

# The Sahûl Chronicle

Turn 14

Published by the Printers Guild of Zadres

1516–1520 SA

*All Sahûl holds its breath. Are these fragmented years doomed to be remembered as the calm before the storm?*

*Kitterix Jinx, Imperial Chamberlain*



AS YOU CAN see, Oratoa is up and operational. The launch was extremely successful, and I thank all those who made it possible. To facilitate more rapid processing of Turns, Cort Winters and his merry band of developers are working on a turn order-entry tool that will enable all players to submit standardized movement orders. I'm particularly excited that all movement will now arrive at my desk pre-checked for violations of the movement rules. I spend easily 85% of my time mucking about with movement orders, so this will be a tremendous help, once it's finished. More information will be posted to the forum as events warrant.

### COMING SOON:

*Poster Map of Sahûl* – On the back burner, but not forgotten! Now you won't have to do all that messy cutting and pasting. A full-sized full-colour poster map of Sahûl is coming. Price to be determined.

### RECENT PUBLICATIONS:

*The Chronicle, Volume 1* – 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 (\$18.00) and hard cover (\$30.00).

*Atlas of Sahûl, Second Edition* – Updated maps and some other supplemental material, including an index of all regions. Available in paperback (\$22.00).

*Cruenti Dei Rules Supplement 2: the Underlands* – This supplement details the Underlands, a series of vast caverns underneath eastern Sahûl, and a new Kindred, the Yaminon, and their peculiar culture. Available as a free download or in paperback (\$10.00).

NEXT TURN DUE: FRIDAY 16 APRIL 2010.

## FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

### IMPERIAL BANK OF SAHÛL

Location: ..... Einandhu, Sardarthion

Available to borrow: ..... 3,960 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, any 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:

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Imperial Exchequer.....                    | 7* |
| Guilds Council of Adndar.....              | 5* |
| House Pangku of Araxes.....                | 4* |
| House Gwariva of Ingazi.....               | 3* |
| Ancient and Undaunted Order of Herald..... | 3* |
| Printers Guild of Zadres.....              | 1  |

Loans: Atuburrk (840/t15)

### BANK OF ITAXIK

Location: ..... Itaxik

Available to borrow: ..... 2,218.1 GP

Loans: None outstanding.

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## Western Sahûl

### THE KIT'IXI COAST

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

*Her Excellency, Tinikatua VII, the Vain, Mistress of the Totek Hive, Countess of Tokatl.*

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

**DP:** None

**T**okatl's self-absorbed Countess ordered the construction of a new palace, which is about halfway complete. She also ordered hefty investments in agricultural and irrigation projects throughout her realm, designed to increase production of Tokatl's primary food export, the delectable woodberry. It's only a coincidence that woodberry is Tinikatua's favourite flavour of jam.

Tokatl suffered longer winters and shorter summers, though nothing like the troubles to the south.

#### SCENE: UCHAMSA AERODROME, 1518

Seething, Admiral Katink'a In'qua paced the airfield, her adjutant skipping hurriedly along attempting to stay abreast.

"Tinikatua's a fool. Her vanity leaves Tokatl vulnerable. At least her predecessor had the forethought to spend on the navy. But still the airfleet lingers in near obsolescence. And nothing I say can penetrate her vapidty."



Admiral Katink'a died quite suddenly in 1519.

Somehow, cavalry tactics improved.

#### DUCHY OF TANEKI (22 I/YG)

*Her Grace, Torakka II, Lady Talkeltik of Akeltl, Baroness Ketatl, Duchess of Taneki.*

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

**DP:** None.

**T**he winters continued to be harsh. In response, Taneki invested in new irrigation projects in their northern farmlands. Meanwhile, Mount Tan in Taneki Prefecture erupt-

ed three times, adding grey ash to the falling snow. It turns out that it's perfect camouflage for the cows, who have grown wily in avoiding tipsters.

Taneki Intelligence rooted out a nest of foreign agents in their capital. The spies went down fighting, and there's no indication of who sent them or what their mission might have been.

The town of Tzurn grew into a city.

In 1517, a fleet of Iluvarian transports sailed down the River Ateltl and out to sea. Within sight of shore, they rendezvoused with another fleet, and then sailed southward out of sight.

#### THE ORDER OF THE SWORD OF ILUVAR

*She drew her blade, "but this is treachery!"*

*"Better business", he shrugged, "than butchery."*

**D**ame Akit Ketira looked out over the diminished lands of the Sword of Iluvar and knew her time was fast approaching. Though her forces had smashed the Averese armies, the enemy would be back and in greater numbers. It was a losing game, and she knew it.

In desperation, she sought to pledge fealty to the Prince of Cappargarnia. The Prince agreed in 1516, but later that year he relinquished all claims of territory and fealty in favour of the Grand Duchess of Averon.

It is said that Dame Akit Ketira actually laughed when she heard the news. "Fealty to one so faithless is meaningless." Whether she meant to Cappargarnia or to Averon is an open question, but it was then that she put into effect a series of complicated schemes known only as "Plan B".

#### ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF AVERON (38 SI/IL)

*Her Gracious Majesty, Derica I, Lady Drax, Countess of Darida, Lord Admiral of the Green, Electoral Grand Duchess of Averon, Protector of the Faith.*

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

**Trade:** Araxes, Itaxik, Taneki, ThaceD, Tokatl, Udrahahn

**DP:** Sum'kah, K'ah, Usutbes *see below*

**G**rand Duchess Derica sent honey-tongued diplomats into the lands of the Sword of Iluvar. She was not surprised that the Order's government seemed to have suddenly collapsed. Indeed, her agents entered into direct diplomatic negotiations with the local aristocracy and not with any official of the Order.

The Order, it seems, had vanished. Their troops were loaded onto ships at Tikata in advance of the approaching Averese. The nobles of K'ah and Sum'kah were overwhelmed with gifts and promises, and both regions joined Averon with alacrity as friendly prefectures<sup>1</sup>. Local use of their gifts was mixed; in K'ah they laid the foundations for a palace for the Tikatan Archemandrite (when one is elected). In Sum'kah by contrast, the local nobles built themselves villas and purchased sumptuous Averese silks and polished gemstones from Thacia.

When the Averese diplomats arrived in Usutbes at the head of a small army (you can't be too safe, you know) in 1518, they found the place a bit of a shambles. *Fortress Harbinger* had been sacked, with only a single Saurian left taking shelter in the ruins. He turned out to be Duchess Jera's husband, Baron Challik of Goorin, safe and sound with a small supply of food and water.

He told a tale of frantic activity, of equeries and workers alike pulling every timber and fitting from the fortress, of supplies coming in from foreign lands, of spears and shields taken apart for wood and metal, all to build a mighty fleet. The great fleet set sail in the summer of 1517, down the River Ateltd and out to sea.

The winters in Averon lengthened, and many of the villages in the western highlands moved down-slope to more temperate climes. Averon's sorcerers had a bit of a breakthrough, and the government expanded. Averon resumed trade with some of the Yagnarists.

Duchess Jera's two oldest children, the Princesses Jushana and Larreta, entered the Military Academy

<sup>1</sup> That's not to say that the new Averese order was popular with the people; it clearly wasn't, but nobody was in any position to argue. After decades of uncertainty and war, most folks were just too worn out to be revolutionaries.

in Kongros in 1518 and 1519 respectively. Grand Duchess Derica's oldest daughter Derica rapidly approaches her age of majority and has made no secret of the fact that she thinks she should be heir instead of her aunt. A growing faction at court, meanwhile, favour Grand Duchess Derica's young son Muldalan instead. Prince Muldalan could not be reached for comment, since it was nap time.

### THE CHURCH MILITANT

Nuncio Bohr promised the Pontiff's support and protection for the members of the Holy Synod, and he encouraged them to return to Sahn'akl to elect a new Archemandrite. A few did return, but most are still waiting for a definitive peace. The Cathedral and grounds is being (temporarily) administered by a committee of clerics led by Bohr.

Meanwhile, with no center, the vast bureaucracy of the Church Militant began to slowly unwind.

### COUNTY OF PEXIKI (29 I/YG)

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

**Trade:** Itaxik, Sakkar, Taneki

**DP:** Kalli (F)

**T**he winters in Pexiki only got worse, and the summers grew shorter and cooler. The northern highlands were particularly hard hit, with whole villages moving down-slope to the valleys. Crop yields are so consistently down that locals have stopped calling them "failures".

Countess Xitar died, ancient and withered, in the winter of 1516. She was succeeded by a young, energetic Xitar II. The new Countess is considered something of an administrative genius.

Moderate investments provided for additional improvements in infantry and airship quality. The government expanded.

## ELECTORAL QUEENDOM OF ITAXIK (50 I/UR)

*Her High Majesty, Queen Yautlatoaya II, Mistress of the Tis'chak, Countess of Takkikik, Elector of Itaxik, Golden Beetle of the West.*

*Her Excellency, Cipa'ctonatha IV, Baroness Aueuetl, Countess of Pehuatoka, Guardian of Mi'ctia.*

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

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

**DP:** Tlakulo (A), Dottoria (F), Ohoka (A)

**Q**ueen Yautlatoaya spent many an evening just staring at the snow blanket covering her new Queendom. The snows of 1514 finally melted in 1516, but they soon returned. In the lowlands and near the coast, it wasn't so terrible, but inland and in the highlands it wasn't unusual for the snow to stay for eight months at a stretch. The Queen ordered her engineers to build new megalithic greenhouses in Itaxik and Kachar, and to opening up more productive farmland through irrigation projects. Food rationing was introduced in the cities.

The great "University of the Ice" began a massive project to increase farm yields and to produce hardier crops. While nothing definite has yet been achieved, the researchers are pursuing several promising leads.

The Queen died in 1516, at the end of the short summer as the snow was again beginning to fall on her capital. Her successor took her name in her honour. The new Queen is both young and energetic. Her proposal of an alliance amongst the western powers was greeted with general acclaim.

Meanwhile, in the deserts of Hanabiah, Colonel Asatdya received from the high command two entirely different sets of orders. Choosing the path of higher valour (and not coincidentally away from the desperate hardships of Hobith), she led 27,000 equeuries and fifty airships south to "transit through" Yagnarišt Histaun. Needless to say, the local Sar was unhappy with this overbearing show of strength, and he gathered his 3,000 steppe-riders to resist. After the slaughter, the *new* Sar paid tribute to Itaxik. Colonel

Asatdya wisely left the Yagnarišt abbey of Makkau in peace, and pushed her force further south in to Zundaun, where virtually the same thing happened.

The one-eyed Baron of Zundaun gathered his army of 7,000 mixed cavalry and infantry and met the Itaxik force at a place called Yak's Meadow. Rather than attack the astonishingly superior numbers of the invaders, the wily old Baron called for a parley. And then he called for roasted meat and rice wine. The parley lasted weeks, but it ended with Zundaun paying tribute to Itaxik.

At Tikopai, more research and excavation was carried out amidst the ever-present sandstorms. Vast sums of money were spent to hire scholars and adventurers to explore the maze caverns, some natural, some artificial, discovered beneath the monolith. Bonuses were paid to the troops stationed there, which *almost* made up for the morale issues associated with being stationed in the middle of a sandy wasteland.

Thanks to consistent investment, naval quality improved and the naval academy expanded.

Zacaun rebelled from Pehuatoka.

## FIRST WESTERN ALLIANCE CONFERENCE

Representatives of most of the western realms met in the city of Itaxik to tackle the problem of Winter and to better coordinate their efforts in finding solutions. Attending the "Ice Conference" were Lady Tzix (Tokatl), the Xinite Baroness Xitch of Uetzi (Taneki), Baron Ennor II of Jorun (Averon), Lady Xot'chi (Pexiki), Ambassador Cerocoma (Sakkar). The conference was hosted by Queen Yautlatoaya II herself.

The main topic was the weather, and the representatives agreed on the following items:

1. Continuing conference meetings by ordinary envoys.
2. Most realms pledged funds to a disaster relief fund, with moneys deposited in the Bank of Itaxik.
3. Mutual efforts to increase food production in all realms.

4. Itaxik distributed its “green house” blueprints to all.
5. A *Charter*.

Other items on the agenda, but not yet addressed, include handling the inevitable refugees.

### Greenhouses

Megalithic greenhouses may be built in a Region to help offset the effects of Famine or encroaching Winter. One greenhouse may be built in a Region for every Population Value. A greenhouse is a level-2 Megalith. Unlike a granary, greenhouses do not need to be stocked.

### BARONY OF SAKKAR (15 IS/IL)

*Baroness Nenepillah II of Sakkar, the Vehement, Mistress of Nelhuayotl, Heir of the Prophet, Beloved of the Light of Iluvar.*

**Trade:** Itaxik, Pexiki, Taneki, Tokatl, Udraháhn, Yax'te

**DP:** None.

**B**aroness Nenepillah was strangely silent, perhaps deep in a religious reverie. In 1520, a fleet of more than 200 ships called at the Sakkari capital of Kuauinochitla. Aboard were Dame Aket Ketira and what remained of the Order of the Sword of Iluvar. Remembering the constancy and faithful devotion to Iluvar displayed by Baroness Neallatalah III, Dame Aket Ketira led her Order to Sakkar to seek service and asylum.

Sadly, before any answer could be made, Dame Aket Ketira died in the winter of 1520, broken but unbowed. The Order elected Dame Tarik Tiketua as their new Grandmistress.

The winters in Sakkar became even worse, but it brought out the best in this hardy nation. In some villages, the buildings are connected by tunnels through the snow for eight months of the year. The growing season is short, but for now they are scrambling by on root vegetables and game.

General Cinara, Baroness of Tlapan and hammer of the Xinites, died in her bed in 1519.

### ICEMARK OF YAX'TE (17 S/IL)

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

**Trade:** Itaxik, Sakkar, Taneki

**DP:** Chidrûl (T), Onisba (F), Teotel (F)



Young Margrave Cleon II was careful to stock the granaries in Onisba and Potem'te, unlike his late father. In both prefectures he almost certainly avoided famine by his efforts. Ital'te was not so lucky, and the famine there was harsh as untold numbers of people starved in the cold.

