

# The Sahûl Chronicle

THE EMPEROR IS DEAD. LONG LIVE THE EMPEROR!

Turn 15

Published by the Printers Guild of Zadres

1521–1525 SA

*After me, the deluge.*

—Emperor Sardhan (upon leaving Golmath for the last time, as reported by his Chamberlain)

**U**NFORTUNATELY, THE NEW online order entry tool is not yet in operation. 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.

## CHANGES:

More observant players will note that this first “business” page of the Chronicle has changed somewhat. The sections on banking and mercenary companies have been moved to the *Gazette*, which has been gaining more prominence of late. I am considering making the compiled *Gazettes* available, possibly as a download or in a printed edition. We shall see how much free time I have moving forward.

## CURRENT 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 and a 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* – With maps updated to Turn 10 and some other supplementary material, including an index of all regions. Available in paperback (\$22.00).

*Cruenti Dei Rules Supplement 1: Errata and Additions* – This supplement contains the corrected Movement system, information on plagues, famines, and corruption, and new rules for heirs and religious Orders. Available as a free download or in paperback (\$10.00).

*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).

Thanks to all who contributed to this Turn, especially Cort, Jim, Adam, Alex, Rick, Theo.

NEXT TURN DUE: FRIDAY 16 JULY 2010.

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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.

**A**fter the truly horrible winters of 1521 and 1522, Tokatl's weather cleared up marvelously. The County is recognized as a centre of western fashion. Oddly enough, most of Tokatl's exports are to the east<sup>1</sup>, as their styles are a little too flamboyant for their more sober southern neighbours, where "equerry chic" is still the dominant style with its stark lines, muted colours, and demure floral silks.

In Tokatl, by contrast, feathers and enormous hats are all the rage. A starched cloth "ruff" was developed in imitation of the furry ruffs made famous by the Golmathi Wenemet. These became an immediate (and much imitated) hit throughout Thacia and the Byrrin Valley. It's no wonder that hiring managers and recruiters from the Araxes fashion industry positively pillaged the best and brightest of the newly graduated Tokatl designers.

Tokatl's government expanded.

#### DUCHY OF TANEKI (23 I/YG)

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

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

**DP:** Itta (F)

**T**he winters of 1521 and 1522 were harsh, particularly in Taneki's highlands, but the summer of 1523 was warm and sunny. The weather continued to improve.

Taneki built the port of Tora in Teutan on the Sea of Endeel and expanded the town of Jirum in Ketatl. Engineers extended the Ducal Road from Sumbir

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<sup>1</sup> Particularly in Atuburrk, Western Thacia, and parts of northeast Sahûl, including Elphárec and Hyrágec.

across the mountains into Utuk'oh. Locals in the deep south reported armies of the dead, shambling northwards.

Taneki's infantry and siege technology improved. The expanding government finally settled into permanent facilities in the capital of Akeltl. The Xintec Sorcery Academy was endowed as a proper University in 1525.

#### ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF AVERON (39 SI/IL)

*Her Gracious Majesty, Jera IV, the Wise, Lady Drax, Countess of Darida, Electoral Grand Duchess of Averon, Protector of the Faith.*

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

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

**DP:** None.

**A**veron celebrated the return of Duchess Jera's husband, Baron Challik of Goorin, with a parade through the streets of the capital and several great feasts. The weather improved markedly after 1522, and even the steadfast and solemn Averese stole some time to frolic in the summer sunshine. These heady days were cut short with the death of the Grand Duchess Derica I, who had been ailing for some time.

The succession laws having never been changed, Derica's children were passed over, and the throne passed to Derica's younger sister Jera. Having been the power behind the throne for nearly twenty years, Jera quickly settled into her new role. As heir, the new Grand Duchess appointed her own eldest daughter Jushana. The charming and sophisticated Jushana, a recent graduate of the War College (and now a Duchess) is considered by her instructors to have the finest military mind of her generation.

The fleet returned home in 1525.

Averon built an enormous greenhouse in their capital and upgraded Teneir Priory in Tueteen to an abbey. Huge sums of gold and equipment were shipped to Ducal Thace. Construction work on the unfinished Archemandal Palace in K'ah ground to a halt.

By order of the Grand Duchess Jera, all Averese tithes (a considerable sum) were sent directly to the

Iluvarian Pontiff, giving strength to a new movement in the western Church called “Integrationism”.

