his followers joined Chi'tixi. The holdouts scattered, many of them retiring and some even returning to their homes.

Chi'tixi built one additional priory and ceased trading with all Tarotists.

#### DUCHY OF THACE (24 s/UR)

*Lord Sasobal Yanor, Steward of Thace.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Averon, Carcë, Chi'tixi, CM, Ingazi, Hyrägec, ID, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdrahahn

**DP:** Yes.

Duke Willor ordered the construction of two steppe towns, Cavok in Degrah and Röedah in Apéric, as well as seven priories throughout his realm. Investments continued everywhere. The University of Ourane finally opened their library's new wing. Those who had briefly seen Duedhyn's library at Pareis claimed that this was the greater. Scribes and printers from all over Sahûl flocked here, and several new printing houses opened in Ourane. Those shut out of Duedhyn were delighted with this collection of works long thought lost, including the *Annals* of Vator, ancient texts on alchemy, metal craft, architecture, philosophy, mathematics, and hydraulics. Truly a wonder of the world, and open to the public. Improvements to the Duchy's military and especially sorcery are already evident.

Three of the Duke's four nephews spent their time in court intrigues, jockeying to be named heir and attending either the University or the Military Academy<sup>2</sup>, but neither the Clan Mothers nor the Duke tipped their hands. The fourth nephew is

<sup>2</sup> The brothers Lords Willor and Brannis attended University, and their cousin Lord Biard, already an army officer, attended the Military Academy and received a promotion to Colonel.

a monk and quite uninterested in politics. In the absence of a selected heir, the Duke appointed his friend, the Wizard Yanor, as *Steward of Thacia* and set off to Sardarthion to serve as Chancellor of the Empire.

When the three nephews had graduated from their respective schools in 1500, they were called before the Clan Mothers, who chose the youngest and brightest as heir. Although Lord Brannis was pleased to have been chosen, he has some concerns about his older brother Willor, a lazy lout who barely graduated from University.

Urdan missionaries convinced a majority in Sandir to forsake Iluvar.

#### ELECTORAL COUNTY-PALATINE OF THACE (27 s/UR)

*Somara the Savvy, Sorceress Extraordinaire and Regent for ...*

*His Most Excellent Maješty, Brannis VI, the Young, Lord Goshtikka-Snamarthis, Electoral Count Palatine in Thace.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Averon, Cappargarnia, Carcë, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrägec, ID, Ingazi, Kitchat, Taneki, ThaceD, Urdrahahn

**DP:** None

Electoral Thace continued to slide into disarray. As Count Ebalondrir spent his days in wine and opium in far-off Carcë, starving peasants and destitute burghers voiced their dissatisfaction by means of riots and the odd occasional looting. The Lord of Corinn stopped sending tribute in 1497.

The following year, the capital was abuzz with the rumour that Baron Gortika Argath, commanding the County's largest army of 65,000 cataphrači and knights, was considering crossing the bridge from Esenthis into Snamarthis to restore order. Count Ebalondrir suddenly roused himself from his stupor. He gathered his wife and son and the Carcë garrison and sped towards the capital with all due haste. No sooner had the Count left than Carcë rebelled.

Indeed, the next year Argath and his forces crossed the Hûrn. They were briefly confronted the army of the Sorceress Somara, some 12,500 husars. Somara withdrew her forces, fleeing back into the capital, while Argath's army camped outside. Argath, determined that the Count had to be replaced by somebody competent, or at least not addicted to opium, had sent agents throughout the area, looking for a male heir to the House Goshtikka-Snamarthis. None could be found. Desperate, he sought out even a female, that he might marry into the family, but the only unmarried member of the House that had reached the age of majority was the Count's very elderly aunt, who suffers from dementia. The pruning of the House's family tree over the last several generations was now painfully obvious.

More and more of the nobility of the Electorate were rallying to Baron Argath's cause for reform, and the Count's northward journey was becoming dangerous. Everywhere he went, he was confronted by starving farmers and rebellious lords. Fearing for his family's safety, he left his wife Gorthis, their young daughter Sardira, and the majority of his troops behind in the fortress of Brakus' Rest in Esamocia. He took his two young sons and the Palatine Horse Guard northwards with him, travelling under cover of night and hopeful that they might rally support at the capital.

The Count arrived in the spring of 1499 to find Baron Argath's army besieging the capital, with Somara's small force holed up inside, lobbing occasional fire bolts over the walls. The loyal Lord Drarröe, meanwhile had recruited something like 50,000 cataphraçti at Andröe to his Count's cause. The Count met up with this force en route to relieve the siege, and battle was joined on the river bank near Snamarthis.

The battle was short, occupying only the early morning hours of the 25th of Tertillis, but it was extremely bloody. In the mighty crash of charging cataphraçti against cataphraçti, tens of thousands died. Among the casualties were both the Electoral Count-Palatine Ebalondrir Lax and the "rebel"

Baron Argath. Confusion reigned, until the Sorceress Somara's herald, almost by sheer force of will, convinced the rebel lords to accept a truce while the dead were counted and named.

Argath's seniormost surviving lieutenant, confronted with the fact that Ebalondrir was dead, declared himself perfectly happy to surrender to the new Count, whoever that might be.

And so it was that Ebalondrir's eldest son was acclaimed as Electoral Count-Palatine of Thace and given a battlefield coronation at the tender age of nine. By mutual consent, Somara was appointed regent, and all surviving combatants of both sides swore fealty to the new Elector.

#### **LORDSHIP OF CARCĚ (5 s/UR)**

*Sar Grotan Tremek, Second Lord CarcĚ, Master of the Horseclans, Scourge of Urda the Fierce.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Itaxik, ThaceD, ThaceE

**DP:** None

**S**ar Tremek was pleased that his homeland rejoined without a war. Otherwise, the horseclans were largely absorbed with herding sheep and cattle.

#### **GRAND DUCHY OF ARAXES (26 w/UR)**

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

**Trade:** Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averno, Cappargarnia, CarcĚ, Chi'tixi, CM, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kitchat, Kommolek, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

**DP:** Rerek (A), Zimjun (F), Gölzuz (F), Syghor (T!)

**G**rand Duke Tramandes clearly missed the whole stomping about in the steppe and whacking heretics thing. So just as the Twilight March was pulling out of the mess in the Byrrin, Araxes was getting in. Some said the Grand Duke was a little old to be riding off, but he refused to let it stop him go on maneuvers with his army. He was accompanied by Sir Ronnel Rannes, the Lord Protector of the Realm. Sadly, Sir Rannes died in 1499. His

youngest son, a spitting image of his father, took up his military duties.

Despite the lingering effects of the financial crisis, four new towns were built, all in the inland portions of the Grand Duchy: Majimu in Hesketh, Kamukapi in Gorice (in the very shadow of the volcano Mount Gor), Kalbi in Morna, and Parrpa in allied Zayana.

Considerable military construction was everywhere in evidence. Thanks to considerable investment, cavalry, infantry, naval and airship quality all improved.

Following an apology from their northern neighbours, Araxes reestablished trade with Chi'tixi.

The Grand Duke's son and heir, Count Pangku Tramandes, was promoted to Captain of one of the realm's newest caravels, *HGS Absolute*.