The Zanthia colonists made a go of it, and the region is now (2131)s. Settlers were sent to Hiragar, and reports indicate a positive outlook for the new forest colony.

Meanwhile, refugees from ice-shrouded Neghos arrived in the forests of Elowen in 1520. Starving, they did a fair bit of pillaging in their attempt to find food and fodder.

Firreltet Naval Academy expanded their programs and offerings.

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## Thacia and Aret

### THE HIGH PLAINS & NORTHERN COAST

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#### ELECTORAL QUEENDOM OF THE GREAT HIVE OF CHI'TIXI TIRRIX KI (39 I/YG)

*Her Most Puissant Majesty, Taxitiki II, the Illustrious, Mistress of Tirrix & the Great Hive, Duchess of Chax and Tix'itikata, Countess Itax, Elector & Lich-Queen of Chi'tixi, &c., &c.*

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

*Baron Tirabinis Tirrit of Tichiir, Grandmaster of the Military Order of Gidaxa, the Black Claw Sage.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Hyrágec, Ingazi, Kitchat, Kommolek, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Udraháhn

**DP:** What is this thing you call “diplomacy”?

**I**n the capital aerodrome, the masked Lich-Queen Taxitiki herself christened *HMAS Queen Xant'ki II*, the first vessel of an entirely new kind of airship, a *sky galleon*, magnificent with her black sails and the great red Eye of Yagnar painted on her mainsail. In all, Chi'tixi launched 55 of the vessels, the pride of their military.

Soon after, the Queen ordered all naval and air vessels to adopt the black sails motif. She also redesigned the officer uniforms of her forces. While the enlisted continued to wear the colours of the Twilight March, the officers adopted a darker grey, trimmed in fur. The Order of Gidaxa also received new uniforms, officers and enlisted, of solid black.

The Black Claw Sage wrote three small books: *Tactics*, *Preparation*, and *Memoirs of the Black Claw Sage*. The use of the first two volumes is so far confined to the Order, but *Memoirs of the Black Claw Sage* has enjoyed wide distribution.

The winter of 1520 was particularly harsh, though nothing like the terrible winters south of the mountains. In Chi'tixi, there was little snow, but the hard autumn rains dramatically reduced the harvest, particularly in the highlands.

The anti-Tarotist campaign continued unabated. Naval patrols continued on the Stroip and Tikka Rivers through 1519, when all naval forces were suddenly recalled to the capital without explanation. The sorcery academy expanded.

#### DUCHY OF THACE (31 S/UR)

*His Grace, Brannis II, Lord Goshtikka-Ourane, Baron of Brennadein, Marshal of Thacia, Duke of Thace.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Averon, Cappargarnia, Carcë, Chi'tixi, Ingazi, Hyrägec, ID, Taneki, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdráhahn

**DP:** Failed!

**D**uke Brannis' engineers continued his building programme, extending the road from Thünd in Närn to Beregem in Deiss.

The Duke himself came out of his self-imposed seclusion in 1518 to pay his respects at the grave of his older brother, Lord Willor. Shortly thereafter, he gave a speech to his people from the balcony of the palace.

*My fellow Thacians. It has pained my heart to be away from you. It has pained me more that it was required that I must keep my activities from you. The empire is in crisis. It is no longer safe to travel openly. Assassination, patricide, the living dead, unexplained disappearances and unexplained deaths seem to be the order of the day. It was imperative that I meet with other leaders of our Empire to plan and prepare for the future. But most specifically and heaviest on my mind is the future of our Duchy. We must continue to uphold our Duchy and our ancient legacy. We have made great strides as a realm in the last sixty years. The credit for this lies in you, the people. The greatest leaders can do nothing without the greatest people. But the greatest people can do much without the greatest leaders. Thank you for all that you have made our Duchy. We continue our work to discover what happened to our beloved Lord Willor. We will find out how our brother's passing was orchestrated. Continue in your courageous loyalty and know that you are the Duchy and the Duchy is great. The future is ours.*

Renewed investigations into the strange life and death of the late Lord Willor have proven inconclusive, though there were several similar deaths reported in the Ourane docks district over the years.

The winter rains became winter snows in 1518.

In 1519, Lord Sasobal Yanor, former Steward of Thace, died after a long illness.

The University of Ourane expanded its world-class offerings. Siege quality improved.

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

*His Most Excellent Majesty, Brannis VI, the Gallant, Lord Goshtikka-Snamarthis, Overlord of Carcë, Electoral Count Palatine in Thace.*

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

**DP:** Hurrimak (A), Helates (F), Zaydrir (F)

**T**he well-beloved Count Palatine supervised the expansion of the primary schools system and the University of Snamarthis. The Count's engineers extended the road network from Corund to the town of Gorathis in Belorn.

A soaring megalithic structure dubbed *the Tower of Thought* rose above the Snamarthis skyline. This building is an architectural monument to the life of the mind and the path to knowledge. It's also the new headquarters of *Sardarthion House*, the exclusive (and extremely wealthy) publishers of the "Sard and Fi" mystery novels<sup>2</sup>.

The Sar of Hurrimak, intrigued by Thace's offer to locate a brewery deep in the steppe, declared his allegiance. He also shared enough *koumiss* with Colonel Gollish to fell an ox. The good Colonel obligingly fell down. A lot.

The Sar of Zaydrir and his extended family of yak herders joined Thace on the basis of the gift of more money than the family had seen in a century or more. In fact, the Sar abdicated in favour of his son and took a large amount of cash with him into his retirement in Balyow. He reportedly drank himself to death in the company of four ladies of the city. At least no yaks were involved.

The agriculturists of *Goshtikka Gardens* finally succeeded in cultivating Zyleen grape vines.

Two great notables in the history of Electoral Thace died in 1517: the sorceress Somara the Savvy and the steppe hound known as Mister Trim<sup>3</sup>. That both were equally and universally mourned says quite a lot about Electoral Thace.

Count Brannis and Countess Tressa hatched three additional children: a son named Merryn and two daughters named Lowenna and Gorthis. All the children have their own steppe hounds, the legacy of Mister Trim and his many descendants.

Mount Gor in Belorn erupted three times and Mount Áretan erupted once, spewing ash over the white snow of Belorn.

<sup>2</sup> The *Sard and Fi* mystery novels are proving enduringly popular with young ladies of a certain age. Sardarthion House is publishing them at a rate of about one a year.

<sup>3</sup> Some of the newspapers insist on calling him "Mr. Dead" now.

## ASSAILING THE TIGERS (1516-1520)

*Electoral County-Palatine of Thace v. Tigers of Urda*

**L**ady Tanna'tix was recalled to Snamarthis for "consultations". General Lord Basodir, saying "no one spits in the face of Thace", gathered together some 18,000 cavalry<sup>4</sup> and rode to Tiger Nemeketh determined to exact an apology. The Sar of Nemeketh took this as a declaration of war, and in very short order the four remaining Tiger regions of the Argan desert united against Lord Basodir. It was a war fought as much against the drifting snow as against each other.

Lord Basodir forced tribute from Nemeketh, though there was not actually any armed resistance. The Sar and his army had fled to the west, presumably to rendezvous with additional forces.

From Nemeketh, Lord Basodir advanced into Deiradjur with about 10,000 men. It was there that he encountered the force of Tiger arms.

### *Battle of Trandjur (1518)*

Lord Basodir's force consisted of 5,000 cataphraçti and an equal number of medium horse. The dragon Róta flew overhead. Near the oasis of Trandjur, they met the combined arms of the Tiger Sars. The last remnants of the once-mighty Tiger forces rode into battle: 6,000 medium and 9,000 light horse. It was, for the Tigers, a fools' errand.

Battlemagic crackled through the air, and the dragon fell upon the Tigers with ferocity. Regardless, the Tigers attacked, wave after wave, trumpeting their battle-cry across the endless steppe, where some say it still echoes in the howl of the desert storms.

In the end, there were no survivors of the epic charge, not one. The Thacian medium horse took about a thousand casualties and counted themselves fortunate. The leadership and heroism of their General of the noble house of Goshtikka-Snamarthis, riding his dragon into battle, have become the stuff of legend. Lord Basodir was wounded in the fight, and his army remained in the region.

<sup>4</sup> And a dragon. Did we mention the dragon? There was a dragon.

### *The Marakoë Campaign (1519-1520)*

In 1519, Colonel Gollish's army arrived in the Tiger region of Marakoë. The deserts of the Argan are a flat, bleak place, and a thin dusting of snow made the area look as featureless as a frosted wedding cake. The 55,000 Thacian cataphraçti and hussars were the only life to be seen. Knowing the Tigers' penchant for hit and run raids, Gollish kept his army together, with few outriders and no patrols in force.

The pole with the impaled Saurian head was on the only hill within twenty leagues, so it was visible for most of a day as the army rode towards it. Speculation ran rife through the ranks as to what it could mean. If the Colonel had an idea, he did not share it but instead grimly set his jaw.

They arrived as evening fell. As most of the army made camp, a regiment was dispatched to the crest of the hill, both to establish an observation point and to fetch the head. Colonel Gollish's command tent was some tens of yards down the eastward side of the hill. He was standing in his dress uniform with an honour guard when the head was brought to him. He feared he knew who it must be. There was a small chance that it wasn't her. There was some hope that it was just the head of some yak rustler or bandit brought to the rough justice of the steppe. He prayed it was. One glance at the head proved all his fears realized. It was the mutilated head of the envoy of the Urdan Church that he was to meet here. This was the mortal remains of the Reverend Mother Berthilde, leader of the Nöenian Order and the force behind the Council of Carcë that brought most of the Tigers of Urda back into the Urdan fold.

The head was not fresh. It had been atop that pole for some time, perhaps as much as a year. The flesh was fairly mummified, and the soldiers reported no trace of the rest of her body. There was a single scrap of parchment nailed to her forehead.

The words were painted neatly in Old Imperial:

*A traitor to Urda and a traitor to her people. This is the criminal Beratil, executed by order of the Master of the True Tigers. Kalends of January, Eighth Year of the Leaping Snow-Cat.*

The adjutant turned to the Colonel. "What are your orders, sir?"

The Colonel's eyes never left the unseeing, sunken eyes of the mummified head. "Orders, Lieutenant? In the morning we will find these murderers and we will kill them."

"I meant the head, sir."

The Colonel tore his eyes away and directly addressed his adjutant. "Have the smiths construct a reliquary for it. We shall carry it before the army, and it shall spur us to final victory. And bring me the pole it was on; we shall affix our ensign to it, as it has been honoured by the blood of the martyr."

And so it was that the Thacian army spent the better part of two years in Marakoë, hunting and slaughtering the Tiger forces they found, always with the Reliquary of Saint Berthilde the Martyr before them. While there were some, concerned that perhaps the Colonel was exceeding his orders, who counselled restraint, the Colonel ordered that no mercy would be show to those who bore arms.

By the winter of 1520, Marakoë was pacified, though not yet orthodox.

With the fall of Marakoë, Mordir became the only remaining independent Tiger region.

### THE RETURN OF CAMLEDA

**I**n 1520, the elderly and ill Holy Mother Camleda V returned to the steppelands of her birth, riding the great dragon Skögul. She settled in Belorn, visiting St. Veetas Priory before setting out on horseback to ride the rolling plains of her youth. Somewhere out in the wilds she died, and the howl of mourning that rose from her dragon companion could be heard, they say, as far away as the sanctuary of Tiogar.

The dragon Skögul, full of gentle mourning for her long-time friend, found herself a cave high in the Oladya Mountains in which to nest.

Where the Holy Mother is buried, none know, but legend has it that she may still be seen in Belorn on moonless nights, when her spirit rides, free and wild, over the steppelands of her youth.

Where is the horse gone? Where is the rider?  
 Where is the giver of treasure?  
 Where are the seats at the feast?  
 Where are the revels in the hall?  
 Alas for the bright cup!  
 Alas for the mailed warrior!  
 Alas for the splendour of the prince!  
 How that time has passed away,  
 dark under the cover of night,  
 as if it had never been!<sup>5</sup>

### LORDSHIP OF CARCĒ (6 S/UR)

*Sar Grotan Tahnik II, the Dragon, Third Lord CarcĒ, Master of the Horseclans, Scourge of Urda the Fierce, Defender of the Steppe.*

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

**DP:** Zacaun (T)

**T**he icy winter winds howled from the south. Summer snows became more common, culminating in the frozen horror that was 1520, when the animals had to root through the summer snow to find any little bit of green grass to eat. The *Solstice of the Earth Mother* traditions continued unabated.

Thanks to the continuing financial assistance and expertise of their overlords in Electoral Thace, the CarcĒ government expanded.

The Dragon's wife hatched him three more sons.

### PANTUN: THE FORSAKEN

**P**antun's desert is harsh and unforgiving. The severe winds blow from the salt flats of Dorozhand for six months of the year so dry that it is said that you can watch your own skin cure into leather within hours. In the other six months, the Sirami winds blow. They are not as hot and dry as those of Dorozhand, but they howl with an unceasing fury so loud that a Saurian trumpet cannot be heard for more than a few dozen yards. There is no life outside a few scattered oases. Even the shores of Lake Muleen host only a few stunted trees and rough grass. The only inhabitants were godless Saurian nomads who refused all attempts at friendship or con-

taŕt. For centuries, the civilized world had avoided the place. Visitors were rare, and usually the result of a faulty map or thoughts of suicide.

In recent years, as the steppe was swallowed by the realms of the Empire, more visitors have come. Explorers, envoys, spies. Few had survived the climate and the nomads. Aeron built a road through the region, but those who traverse it do so quickly, and without daring to depart from the road.

The elderly Saurian sat on a boulder in the oasis of Karrk, absentmindedly drawing figures into the mud at his feet. Here in this place, the breeze was cool, and a small copse of trees gave shelter to the wanderer and his three heavily laden horses. The Saurian was seventy if he was a day, yet here in the deserts of Pantun he had already outlasted three servants and two horses.

Everywhere they had gone, despite their disguises, they were shunned. From oasis to oasis they rode. At each they found nomads with their goats and sheep and horses. And always, the nomads packed up their belongings and left the moment the strangers arrived. And now, he was alone. His servants and a pair of horses were still where they had fallen in the desert, covered now by the blowing sands. He was resigned to a similar death, and soon.