#### *The Council of Sahn’akl (1524)*

The scattered members of the Holy Synod finally gathered in Sahn’akl under the protection of both the Orthodox Pontiff and the Grand Duchess of Averon. Over the years of crisis, many had died, and several who did not support the new direction of the Church had retired to the cloister<sup>2</sup>. There were new faces, younger faces, all around. Conspicuous by their absence were the high clerics of the Military Order of the Sword of Iluvar. Representing the Pontiff, Nuncio Bohr was replaced by an earnest young Saurian theologian, Brother Huygens.

The Holy Synod met in council throughout the warm summer of 1524 and into the autumn, deeply divided, as always, into factions. The *Restorationists* sought a return to the state of the Church before the crisis of 1503 (minus the endemic corruption, of course), while the *Integrationists* called for even closer ties with the Pontiff, tossing out phrases like “administrative unity” and “subsidiarity”. A large number remained unconvinced by either faction.

There was very little talk of “tradition” or “reform”.

Finally, on 21 October 1524, with the first snowfall of the year still fresh upon the ground, the Holy Synod elected a new Archemandrite, a Saurian from Derida who took the name Sardula V.

Sardula is a Restorationist, though she made no moves to evict the Pontifical Nuncio, nor to take up any of the administrative duties of the Cathedral and grounds, which are still being administered by a committee of clerics led by the Nuncio. Instead, she is concentrating on restoring the Church’s moribund liturgical life and reconstituting the Church’s disrupted and scattered internal government.

#### **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:** None.

<sup>2</sup> This was most prevalent in Sakkar.

he winters of 1521 and 1522 in Pexiki were among the longest and hardest on record. When the spring of 1523 arrived, however, it proved unseasonably warm. In fact, the weather since that first glorious spring has been something approaching normal. Nevertheless, Pexiki stockpiled, well, everything just in case this was just a brief warming phase.

A Taneki fleet of 200 warships sailed up the Poyatl, through Lake Exin, and into the River Tepic.

Naval quality improved.

#### **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’tonatha V, 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, Urdrahahn, Yax’te

**DP:** Yöllök (T)

ood rationing began in the deep winter of 1521 and continued through the next year as well. Investments in the Ice College and in exploring new farming techniques continued in a desperate effort to stem the worst effects of the severe winters and cool, rainy summers. More root vegetables were planted, and several magazines held contests for the most inventive ways to cook cabbage. The government borrowed from their own bank to purchase foodstuffs from northern farmers and redistribute it in the south and highlands.

In accordance with the wishes of the Urdan Church, the Queen announced (voluntary) days of fasting and prayer for the reunification of Duedhyn. Though the Queen herself participated in the days of observance, the reaction from much of the rest of the Queendom was lackluster at best. Non-Urdans were of course exempt, but even among the Urdan majority, religious observance is sparse at the best of times. Participation was higher in the east of the country

than in the west; throughout the Miçtian Valley the devotion has proven extremely popular.

The spring of 1523 came early. That is to say, there was a spring in 1523, and the summer of that year was downright balmy. Bumper crops that year and the next did much to dispel the shadow of famine. The retreat of glaciers in the mountains was greeted with celebration.

A Taneki fleet of 200 warships sailed up the Poyatl, through Lake Exin, and into the River Tepic.

After hurrying through Ormacar, with its strange chanting people and parades of children, Colonel Asatya led her army into Yöllök with the idea that maybe she would try diplomacy rather than military intimidation there. The Colonel is not the smoothest diplomat in the world, but the implied threat of her large army did help.

Itaxik continued to invest in their military. Breakthroughs were reported in cavalry, infantry, and air tactics, leading several of Itaxik's military leaders led by Captain-General Yix to begin compiling the accounts of historical battles and studying them in light of the new strategic and tactical thinking. General Yix herself took a sabbatical from her duties to begin work on what is now reportedly a massive tome on the art of war.

Admiral Tonicpaya's expeditionary fleet did not return, and it is now feared lost.

The elderly Lady Cipaçtonatha visited the forbidding Ormic Hills and attempted to gain the attention



of the Abbot by means of large shipments of gold. She was finally granted an audience in 1524. Lady Cipaçtonatha was brought to the abbey's garden on the night of a full moon, where she sat and talked with the Abbot until dawn. The ancient Saurian Abbot was heavily robed against the cool night air, and an Urdañ holy symbol was tattooed between his eyes. The Abbot spoke in low, soothing tones, and afterwards Lady Cipaçtonatha

could not remember what he had said. Shortly afterwards, she died.