#### COUNTY OF KICITCHAT (20 I/YG)

*Her Excellency, T'cha'k v, Lady Tchac'at, Countess of the Kicitchat Hive and Associated Dominions.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, CotI, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None

Kicitchat stood down from war, as did all of the Twilight March realms. They did, however, send oodles of missionaries into their newly conquered territories. The populations of Krittix, Thichat, Karadeg, Kentel, and Dahu were converted to Yagnarism, leaving only scattered Tarotist minorities in those regions. In Krittix, the "Tarotist minority" consists of a band of wandering minstrels and their dog.

Countess Xant'ki died of old age in 1499. The new Countess is not as popular as her predecessor.

#### ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ATUBURRK (23 W/YG)

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

**Trade:** Araxes, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat,

Kommolek, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn, Zadres (3)

**DP:** None.

Admiral Jannes, twice over a hero of Atuburrk and (arguably) the Empire, died of heart failure aboard his flagship *HMS Count of Erran* at the age of 75 in 1497, still commanding his Grand Duke's navy. The flags of every ship in the fleet, and even the Electoral Banner over the palace, flew at half-mast for six months in his honour. So beloved was the Admiral, that the citizens of his home city of Inh Ódnodnen raised a statue to him, paid for by donations. They didn't even have to flog anybody to cough up their share.

On the Wild Coast, the wreckage of several ships washed ashore in the autumn of 1500. Several weeks later, a handful of Ingazi warships made port under a flag of truce. The ships were basically hulks: most were down to a single mast and makeshift sails, and all were taking in water as fast as it could be pumped out.

The double port town of Wagga Wagga was built on Cape Fahz in Katch. Atuburrk's airship quality improved.

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## Central Sahûl

### THE HEART OF EMPIRE

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#### THE CRUSADE OF THE SIX KNIVES (1479-1499)

*Raven Crusaders vs Cappargarnia, etc.*

1496: As the armies and navies of the Twilight March headed to their respective homes, it became obvious that Cappargarnia would be defending the Byrrin valley from the Raven Crusaders alone.

On the other side of the war, meanwhile, the Raven Prophet Barugh had his own problems. His crusaders were deserting in droves. Rumours were rife that the Holy Mother had definitively repudiated the Prophet, and confusion reigned among the faithful. To forestall the disintegration of his army, the Prophet ordered his men to leave the relative

safety of their city of Hunychar and march eastwards to try to capture the city of Adndar.

Meanwhile, Commodore Lord Sevas Dixit and the Cappargarnian fleet blockaded the Raven port of Balyow, though precious little trade was coming through the port anyway.

Kommolek gave up its claim to Ebmadh in recognition of the bravery of Baron Sandrim Hesiod and the Ebmadh armies in alliance with Kicitchat at the Battle of the Three Armies (1494). They even left a thank you note to the Baron for his service to the Empire, as well as a lovely stick.

*1497:* As the Prophet's army struck east, the armies of Lord Drathic of Pahkandar moved into Dwelnaz behind him. They found the region undefended as the garrison fled before them. They encircled the Prophet's city of Hunychar and prepared for a long siege.

In the south, Cappargarnian armies met invading Ravens in Arzhador, at the very steps of the Tarotist Cathedral of Ardarhun.

#### *The Battle of Ardarhun*

Four Raven captains, led by Sir Spennenn Wynn, commanded 17,500 knights, 23,000 horsemen, and 18,000 spearmen against the Cappargarnian army of General Darronley of the noble House of Anabrin and the Clan forces of Baron Sandrim Hesiod of Ebmadh. The Cappargarnians mustered 41,000 horse and 19,000 foot in a strong defensive position and waited for the charge.

And when the charge came, the thundering crash of arms could be heard for miles. The luck of the Ravens was as bad as the luck of the Cappargarnians was good. The Tarotist pike tore through the charging crusaders, putting the survivors to flight. The best news for the crusaders was the death in battle of the Baron of Ebmadh.

Despite their losses, Wynn rallied his forces to again charge the fortified Cappargarnian lines. This time, as the crusader knights crashed into the

defensive line, Cappargarnian cavalry flanked them from both sides. In the bloodbath that followed, there were virtually no crusader survivors. What few there were fled and were heard of no more. Sir Spennenn Wynn's mangled corpse was found and stripped of its armour as a trophy. The bodies were left for the crows.

The Cappargarnian casualties were heavy, with the survivors numbering no more than 42,000.

Meanwhile, in Envel the Prophet led 20,000 crusaders into what he called "the enemy's heart". It proved to be an unprotected heart. After brushing aside the few thousand defenders like flies, Barugh began preaching in the countryside of Envel, even as his army prepared for an assault on Adndar itself. But this was not to be a repeat of Dwelnaz; the mighty fortress of Nalhul proved a thorn in the crusaders' side, and the burning of the Hermitage Priory hardened the hearts of the stubbornly loyal Tarotists. Still, about a quarter of the population had embraced the Raven's call by the time the Prophet presented himself before the mighty walls of the Imperial Free City of Adndar in the summer of 1497.

Unlike Hunychar just three years previous, the Adndar garrison did not ask for terms. No one answered the Prophet's call. In fact, the longer the army encamped near the city, the smaller the army became. At first they left in twos and threes, in the dead of night. But then copies of the Holy Mother's *Order of Excommunication and of Public Repentance to the Prophet Barugh & the Raven Crusaders* began to make the rounds. At that point, deserters left by the hundreds.

Using every ounce of authority he could muster, the Prophet harangued the crusaders and whipped them into such fighting shape as he could. Already aware of the loss of Dwelnaz and the catastrophe in Arzhador, the Prophet urged his followers, now numbering about 15,000, to "one final, glorious battle".

### *The Assault of Adndar*

Though his army consisted mostly of horsemen, the Prophet Barugh hoisted his banner, the Banner of Malygris, and led the charge himself. “This night,” he shouted, “we shall dine together in the halls of Adndar, or we shall dine together in the Halls of the Raven!”

Surprisingly, the crusaders actually had a chance. Though the city’s walls were tall and thick, there was virtually no other defense, and no leadership to speak of. The city’s great airship fleet lay silent in their berths. While the cavalry was busy painting the city’s gates scarlet, the light infantry was already atop the wall. The Prophet himself was atop the wall, when a single arrow found its mark in his throat. A collective gasp rose from the fighters on both sides and time itself seemed to jell and thicken as the mighty Raven Prophet Barugh toppled from Adndar’s wall into the moat outside.

The crusaders broke. There was no other leader, no other cause, no other reason that could compel them to continue the attack. They broke and they fled, leaving behind a breached wall and burning defenses. The clergy of Adndar proclaimed a day of thanksgiving for their miraculous deliverance.

When Barugh’s body was fished out of the moat, no trace of his banner could be found.

*1498:* As news of the Prophet’s death and the destruction of the armies filtered through the Raven territories, panic began to set in. A stream of refugees headed west, where they were welcomed with open arms by Sisters of the Church Universal & Triumphant, who had set up refugee camps providing food, shelter, and orthodox preaching.

Darein’s Destroyers joined the Cappargarnian forces entrenched in Dwelnaz to help out with the siege, though most of the heavy lifting was already over. The Cappargarnian siege of Hunychar ended with only a handful of casualties, as agents from inside the city opened the gates for the Tarotists.