But then, something singular happened. A small boy of perhaps eight summers approached the old Saurian. He sat right beside him and said, "your disguise is so poor that my sister saw you for an outsider. She's four."

The old Saurian stopped drawing in the mud. "What is your name?" he asked.

The boy cocked his head and said, "I am speaking to you, so I no longer have a name. What is yours?"

"I am called Korbulo d'Gar of Clan Sand Storm, Agik of Rückar. How can a boy have no name?"

The boy ignored the question, instead saying, "old man with the proud name, I am here to tell you only this: two Saurians, one old one young, sit in the Land of the Forsaken. One will not live past the setting of the sun. The other will die before the sun returns to rise where it did today. Tell them..." The young boy

<sup>5</sup> *The Wanderer*, an anonymous Anglo-Saxon poem.

choked. It sounded as though he were sobbing, but no tear fell from his eyes.

“Yes?” the old man prompted.

“Tell them, the others, the unforsaken, tell them that they must leave us alone. Do not let them come back. What must we do to convince you that we are accursed and that those who come here will die accursed as well? Go.”

The old man shook his great head. “Son, people will continue to come. This is almost the last place in the steppe that no realm has claimed. If it is not us, it will be Averon or Itaxik or Thace.”

The boy was suddenly, keenly interested in what the old man had drawn in the mud. He paused a moment before looking up at the old man, eyes wide. “All they can do is kill us. We can destroy their souls.”

With that, the young boy stood, then walked out into the burning desert. The old man lowered his eyes as the boy took out a knife, slit his own throat, and tumbled to the ground.

The old man sat for a few moments before mounting his horse and riding home.

Within a year, he was dead.

#### GRAND DUCHY OF ARAXES (29 W/UR)

*His Excellency, Captain-General Pangku Kapalless III, Count of Thangkar, Lord Protector of Araxes.*

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

**DP:** Ormeth (F), Hessit (F), Morrûd (T)

**L**ord Protector Kapalless tried to continue the Araxean tradition of solid government. He dedicated a new Theology College at the University. He then attempted to gloriously expand the air forces, to thereby put his own stamp on the Grand Duchy's military. Unfortunately, the young Lord (as has been said) has “all the organizational skills of a plum tree”. He grossly over-appropriated the available resources for the construction, and only a fraction of the planned vessels were actually completed. In better news, engineers built a road from

the capital into the hills of Inchik, and another from Gorice to Brandöe.

Large piles of cash were spread around the southwestern steppe, more than Araxes could pull out of those regions in a century. Between Electoral Thace and Araxes, the mad scramble for worthless steppe land reached a crescendo with their division of the Argan. Only the horror that is Arganax is independent between them.

The Ingazi airfleet and dragon commanded by Air Marshal Lord Gwariva Trememeres went home.

The snows of 1515 finally melted in the summer of 1516, but by and large the winters in Araxes remain long and difficult. Some even say they've gotten worse.

#### COUNTY OF KICITCHAT (21 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, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kommolek, Taneki, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**C**ountess T'cha'k continued to invest in the future greatness of her realm. The government expanded and airship quality improved. At attempt to (once again) expand Xant'ki foundered on a lack of infrastructure and planning. Reports have filtered out that the head of the urban planning department resigned after losing her head.

The Countess herself paid a visit to the Priory of Arcême, where she reportedly held a private dinner with the Prior and the leading Tarotist subjects of the area. She reaffirmed her support for their community and expressed appreciation for their continuing loyalty. For their part, the Tarotists were appreciative and toasted the health of the Countess.

The winters continued to be harsh, but large expenditures designed to ameliorate the conditions were enough that Kicitchat's people were no more miserable than they had been.

Kentel and Krittix became friendly.

**ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ATUBURRK (28 W/YG)**  
*His Gracious Majesty, Adhanggar Sydath II, the Wolf, Count of Odol, Overlord of Kitchat, Imperial Governor of Arbedon, Elector & Grand Duke of Atuburrk.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kitchat, Kommolek, Taneki, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**U**nlike many of the neighbouring realms, the weather in Atuburrk continued to be balmy and pleasant. New public works projects were ordered everywhere by the albino Grand Duke. The towns of Wodonga and Wagga Wagga expanded into cities, and the capital of Inh Odol expanded as well. Infantry quality improved. Resources were shipped to Aradéc for the construction of an *Iluvarian* priory. Most folks assume this is all part of some diabolical plan. Others, however, think the Grand Duke is some sort of subversive.

The recently appointed Imperial Governor of Arbedon caught a chill and died. Grand Duke Sydath almost immediately received the appointment to succeed him.

Quite a lot of movement was reported amongst the gathered naval armada at Alghin. It appears that the vast fleet is breaking up, with several contingents heading out to sea, though quite a lot remains there. Reports of unidentified flying objects more or less ceased in about 1517, though there were reports of demons wandering about and scaring the sheep.

The ever-fashionable Sydath the Younger enrolled in Atuburrk's Sorcery Academy in 1517. He constantly complains to his father about the lack of a decent library there. He is reportedly holding weekly salons with the best and brightest artists, writers, and musicians Atuburrk has to offer.

The dashing and popular Lord Dolmathes took command of a fleet of 250 transports and sailed up the Byrrin to his waiting bride at Fair Belsúnd. He was wed to the Lady Ebrel of Fell Kommolek at the Cathedral of Kembra on Ides of Paharn, 1520.

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## Central Sahûl

### THE HEART OF EMPIRE

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**ELECTORAL REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA (53M/TA)**  
*His Sublime Majesty, Anabrin Darronley, Lord Admiral of the Blue, Electoral Prince of Cappargarnia.*

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

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

*Sir Darein Gorthes, Grand Marshal of the Holy Blood Legion of Swords, Consul-General of the Tempest March.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kitchat, Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**P**rince Anabrin Darronley spoke before the Senate in 1516, proclaiming a new era for the Republic. The new era would be dedicated to increased urbanization, great public works projects, and a renewed focus on education. All of the Republic's aristocratic families would be required to send their sons and daughters to academy or university. The Republic's budget reflected these new priorities. The cities of Montoya, Marangal, Pakhandar, and Joarbal all expanded. The Air Academy in Cappargarnia expanded. Massive outlays in new public works were targeted to urban centres throughout the Republic.

Following his speech, and a follow-up meeting with some of the patriarchs of the great aristocratic families, the Prince offered sacrifice at the Cathedral of Arag. The next day, a profusion of wildflowers suddenly came into bloom throughout the city and the prefecture, the likes of which no one in living memory could recall. For weeks, the urban stench was masked by a heady perfume, and the dirty, grey snow still to be found was brightened by the cheerful profusion of colour.

The winters in the Byrrin valley got worse, but the Republic's public works spending prevented any widespread discontent or hunger.

The Republic concluded several treaties, including one with Kommolek strengthening the peace between them. The Tokatl emissary tried to visit the Pontiff at Golluz, and she was once again rebuffed. So she left for the warm waters of the Gulf of Iphil, where she enjoyed sponge fishing and long underwater dives, some lasting weeks.

A heavily laden fleet of 200 Averese ships docked in Cappargarnia City in 1519. Shortly thereafter, Cappargarnian longshoremen unloaded hundreds of chests and crates from the vessels. The following year, fifty warships of the Kachari Lady of Uilaokatl docked in Adndar, frustrated by their inability to pay the canal toll. *Over* Adndar, it was a different story as a speedy Ingazi airfleet and dragon sped northward over the river.

Pontiff Fenric IV died in 1520 at the age of 75. He was succeeded by a young whipper-snapper named Fenric V. The new Pontiff was quite amused to note that Hyrágec had built a new road connecting the Urdan Cathedral of St. Celli to his Tarotist Holy City of Golluz. Widely derided as "the jihad road", it nevertheless proved an important conduit for trade between Hyrágec and Cappargarnia.

Naval quality improved, making the Republic's ships and tactics once more the equal of Ingazi's.

#### IN THE BACK ROOM OF A CASINO IN ADNDAR, 1516

An older Malebolge in formal attire and a Wenemet wearing an Heraldic surcoat entered the smoky room. Around a circular table, an assortment of Kindreds, including an ancient Wenemet, played cards.

The Malebolge bent down and whispered to the old Wenemet, "Count Agdora?"

He whispered back "I said I wasn't to be disturbed."

"Count, I'm afraid that the herald is very insistent" the Malebolge apologized.

"Are you joking? Look at this hand! How can I walk away from this?"

The other players at the table collectively threw in their hands to the sound of groans.

"It looks like I am available now. Cash me out then. Herald, let's find a place to talk."

The Wenemet slowly came to his feet while picking up his whiskey and cane. Nodding to the Herald, he ambled off to a corner of the room with a pair of overstuffed chairs next to a fire. He settled into the chair furthest from the fire and addressed the Herald.

"That worked out well. My hand was worthless. Now what is the issue?"

"Your Majesty..." began the Herald.

"Address me as Count Agdora. I wish to remain incognito."

"As you wish... Count. However, I doubt it is fooling anyone" said the Herald as he indicated the crown sitting on the Emperor's head.

Sardhan smiled "Perhaps not, but it pleases me to maintain the illusion. Continue with your message." He took a sip of whiskey.

"It appears that there has been a bit of an uproar about using the term 'baboon' to refer to, well, a baboon."

Sardhan coughed on his drink and sputtered "Is this a joke? Did someone put you up to this?"

The Herald said in a rush "No, Your Maje...er... Count. The King of Zarkhandu—"

Sardhan grimaced and muttered "By the Deck..."

"—has been most insistent that they be called 'humans', the name they use to refer to themselves. He claims that calling them baboons is derogatory. He also implied that he would challenge the representative from Cappargarnia to a duel for the defamation."

"Oh, Lords..." intoned Sardhan as he looked at the ceiling.

The Herald continued "Then the Cappargarnian spokesman asked the Holy Mother if she 'would put a baboon before a southern'. The Count Palatine of Ingazi took offense and demanded a retraction. The Cappargarnian spokesman made a barbed retraction while stating that the word for baboon is 'baboon'. Then the Court Sorcerer for Zarkhandu claimed

that the Wenemet are ‘the exiled serfs of the Yaminon’ and that ‘Yaminon’ is the true term of the race.”

The Emperor stared at the Herald for a moment before asking “How do you follow all this?”

“It’s the training, Your... Count.”

Sardhan shook his head. “Well, sit down then. You look like you could use a bit of whisky. Waiter, bring my friend here a glass of Runazari<sup>6</sup>. Clan Harret if you have it.”

The Herald started “Count, I really shouldn’t...”

Sardhan’s eyes narrowed. “Are you refusing an order from your Emperor?”

“No, Your...”

“Then sit” commanded Sardhan.

As the Herald sat in the remaining chair, the waiter returned with a glass of Clan Harret and a glass of ice. Absentmindedly, the herald dropped a piece of ice in his whisky. The Herald glanced at the Emperor who was looking at the fire with a bemused expression. As the Herald took his first sip of the peaty whiskey, the Emperor spoke.

“What ruffles the fur of Sahûl continually surprises me. Why just a few decades ago, the King of Zarkhandu’s great grandfather joked about the type of wood to use for a ‘baboon on a stick’. Now, a few decades later, his great grandson gets upset when they are called by their name?”

“But what about his comment about the Wenemet?” asked the Herald.

“Have you had contact with the Yaminon?”

“No, Your Majesty.”

“Call me Sardhan. We are drinking together and should call each other by name. What is yours?”

“It is Kuron.”

<sup>6</sup> Whiskey.

*Rye dominates in the south and is primarily distilled in the Kalurri River valley. The best is said to be produced in Windra prefecture, but east of Madran this assertion may spark a duel.*

*North of Withi Kaparri, corn is dominant. In the past few years, Walu prefecture has become so famous for their corn whiskey that now is it referred to as Walu whiskey rather than corn.*

*Down south, in the County of Runazar, they have a different method of creating whiskey (as they spell it) which involves treating the malt with smoked peat moss. Slowly this has been gaining in popularity in the capital with the aristocracy and upper class merchants.*

*(from An Introduction to the Spirits of the East, by Agdres Sardhan, Khanazar Press, Sarsis, 1489)*

“Well, Kuron, according to the Yaminon, the Wenemet and Yaminon are separate species descended from the Proto-Wenemet. While separate, we are capable of breeding.

“Really?” Kuron looked slightly repulsed at the suggestion.

“Yes. And their women all have furry noses.” Sardhan said with a grin.

“No!” Now Kuron looked anything but repulsed.

“They do. Obviously this has been popular with the soldiers stationed down there.” Sardhan said with a chuckle. “I would expect that within a few hundred years, the Golmathi underlands will be a mixture of both Wenemet and Yaminon.”

“What about the Court Sorcerer’s comment?”

“The Court Sorcerer’s comments are meant to get a rise out of someone rather than be factual or accurate. Besides he’s a lizard that plays with baboons. What would he know about the Wenemet or Yaminon?” Sardhan said with a smile.

“And about the baboon versus human argument?”

Sardhan chuckled and said “Oh that’s just rubbish. It is the same as calling the Thalari ‘Ice Bears.’”

“What?” Kuron asked with a confused look.

“Oh, never mind that Kuron. It is just the ramblings of an old wombat.” Sardhan raised his empty glass. “Waiter, we need another round here.”

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

*Sir arCanlann Dirbarn, Tiger King of Arms.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Duedhyn, Elphárec, Golmath, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** It’s a living.



Sir arCanlann kept the Heralds busy at their many appointed tasks. There was some confusion regarding a substantial loan at the Imperial Bank, but it was straightened out by means of a very large rubber-stamp that reads “DENIED”.

### THE IMPERIAL DEMENSE (14 M/UR)

*His August & Imperial Maješty, Sardhan the Eternal, Baron of Madran and Kamadhi, Count of Agdora, Elector and Prince of Golmath, Sovereign of Sahûl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World.*

*His Grace, Pangku Tramandes II, the Precise, Baron Pinyerrel, Grand Duke of All Araxes, Chancellor of the Empire.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Kicitchat, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC, Kommolek, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**IIP:** 22

*For appointments, please see Gazette.*

*“One lašt, triumphant tour!” the papers said  
While others muttered of the walking dead.*



he Imperial Exchequer, pursuant to statute, purchased seven shares of the Imperial Bank of Sahûl.