The Countess of Pehuatoka redecorated her palace in the latest style.

Research continued at Tikopai amidst the ubiquitous sandstorms. The exploration of the mazy caverns beneath the monolith was successfully concluded.

#### 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.*

*Dame Tarik Tiketua, Grandmistress of the Military Order of the Sword of Iluvar, Warriors of the Ice.*

**Trade:** Itaxik, Pexiki, Taneki, ThaceE, Tokatl, Udrahahn, Yax'te

**DP:** Onnok (F), Sword of Iluvar (A)

**B**aroness Nenepillah made ready her indomitable realm for the onslaught of the Ice. Engineers constructed a great greenhouse in Itatlan. Sakkar even sent tree seedlings and other resources to the Elector's gardens in Thace in an effort to research cultivation techniques. While the people of the Barony's forest regions soldiered on through the terrible, terrible years of 1521 and 1522, the story in the western regions was far different. Howling winds whipped drifting snows across the plains virtually all year, killing cattle and destroying farming and commerce. Towns, buried under the snows, became warrens of tunnels. Starvation was endemic, and the very fabric of society began to unravel.

Grandmistress Dame Tarik Tiketua, on behalf of the Military Order of the Sword of Iluvar, pledged fealty to and alliance with "House Nelhuayotl and Baroness Nenepillah II of Sakkar and her lawful successors forever". Accordingly, the great fleet made a quick tour of the Realm and then sailed up the partially frozen Choloa River, making landfall in the forests of Roder. A small group of struggling Sakkari colonists were supplemented, and the region is now (3233)I. The port of Takorr was built on the river to facilitate the landing of the fleet. A priory was also built for the spiritual life of the Order. New Shintar was one of six new priories built throughout the Barony.

In the summer of 1523 the snows melted. Through the halcyon days that followed, Sakkar rebounded. Bumper crops in 1525 brought the realm back to a level of prosperity not enjoyed in a generation. Mind you, Sakkar is still cold, and the winters are still long, but they're now five months long rather than ten.

Sakkar built the port of Takatla in Auicalo on the Sea of Endeel. Iluvarian missionaries converted most of the Urdan population of Popuks. Auicalo became friendly.

**ICEMARK OF YAX'TE (18 S/IL)**

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

**Trade:** Itaxik, Sakkar, Taneki

**DP:** None.

**Y**ax'te spent all their time and energy surviving the bitter cold, especially during 1521 and 1522. Survive they did, by means of green houses, new public works, agricultural imports, and sheer grit. They were rewarded when the weather began improving. By 1525, Yax'te was back to four seasons a year.<sup>3</sup>

The mountains of Neghos were abandoned to the glaciers, while refugees were settled in Elowen, expanding Sedrutet to a city. Government expanded.

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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.*

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<sup>3</sup> Translated from the Choloak these are: Fore-Winter, Deep-Winter, Hind-Winter, and Summer, or, more colloquially, Snowy, Blizzardy, Icy, and Chilly.

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

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Hyrágec, Ingazi, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za, Zarkhandu

**DP:** Diplomacy, shmplomacy.

**T**he lich life is gaining in popularity in the Chi'tixi leadership corps, much to the disgust of much of their followers.

The Chi'tixi shipyards continued to be busy.

Kommolek transferred pacified Tapori to Chi'tixi control. The commander of the Chi'tixi Rangers there was horrified to discover a substantial Tarotist minority in the region. Chi'tixi balanced this unfortunate situation by disembarking many troops into the region.

*Memoirs of the Black Claw Sage* went into its sixteenth printing. Cavalry quality improved.

**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, Hyrágec, ID, Taneki, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

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

The winters of 1521 and 1522 were the worst yet, but the storm has apparently broken, as the following years were relatively normal. Indeed, 1524 was downright pleasant, so pleasant in fact that people continually remarked about how pleasant it was<sup>4</sup>.

In accordance with the wishes of the Urdan Church, the Duke announced days of fasting and prayer for the reunification of Duedhyn. The Duke personally encouraged all of the people to observe this devotion. The response was extremely positive throughout the Duchy.