In Tythyen, the increasing presence of orthodox Urdan preachers from the Cathedral of Logosenn

converted a majority of the region back to Urdanism. The Raven Burgrave of Balyow fled in the night, supposedly disguised in a burkha, and soon the entire region rose in armed rebellion against the Ravens.

Raven-held Bufalein was occupied by the forces of the masterful General Anabrin Darronley, accompanied by the new Baron of Ebmadh, the young and personable Sandrim Haryt, with his Clan forces. Although the Urdan locals did not care for the Ravens, they like the Tarotists rather less.

Prince Tiribissi Lanharnes sought a vision from the Hidden Lords at the ancient Cathedral of Arag. If he saw anything, he did not reveal what it might have been.

*1499:* In Tarotist Dramûl, the Raven garrison was overthrown by locals armed with rakes and shovels. They joyfully welcomed the Cappargarnian army and even Darein’s Destroyers as liberators.

In the west, Urdans were on the march against the Raven remnants. Following a string of successful diplomatic efforts, Araxes annexed Tarotist Syghor as much by the presence of a large army as by the presence of diplomats from both Araxes and the Church. Independent Tythyen, searching for a protector, paid tribute to the Grand Duke of Araxes.

In newly Araxean Zimjun, the Church Universal & Triumphant constructed a priory dedicated to Saint Ilona of Blessed Memory.<sup>3</sup> In all of the new Araxean territories, daily prayer for the conversion of the Ravens was held at daybreak in well-attended tent services in the steppe.

With the loss of leadership and a string of defeats, all cohesion of the Raven Crusader State collapsed, leaving only independent Raven “Republics” in Cauaros, Dusios, and Adément. While the rulers of these lands have considerable armed might, in Dusios and Adément they don’t really have the support of the citizenry, which is overwhelmingly Tarotist.

<sup>3</sup> Saint Ilona was martyred in the Byrrin Valley in the second century when she attempted to defend the (now long lost) Cathedral of Ennet from the mob led by the arch-heretic “Prophet” Balasár. She failed.

### ELECTORAL REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA (35 M/TA)

*His Sublime Majesty, Tiribissi Lanharnes, Electoral Prince of Cappargarnia, Guildmaster of the Innkeepers, Hereditary Burgrave of Adndar.*

*His Excellency Tiribissi Lanharnes II, Chancellor of the Guilds Council of the Imperial Free City of Adndar.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Duedhyn, CotI, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Zadres (3)

**DP:** Nope.

**D**espite the ongoing war, the new renaissance of learning spread from Duedhyn, bringing with it a renewed interest in the classical forms of art, literature, and science. Sorcery and airship technology were enhanced. The University of Cappargarnia expanded. Cappargarnia repaid their bank loan.

With the collapse of the Raven Crusaders in 1499, Tiribissi Lanharnes was hailed as the saviour of the Republic. His only rival in the public affection is one of the heroes of the war, General Lord Anabrin Darronley.

### CHURCH OF THE ILLIMITABLE (9 M/TA)

*His Great Holiness, Fenric IV, Pontiff of the Hidden Lords at Golluz.*

**Trade:** Cappargarnia, Einandhu, ID, Kicitchat, Kommolek

**DP:** None.

**F**enric IV began his reign auspiciously enough by doing nothing. This was a marked improvement over his immediate predecessor.

### IN THE IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF EINANDHU...

**T**he three of them sat in the small chamber that had been the private study of the Tiger King of Arms. The decrepit furniture and the centuries old tapestries had been cleared out for rubbish, replaced with the very latest and most elegant furniture in the Djarden style and oil paintings, particularly portraits, from the new school of the Masters of Joarbel.

They had formed their “second son society” years ago, and even now those bonds of friendship proved as strong or stronger than bonds of Clan or Country. They gathered under the leadership of the youngest among them, the 22-year old Saurian now calling himself Tirach Zhur.

*Three forms of good government can be discerned from our tradition and law, as well as three that are contrary to them. The bad forms of government are darkened mirrors to the good. Those who equate good government with Iluvarian morals and bad government with Yagnarišt morals are as tiresome as they are incorrect.*

(A Treatise on Government, *Tirach Zhur*)

A servant brought in a bottle of Zyleen icewine and a tray of sweets. The room was silent until the servant left, closing the metal-banded oak door behind him.

The two Wenemet were about the same age, either side of forty, but otherwise very different. The older still wore the uniform of a colonel of the Emerald Watch, though all rank and decoration had been removed. His movements were precise, like clockwork, as he brought his glass to his lips and swallowed the icewine in one go.

The other Wenemet, dressed in simple but elegant burgundy brocade, was much more fluid, and he slouched with one arm around the back of his chair. He poured himself a glass but did not drink. Instead, he held his glass up to a reedy beam of light that tumbled from one of the chamber’s high windows and squinted through the pale liquid as if looking for insects.

The Colonel broke the silence. “How goes the book, my lord?”

The Saurian smiled. “Which book, Lazar? I sent the commentary to the printers this morning.”

“I was unaware that there was a second book. I was referring to the treatise on government.”

“Ah. I decided the chapter on the *Code* didn’t really belong with the rest of it. I polished it up and sent it separately. No more than ten pages. More of

a pamphlet, really, than a book. I think you read the draft?”

“Indeed my lord. Your detractors will be... confused I think that you’ve written a commentary on the *Code of Chivalry*. And such a one! They’d think you the reincarnation of Swordmaster Mathanes.”

“You flatter me, Lazar. You’d better watch that. It’s a bad habit.”

With a hint of a smile, Colonel Lazar bowed in his chair to the young Tirach Zhur.

*The first sort of government in the city of Sardarthion after the expulsion of the shadow kings was “for the people”. Such a democracy becomes bad when it is the government of those who are ruling for their own advantage, in opposition to the rich, or to any people.*

(A Treatise on Government, *Tirach Zhur*)

The second Wenemet, apparently satisfied by the clarity of the icewine, took a tentative sip. Tirach Zhur addressed him. “I’m given to understand that a herald came with a message for you yesterday, Andel. Anything of consequence?”

“No, my lord. Another offer for refuge. I believe that makes four offers for exile or employment since we’ve taken the city. I politely declined, of course.”

“I appreciate your confidence, Andel.”

The Wenemet shook his head dismissively. “Confidence or not, my mercenary days are over. Wild pursuits are better left to youth.”

“Fairly said, brother.”

“I do confess myself curious, my lord, about the length of our stay here.”

“How do you mean?”

“This was only ever meant to be a staging point. We have the mass teleport crystal at the ready and loyal troops. And yet we go nowhere. While it’s true we have a monstrous amount of gold, you’ve spent a small fortune on artwork and redecorating the palace. It looks to me like you’re planning a longer stay than you’re letting on.”

The Colonel interjected, “The Emperor will be sending an army soon, no doubt, to roust us out. It’s an open secret that he’s hired Darein’s army here

in the city—they’re spending money like water—and we’ve yet to make a move against them. Are we waiting for an engraved invitation?”