The Ladies Sardira of Thace and Thierre of Araxes were on hand for the opening of a branch office of *Sardarthion House*, a new printing venture that now publishes their novels. They signed books for hours at the event. Afterwards, they bid each other a tearful farewell as Lady Sardira headed north to go home to Snamarthis.

Work on the Shrine of Iurdana, oft delayed over the past few decades, has again resumed.

#### SPECIAL LITERARY EXCERPT

*From The End of Eternity by Lahon Dorthes<sup>7</sup>*

The most charitable thing that could be said of the Emperor Sardhan is that he lived twenty years too long. Like so many emperors before him, he reign began with great promise. In a time of chaos and uncertainty, the venerable Sardhan promised order

<sup>7</sup> The actual title page reads: *The End of Eternity / Being an Account of the Final Years of Emperor Sardhan / by Lahon Dorthes / Late of his Imperial Maješty's Emerald Guard, 2nd Reg't.*

and stability. In large measure, he delivered on those promises. As the decades passed, that stability more and more began to resemble ossification. ...

He began his reign with the same boundless energy he had displayed as Grand Duke of Golmath since 1459. Though he was 71 at the time of his election in 1494, the new emperor was in excellent physical shape and at the height of his mental powers. In the first three years of his reign, he possibly accomplished more good than any emperor since Manandir. He ended the Cappargarnian Chastisement and the economic crisis brought about by the Crash of 1492. He chartered the Imperial Bank of Sahûl, revived the Zho reforms, built Pirna Memorial Stadium, and set the Imperial Reform Steering Committee to their thankless work. ...

After the failure of the Charter revision, however, the imperial reforms lost focus and eventually ground to a halt. As the emperor grew ever more ancient, his faculties declined. The once energetic and powerful Wenemet became gaunt and grey. His government became concerned above all with the preservation of the *status quo*, much to the frustration of his last chancellor, Grand Duke Tramandes of Araxes. The Duedhyn morass, at the very gates of the Imperial Demense, was allowed to drag on year after year, as the emperor referred all queries and appeals on the subject to the absent landlord-king of Aradéc.

When the terrible winters of the 1510s began, the emperor did nothing. Some ascribed his inaction to ancient grudges still tightly held, others to a decline into senility, though the most likely culprit remained simple exhaustion. Wracked through his eighties and nineties by chronic illness, by 1515 the emperor was more dead than alive. In those increasingly rare days or weeks when he was out of his sickbed and lucid, he simply could not keep up with the world so very changed.

Perhaps it was the unfolding succession crisis in Golmath that finally roused him. Perhaps it was the need for one last grand adventure before his inevitable end. Perhaps it was, as some have suggested, the ministrations of his new, young nurse. Whatever the cause, the emperor quit his palace sickbed

on a snowy spring morning in 1516, and he never returned to it. Displaying more vigour than he had in a decade, Emperor Sardhan breakfasted on steak, eggs, turnip greens, and two pots of *raki* tea before summoning his astounded chancellor. After reading the dispatches and conferring with Chancellor Tramandes, the emperor ordered the Auditors to undertake a thorough examination and reform of the provinces of Biralis, Kinsidan, Kordier, and Larloc. He approved a number of appointments and scribbled a few hurried messages and handed them to an ever-present aide for delivery by Herald.

And then he vanished.



In 1519, the Dragon Sanngrithr swooped down into Sondrim and pillaged the region, to the great terror of the population. After burning down the World Priory and chasing off its terrified monks, she settled down into its ruins. She actually seemed quite nonchalant about the whole affair... almost indifferent in fact.

#### THE DUEDHYN CRISIS (1506-1520)

*In snowy and deserted streets, wolves howl  
While faded roses echo with their howl.*

**T**o the growing alarm of those within both Duedhyni factions, it became obvious by 1516 that King Rhazahan of Aradéc had no interest in reuniting his vassal under a single prince, never mind deciding which of the two claimants of Clan Dhanos were the true Prince of Duedhyn. Set amidst a background of harsh winters, cold summers, crop failures, famine, and wild animal attacks, Duedhyn slowly unravelled.

#### 1516: *Not Peace, but Strangulation*

In addition to the ban on military force, King Rhazahan in 1516 also forbade “diplomacy, religious conversion attempts, military attacks, intel attacks, assassinations, casting of spells, leader actions, public and private communication, builds, spending of gold, investments, diplomacy with other realms and

other entities legal and illegal and any other thing you might possibly order to affect harm of any kind upon the other party, including but not limited to the loss of regions, the loss of troops, the loss of income”. He furthermore ordered both factions to return (more or less) to their 1510 boundaries: Avalow and Glaстанen were to be returned to the Ravens by Prince Merryn, through Sarsynek would remain with Merryn<sup>8</sup>.

Regardless, resources and cash continued to flow into both factions from their supporters throughout the empire, and neither faction embraced the utter paralysis that a close reading of their overlord’s order seemed to require.

Prince Merryn was furious. He wrote an open letter to his liege of Aradéc, where he clearly laid out his position. In keeping the Principality divided instead of united, “our liege has failed us”. Nevertheless, the Prince rendered his due obedience, issuing a proclamation that returned Avalow and Glaстанen to the Raven faction and apologized to their people that they would not now benefit from the investments the Prince planned for all of his regions. Glaстанen quickly reverted to the Ravenists, but the rather crusty Baron of Avalow would have nothing to do with them. He repudiated his tribute to Duedhyn altogether, “until Prince Merryn grows some (expletive deleted) [courage]”.

Raven Prince Dallyn, meanwhile, raised troops.

#### 1517: *On Gryphon Wings*

With the summers continuing to shorten and food becoming more and more scarce, wild animals have begun to seek lands further north and closer to settlements. Numerous attacks have been reported, and there are whole villages abandoned to the wolves.

Gryphons were reported nesting in Kerghtyr and Breselek, through far-ranging flights of them have been spotted hunting as far north as Derrow and Tiogyon. Refugees fleeing the growing glaciers of

<sup>8</sup> Nothing was said about Finnedor, which quit Merryn to join the Ravens in 1512. Although the town of Samia was raised by Raven settlers, the scattered population in the countryside are strongly orthodox Urdan.

Edhen and Garowdyr flooded into Teylek. Many reported a fearsome and previously unknown predator, called the *leaping snow cat*, stalking through the lanes of the empty highland villages.

Spies were reported by farmers in Derrow, though the constabulary found nothing suspicious.

The Princess Tegen, consort to Prince Merryn, died in the harsh winter of this year, when the snow drifts threatened to top the very walls of Trenk. The Prince was inconsolable at the loss, and he wore mourning white from that day.

#### *1518: No Ordinary Faith*

The terrible winter of 1517 continued right through the spring and into summer. Even as late as early Quintilis, snow could still be found in shaded glens and forest land.

On the Feast of Saint Annír, the Urdan Cathedrals, abbeys, and priories proclaimed a new document from the Holy Mother, aimed at reconciliation with the Urdans uncomfortable with the Raven religious establishment. Called *Urged by Faith*, it provided ecclesial structures for the mass-conversion of Raven doubters to Urdanism. Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of copies of *Urged by Faith* were printed, and they soon found their way throughout the lands of Duedhyn.

The Raven dioceses of Avalow and Gwydhen immediately took advantage of the offer to establish Ordinariates. While there was no other major movement in this area, there are now reports of underground pro-Urdan Church movements in some Raven regions, particularly Glaстанen.

At Pareis, 130 heavily-laden transports bearing the flag of Tiryowglas docked. Shortly thereafter, Prince Dallyn III died of a terrible fever.

With the death of Prince Dallyn, the Dragon Sanngrithr was immediately unbound. She took to the air, much to the relief of the people of Pareis who were not looking forward to another dragon battle over their city. After circling the city twice, she headed out eastward over Lake Sardath.

Refugees from Truthek were given solace and comfort by the Raven Pimate and escorted into Breselek (and protected from marauding gryphons) by Grandmaster Kerydh. Habitation in Truthek is now confined to the area immediately surrounding the fortress of Dyghow and nearby Menydh Priory.

Meanwhile, the elderly Raven Captain-General Arrask led 27,000 cavalry into independent Avalow to reclaim the region for his new Prince. Much to the General's surprise, Baron Glannyn of Avalow resisted.

#### *The Battle of Mirjyn (1518)*

The Baron marshalled his forces near the ruins of Mirjyn Priory, burned in 1480 by the Knights of Saint Jarrod, and within visual distance of the Raven priory of Slaughter. He came to the field with 8,000 medium horse and 8,000 swordsmen. The Herald from the Raven forces carried a message demanding his surrender and submission to Prince Meriasek. Heavily outnumbered, Baron Glannyn nevertheless sent the Herald back, saying that he'd rather "be killed and served at table than submit to that pock-faced lunatic".

The Avalow army was massacred. The Ravens only took about 4,000 casualties, but they included old Captain-General Arrask<sup>9</sup>. The remaining Avalow soldiers retreated in good order to the Baron's fortress of Skrifys. Command of the Raven forces was assumed by the recently promoted Captain-General Hendra, who promptly put Skrifys to siege.

#### *1519: The Unravelling*

As communications and travel grew increasingly dangerous and rare, the outlying prefectures of both Princes began to look after their own interests. Sarthes and Tewynn rebelled from the Ravenists, and Rinthes would have rebelled from Prince Merryn, were it not for the presence of his son and 10,000 knights and cataphracti.

In Teylek, the numerous refugees had pretty well destroyed the local infrastructure's ability to care for

<sup>9</sup> Just days before his retirement. Of course.

them. As the refugees left for Tawesek, Lord Teylek rebelled from Prince Merryn and declared his region independent.

Finnedor Prefecture dissolved into civil war, for reasons perhaps best described as “an extreme difference of opinion”, and the region is now both independent and disunited.

#### *1520: War!*

In the bleak summer of 1520, Prince Merryn remained ensconced in the city of Trenk in Derrow, trying to hold his fraying realm together. Word reached the Prince that a Raven army leading refugees had entered the region from Breselek, apparently heading north and trying to avoid detection. Unfortunately for them, it's rather difficult to hide a mob of 20,000 unruly men, women, and children with carts and wagons full of their goods. Despite some desultory effort of the Raven army to prevent it, the refugees had pillaged far and wide throughout Derrow in an effort to avoid starvation.

Citing this as a clear violation of the orders of his liege of Aradéc<sup>10</sup>, the Prince put aside his mourning clothes, donned his armour, and gathered his forces to confront the invaders near Keresyk Priory.

#### *The Battle of Keresyk (1520)*

Prince Merryn's hastily gathered army consisted of a motley band of 10,000 assorted cavalry, infantry, and engineers, supported by the network of castles in the area and the imposing presence of 500 massive stone golems.

The Raven force was led by none other than Grandmaster Kerydh of the Order of the Sacred Raven, accompanied by the Raven Prelate Artysr the Zealot. For Sir Kerydh, it was a homecoming of sorts. He had been born and raised in Derrow. Indeed, his cousin the Lord of Derrow was allied with the enemy. He commanded 10,000 knights of the Order and an astonishing 50,000 auxiliary lancers.

A quick exchange of Heralds reaffirmed the neutrality of the refugees and confirmed that battle was inevitable. The armies arrayed themselves on the

<sup>10</sup> And mindful, no doubt, of the Civil War rules.

misty morning of the *Nones* of Sextilis on a wide field overlooked by the craggy hill upon which stood the Urdan priory of Keresyk.

The trumpeting sounded shortly after dawn. The fearsome sound of the Order of the Raven drowned out the vastly outnumbered rabble of Prince Merryn. Outnumbered five to one, Merryn's forces prepared themselves for death. Many of the Prince's advisors counseled retreat. In reply, the Prince rode to the head of the line and inspired his officers and men with a stirring speech, promising them the protection of Urda and everlasting glory in the Summerlands, whether they died at Keresyk or safe in their beds twenty years hence. He promised knighthoods to every man who fought with him this day, saying:

*We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;  
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me  
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,  
This day shall gentle his condition;  
And gentlemen in Duedhyn now-a-bed  
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,  
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks  
That fought with us this day<sup>11</sup>.*

And then, the men on the lines perceived that they were not alone. It was said later in the courts of Prince Merryn that the very graves opened up, and the ancient warriors of Duedhyn arose to defend their true liege. Whatever the case, in the dim morning mist the Raven commander Sir Kerydh noted the presence of 40,000 infantry reinforcements in the enemy lines and adjusted his tactical plan accordingly.

Moments later, the Ravens charged. The mass of cavalry tore through the Merryn line, and the Heralds counted more than 50,000 dead from the first charge, the overwhelmingly vast majority of which were from the defenders.

Sir Kerydh wheeled his knights and lancers around and charged again. Again, the cavalry tore through the Merryn positions, though this time significant casualties were inflicted by the stone warriors. As the Ravens prepared their third charge, word came that

<sup>11</sup> With apologies to Mr. William Shakespeare.

Sir Kerydh had suffered a grievous wound. He was not expected to survive the hour.

The third charge was ordered by the Raven Prelate himself. The “motherists” were on the run, with only a handful of survivors. It would be simple. It might have been, if not for the stone warriors and the fact that the Prelate was not by any means trained in the arts of war.

The third charge quickly degenerated into a general *melée*, with Raven cavalry running down small groups of Merryn defenders and then getting squashed flat by the immensely powerful (and very large) golems. The ground was obscured by the sheer numbers of the dead. No quarter was given, nor was any asked, as the battle continued through the day and into the moonlit night. Dawn found the field held by the remaining stone golems, numbering perhaps 150, perhaps more. Little else stirred on the field of battle, save for carrion birds.

A handful of Raven knights and the Prelate of the Raven Orthodox Church survived and were taken prisoner. Prince Merryn was wounded, and virtually all of his troops are dead.

*Civil War rules are no longer in effect.*

#### PRINCIPALITY OF DUEDHYN / RAVENIST (9 S/RA)

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

*His Holiness Artysr the Zealot, Prelate of the Raven Orthodox Church*

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

**DP:** Failed!

**D**Prince Dallyn died, and his zealous son is the new Prince. He has inherited quite a mess, not the least of which was the panicked alarm of the Raven Orthodox clergy, leaderless and suddenly bereft of Mana.