Officials are becoming alarmed at the number of strange deaths reported in the Ourane docks district. The victims are found completely drained of

<sup>4</sup> They say it was pleasant.

their blood with only tiny puncture marks, usually at or near a major artery.

**ELECTORAL COUNTY-PALATINE OF THACE (27 S/UR)**  
*His Moſt Excellent Majeſty, Brannis VI, the Gallant, Lord Goshtikka-Snamarthis, Overlord of Carcë, Eleſtoral Count Palatine in Thace.*

*Margrave Thoſh the Wicked of the Severed Steppe, Sar of Nemidor.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Averno, Cappargarnia, Carcë, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Sakkar, Taneki, ThaceD, Urdraháhn

**DP:** Nemidor (*see below*)



The Count's engineers extended the road network as far as Assarnes in Carcë, linking at laſt their capital with that of their mightieſt vaſſal.

The Count authorized the ereſtion of a Yagnariſt March in the ſteppe, conſiſting of Nemidor Prefecture and Bleak Carridok. It is an autonomous Yagnariſt ſtate within Eleſtoral Thace. The Sar of Nemidor has been eſtabliſhed as its firſt Margrave. A new town was platted out, though recruiting people to live there has proven a little tough.

Not to be outdone by their Chi'tixi neighbours, Thace launched a fleet of galleons. Their flagſhip, *ETS Somara*, was chriſtened by the Count himſelf.

The *Sardarthion Houſe* publishers vacated their offices in *the Tower of Thought* as the Urdan Society of Saint Annír moved in. This order of nuns is dedicated to education, and they have been an enormous boost to the County-Palatine's primary education ſyſtem<sup>5</sup>. The great theologian and founder of the Society, Reverend Mother Lœnni, arrived from Urdraháhn to help the Society get ſettled in.

In accordance with the wiſhes of the Urdan Church, Count Brannis announced days of faſting

<sup>5</sup> The Society of Saint Annír (the Annuits) adhere to the wearing of the burkha, but they wear an apron front in a cream colour to diſtinguiſh them as an educational order. They are ſlowly being placed in charge of elementary education of Urdan ſchools throughout Sahûl. They already have a hand in ſetting the curriculum for theſe ſchools. Saint Annír himſelf was a legendary ſcholar inſtrumental in ſtarting Sahûl's firſt University.

and prayer for the reunification of Duedhyn. Led by their beloved Counteſs Treſſa, the people embraced the new devotion.

Count Brannis and Counteſs Treſſa hatched another daughter, whom they named Tilda.

In 1525, a Carcë ambaaſſador paid a viſit to Snamarthis.

Goshtikka Gardens received a gift of many ſaplings and other plants from Sakkar. Theſe are all native to the ſouthern boreal foreſts, and the ſtaff at the Gardens hopes they can uſe them in future foreſtry projects. Deſpite the beſt efforts of the County's vintners to propagatethe Zyleen grape vines, it has ſo far proven impoſſible. After repeated pleaſ, they finally received inſtruction from one of their compatriots in Zarkhandu.

*Zyleen is the moſt bittersweet of prefectures. As the Ice has overtaken her, ſhe has produced the moſt exquisite vintages that already ſell for ſcores of crowns a bottle. When the Ice advances, the rolling hills and miſted vineyards of the ſouth will be loſt forever. However, to your queſtion! The traditional manner of preſerving and nurturing the vine is to dig a ſhallow bowl-shaped hole into which you place a zombie formed into a fetal poſition. An incision is made into the ſide of the zombie's ribs and the young vine placed within. Next is a matter of ſome professional debate. In the Eaſtern coaſtal lands, the farmers place the top facing zombie arm into an upright and extended poſition. This allows for the vine itſelf to be coiled to the zombie's fingerbones and thereby allow for ſtrong light penetration and extra grounding from coaſtal ſtorms. In the Weſt, that is not the praſtice and is ſubjeſt to a good deal of ſcorn from the locals, which is of courſe reciprocated in the Eaſt. I hope this has been of aſſiſtance.*

They have all reportedly given up on the project, except for one determined old coot from the foothills in Mennendar.