*The second kind of government in the city of Sardarthion was by the heads of the clans, and this sort of government is good if it tends toward the common good. Such an oligarchy becomes bad when it is the reign of a few rich people who have no interest in the common good.*

(A Treatise on Government, *Tirach Zhur*)

Tirach Zhur smiled. These two were the only people in Einandhu who would have dared address him this way. Everyone else was dazzled by his presence, it seemed, except them.

“If I had a hundred more of both of you, we could conquer the world. Yes, as a matter of fact, we are awaiting an invitation. I’m given to understand it’s on its way. We shall move the moment it arrives.” Tirach Zhur sipped his icewine. “Until then, we will continue making this palace livable. Think of it as rent to the heralds for the use of the buildings. And I know Darein; he won’t make a move until Imperial reinforcements arrive. We have at least another month, possibly more. But we shall be gone long before then. Patience!”

*The third sort of government is rule by one man. He is called a lord if he inclines to the welfare of his subjects and their common future, a tyrant if he is inclined to pursue detrimental or merely personal ends.*

(A Treatise on Government, *Tirach Zhur*)

Four days later in the same chamber, the three received an elderly herald with a message. Tirach Zhur studied the old Wenemet as he opened the envelope. His eyes rapidly scanned the letter, and he laughed.

The Colonel’s left eyebrow rose a scant quarter inch. “My Lord?”

Tirach Zhur tossed the letter on the table between them, and Lazar and Andel read the opening lines. “As the Queen dowager of the Electoral Kingdom of Zarkhandu, I invite you to return home and

bring your claim before Yagnar in personal combat with your brother..." There was more, and it was signed "Mom".

Tirach Zhur turned to the herald and said, "send back a verbal message, if you please. 'Coming, Mother' will do nicely. Oh, and herald..."

The old herald, already making for the door, turned back to Tirach Zhur.

"...or should I say, Sir Aratan?"

The herald visibly started.

"These halls shall soon be yours again. I'm grateful to you for the use of them, no matter the circumstance. I hope we have left them better than we found them."

*A single king or prince should have with him many counselors and powerful men to whose counsel he pays heed. He should listen and carefully weigh their advice. Therefore he will see things as if he were many and not just one, nor will he easily be corrupted, unless his entire council is corrupted. But if this king were to follow his own head he would not be a king, but a tyrant. Such a king is unfit to rule.*

(A Treatise on Government, Tirach Zhur)

#### IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF EINANDHU (4 M/UR)

*Sir Graxes Aratan, Tiger King of Arms.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, CotI, Duedhyn, Elphárec, Golmath, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, Tiryowglas, Zadres (3)

**DP:** It's a living.

Imperial armies of the Emerald Watch arrived at Einandhu in the late summer of 1496. They found the gates of the city open, and Darein's Destroyers in command of the city. The tale told by their captain, Darein Dorthes, was odd indeed. After months of inactivity, one day the entire occupying force simply... vanished. They left behind a spruced-up city, new artworks and furnishings in the Heraldic Palace, and a note:

*Thank you for your hospitality, and please accept our profound apologies for any inconvenience. TZ*

The Green Fleet and its Averese auxiliaries, late to the party and numbering 210 ships altogether, began a blockade of the city in 1497. With the death of the Grand Duchess Jera in 1499, the Green Fleet reverted to internal command. The former Vice-Admiral of the Green, Lord Níder of Episma, found himself and 10,000 cavalry stranded in Einandhu with only 35 transports. Though extremely elderly, Lord Níder maintains control of his forces during their extended, but sober, shore leave.

The Imperial Bank was (re)chartered, and the Heralds and the other Directors began sorting through the mess of records. The Directors voted to expel Zarkhandu from the Board and refund their shares. The first Imperial audit of the bank will be conducted within the next five years. The Board was gratified that both outstanding loans were paid in full.

#### THE IMPERIAL DEMENSE (12 M/UR)

*His August & Imperial Majesty, Sardhan I, the Glorious, Baron of Madran and Kamadhi, Count of Agdora, Elector and Grand Duke of Golmath, Sovereign of Sahúl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World.*

*His Grace, Willor v Agröeš, Shining Star of the Steppe, Lord Goshtikka-Ourane, Baron of Brennadein, Duke of Thace, Chancellor of the Empire.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, CotI, Einandhu, Elphárec, Kicitchat, Golmath, Hyrárec, Ingazi, IOC, Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Zadres (3)

**DP:** None

**IIP:** 25

*For appointments, please see Gazette.*

Emperor Sardhan threw himself into Imperial rule with the energy and focus with which he had ruled in Golmath since 1459. Einandhu was taken with no resistance in the summer of 1496

and returned to the Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds in the autumn of that same year.

Continuing the provincial reforms of Onin Zho, Sardhan ordered the Auditors to Kaparis and Orinos Provinces. And the Imperial Bank was granted a charter making it the Imperial Exchequer:

*Charter of the Imperial Bank of Sahûl (1498)*

All assets of the Imperial Bank of Einandhu shall be reconstituted into the *Imperial Bank of Sahûl*. The terms of this Charter are as follows:

1. The Imperial Bank of Sahûl shall be the Imperial Exchequer. The Emperor may withdraw only funds assigned to this exchequer account.
2. The Imperial Bank of Sahûl shall have Shareholders.
3. The Imperial Bank of Sahûl shall have a Board of Directors to define banking policies.
4. The Auditors shall audit the Imperial Bank of Sahûl every five years.
5. The Imperial Bank of Sahûl is owned and answerable to the shareholders through the board of directors.
6. The headquarters of the Imperial Bank of Sahûl shall be in Einandhu. The bank must establish a branch location in Sardarthion within five years in order to maintain the Imperial account.

The Emperor appointed the Duke of Thace as Chancellor of the Empire. He may have cause to regret his decision, as Duke Willor arrived blindfolded, and he spent much of his time this way. He is sometimes seen wandering the streets of Sardarthion without his blindfold, gape-mouthed and wide-eyed, staring around himself in wonder. In this state, he often holds conversations with people that no one else can see, and walks around invisible impediments. He once walked into the side of building, apparently not noticing it, with such

force that he gave himself a concussion and was bedridden for several days. The locals have learned to steer clear of him.

Itaxik researchers, led by the Electoral Princess Chass'ika herself, combed through the Imperial archives and Library. Sadly, Chass'ika inhaled a little too much book dust and caught a nasty cough, from which she soon died. She was mourned throughout the City and entombed in an honoured spot very near to the Mausoleum of Paharnes.

The Emperor appointed an *Imperial Reform Steering Committee* to look into ways of clarifying and revising the Golden Edict. Delegates from Atuburrk, Averno, Ingazi, Itaxik, Kommolek, and the Iluvarian Orthodox Church were appointed to the work. Thus far there has been a lot of debate, but the IOC Chair seems to be keeping everybody on task.

Desperate for some decent rugby, the Emperor gifted Sardarthion with a stadium, built at his own expense and named *Grand Duke Pirna Memorial Stadium*. The local teams are fairly comical, but Sardhan has high hopes that they'll be able to put a decent show against the Golmath Pee Wee All-Stars in a few years.

Recruitment is up in the Emerald Watch to replace those who joined Tirach Zhur.

The Urdans continued work on the already very impressive Shrine of Iurdana. It fast becoming the largest building in the City.