#### PRINCIPALITY OF DUEDHYN / MERRYN (2 S/UR)

*His Highness, Prince Merryn II of Duedhyn, Lord Goslowes, Baron Dhanos, Defender of the Faith.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Elphárec, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Kommolek, ThaceE, Tiryowglas

**DP:** None

**D**Prince Merryn suffered the loss of his wife, the loss of more of his sundered Principality, an attack by the Ravens, and the depredations of Winter and the wild animals it is driving from the wilderness. Still, it could be worse.

#### BARONY OF FELL KOMMOLEK (19 W&S/YG)

*Baron Goesek Annavas III, the Grim, of Kommolek, Lord Treskaw, Burgrave of Fair Belsúnd.*

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

**DP:** Drogdyr (F), Pentyr (F)

**R**efugees fled the highlands in ever-increasing numbers as the snows continued to deepen. The barony did its best to coordinate an orderly evacuation northwards, sending armies to guide the refugees and locating food and supply depots at strategic places on the planned routes. It was a logistical nightmare, and the strain was plainly visible on the haggard face of Baron Annavas. The 57-year old Baron looked seventy, and his ruff was the colour of ash.

Refugees poured from Colledhu, Drogdur, Dubarha, and Kurfowlek, as villages emptied fleeing the summer snows. Under careful supervision of the army, they joined those from Nametor, Namdynn, and Kerrek and slowly trekked northwards towards the coast of Lake Sardath. Throughout the long march, caches of food and supplies were carefully placed in encampments, both to keep the refugees fed and clothed, and to keep them together in large groups.

Though the countryside was nearly empty, some pockets of civilization remained. The city of Ueramos in Colledhu, though now a mere town, clung to life, as did the Cathedral of Bituveco there. Assorted small castles served as outposts in many of the otherwise abandoned prefectures.

Even as most of his people fled, the Baron of Nametor renounced his tribute to Kommolek, claiming that Annavas was set on abandoning his realm. The truth of that assertion soon became obvious. In 1517, Baron Annavas announced the *Nowydh mora Tir* decree, to take effect in 1520. In explaining the meaning of the decree to his councillors, he said:

*Here at the point of Yagnar's Icy Spear do we at last reveal our darker purposes. Know that we shall divide our lands in three, and it is our fast intent to shake all cares and business from our age. I and my other elder agents of empire, distinguished as they are, shall confer them on younger strengths, while we unburthen'd crawl towards death.*

*Our realm shall radiate as the light of our lord in the four directions of the compass. As in the south spreads the stalwart ice, in the east we bequeath to my brother Andel and my sister Ennor as well as her children Caja, Elowen, and Ando, suzerainty over these lands of our realm to expand further east in the name of our lord and together with our allies of Zarkhandu. Under their guidance and strength shall that house spread. To the West, we bequeath to Lady Ebrel as her dowry the lands of the western Fell. These shall grow under the care of our allies of Atuburrk and Kitcitchat. And to the north, the greatest burden and the greatest opportunity shall fall to Annavas III my heir and your prince who shall take his rightful place as Baron and your liege.*

The young Goesek heir was now openly called Annavas III, even though he was not yet baron. He took command of the Barony's new acquisition, the flying fortress *Cleansing Storm*. It was last reported over Hüdül and has become the *de facto* Kommolek capital. From there, he rallied his armies and his people to perseverance and greatness.

*say farewell to ease  
say farewell to the weak  
say farewell to your treasures  
more still shall we make  
journey light, but bring your swords  
and we will become pilgrims  
of a new Kommolek*

In 1519, the heroic and studly Lord Dolmathes of Atuburrk arrived in Fair Belsünd with a fleet of 250 ships. There, he married Lady Ebrel in a somewhat restrained ceremony at Kembra Cathedral.

In 1520, as the Baron's *Nowydh mora Tir* decree went into effect, he abdicated in favour of his son and heir. He retired to the howling wilderness of icy Namdynn accompanied by the Demon Dantiar: to face the snow, to watch the sad, noble Griffons, and to reflect on the way of things.

The Baroness of Drogdyr swore fealty to Baron Annavas III, and he appointed her to his council. No new heir was named for the unmarried and childless new Baron.

Observers estimate 120,000 refugees in Baradhu.

#### COUNTY OF TIRYOWGLAS (29 S&W/IL)

*His Excellency, Count Lefans IV, Baron Kwilkyn, Count of Tiryouglas, Defender of the Faith.*

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

**DP:** None.



inter deepened. Widespread crop failure and starvation became the rule rather than the exception. Large expenditures on new public works projects helped soften the blow, but misery continues to stalk the people of Tiryouglas.

Mount Tathur suffered a series of rolling eruptions throughout most of the period from 1515 to 1520, causing people to abandon many of the highland villages in Mengleth. In much of eastern Tiryouglas, brown and red snow fell, sickening both cattle and people.

Count Lefans called on his subjects to pray for the repudiation of the "so-called Sword of Iluvar", as "they have shown themselves unworthy of Iluvar's grace and blessing by not keeping their house in order, then by seeking refuge and swearing fealty to a Tarotist realm to try and resist the just attempt by Averon to secure and hold the territory, assets, troops and worshipers for Iluvar".

Tiryouglas reorganized its military, creating the *Army of the Lake*, also known as the "Browncoats",

due to the brown long coats that are part of their uniforms.

The city of Caranes in Bronnow expanded, becoming the largest city in the County. In Vaël, the University of Eidis was founded in 1519.

The navy continued joint patrols with Ingazi and Murali on the Upper Antean.

#### ILUVARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (24 IL)

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

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

**DP:** None.

**D**ope Pious VIII was found frozen to death in his apartments in 1518. He had apparently allowed the fire in his hearth to go out. The canons of Ilúhir chose a young, dynamic theologian who took the name Harmony. Maybe this Pontiff will stick around a while.

The Church expanded the Pontifical University of Siſtrameides and added more administrators and functionaries.

Lady Lynnel of Sakkar, commanding 10,000 Tiryowgli light horse, attended the Church's famous school of diplomacy. She then spent several years soaking in the atmosphere of the Holy City and defending it from any trouble.

#### MOST SANGUINE DUCHY OF ELPHÁREC (39 W/IL)

*His Grace, Eparreb Tashnes IV, the Flamboyant, Count of Angûron and Siddhan, Duke of Elphárec.*

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

**DP:** None.

**A**s the winters grew ever harsher, the Duke's councillors resolved that dramatic actions were required. In supplication to Iluvar, Saint Aldſtadht's Abbey in Kalipara was raised to a Cathedral. Large amounts of gold were invested into new public works projects. Truly *massive* amounts of gold were invested in the realm's sorcery. Did any of it help? It's hard to say. Certainly the weather was ruin-

ous, but the sufferings of the people did not appear *much* worse, so perhaps that's progress.

Needless to say, in these trying times the Great Clock of Baron Ilkurr Valdiss, Toymaker of Mungg, was cut completely out of the Duchy's budget. The elderly Baron despaired of ever completing his life's work. And then, a miracle happened: he found a wealthy patron in the person of the Duke's younger brother, Air Marshal Count Gorran. Work began in earnest, and the intricate plans were finally completed in 1517. Unfortunately, in that deep, cold winter the Baron breathed his last. When Gorran's men arrived at the workshop the next spring, they discovered that the Baron's workshop had been ransacked. There was no sign of the plans, and there are no suspects.

The Duchy's infantry quality improved.

#### KINGDOM OF HYRÁGEC (29 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.

**O**ne afternoon over tea and cakes, Queen Finora mentioned to her husband the King that he had seemed increasingly restless and out of sorts. Our intrepid correspondent reports the ensuing conversation.

**KING:** It's Frenthes. The boy is 36 today.

**QUEEN:** Well, yes. That's why the ball this evening. Have you forgotten?

**KING:** No, confound it, woman, I haven't forgotten. But he's 36 and still unmarried.

**QUEEN:** Well, he just hasn't found the right wenemaide yet, that's all. Give him time.

**KING:** Time? He's middle aged, Fin! It was amusing when he was in his twenties and playing the charming bachelor, dancing with every pretty young thing at the balls, but now...

**QUEEN:** But now all those pretty young things have settled down and had families.

KING: Exactly! The wenemaids at the balls are fifteen years younger than him. Or more. It's just embarrassing.

QUEEN: Well, what do you suggest?

KING: We'll have to fix him up.

QUEEN: Fix him up?

KING: Yes—an arranged marriage. And pretty quick, too. He needs a proper heir.

QUEEN: Oh, Rah, you've got plenty of grandchildren. And Frenthes gets along with all his nephews and nieces. Any of them would make a fine...

KING: Yes, yes. But the boy should have a wife. Any ideas?

QUEEN: Well, there *is* that Ingazi ambassador who's been showing around a portrait of the Count's daughter for the past few years...

KING: Perfect! Fin, you're a genius. Page! Fetch me the Ingazi ambassador!

And so it came to pass that a few months later, the invitations were sent:

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

has the honor of announcing  
the marriage of his daughter

the Lady Gwariva Albitirre

to

Crown Prince Irrjir Frenthes of Hurágec

at the Cathedral of Injadh  
Midsummer Day, 1517

Preparations began immediately. The Queen, reportedly embarrassed that the realm looked so shabby and dowdy, prodded her husband the King to “spiff the place up a bit”. New public works projects went

in, three new royal roads were hastily constructed<sup>12</sup>, the town of Celli was built in Seni, and the port town of Alvitirre (named after a certain Ingazi princess) rose in Lhan across the Kingsbridge from Pahasar. The town of Gawyandra grew to a city.

To provide appropriate music for the blessed event, the King ordered the construction of a great school and concert hall in the capital, to be called *the Royal Conservatory*. The institution quickly attracted the very best music and voice teachers from all over the Byrrin valley and the Gawan Peninsula.

The Prince, for his part, positively fell in love with the painted portrait of his betrothed.

Ingazi artisans flooded Lhan to make preparations. Great pavilions were built outside the Cathedral for the reception, and barrels and crates of food and drink arrived every day for months. The crowning achievement, however, was the wedding cake. The scaffolding to construct this delectable edifice was in itself the size of a small manor house.

The wedding day was heralded by gloriously warm and sunny weather<sup>13</sup>. The Ingazi delegation, encamped near the Cathedral, was led by the bride's older brother Lord Trememeres, who had been deputized by his father to give away the bride. They had with them the Lady's dowry—several chests full of gold, furs, and jewels—all of which met with Queen Finora's admiring approval.

Prince Frenthes arrived at the head of honour guard consisting of more than 5,000 cavaliers and 22,000 knights of the realm, gloriously arrayed in all their tournament finery.

It was only during the ceremony that bride and groom saw each other for the first time. The groom was dressed in cerulean brocade cut with cloth of gold and embroidered with the House Irrjir arms. The bride, more than a decade his junior, wore a richly embroidered white satin wedding dress that shimmered with her every movement. The embroidery was skillfully spaced throughout the dress, with garlands of pearl orange blossom and jasmine com-

<sup>12</sup> Pahasar to Vidres, Pahasar to St. Celli, St. Celli to Golluz.

<sup>13</sup> Even in Hyrágec, this has become something of a rarity.

bined with flowing lines of wheat ears, a symbol of fertility, and worked in pearl and diamanté.

After they pronounced their vows, Prince Frenthes placed on Alvitirre's finger a ring fashioned from diamonds that once decorated a tiara belonging to Queen Sardira, and then he swept her up into his arms. The new Princess later said, "it was wonderful, magical. I just threw my arms round his neck and kissed him as he held me to him, my feet dangling off the ground."

And then there was the reception. In addition to the aristocracy of Hyrágec and Ingazi, ordinary people came from miles around, some from as far away as Pahasar. Wine flowed from fountains, and great wheels of Ingazi cheese were set up everywhere to keep the peasants well lubricated and fed. Then came the soups and breads and meats and sweets, until even the nobles began to marvel at the great quantities of food for the feast. There were festive musicians, jugglers, and even a demonstration rugby match. But all this paled before the cake: nine tiers of Ingazi cheesecake, each tier alternately frosted with clotted cream or cream cheese, and decorated with sliced strawberries forming the linked heraldry of Hyrágec and Ingazi. The entire edible edifice stood at something over twenty feet and was quite capable of feeding the prefecture by itself.

Within a month, Hyrágec had returned more or less to normal. The happy couple settled down to wedded bliss, announcing the birth of their first son Rahnes in 1519, and their second son Andjes in 1520.

The government expanded, as did the Naval Academy.

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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, Golmath, Hyrágec, Iáthedain, ID, IOC,

Kicitchat, Kommolek, Murali, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, (z)Arkhandu

**DP:** None.

**I**ngazi celebrated a royal wedding in Hyrágec, much to the satisfaction of the Count Palatine.

The winters continued to be rough, particularly in Ingazi's inland territories, where there were scattered reports of highland villages abandoned to the advancing glaciers. They were nowhere near as harsh, however, as in the more southerly realms.

For once, the news from New Ingazi was not all smiles and rainbows, though rumours of a great naval victory have found their way into public discourse.

Ingazi laid down more new galleons. Cavalry and infantry quality improved, the Air Academy was enlarged, as was the government.

A national youth Rugby programme was initiated, bringing much new talent into the sport. Additional state subsidies to the Ingazi League greatly improved the various teams.

#### CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT (46.4 UR)

*Her All-Holiness Kemalla XVII, the Hunting Lion, First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sabúl.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averon, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, Iáthedain, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Itaxik, Kicitchat, Murali, Sakkar, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Zarkhandu

**DP:** See below.

**F**irst Matriarch Camleda V, now in her late sixties, scarcely slowed down in her efforts to minister to the Church. Her legates and emissaries traveled to the four corners of the known world to further her agenda of Urdan orthodoxy.