## ASSAILING THE TIGERS (1516-1524)

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

**G**eneral Lord Basodir, his numbers strengthened to 30,000 cataphraçti and 17,000 additional cavalry, rode west into Mordír, the last independent Tiger region. The reliquary of Saint Berthilde the Martyr was carried before them, and the army's ensign fluttered from the Holy Staff. The dragon Róta flew overhead, scouting for the Tiger forces.

Their orders were to secure tribute from the Tiger horseclans, but most in the army knew that wouldn't happen, not under Lord Basodir's command. He had developed a hatred for the Tigers that ran deep, and he was determined that they never again be able to raise a military force.

### *The Mordír Campaign (1522-1524)*

The Tigers, their numbers strengthened slightly by those survivors of more eastern battles, wisely refused to engage in open combat. They staged hit-and-run raids, burned sources of food, and picked off lone patrols. The bone-chilling weather hindered Lord Basodir's pursuit, and the wind and drifting snows made tracking the Tigers difficult.

Frustrated by their inability to engage the enemy, Lord Basodir ordered his forces to begin a systematic conversion of the population to Orthodoxy by military means. While only half of the region effectively converted, the "inquisition by cataphraçti" certainly garnered the attentions of the slippery Sar of Mordír.

Battle was joined in the cold, snowy autumn of 1524 between Lord Basodir's army (somewhat reduced by the combination of weather and Tigers) and that of Sar Rahán of Mordír. The Tigers mustered several thousand steppe cavalry, and they were not long for this world. The Tigers were wiped out to the last, and the last Tiger Sar was killed in the final mêlée by Lord Basodir himself. Taking the dead Sar's sword and cape<sup>6</sup> for himself, Lord Basodir ordered his men to leave the rest for the snow and the scavengers.

<sup>6</sup> Made of finest leaping snow-cat fur.

## *Epilogue: Our Lady of Vengeance (1525)*

In Bodrûl, General Lord Basodir occupied the virtually uninhabited region before riding to the Cathedral. He presented the reliquary containing the mortal remains of Saint Berthilde the Martyr and the sword of the last Tiger Sar to the Matriarch of Our Lady of Vengeance. The relics were installed in a newly renovated side chapel dedicated to the saint. The sword, by contrast, was set into the floor across the threshold of the Cathedral's main doors, so that everyone who enters has the opportunity to tread on this symbol of Tiger militancy.

### LORDSHIP OF CARCË (7 S/UR)

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

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

**DP:** Zacaun (F), Drazjun (F), Sarád (F)

**L**icy winter winds howled from the south, culminating in 1522, a year where horse and Saurian alike starved by the thousands. Fortunately, the weather improved markedly in the next year, leading to a real recovery in the following years.

As Thacian engineers extended their road into Assarnes, the town itself expanded into a city. Carcë's own engineers extended their road from Pivrassa into Rückar. Many new public works projects were initiated throughout the realm.

In accordance with the wishes of the Urdan Church, Sar Tahník announced days of fasting and prayer for the reunification of Duedhyn. The new devotion was quite popular in the steppe, particularly in the realm's five new Urdan priories.

### IN ORMACAR

**I**n the steppes of Ormacar by night, the Saurian kindred were entranced by the gloaming vision of a high-stepping, richly robed Saurian maiden who wandered among their encampments and villages, her snapping eyes and saucy stride promising nights of love and glory to the men,

prosperity and friendship to the women, as well as fun and sweets to the children!

And the music that poured from her violin! Music like honey and spices, rich and full and sweet, music that causes some to weep for joy, others to shout with triumph, but all to dance! The Maiden's fleet fingers poured forth music from the violin, and thousands followed the maiden out into the night, some cheering, some singing, all dancing!

Those that followed the maiden into the night were never heard from again.

#### 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, IOC, Kumara, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**L**ord Protector Kapalless decided to play to his strengths: construction! Engineers built a road from Brandöe to Galingdri. A new megalithic building is rising over the capital. It's not yet complete, and nobody's quite sure what it's supposed to be. Sardarthion House relocated their northwest branch to Nigata – perhaps these two events are related? Those in the know aren't saying

The increasingly harsh winters culminated in 1522, where commerce and travel in the highlands were practically shut down for much of the year due to snow and cold. The weather has improved since then, much to the delight of the Araxeans.

In accordance with the wishes of the Urdan Church, the Lord Protector announced days of fasting and prayer for the reunification of Duedhyn. Although supported by the mass of peasantry, the new devotions have been slow to catch on amongst the aristocracy and the burghers.