Despite his advanced years<sup>4</sup>, the Emperor's doctors pronounced him fit as a fiddle.

**PRINCIPALITY OF DUEDHYN (10 S/RA)**

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

**Trade:** Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Elphárec, IOC, Kommolek, Tiryowglas

**DP:** Rinthes (T)

<sup>4</sup> Sardhan turned 75 in 1497, and on his birthday he did not slack on his daily regimen of riding, fencing, reading the dispatches, and beating his equerry (in chess), all before breakfast.

Prince Dallyn closed the new library, except to those who had his written permission. Unfortunately, it's rather difficult to put a cat back into a bag. Many of the most sought-after volumes are already in print in editions of varying worth and accuracy. With the opening of the new library in Thace, many scholars and book agents left Duedhyn for greener pastures to the north. Only a single representative from the Iluvarian Orthodox Church was allowed in the building.

Lord Wydhenn of Derrow and several thousand attachés entered the Crusader lands on a diplomatic mission. Lord Wydhenn, being rather gruff and impatient, did not impress the locals, who attempted to eject him. This did not go well, and the situation ended with Duedhyn forcing tribute from Avalow in 1499. Duedhyn then built two Raven priories to celebrate.

Underneath the previous declaration, a rather lengthy document posted for all to read upon the mighty doors of the Urdan Cathedrals in Morhogh and Sansoleth. It was written in both the Old Imperial and Sardic languages. The title, in letters two inches high, was *Order of Excommunication and of Public Repentance to the Prophet Barugh & the Raven Crusaders*. No one yet knows how this might affect Duedhyn's already strained relations with the Church, but the orthodox Urdan populations of the realm are notably restive.

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

*Baron Goesek Annavas II of Kommolek, Lord Treskaw, Burgrave of Fair Belsûnd.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, CotI, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Kitchat, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Zarkhandu

**DP:** Dubhara (A)

At the end of the fifteenth century, Fell Kommolek found itself at peace. The weather improved, the financial crisis abated, and the new arts and sciences of the emerging Renaissance energized the realm. Infantry tactics and magical learning improved thanks to the new learning.

Chi'tixi forces withdrew from Taporí, leaving the region in Kommolek hands. Yagnarist missionaries convinced a majority there to give up their Tarotist ways. The local hatred for the invaders has cooled considerably as many of the more compliant local leaders became wealthy under Kommolek rule. Most of Kommolek's military left Taporí and sailed back south.

Ebmadh was returned to its baron with grateful thanks for his service to the Empire. The Kommolek didn't even loot the place when they left as a mark of their true esteem. They left a struggle stick in the empty garrison headquarters as a gift for the baron (or his heir, as the case may be).

Kommolek's astronomers were well funded.

In 1496, a small military force of perhaps 8,000 men and sixty stone golems led by Tirach Zhur suddenly *appeared* in a meadow in Yseldyr flying the colours of the Twilight March. Within days, much of their leadership corps and a number of the troops vanished, leaving behind 7,500 infantry commanded by Colonel Turanis Akkethes, late of the Emerald Watch. They don't appear to be doing much.

#### **COUNTY OF TIRYOWGLAS (23 s&w/IL)**

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

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

**DP:** None.

Count Sarrík's oldest son and heir, Lord Kerens, died in 1500 after a brief illness. Both the Count and the Clan Mothers were taken by surprise, and no new heir has yet been chosen. The leading contenders seem to be two of Kerens' brothers: Lord Sarrík is an administrator in the newly expanded government, and Colonel Lord Lefans is with the Army of the Antean. Some, however, think that one of Lord Kerens' young sons might be a better choice.

The County's economy, hard-hit by the "Yagnarist Recession" slowly recovered. By agreement, the

Imperial Free City of Deriháhn expanded to an actual city. The Tiryowgli navy came home.

### ILUVARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (22 IL)

*His All Holiness, Pope Pious VIII, Pontiff of Siſtrameides, Archemandrite of Ilúhir.*

**Trade:** Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Tiryowglas

**DP:** None.

Pope Pious VIII endowed a new Medical College at the University of Siſtrameides. The Church expanded its grasp of sorcery and enlarged its bureaucracy.

The Pope asked the Duke of Elphárec if they wouldn't mind following the example of Tiryowglas and tithe some raw materials as well as gold. No answer has yet been received.

A delegation from the Church Militant, led by the Archemandrite Aketika XII herself, arrived slightly early for the Convocation of Iluvarian Churches, scheduled to begin in 1501. The Grand Abbot of Kityara is reportedly weighing a visit as well.

The Abbot of the Order of the Scroll visited the library of Siſtrameides.

### MOST SANGUINE DUCHY OF ELPHÁREC (30 W/IL)

*His Grace, Eparreb Tashnes III, Count of Angûron and Siddhan, Duke of Elphárec.*

**Trade:** Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Tiryowglas

**DP:** None.

Duke Tashnes continued to spend a great deal of time hiding under his bed. Frankly, some of the court are starting to worry.

Baron Ilkurr Valdiss, the Toymaker of Mungg, with no instructions to the contrary, continued to work on his increasingly complicated and increasingly bizarre automatons. His life's quest was to build one capable of playing chess. Although he has not succeeded (yet!) his most recent works are garnering much attention. Most popular is a boat with four automatic musicians that floats up and down the Ogobir River to entertain guests at drinking parties hosted by the Duke's heir, Lord Tashnes.

### KINGDOM OF HYRÁGEC (23 W/UR)

*His Valiant Majeſty Irrjir Rahnes VI, the Taciturn, King of Hyrágec, Beloved of Urda.*

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

**DP:** None.

The great Queen Sardira fell ill and died in the autumn of 1498 at age 68, mourned by all the Kingdom, and indeed by much of Sahûl.

Her heir was her no-nonsense second cousin once-removed, Captain Prince Rahnes of the Royal Hyrágecan Navy. While there are those who contend that the new King rarely smiles or jokes, those familiar with him know better. The new King has, in fact, *never* smiled or cracked a joke.

The King's son Frenthes, a recent graduate of the military academy, was chosen as heir.

The new king continued Queen Sardira's expansion of the Sorcery Academy, and it was finally endowed as the Royal University of Pahasar in 1500. The Royal Infantry upgraded their tactics (and uniforms), while the Kingdom's sorcerers reported breakthroughs in their sacred arts.

The Kingdom expanded the priory of St. Neham in Tregerieg into an abbey. The strange talk about Elbun Forest increased; some incidents were even reported by sober people.

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## The Gawan Peninsula

### THE FEUDAL NORTHEAST

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### COUNTY PALATINE OF INGAZI (29 W/UR)

*His Moſt Urdan Excellency, Gwariva Trememeres III, Overlord of Gawan, Captain of the Eaſt Riding, Count Palatine of Ingazi.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Hyrágec, ID, IOC, Kitchat, Kommolek, Murali, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, (z)Arkhandu

**DP:** Naripinyi (F), Kattri (F), Yiannis (A, see below)

Ingazi aggressively patrolled the Antean River to protect their trade. Naval quality improved, the government expanded, and both the Air and Diplomatic Academies were enlarged. Determined not to let Rugby degenerate into a purely Tarotist game, Ingazi built a stadium and sold the naming rights to the Cheesemakers Guild. *Cheesemakers Stadium* saw its first games in 1500, though it will be a while before Ingazi's teams are up to international play standards.