In the autumn of 1516 while the snow fell, Urdraháhn played host to the Emperor Sardhan. After a brief "official" visit, Emperor and Matriarch (and servants and aides) retired behind locked doors to a small chamber in the most ancient portion of the Matriarchal Palace for *raki* tea and cakes, followed by whiskey and chowder, followed by whiskey and

whiskey, followed by more whiskey. What they discussed, none knew, but occasionally peals of laughter could be heard through the locked doors. The Emperor's aides carried him out about dawn, while the Matriarch was simply allowed to sleep in a rather comfy chair surrounded by empty whiskey bottles.

The next year, the Holy Mother vacationed in Pupini, just in time to witness some spectacular eruptions of the volcano there. When she returned to Urdrahahn, news had arrived of the martyrdom of Reverend Mother Dora in the north. Camleda openly wept. When later that year reports filtered into Urdrahahn of the disappearance of Reverend Mother Berthilde in the southwestern steppe, Camleda simply turned her private secretary and said, "I shall die on the steppes as well, Callebaut."

Shortly thereafter, she appointed her old friend Reverend Mother Kemalla administrator of Urdrahahn in her absence. The Holy Mother loaded up some basic supplies on her dragon Skögul, and the two of them left the city, flying westward.

Meanwhile, Reverend Mother Ixti'ati and Abbess Tzeitel continued their meetings with the Draconic Barons to great effect.

Shortly after the death of Camleda on the steppe, the Sybil awoke from a ritual trance with the name of Reverend Mother Kemalla on her bloody and foam-flecked lips mumbling the motto "hunting lion".

#### ELECTORAL PRINCIPALITY OF GOLMATH (57 W/TA)

*His Majesty, Walarri Parndarra the Stern, 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 Kaidarian the Reserved, Baron Volpel and Count of Runazar.*

*Margrave Volpel Tregarion of Ebalon.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrrk, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, Murali, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdrahahn

**DP:** Murrugapa (F), Kurldayi (F), Oy.

**S**ardhan had returned! The cry went up from every plaza and street and alley of the city of Golmath in late 1517—Sardhan the Glorious, Sardhan the Old, Sardhan the Eternal—Sardhan had returned! He took over a wing of the old Ducal palace and immediately summoned Prince-Regent Parndarra, Count Kaidarian, Hierarch Mordican, the conquering Lord Wooster, and all of the Walarri and Volpel Clan Mothers to meet with him in the spring. There were those who thought that he had come not a moment too soon.

Prince-Regent Parndarra the Stern<sup>14</sup> had ordered prodigious sacrifices to the Lords of the Tarot, consisting primarily of marginal art, questionable books, and hoofed animals. Hierarch Mordican and the increasingly intransigent *Fellowship of Connate Tarotiſts* jumped to comply. The flames gouted over the temples throughout the Principality for months, and the smell of barbecue wafted through the towns and countryside. This was, however, merely a prelude to Parndarra's final push to eliminate the political and economic power of the realm's various religious minorities.

Tarotiſt missionaries descended upon Yagnar-iſt Minyappa and largely converted the population. In the Ebalon March, Urdan Caros, Toworrah, and Yuwa were colonized with good Tarotiſt stock. In the Underlands, atheist Tawajta was given the same treatment. Ina was colonized as well, presumably because the inhabitants weren't Tarotiſt enough.

Parndarra's drive for uniformity resulted in very different responses throughout the Principality. In Runazar, where the Fellowship of Connate Tarotiſts has never had much influence, the people continued their religiously free-wheeling ways<sup>15</sup>. Throughout much of the countryside of Golmath proper, the "new orthodoxy" was extremely popular, as a new, uncompromising puritanism took root, building on

<sup>14</sup> Also known in some quarters as "Parndarra the Zealot" or "Parndarra the Slightly Unhinged." A hard-core Tarotiſt of the new school, he is not very popular amongst the realm's intelligentsia or the more old-fashioned Tarotiſts. Plus, he's a bit of a jerk.

<sup>15</sup> In fact, the Patriarch of Random was told of the doings up north while he was at his weekly poker game. He reportedly threw back a glass of whisky and opined, "sod 'em anyway, the limp-scuttled whoresons. They'll have us all drinkin' raki before they're done".

the “great revival” of two generations ago. The puritan movement, so called because of its central tenet of keeping Tarotism “pure” from outside influence, was decidedly unpopular in the cities, where a cosmopolitan culture of arts and literature dominated.

The largest organized rejection of Puritanism, however, was in the northwest, where a cult dedicated to the *King in Yellow* suddenly flourished. Centered in the labyrinthine city of Kumara in Dambiyi, the cult rapidly spread to Kurldayi, Minyappa, and Ardanyi. These followers of Card XVI utterly reject the FOCT, and they openly preach entropy, dissipation, and despair. The *Fellowship* is baffled by them, and for their part, the followers of the “Yellow Cult” are increasingly hostile to any imposition of puritanism.

Mendicants dedicated to the *Way of Yustomon* were the targets of derision and even physical abuse and violence in the Golmath countryside, though not in Runazar, where they remain popular.

In the ports, goods from Araxes, Hyragec, Ingazi, and Thace were increasingly subject to vandalism, and their merchants suffered an escalating series of physical attacks. Trade goods from Urdrahahn were boycotted by many in the realm, and some are calling for the end of trade with all Urdan realms.

Depending on which part of Golmath you’re in, the Prince-Regent is hailed as either a prophet or a dangerous lunatic. It was into this atmosphere that Sardhan returned to his homeland and called for “a sit-down”.

#### A SIT-DOWN (1518)

*(The Great Hall. Jinx is setting out large bowls of pears and peaches on the sideboard. Kaidarian is sitting on the stairs; Parndarra and Mordican are standing by the door talking quietly with each other; Wooſter is standing off to the side, idling, waiting for something to happen; eight Clan Mothers are sitting and talking at the table, with the middle-aged Walarri Pirri and the young Volpel Wadyima occupying the big chairs. Sardhan walks in and takes a seat.)*

SARD.: Peaches and pears on the frakkin’ bar.  
Spoon it out amongst yourselves. *(They all*

*sit)* First thing to say is, I’m frakkin’ 95, and you lollipop suckers don’t have the deck-damned succession worked out yet.

PARN.: *(Rising from his chair)* But surely, my Lord...

SARD.: Sit the frak down. I’ll deal with you later. *(Wooſter laughs)* After what I’ve seen going on around here, I want to make damn sure that after somebody sticks a knife into Miſter frakkin’ popularity here, we’ve got a Plan B. *(Parndarra smiles weakly, sits)*

PIRRI: My liege, we will happily convene the Clan Mothers and choose the Prince-Regent’s heir. Surely this simple request did not merit your arduous journey?

SARD.: That’s exactly what you’re going to do. And you’re going to frakkin’ do it right here, right now. And these ladies *(broadly gestures at Volpel Clan Mothers)* will be happy to assist.

PIRRI: *(Grits teeth)* Now, my liege?

SARD.: Is there a problem?

PIRRI: As well you know, my liege, no man is permitted in the convocation of the Clan Mothers.

SARD.: Kaidarian, Wooſter, you two go out into the hall and show those guards out there how to clean the frakkin’ rust off their frakkin’ weapons. *(As Kaidarian and Wooſter leave, he addresses Pirri)* None of these other lollipop suckers is a frakkin’ man, so you can start any time.



The meeting was mercifully brief, and it was to no one’s great surprise that the rugged Volpel Kaidarian was chosen the Prince-Regent’s heir, over the objection of most of the Walarri Mothers. The Emperor required all those attending the meeting to swear fealty to both Parndarra and Kaidarian.

The Emperor took to his sickbed in the winter of 1520, and rapidly declined. Few believe he will outlast the snows.

Anti-Urdan riots followed the conclusion of the ARF finals in 1520.

#### ALL-EASTERN RUGBY FEDERATION (ARF)

**A**RF's 1520 quarter-finals again featured the utter destruction of the Kumara *Firestorm* by Ingazi's Mindo *Maulers*, this time by a score of 12-2. The Pagumath *Pirates* lost to their hated rivals, the Callam *Kilted Maniacs* 8-6. The rioting that followed this game took almost a month to clean up in the run-up to the final.

The *Maulers* came to the final with the full force of the new Ingazi programme strategies behind them. It paid off. They dominated the game from the start, and took home their first dog bowl, smashing the *Kilted Maniacs* 18-4. The wild celebrations throughout Ingazi are ongoing, and in Mindo a public holiday was declared.

#### ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ARADÉC (44 W/IL)

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

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, Iáthedain, ID, IOC, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Murali, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za

**DP:** Palha (F)

**R**hing Rhazahan continued to spend an inordinate amount of time pursuing peace within his vassal of Duedhyn and with Duedhyn's neighbours. He cautiously welcomed the Urdan Church's new outreach to the Ravens.

The kingdom built the port towns of Henari and Acronum in Kudirri and Marrgalayi, respectively. The Royal Engineers attempted to build another town on top of the one they'd already built in Kudirri, but fortunately the inhabitants convinced them otherwise.

Pathilu Priory in Madrawan was built using construction materials sent to Aradéc by the Grand Duke of Atuburrk. Some of the junior monks there call the place "spooky".

Both the military academy and the university were enlarged, and considerable monies were spent in various investments. Large-scale agricultural public works were constructed in Darrayi and Napamiri.

Prince Deric and Princess Glóamora added two new children to their growing family: a boy named Deric in 1517, and a girl named Mayia the following year. Prince Endrahan, meanwhile, entered University in 1518.

In Darnuldeis, engineers constructed several more series of expansions to the foundations of city walls.

Aradéc's winters grew colder and snowier.

When told of the armed conflict in Duedhyn, King Rhazahan reportedly put a cold compress over his eyes and had himself a lie-down.

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

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

**Trade:** Aradéc, Golmath, Ingazi, IOC, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**M**urali was peaceful under its deepening blanket of fluffy white snow. The navy continued joint patrols with Ingazi and Tiryowglas on the Antean. The *Cult of Saint Zanthos the Combustible* increased, though it is nowhere as strong as the mendicants of the *Way of Yustomon*, with whom they maintain a friendly rivalry.

#### DRACONIC BARONY OF IÁTHEDAIN (5 S/UR)

*Baron Darandein Zharharn of Iáthedain, the Gruff but Lovable, Lord Dragonwood.*

*Sir Trefusis Pennires, Grandmaster of the Military Order of the Red Dragon.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Ingazi, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za, Zarkhandu

**DP:** Darathal (F), Kiaf (F), Shuden (A), Sital (F)

**H**oly Mother Camleda V brokered an agreement with the Draconic Barons to relocate north of the Antean. With Ingazi's logistical help and Zarkhandu's insouciance, a new Realm entered the annals of the Empire as the Draconic Urdan barons swore their fealty to the gruff old Baron

of Zharharn of Darathal, who has transferred his baronial seat (and most of his people) to the forest wilds of Naipa. Zarkhandu's experiment of an Urdan March ended as their Urdan subjects migrated north, ceding their now depopulated regions directly to the Zarkhandu crown.

The Church helped build some infrastructure in the divided Barony, including the port towns of Wyrnglen in Kias and Dragonwood in Sital. A bridge was constructed across the Antean from Arrendeis in Haidek to Dragonwood in Sital. A road was built from the Cathedral of Harlech in Shuden to Wyrnglen.

The Church also built the town of Glenurda and the fortress of Trefusis in Shuden and established there the Military Order of the Red Dragon, commanded by Sir Trefusis Pennires and consisting in large part of his former mercenary company. Diplomacy in Shuden established that region's lands as part of the Order's patrimony.

Naipa was settled (2131)S, and the refugees founded the barony's capital town of Iäthedeis there. More refugees are heading for Karnamú.

#### IÄTHEDEK: THE PROTECTORATE OF FRIEBÆLD

**F**orce prevailed. A tough brown grass is growing in parts of the Wyrmwaste, and plants have been noted in Scagadon.

#### VEILED MASTERS OF YARNI-ZA (9 YG)

*His Unholy Magnificence, the Lich Ystar, Thirteenth Patriarch of the Priests of Ozahn, Dread Hand of Yagnar, Voice of the Hidden Masters of Yarni-Za, Lord of the Fell.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Iäthedain, Zarkhandu

**DP:** No.

**Y**star the Lich moved his pieces around the chessboard with deliberation and subtlety. The winters continued to be bitterly cold.

#### ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ZARKHANDU (44 S/DF)

*His Dread Majesty, Tirach Bæn, Lord Sakkath, Count of Vúhlath & Mlideen, Duke of Hyáglión, Overlord of the Putini & Yani, Electoral King of Zarkhandu.*

*His Majesty, Tirach Zhur the Magnificent, Prince Imperial, Speaker of the Zarkhandu Regency.*

*Colonel Sir Mattahonga Lazar, Grandmaster of the Order of the Second Sons.*

**Trade:** Iäthedain, Ingazi, Kommolek, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za

**DP:** Zhín (F), Nardis (F)

**Z**arkhandu was snowed under, with the winters becoming nearly constant. Food came increasingly from hardy root vegetables and the bounty of the sea. Famine was endemic in the mountain prefectures, and refugees fled the Zíman cultural regions<sup>16</sup>, leaving the ancient town of Trodath a ruin. Priests of the Dread Forge distributed aid and prepared the people to relocate to Garghas and Sleghas, themselves already under the grip of icy famine. The Wizard's Guild guided the slow-moving caravan of wagons across the mountains.

In 1516, Captain-General Turanis Akkethes led a mixed force of 20,000 men with an equal number of zombie auxiliaries and thirty gryphons into Haidek with the intention of bringing them firmly back into the Zarkhandu fold. The region itself was eerily quiet, and the Urdan population was nowhere to be found. The town of Arrendeis, on the other hand, was full of loyal Yagnarist Saurians, and they threw the gates open on the army's approach. They related how Urdan priestesses had led the people across the river just ahead of the advancing Zarkhandu forces. They did leave a lovely bridge, however, linking Arrendeis with the new Urdan town of Dragonwood. Celebrations (with fireworks) were held in Arrendeis, which is now (F) to Zarkhandu.

<sup>16</sup> The mountainous region to the west of Zarkhandu proper was home to the rustic Zíman people. This culture is significantly different from Zarkhandu's, being more closely related to the lost culture of the Yann. Even the language is different from that of Zarkhandu, though they are mutually intelligible. A hardy and proud mountain folk, the Baron(ess) of Trodath is their traditional leader.

The royal road extended from Hallek to Agremek, and a large magical construction was built in Vúhlath.

Although Tirach Bæn came of age in 1516, the Regency remains in effect while the King attends University at Zonu-Yahn. He is expected to graduate with a degree in Engineering in 1521. His siblings are likewise all attending University.

The Crown ordered the creation of a new Military Order, based in Zimandhu with fortresses in Zimandhu, Mekellen, Zodrek, Ziman-Dath, and Ziman-Heth. Called *the Order of the Second Sons* (OSS), it is a pan-Yagnarišt Order based on the friendship of Tirach Zhur, Goesek Anđel of Komolek, Mattahonga Lazar, and Turanis Akkethes in their youth in Einandhu. Membership in the Order is open to any Yagnarišt regardless of station, hive status, gender, or kindred, with the caveat that there is no room for the living dead. Wenemet Colonel Mattahonga Lazar, late of the IVth Emerald Watch Regiment, former attaché to Tirach Zhur, was appointed the Order's first Grandmaster at the ripe old age of 67 in 1519.

When trade increased with the Draconic Federation (and later with the Barony of Iäthedain), Zarkhandu citizens voiced their opposition. There are increasing calls against continued trade with Ingazi and Urdraháhn.

A spy was captured in Hebith.

#### MEANWHILE, IN THE GREAT WHITE SOUTH...

**T**he frozen south is not completely without people, of course. Certainly, there are vast regions of uninhabitable mountainous glaciers and even ice sheets, but much of the land is tundra. This forboding territory is home to small bands of hardy nomadic herders, answerable to no king but the storm. They migrate with their tiny herds of reindeer, musk-ox, and even mamonts across the snowy wastes.

As these herders come into the border villages and towns to trade furs for metal tools and the like, they will occasionally bring news. Mostly, this is informa-

tion regarding the weather, as there's not a lot else of interest to outsiders, but in 1520 strange tales were told throughout the south.

Eyewitnesses report that in 1519, a great fleet anchored at Nurl. Within hours, boats started coming ashore filled with white bears. They resembled the wild antarctic bears that prowl the coastlines and rivers, but they walked upright and wore simple clothing. They came under the leadership of Wenemet, and there were thousands of them, perhaps tens of thousands. They came with metal tools, and they quickly colonized the region (2122)T.

After the fleet weighed anchor and sailed away, a small group of Saurian reindeer herders went to see if they could trade with the bear-people. They learned that they call themselves Thalari, and they seem to rely on fishing for their livelihood. They are fantastically loyal to their tribal leaders, and they are extremely violent with those who violate their many taboos or offer insult.

And they're Tarotists.

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## The Underlands

### DOWN UNDER

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#### THE PUTINI & YANI ALLIANCE (15 Y/-)

*The Right Honourable Provošt of Yani and Master of the Union Guilds of the Federated Towns of Yangina and Putini, Mani Prupari.*

Trade: None.

DP: None.

**Y**ani's sappers built a series of fortifications called *King Wulyaku's Wall* on the northern border of Nuyina Luyni, securing the border between Nuyinia Luyni and the tunnel to the Mines of Thanima. They declared the city of Yani as their Capital and expanded it, as well as the town of Palawani. Otherwise, life was pleasant.

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## The New World

### THE GREAT GREEN NORTH

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#### NEW ATUBURRK

The Atuburrk air expedition continued with their explorations before leaving in 1517. They returned the next year with a larger fleet of 70 airships, which flew patrols for an enormous flying fortress. Commanded by Lord Kourbiedes, this fortress cast a great shadow over the lands below, sending the natives into panic.

Any time an airship flew close to the ground near the inhabited areas, it was subject to a shower of arrows and javelins, none of which however appeared to have much effect.



#### VICEROYALTY OF NEW INGAZI

*Gorres, Lord Trouserdale, Admiral of the Ocean Sea, Lord Lieutenant of Saint Ilana, and Viceroy of New Ingazi.*

Trade: None.

DP: None.

Following a great naval battle at Rangi, Viceroy Lord Gorres rendezvoused with a transport fleet in the Ninghan Sea and proceeded to the Dolphin region designated New Dara. The fleet landed a force of 9,000, which pacified both that region and neighbouring Oamnga.

Lord Keebel, meanwhile, set his forces to militarily convert Razhirri and Laharri. Casualties proved heavier than expected.

#### MEANWHILE, ON THE ISLAND OF RUWTAM...

In the year 1520, a very battered flotilla of twenty-five airships flying the red and gold flag of Araxes landed at Wuátru. A considerable mob of armed Dolphin heretics immediately surrounded the landing area. The commander of-flooded some 3,000 men to secure the landing area. The mob, by now numbering twice that number, attacked.

Araxean weaponry and armour proved superior, and the mob was quickly destroyed. They did manage to inflict about a thousand casualties. Araxes now controls the region.



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# Imperial Gazette

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

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Emperor Sardhan

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## APPOINTMENTS

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To Governor of Arbedon: Electoral Grand Duke Adhanggar Sydath of Atuburrk.

To Governor of Biralis, Dorthacia, Dranchoal, Drazhan, Kaparis, Kiermon, Kinsidan, Kordier, Larloc, Sardior, Withidan: *by examination*.

To Lord Admiral of the Blue: Electoral Prince Anabrin Darronley of Cappargarnia.

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## PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS OF THE EMPIRE

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

Governors as indicated.

Fealty of the Military Order of the Sword of Iluvar to the Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia (1516)

IT IS WITH NO SMALL AMOUNT OF CONCERN that Our attempt to negotiate, on behalf of the Sword of Iluvar, with Electoral Averon has been met with a Silence most profound. We believe that the starting terms of Our failed conversation were most reasonable and certainly worth entertaining a constructive dialogue. Unfortunately, the Time for a proper response has come and gone and the Agent for the Grand Duchy has not brought forward any Word on behalf of their Ward. Therefore, in a manner consistent with the terms and provisions of Our existing Contract with the former Reformed Church Militant;

I, Anabrin Darronley, Electoral Prince of the Republic of Cappargarnia, being of sound mind and carriage, and imbued with the Imperial Authority of Elector, do acknowledge before the Assembly of Sahûl and in the Eternal Presence of the Hidden Lords, that the sovereign realm, formerly known as the Reformed Church Militant and now proudly presented as The Sword of Iluvar, has lawfully and with due humility requested the privilege of paying fealty to The Prince, and to serve as Vassal to the Republic.

I declare for All to hear that Their proper request is hereby granted. Formal Ceremonies shall be indulged, as is fitting, at an appropriate Time and Place.

We understanding that the regions of K'ah, Sum'kah, and Usutbes; the City of Tikata, the Cathedral Sahn'akl, and the Fortress Ta'chitix; as well as all resources, citizenry, and associated features, including, but not limited to University, Academies, and Pories; such as represent the Legacy of The Sword of Iluvar from a time past and to a time future, are hereby claimed on behalf of The Sword.

We request that the Herald for The Sword of Iluvar provide a public and clear acknowledgement that Our understanding is with merit.

*Prince Anabrin Darronley*  
Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia  
Cappargarnia City, Erediar Prefecture.

THE SWORD OF ILUVAR Military Order hereby acknowledges fealty to the Republic of Cappargarnia. We also would like to personally thank the Prince for his support of truth and justice. For being a defender of the Empire, while others have been taken over by greed and power.

We ask for Averon to end their illegal war and leave the Republic of Cappargarnia's lands.

*Dame Akit Ketira*  
Military Order of the Sword of Iluvar  
Fortress Harbinger, Usutbes Prefecture.

*(definitively repudiated by the Military Order of the Sword of Iluvar in Sartember 1516)*

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Treaty of the Byrrin (1516)

THE REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA and the Barony of Fell Kommolek enter into the following treaty, clarifying their earlier agreements in principle: Kommolek is granted free passage of the Adndar Canal for the next fifteen years. At the end of fifteen years, The Republic will have the right to renew or end this treaty.

*Prince Anabrin Darronley*  
Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia  
Cappargarnia City, Erediar Prefecture.

*Baron Goesek Annavas II*  
Barony of Kommolek  
Lagas Priory, Dubarha Prefecture.

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The Duedhyn Proclamation (1516)

HERE IS THE MOST WISE and confirmed opinion and order of the King of Aradéc to his vassals in Duedhyn, the Princes Dallyn III and Merryn II, and their heirs and successors, whatever political ruler may come:

Diplomacy, religious conversion attempts, military attacks, intel attacks, assassinations, casting of spells, leader actions, public and private communication, builds, spending of gold, investments, diplomacy with other realms and other entities legal and illegal and any other thing you might possibly order to affect harm of any kind upon the other party, including but not limited to the loss of regions, the loss of troops, the loss of income and so forth done by either Duedhyni or ally of Duedhyn or friend of Duedhyn, with their foreknowledge, are forbidden. This is the King's peace, and is under the Emperor's thumb.

The only pass is given if some agent of evil intent, some ignorant, and/or some killer of peace attempts by

means most foul or fair to bring disadvantage upon one of my vassals or takes an action against the will of my vassal against the other. In which case, you, my vassals, are ordered to inform me in as timely a fashion as possible as your becoming aware of said situation in order to give me time to react to the matter or as soon as you are aware.

The borders will be respected as per the initial split of the realm with one small change to reflect that Orthodox and Raven Duedhyni be served by a prince of their religious bent.

To that end, Prince Merryn II is ordered to return the regions of Avalow and Glaſtanen and ordered to take no action infringing Prince Dallyn III regaining control of raven Gwydhen. the people of these regions follow Ravenism and shall obey their liege lord in this matter.

To be clear, no one who follows Ravenism is compelled by me to religiously put themselves under the new Raven Church, I am merely compelling secular political authority, and division of the Orthodox so they may not fall foul of the Church Universal & Triumphant's dictates. And to that end, Prince Dallyn III is so ordered to not compel such, and to make clear to his new Primate the delicate nature of his geopolitical situation. Tread lightly, gentlemen, you are treading were mortals pass only at great peril.

Prince Dallyn III is authorized to take actions suitable to regain Avalow and Glaſtanen if Prince Merryn II does not promptly order their return (though as peacefully as possible to minimize the impact upon the people of Duedhyn other than proper political leadership).

The region of Sarsynek is currently noted as being Orthodox Urdan by my cartographers, in which case I will not compel them to remain under Prince Dallyn III's Raven realm.

Furthermore, both parties are instructed to work cooperatively as possible under the religious restrictions to deal with the threat of the ice, to wit, no barrier should be made for Duedhyni citizens fleeing the ice, and if necessary, render what humanitarian aid is necessary, though we request that all Duedhyni citizens make good to flee to a religiously appropriate location so as not to cause problems for their respective rulers.

We humbly request that the Reverend Mother grant a small exemption to her excommunication and related orders to allow this last point to cause less conflict for those who so bound, to wit allowing humanitarian aid of those fleeing the disaster of the ice and winter foul and unnatural.

As is my heartfelt desire, I ask Urda once again to send word, to come herself, to send trusted messenger of recognized authority and standing, to make clear her desires for her followers, that sister and brother might dwell peacefully under her truly delegated authority, that Raven and Orthodox might merge into one fellowship under a combined leadership recognizing balance in all things, including gender, both priest(ess) and prince(ss), steeple and castle, house and field. Until that day, I will bear the transferred burden of my worth successors toward that end, follower of Iluvar that I might be, to bring peace to her people as best I can.

*King Rhazaban IV*

Electoral Kingdom of Aradéc  
Darnuldeis, Pranyi Prefecture.

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### An Open Letter to the King of Aradéc (1516)

WE ARE SADDENED that our liege has not protected our rightful lands. Duedhyn is not two countries, it is one, hence our swearing fealty to it. Our liege has failed us. We are a nation divided by religion, not borders, and our liege has not provided our people with the freedom that we once had, that all Princes of Sahûl are allowed, which is to practice our religion freely and to allow our people to love their Goddess without the joking Raven as intermediary. We are Urdans, not Ravens. The Raven is a heresy and by allowing it to continue, the Iluvarian who is our liege puts the rightful religious body of Duedhyn into a minor role. Urda, the creator. Urda, the protector. Urda the face of balance from which his justice must flow.

*Prince Merryn II*

Principality of Duedhyn  
Trenk, Derrow Prefecture.



Marriage Decree of Prince Frenthes from his Royal Highness, King Rahnes VI (1517)

WITH THE MARRIAGE OF OUR DEAR SON, Frenthes, Prince of Hyrágec and heir to the throne, our royal mind is set to thoughts on the nature of life, marriage, and the Kingdom of Hyrágec's future and the future of her glorious people. The Kingdom of Hyrágec is an old one, but it is one that survives in the lifeblood of her people. We are a people alive with culture, faith, intellect, and artistry. Our most Holy Matron of the Church Universal and Triumphant has wisely proclaimed that the bias and discrimination on the side of life is Urda's will. What can the good people of Hyrágec then do, except to obey this decree, the *Encyclical on the Sanctity of Life*? What can we as faithful Urdans do but look to the beneficent guidance of our Mother and our faith, and revel in the love and strength to be found within a blessed union such as marriage, the very foundation of new life?

To that end, let it be known that we, King Rahnes VI of Hyrágec, do hereby set aside monies from our treasury to support the growth of our glorious people, and do bless the union of marriage, upholding the sacred bond between a married couple through financial support to all who are married and bring forth children to further the cause of life and the lifeblood of Hyrágec. A stipend will be granted for each new child born to an Urdan couple within Hyrágec's borders.

May Urda bless the great nation of Hyrágec, and may Urda grant long life to our Holy Matron.

*King Rahnes VI*  
Kingdom of Hyrágec  
Pahasar, Kerneveg Prefecture.



Urged by Faith (1518)

*A Constitution for the Creation of Raven Ordinariates*

URGED BY FAITH, we are obliged to believe and to maintain that the Church is *Universal*, one and indivisible, under Urda. We believe in her ultimate *Triumph* over the forces of chaos, and we confess with simplicity that outside of her there is neither balance nor harmony.

Of the one and only Church there is one body and one head, not two heads like a monster; and this head is the First Matriarch of Urda.