With permission of the Count of Tiryouglas, the Count Palatine expanded his town of Derihahn into a proper city.

Count Gwariva Laharnes the Farsighted died in 1499. He was succeeded by his nephew, Air Marshal Lord Gwariva Trememeres. The Gwariva Clan Mothers chose Trememeres' own son as heir.

Much to the surprise of Ingazi, Yiannis, to which they had never so much as sent an envoy, allied themselves with the County Palatine. It was almost immediately attacked by Golmath, plunging Ingazi into war! Fortunately, the hardy mountain-folk repulsed the Tarotist running-dogs.

Monks of the Order of the Scroll visited the local libraries.

#### CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT (43.9 UR)

*Her All-Holiness Camleda v, the Transfigured Beetle, First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sabul.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyragec, ID, Ingazi, Itaxik, Kitchat, Murali, ThaceD, ThaceE, Zarkhandu

**DP:** Yep.

Camleda calmed the chaos across the Church following the horrors of the previous few years. A self-described "poor little steppe-child" from south of Carcë, she was not given to patience with those who were casual about their orthodoxy. Accordingly, she issued a document with the rather long title of *Order of Excommunication*

*and of Public Repentance to the Prophet Barugh & the Raven Crusaders.*

This decree included instructions of a fast on the fourth day of the week of abstinence and penance, followed on the fifth day by a feast dedicated to Urda's bounty.

The Holy Office of the Inquisition was the target of some ire within the Church. The general feeling in the hierarchy that they bungled the entire Saint Mirra investigation led to the resignation and retirement of Reverend Mother Tareina of the Holy Office.

Church government was expanded and made (slightly) more efficient. Magical techniques advanced into areas undreamed of in the past.

Monks of the Order of the Scroll visited the library of Urdrahahn.

Camleda also began an ambitious construction programme. The Wandhi River was bridged at Roodreis, the new town of Jerröe rose in the shadow of the Triune Cathedral in Parndri, and two new priories were constructed in the west<sup>5</sup>. A new primary education system was put into place throughout the Church lands, and there is hope that eventually a series of Cathedral schools will be established.

Despite her busy schedule, the workaholic Holy Mother found time to receive some private instruction at the new Law College, mostly while riding her horse up and down the halls.

A decrepit warehouse in the docks district of Urdrahahn was torn down. Once the rubble was cleared away, the revealed *Urdrahahn Gate* was cleaned up and polished. No news yet on whether it actually works.

In 1500, the disembodied head of the "Prophet" Barugh was discovered impaled on a pike in front of the Cathedral of Logosenn. A tarot card, the three of swords, was clenched in his teeth.

<sup>5</sup> Construction of a third in Nechyetti proved impossible due to the existence there of Yattatona Priory there. A fourth, much closer to home in Yiannis, was frustrated by the fact that there was already a priory there, known as "Bear Mountain Priory" to the locals.

### ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF GOLMATH (50 w/TA)

*His Majesty, Walarri Pirna the Erudite, Imperial Governor of Agador, Prince-Regent of Golmath.*

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

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

*Margrave Volpel Tregarion of Ebalon.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Murali, Sidith (2), ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

Prince Pirna the Erudite began his administration of Golmath by changing as little as possible. He did use Murali paper to print and distribute children's primers throughout the Grand Duchy.

He also sent Lord Wooster and almost 30,000 infantry to attack the independent Urdan mountain folk of Yiannis. Unfortunately for Wooster, these specific mountain folk are of a particularly bad-tempered variety, and they mounted an actual defense. Wooster's men had everything going against them: terrain, a well-led and vigorous defense, complete with fortifications and possibly even an airship or five. Wooster's men outnumbered the defenders and killed most of them, but suffered a bloody nose in the process and wanted further instructions or, perhaps, reinforcements. It was only during the hasty retreat back into Marniyi that somebody noticed an Ingazi flag flying over the forts.

Mendicants dedicated to the *Way of Yustomon* were seen throughout Golmath and especially Runazar, where they are particularly sought out for their wisdom and teachings.

Monks of the Order of the Scroll visited the local libraries.

Golmath's infantry quality improved.

The decline of the Thunnarr *Thunder* seems complete: they didn't even make it out of the first round of the 1500 All-East Rugby Championships. This

time, the final round featured the defending champions, the Callam *Kilted Maniacs*, taking on the Pagumath *Pirates*. The *Pirates* got pantsed by Callam, 12-2. As part of a wager with the opposing team, Pagumath's coach must wear a Clan Duich kilt at all games for the next year.

### ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ARADÉC (36 w/IL)

*His Royal Majesty, Sansollen Rhazahan IV, Baron of Wanumarra, Imperial Governor of Aradior, Electoral King of Aradéc.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Cappargarnia, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Murali, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** See below.

Aradéc's succession crisis ended not with a bang, but with a whimper. Sending heralds to Queen Mayia asking for a parley, King Rhazahan rode at the head of an enormous army—some estimate the numbers at 120,000—to meet with her in Dimba.

Meanwhile, Rhazahan's armies were busy making sure that, regardless of how the negotiations went, Bidigapa and Kadra at least would be held by his faction.

In Dimba, while Rhazahan's army stood tensely across Sèrred field from General Sir arTirri Mathius' 45,000 men, the King met with the widowed Queen in a pavilion of cloth of gold. Elsewhere on the field, much money changed hands. After several hours, King Rhazahan and Queen Mayia came out of the pavilion hand in hand. The King was grinning like a shot fox, while the Queen's expression could not be read. Their heralds announced a marriage alliance, designed to heal the broken Kingdom and to prevent what was certainly going to be a slaughter there at Sèrred field. So it came to pass that in 1496, the 27-year old King was married to the widow of the former king, a Wenamatim twenty years his senior. The "young King" Deric, her son, was formally adopted by King Rhazahan and the Clan Mothers solemnly declared him heir.

Not everyone was satisfied, however. The Island Clans of Palha and Milawalpayi declared the entire mess to be "making the illegal lawful" and re-

nounced their ties with Aradéc, though many still have portraits of “young King Deric” in their halls. Karruni and Abijar simply rebelled.

At least the Kingdom’s sorcery improved.

#### COUNTY OF MURALI (13 W/TA)

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

Trade: Aradéc, Golmath, Ingazi, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: None.

Murali continued work on *the Grand Library of Sabúl*. Slowly, the great building has begun to take shape in the otherwise sleepy town of Intix in Karyi.

Murali’s military is making good use of their paper allotment, recording doctrine, manuals of force, training guides and the like. Several editions of the *Testament of Yustomon* are now in print. The Printers’ Guild is positively flourishing in Murali.

A shrine and monument to Admiral Yustomon’s memory was constructed in Pundhu. It is on the coast, where his likeness can forever gaze across the waters he loved, and where he can continue to stand watch. The statue was carved by Murali’s finest sculptor, Jerang Dretha, who of late has been working on the Grand Library. On the base is inscribed a quote from his *Testament*:

*When I am gone from this world, no other exactly like me will ever exist again. I am and remain unique, an individual, and my beginning and end are singular, never to be repeated.*

(Testament, *Narynn Yustomon*)

A priory dedicated to the exploration and study of the Way of Yustomon was constructed nearby. The *Way of Yustomon*, meanwhile, is continuing its spread throughout Murali and beyond.

#### IATHEDEK: THE PROTECTORATE OF FRIBÆLD

Peace prevailed throughout the lands of Iathedek. At least, if it didn’t nobody knew about it. Trade continued bustling along the Antean River.

#### ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ZARKHANDU (43 S/YG)

*His Dread Majesty, Tirach Zhur the Magnificent, Lord Sakkath, Count of Vúhlath & Mlideen, Duke of Hyáglion, Prince Imperial, Electoral King of Zarkhandu.*

*Vahl, Margrave Draconis, Commander of the Horse Guards.*

Trade: Ingazi, Kommolek, Sidith (2), Urdraháhn

DP: Nombo (T), Ambrady (T), Hallek (T), Timaut (T), Aziret (F), Hyáglion (T), Zíman-Heth (F)

The Zarkhandu court of the Empress Kwadan became increasingly isolated and peculiar, with its strange reliance on Zíman mandarins and Human domestic servants. Many of the Humans were even emancipated, and a few could be found attending University and the Air Academy. While many of the Zarkhandu found these creatures comical or disturbing, they did not elicit the hatred the Zíman did. The Empress cracked down on government corruption, which in her delicate hands became a purge, and blood flowed through the streets of Zarkhandu below.

*Three things are required in one who rules well. The first is a perfect discerning reason, so that he may know how to separate the licit from the illicit and truth from lies. Second, he must have right intention, so that he looks more to the public good than to his own. Third, he must have a perfect stability, so that he may on no account be corrupted or fall to fearful insecurity. The will of the king must be constant and perpetual.*

(A Treatise on Government, *Tirach Zhur*)

Diplomats were sent abroad to cajole and threaten, and many of Zarkhandu’s lost prefectures returned, at least to pay tribute. Nuáda’s tribute, though, came only at the tip of a lance.

The soft-spoken but ruthless Empress kept her son, King Onin Torr, out of the capital on one pretext or another for several years, while she ruled the Kingdom from the great flying fortress *Cleansing Storm*. She sat on a replica of Zarkhandu’s throne,

built especially for the great control hall of *Cleansing Storm*, surrounded by her kinsmen and her Human servants, the Demon Kehturak her closest companion.

It was only when Onin Torr returned to the capital in 1499 that he discovered his mother had issued a challenge in his name to his younger brother: a duel to the death using only naked steel. And if reports from the western prefectures were to be believed, he was on his way. His mother the Empress and her court came down to the palace in Zarkhandu to calm him.

*By constant and perpetual, I mean this: even a great king who has these three qualities in abundance will become the worst sort of tyrant if he loses them, seeing enemies under every haystack and cupboard and acting without reason. Such a tyrant deserves death, lest he destroy a nation through his delusions. Was Onin Zho a great king? He was. Did he become a tyrant, deserving of death? Only if you love the Empire. I love the Empire.*

(A Treatise on Government, *Tirach Zhur*)

At about ten in the morning on midsummer's day, 1500, the Demon Kehturak was training knights when he suddenly found himself unbound. Thousands were slain in his sudden blood-rage before he abruptly vanished, leaving behind a slight smell of sulphur and a greasy spot.

In the palace, sudden confusion reigned.

Out of nowhere, the palace was overrun with uniformed members of Tirach Zhur's Black Blood Battalion. Enormous stone golems lined the walls of the throne room and could be seen at every building entrance.

Colonel Mattahonga Lazar secured the person of the Empress Kwadan by the rather effective means of holding a sword to her throat. The wizard An-del of Kommolek, looking a little worse for the journey, collapsed into a chair and loudly asked if anybody could fetch him a drink.

Tirach Zhur stood alone in the middle of the chamber, facing his brother Onin Torr, who sat on the Zarkandine throne.

The Empress opened her mouth to speak, but Tirach Zhur raised a finger to her, saying "Mother, I believe you have given us the precedent of what we should do to troublesome women."

She shut her mouth in surprise, and then for the first time in living memory, a look of fear crossed her eyes.

Tirach Zhur turned to his brother. "I have come to accept your challenge. My only question to you is this: do you make it of your own free will, or has this woman put words in your mouth you fear to taste?"

Shaking, Onin Torr stood and drew his sword. "Brother, I did not issue this challenge, but I issue it now. Naked steel to the death." He took a step forward. "Draw your blade."

*The Emperor Manadir writes in his commentary that "a cavalier forever retains the heart of a child", but I say the man is the corpse of the child. A cavalier is like an archer who makes sure his stance is correct before shooting. If he fails to hit his mark, he does not hold it against his victor, but seeks the cause of failure within himself. Those who, like a child, seek fault in those around him, are not cavaliers at all, but fools.*

(On the Code of Chivalry, *Tirach Zhur*)

"Brother, I'm gratified that you've found your voice, even though it's borrowed, I fear, from our mother. Still, it's good that you'll die like a Zarkhandian, even if you didn't live like one. Here is your first lesson in our culture, something you appear to have forgotten and our mother I suspect never understood. This is a realm of tradition. Of precedence. And there is no precedent in Zarkhandu law or tradition that allows the challenger of a duel to determine the weaponry used."

Onin Torr's sword point dropped several inches and his mouth hung open.

"As the challenged party, I choose the weapons and the terms of the duel. And I choose... stone golems." With that, Tirach Zhur turned to face his mother. Behind him, a lumbering stone golem reached down and carefully wrapped one hand

around the screaming Onin Torr. In one graceful move, the golem hurled him against the far wall. The screaming stopped abruptly.

“Mother, I really do think that dismembering you is rather too recent an innovation for me. Instead, I think you shall become an anchorite. Like the Ozhani anchorites of old, you will dedicate yourself to a life of prayer and privation. You will be sealed up in a brick room, ten foot by ten foot by ten foot. We will leave one brick unmortared so that you can get some air, and we’ll be sure to pass food in every day or so. Perhaps Yagnar will slay you quickly.” He waved at a guard, “take her away. And as for him,” he waved at the broken body that had been his brother, “feed his liver to the dogs.”

King Tirach Zhur turned to the court. “Now we’re going to figure out how best to reward you ladies and gentlemen for attempting to destroy my country.”