For their presumption against unity and for placing their own glory above that of Urda, we excommunicated the Order of the Raven and those princes who support it. The so-called "Raven Orthodox Church" is merely the latest calculated insult to all true religion by unrepentant heretics.

But Urda loves her children, as any mother does, and she wishes for them to return from their folly to their true home, the Church.

In the light of these ecclesiological principles, this Constitution provides the general normative structure for regulating the institution and life of Personal Ordinariates for those Raven faithful who desire to enter into the full communion of the Church Universal and Triumphant in a corporate manner. This Constitution is completed by Complementary Norms issued by the Urdan See.

I.

§1. Personal Ordinariates for Ravens returning to full communion with the Church Universal and Triumphant are administered by the Cannow Cathedral in Derrow.

§2. Within the Raven lands, one or more Ordinariates may be erected as needed.

§3. Each Ordinarate is juridically comparable to an Urdan Diocese.

§4. The Ordinarate is composed of lay faithful, nuns and other members of Urdan Monastic and Mendicant Orders, as well as those orders and organizations originally belonging to the Raven but now in full communion with the Church Universal and Triumphant, and those who receive the Oaths of Initiation within the jurisdiction of the Ordinarate.

§5. The *Catechism of the Church Universal & Triumphant* is the authoritative expression of the Urdan faith professed by members of the Ordinarate.

**II.**

Without excluding liturgical celebrations according to the Urdan Rite, the Ordinariate has the faculty to celebrate the Urdan Oaths and Blessings, the Horologion and other liturgical celebrations according to the liturgical books proper to the Raven tradition, which have been approved by the Church Universal and Triumphant, so as to maintain the liturgical, spiritual and pastoral traditions of the Raven Communion within the Urdan Church, as a precious gift nourishing the faith of the members of the Ordinariate and as a treasure to be shared.

**III.**

A Personal Ordinariate is entrusted to the pastoral care of an Ordinary appointed by the Holy Mother.

**IV.**

The power of the Ordinary is:

- a. *ordinary*: connected by the law itself to the office entrusted to him by the Holy Mother, for both the internal forum and external forum;
- b. *vicarious*: exercised in the name of the Holy Mother;
- c. *personal*: exercised over all who belong to the Ordinariate;

This power is to be exercised jointly with that of the Diocesan Head of Cannow.

**V.**

The Ordinary, with the approval of the Church Universal and Triumphant, can erect new Urdan Monastic and Mendicant Orders, with the right to call their members to holy orders, according to the norms of Urdan canon. Orders originating in the Raven Communion and entering into full communion with the Church Universal and Triumphant may also be placed under his jurisdiction by mutual consent.

**VI.**

Both the lay faithful as well as members of Urdan Monastic and Mendicant Orders, originally part of the Raven Communion, who wish to enter the Personal Ordinariate, must manifest this desire in writing.

**VII.**

Every twenty years the Ordinary is required to come to Urdrahahn (or in dire cases Iurdana) for an Urdan Diocesan Visitation and to present to the Holy Mother, through the Supreme Sacred Congregation of Universal Inquiry (also called the Holy Office) and in consultation

with the Cannow Diocese, a report on the status of the Ordinariate.

Her All Holiness,

*Camleda V the Transfigured Beetle*  
First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sahûl.

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Nowydh mora Tir (1520)

*“to sail to new land”*

I, THE FELL BARON OF KOMMOLEK of unclouded mind dispose herein the lands, prefectures, and possessions of the former lands of the Barony of Kommolek.

*Clause One: Intent*

That Kommolek commits its people and future to the conquest, settlement, and improvement of the Lands of the north.

*Clause Two: Method*

All of the former prefectures, inheritances, rights and privileges of governance shall transfer within the following inheritance of Lady Ennor’s daughter Caja and dowry for Lady Ebrel, but also to Elowen and Ando, Caja’s siblings. With Ennor and Andel to tend them and aid them in their integration with Zarkandhu’s ruling house.

*Clause Three: Diverstiture*

Ladies Ennor, Ebrel, and Caja do hereby sever their ties to the succession to the Barony of Kommolek in the New Lands by the disposition of this dowry and inheritance. They are now and forevermore to be considered part of Attuburk and Zarkhandu and are not themselves or their descendents in any form in position to make any claim upon the future holdings of the Barony. This also specifically includes the Lord Andel of Kommolek and his heirs and descendants.

*Clause Four: Prefectural Particulars*

The Lady Ebrel’s portion to the Lord of Attuburk and devolution to Kitcitchat. To Attuburrk: Baradhu, Korev, Colledhu, Drogdyr, Kerrek.

Attuburk assigns the following to Kitcitchat as part of the Dowry Agreement: Pentyr, Olekker, Vyhan, Nametor, Namdynn, Penglos

The Lady Ennor’s portion to the King of Zarkhandu: Uthek, Hudul, Dannek, Marneeth, Resek, Bylen,

Gothfylek, Morladron, Kreadyr, Yseldyr, Kommolek, Dubarha, Kurfowlek, Tenuos.

Pacified Region to Queendom of Chi'tixi: Taporì.

*Clause Five: Orderliness*

All persons not partaking of the journey North must in every way maintain the loyal and trustworthy nature of Kommolekine culture and be in every way True and Loyal subjects of their new Lords.

*Clause Six: Support for the NOWYDH MORA TIR*

County of Kicitchat: 20 Battalions of pike (one levy only) and 300 talents of gold per five years for fifty years.

Electoral Grand Duchy of Atuburrk: 40 Regiments of medium infantry (one levy only) and 300 talents of gold per five years for fifty years.

Electoral Kingdom of Zarkhandu permanently haſtes and deeds over to Kommolek the flying fortress named *Cleansing Storm* and sends ten squadrons of Airships, ten Brigades of Saruian Cataphraçti, ten flights of rangers, (one levy only) and 400 talents of gold per five years for fifty years.

Electoral Queendom of the Great Hive of Chi'tixi Tirrix Ki: twelve flights of airships together with twelve flights of rangers (one levy only) and 80 talents of gold per five years for fifty years.

*Clause Seven: Enduring Friendship and Support*

The Lords of Kommolek, Chi'tixi, Atuburrk, Zarkhandu, and Kicitchat do reaffirm and stipulate the good faith agreement herein and pledge to do all in our power to ensure the successful Holy Journey the Kommoleki do hereby undertake. This Clause also contains the explicit caveat that this document cannot in any way be construed as a manner of pressuring, forcing, coercing, or in any manner to attempt to force the independent Kommolek to do any thing at all. This is a document for the passing of territory and the appropriate payments therefore. This document ſpecifically excludes the possibility of any portion of Kommolek not deeded herein to be under the command or control of any party herein receiving any thing.

*Baron Goesek Annavas II*

Barony of Kommolek

Treskaw Palace, Kommolek Prefecture.



Accords of the Western Alliance (1520)

THE REALMS OF AVERON, ITAXIK, PEXIKI, SAKKAR, TANEKI AND TOKATL, in creating an ever closer union among them, are resolved to share a peaceful future based on common values.

Conscious of its ſpiritual and moral heritage, the Alliance is founded on the indivisible, universal values of Kindred dignity, freedom, equality and solidarity; it is based on the principles of freedoms and the rule of law. It places the individual at the heart of its activities, by establishing the citizenship of the Alliance and by creating an area of freedom, security and justice.

The Alliance contributes to the preservation and to the development of these common values while respecting the diversity of the cultures and traditions of the Realms of Averon, Itaxik, Pexiki, Sakkar, Taneki and Tokatl as well as the national identities of the Member Realms and the organization of their public authorities at national, regional and local levels; it seeks to promote balanced and sustainable development and ensures free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, and the freedom of establishment.

To this end, it is necessary to strengthen the protection of fundamental rights in the light of changes in society, social progress and scientific and technological developments by making those rights more visible in a Charter.

This Charter reaffirms, with due regard for the powers and tasks of the Community and the Alliance and the principle of subsidiary, the rights as

they result, in particular, from the constitutional traditions and international obligations common to the Member Realms, the Treaty on Western Alliance, the enjoyment of these rights entails responsibilities and duties with regard to other persons, to the person community and to future generations.

The Alliance therefore recognizes the rights, freedoms and principles set out hereafter.

*Article 1: Mutual Solidarity*

Under the Treaty Member Realm should assist if a member Realm is subject to a victim of a natural or kindred-made disaster but any joint military action is subject to unanimous approval by Western Alliance Members.

*Article 2: Prospects for a Common Defense*

The treaty foresees that the Western Alliance will lead to a common defense agreement for the Western Alliance when the Western Council resolves unanimously to do so, and provided that all member realms give their approval.

*Article 3: Enlargement and Secession*

The treaty allows an exit clause for members wanting to withdraw from the Alliance. This formalizes the procedure by stating that a member realm must inform the Western Council before it can terminate its membership.

Expansion of the Western Alliance is allowed for by sponsorship of an existing member and full approval of the Alliance.

*Article 4: Existing obligations*

Nothing in this Charter may be interpreted as implying any right to engage in any activity or perform any action in contravention of the purposes of the *Golden Edict* or other obligations under international law, including the principle of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Alliance Realms.

*Article 5: Dignity*

Kindred dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected.

*Article 6: Liberty*

Everyone has the right to liberty and security of person.

*Article 7: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion*

Realms have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Alliance Realms will respect the thoughts and religion of other Alliance Realms.

*Article 8: Freedom of expression and information*

Alliance Realms have the right to freedom of expression. This right shall include freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas.

*Article 9: Mutual Respect*

The Alliance shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity of member Realms

*Article 10: Freedom of movement and of residence*

1. Every citizen of the Alliance has the right to move and reside freely within the territory of the Member Realms.
2. Freedom of movement and residence may be granted, in accordance with the Treaty establishing the Western Community, to nationals of third countries legally resident in the territory of a Member Realms.
3. Member Realms may attend any University or Academies of other Member Realms.



# Imperial Strength Index

| #                       | Realm             | Player                   | Forum Name            | E-mail                         | ISI     |
|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| <i>The Great Powers</i> |                   |                          |                       |                                |         |
| 1                       | Golmath / Emperor | Paul Flinton             | Free Beer             | cruentidei@gmail.com           | 2,314.6 |
| 2                       | Aradéc            | Charles Hurst            | Xanthi                | charlesh@teleport.com          | 2,110.8 |
| 3                       | Cappargarnia      | Kyle Kinghorn            | Doppleganger          | kyle.kinghorn@gmail.com        | 1,799.4 |
| 4                       | Thace, Elector    | Gareth Anderson          | kolgrim               | kolgrim@gmail.com              | 1,486.6 |
| <i>Major Powers</i>     |                   |                          |                       |                                |         |
| 5                       | Araxes            | Christopher Hord         | chordam7              | chordam7@yahoo.com             | 1,433.1 |
| 6                       | Zarkhandu         | Theo Moriarty            | Mandala of Blood      | tmoriarty@gmail.com            | 1,417.3 |
| 7                       | Atuburrk          | Adam Sherman             | Gonnagle              | mad.angus@yahoo.com            | 1,398.4 |
| 8                       | Chi'tixi          | Steve Cagg               | Priest King           | ragnarstation@hotmail.com      | 1,396.5 |
| 9                       | Itaxik            | Michael Warner           | Galen                 | me1451@comcast.net             | 1,384.8 |
| 10                      | Averon            | Kevin Lawrence           | Averon Inc            | privatej67@yahoo.com           | 1,356.9 |
| 11                      | Ingazi            | Harry Jago               | jago                  | jagoh@yahoo.com                | 1,205.3 |
| 12                      | Church U&T        | Anne Porter              | Cupcake               | crabbycupcakes@gmail.com       | 1,171.8 |
| <i>Regional Powers</i>  |                   |                          |                       |                                |         |
| 13                      | Pexiki            | John Schmid              | Magus                 | magus@spellcaster.org          | 887.5   |
| 14                      | Elphárec          | Lisa Kaattari            | Kaattari              | kaylee.robinson@rocketmail.com | 884.2   |
| 15                      | Thace, Duchy      | Jake Roberts             | Jake                  | jacob.roberts1@gmail.com       | 863.7   |
| 16                      | Hyrágec           | Paul Copenhagen          | Wombatia              | rossclannoble@yahoo.com        | 823.8   |
| 17                      | Taneki            | Don Wynne                | meriden               | dpatrickwynne@gmail.com        | 780.9   |
| 18                      | Tiryowglas        | Mike Johnson             | Minister of Defense   | printermanmj@aol.com           | 767.8   |
| 19                      | Veiled Masters    | <i>open for a player</i> |                       |                                | 733.1   |
| 20                      | Putini-Yani       | Miles Luna               | Ryushi                | meryushi@yahoo.com             | 629.1   |
| 21                      | Murali            | <i>open for a player</i> |                       |                                | 592.2   |
| 22                      | Kicitchat         | James Hazeltine          | Von Malvalken         | jhazeltine@pleiadesmm.com      | 582.9   |
| 23                      | Kommolek          | Cortlandt Winters        | Cortah                | cwinters@notebookmargins.com   | 572.6   |
| 24                      | Duedhyn/Raven     | Alex James               | Clan Dhanos of Duedyn | ClanDhanos@yahoo.com           | 538.9   |
| <i>Minor Powers</i>     |                   |                          |                       |                                |         |
| 25                      | IOC               | Jason Pearl              | redoubtable1          | redoubtable1@comcast.net       | 484.3   |
| 26                      | Tokatl            | Shelley Woodberry        | Skipperway            | desrik@comcast.net             | 432.7   |
| 27                      | Yax'te            | Tyler Baumgartner        | rawhidekid            | tylerbaumgartner@gmail.com     | 400.1   |
| 28                      | Sakkar            | Nelson Merritt           | hemmy                 | nelson.merritt@wachovia.com    | 395.8   |
| 29                      | Duedhyn/Merryn    | Ted Herzl                | Duedhyn               |                                | 382.9   |
| 30                      | Carcë             | Joe Cirillo              | Conqueror Worm        | jcirillo@lcmktg.net            | 336.7   |
| 31                      | Iäthedein         | <i>open for a player</i> |                       |                                | 127.8   |



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