#### *The Defenestration of Vúhlath*

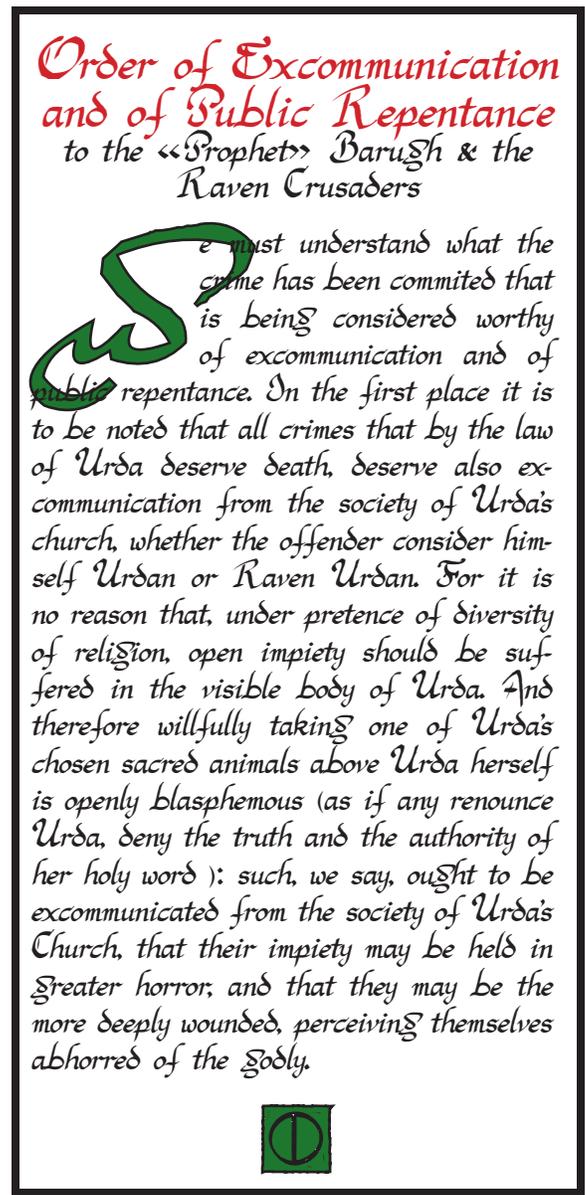
Over the course of several days, the senior ministers and officials of the old regime were examined. Many of them were retired from government service through the simple expediency of chucking them out of a window on the flying fortress *Cleansing Storm*. As their clothing, jewelry, and other personal effects were tossed out after them, this became very popular with the peasant farmers toiling below.

*The Ice it was that made Zarkhandu great. Where is fearsome Ozahn? The Five Jewels of the Yann? Where is the mighty Kingdom of Fell Hrazec? All fallen to the Ice. We alone have survived, we alone were honed by the Ice to the sharpness of the razor. And if we are to prosper, we only need wise kings, our great people, and the Ice.*

(A Treatise on Government, *Tirach Zhur*)

In more mundane news, Yagnarist missionaries converted Agremek and Margh, but had less luck with the Nuádans. The Air Academy improved its curriculum.

#### FACSIMILE OF THE TITLE PAGE OF THE ORDER OF EXCOMMUNICATION ISSUED BY CAMLEDA V IN 1496.



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# Imperial Gazette

Published by the Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heraldry by Appointment to His Imperial Majesty

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Emperor Sardhan

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## APPOINTMENTS

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To Chancellor of the Empire: Duke Goshtikka-Ourane Willor Agröes of Thace.

To Governor of Agador: Prince-Regent Walarri Pirna of Golmath.

To Governor of Arador: Electoral King Sansollen Rhazahan of Aradéc.

To Governor of Balashan, Dranchoal, Kaidu, Kanapad, Kaparis, Kembul, Mondahan, Muralis, Orinos, Sardior, Yann: *by examination*.

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## PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS OF THE EMPIRE

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

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## OPEN OFFICES

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

Lord Admiral of the Blue, Lord Admiral of the Green, Marshal of Thacia, 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 / Emperor ..... | Paul Flinton.....       | Free Beer .....          | cruentidei@gmail.com .....2,123.8      |
| 2                           | Chi'tixi .....          | Steve Cagg.....         | Priest King .....        | ragnarstation@hotmail.com .....1,256.2 |
| 3                           | Araxes.....             | Christopher Hord...     | chordam7 .....           | chordam7@yahoo.com .....1,205.1        |
| 4                           | Aradéc .....            | Charles Hurst.....      | Xanthi.....              | charlesh@teleport.com .....1,194.3     |
| <i>Major Powers</i>         |                         |                         |                          |  |
| 5                           | Cappargarnia.....       | Steven Lloyd.....       | Blackheart.....          | slloyd13@gmail.com .....1,193.7        |
| 6                           | Thace, Elector .....    | open for a player ..... |                          | 1,186.5                                |
| 7                           | Itaxik .....            | Michael Warner.....     | Galen .....              | me1451@comcast.net .....1,161.5        |
| 8                           | Averon .....            | Kevin Lawrence.....     | Averon Inc.....          | privatej67@yahoo.com .....1,145.5      |
| 9                           | Ingazi.....             | Harry Jago.....         | jago .....               | jagoh@yahoo.com .....944.9             |
| 10                          | Zarkhandu.....          | Theo Moriarty.....      | Mandala of Blood .....   | tmoriarty@gmail.com .....924.5         |
| 11                          | Church U&T.....         | Anne Porter .....       | Cupcake.....             | crabbycupcakes@gmail.com .....875.3    |
| 12                          | Atuburrk.....           | Adam Sherman.....       | Gonnagle .....           | mad.angus@yahoo.com .....867.6         |
| 13                          | Elphárec.....           | open for a player ..... |                          | 865.5                                  |
| <i>Minor Powers</i>         |                         |                         |                          |  |
| 14                          | Pexiki.....             | John Schmid.....        | Magus .....              | magus@spellcaster.org.....836.2        |
| 15                          | Duedhyn .....           | Alex James .....        | Clan Dhanos of Duedyn..  | ClanDhanos@yahoo.com .....801.5        |
| 16                          | Taneki .....            | Ed Allen .....          | Malathion .....          | tgroove@earthlink.net .....797.0       |
| 17                          | Hyrágec .....           | Frank Thein.....        | Frank .....              | fthein@gmx.de.....679.8                |
| 18                          | Thace, Duchy .....      | Jake Roberts .....      | Jake .....               | jacob.roberts1@gmail.com .....661.0    |
| 19                          | Tiryowglas.....         | Mike Johnson.....       | Minister of Defense..... | printermanmj@aol.com.....640.1         |
| 20                          | Kommolek.....           | Cortlandt Winters..     | Cortah .....             | cwinters@notebookmargins.com ..612.1   |
| 21                          | Kicitchat.....          | James Hazeltine.....    | Von Malvalken.....       | jhazeltine@pleiadesmm.com .....586.8   |
| 22                          | Murali .....            | Corey Snow .....        | Cyclometh.....           | cyclometh@gmail.com .....481.8         |
| 23                          | Church Militant .....   | open for a player ..... |                          | 434.7                                  |
| 24                          | IOC.....                | Jason Pearl.....        | redoubtable1.....        | redoubtable1@comcast.net .....402.7    |
| <i>Miscellaneous Rabble</i> |                         |                         |                          |  |
| 25                          | Tokatl .....            | Shelley Woodberry       | Skipperway.....          | desrik@comcast.net.....394.2           |
| 26                          | Sakkar .....            | Nelson Merritt.....     | hemmy .....              | nelson.merritt@wachovia.com .....330.7 |
| 27                          | Yax'te .....            | Tyler Baumgartner .     | rawhidekid .....         | tylerbaumgartner@gmail.com.....327.7   |
| 28                          | Carcë .....             | open for a player ..... |                          | 311.7                                  |
| 29                          | COI .....               | open for a player ..... |                          | 212.2                                  |