The government expanded and the Araxes sorcerers improved their arts.

Hiring managers and recruiters from the Tokatl fashion industry positively pillaged the best and brightest of the newly graduated Araxean designers.

#### COUNTY OF KICITCHAT

**Q**ueen T'cha'k V, Countess of Kicitchat, is dying. The once-glossy black of her chitin is mottled and grey, with white patches spreading across her head, thorax and abdomen: the signs of inexorable age and imminent death. Although the Queen's judgement seems unimpaired, her voice is raspy and weak, her movements stiff.

Death is close.

The fear and eagerness of the Queens Aspirant who would vie for the Throne become daily more open and apparent. Each Aspirant grips her Iron Dagger more closely, eyes the others and the Queen more warily. The courtiers and ambassadors in the great, cold stone Hall of the Kicitchat court watch the expiring Queen and the three Aspirants and wait, whispering: debating how soon T'cha'k's death would come, wagering on the outcome of the battle that must follow when the Queen surrendered at last to madness, and wildly guessing which of the Aspirants would triumph. Whispers chase each other across the Hall.

"Surely X'ant'kissa will triumph. Of the three Queens Aspirant, she is the most ruthless and vicious warrior to be spawned from the Testing Creche in some years. She was relentless in the killing pits. How many of her Brood-Sisters has she already killed?"

"But outside the pits she is not as strong. K'ivik is wily and tricky, with a thousand schemes every second, and the imagination of a feral ghoul!"

"Neither can match Cir'ik. Her sorcery will overwhelm them both, and the Queen to boot."

"Not if X'ant'kissa can get within reach of Cir'ik with an Iron Dagger!"

"Whom do we wish to be victorious?"

"Yagnar will choose. That has always been the Kicitchat way. The weak will be culled by the Queen's Madness or fall to the other Aspirants."

Daily the curious and morbid words swirl at the edge of hearing around the Queen and her Aspirants, growing louder and more eager, but still T'cha'k clings to life.

The transition, when finally it occurs, is unremarkable. The Queen gasps for breath, there is a rasping of claw across the stone dais. At one moment, no different than so many that had marched past in expectancy, the Queen is alive. The next, the dwindling life in T'cha'k's multi-faceted eyes had been replaced by a dead, luminous rage, and the maddened Queen stands over the bloody ruins and lifeless meat of Queen-Aspirant K'ivik, whose crushed skull no is longer burgeoned with schemes. The two remaining Queen-Aspirants were faster.

Cir'ik leapt immediately away from both T'cha'k and X'ant'kissa, scrambling to hide behind the nearest stone pillar of the throne room. The watching courtiers hissed their disapproval. Such actions were permissible but barely tolerable: what if Cir'ik was a coward? Such could never lead the Kicitchat Hive.

X'ant'kissa, however, was swiftly on her feet, slashing with her dagger at the trochanter of the T'cha'k's left primary, where the femur met the coxa, and then equally swiftly shifting out of range of the Queen's counter-attacking claw. The court murmured their approval of X'ant'kissa. This was the way a Hive Queen should fight.

Crouched back and away from T'cha'k, X'ant'kissa holds her dagger low to slash, her body weight balanced evenly in readiness, her other limbs guarding her vulnerable eyes and throat. The wound she dealt the Queen was minor, but now the poorly articulated limb slows Queen T'cha'k as she snarls and reaches for X'ant'kissa with her claws: if she manages to grasp the young Queen-Aspirant, T'cha'k's mandibles would rip X'ant'kissa's throat open and leave her to bleed and die, her warm ichor streaking the chill flagstones at their feet. At the same moment as Queen T'cha'k attacked, Cir'ik timed her own ploy, stepping out from behind the pillar, she threw her dagger overhand at her rival Queen-Aspirant.

But X'ant'kissa was ready for both T'cha'k's lunging attack and Cir'ik's thrown dagger and had no intention of bleeding to death on the floor of the Hall. Quicker than flickering light, she sidestepped the onrushing Queen, dodged Cir'ik's poorly aimed throw, and hurled her own dagger at Cir'ik. Cir'ik's

cast was wobbling and inaccurate, the dagger missing wide and clattering to the floor yards away. X'ant'kissa's return throw was deadly and precise, the dagger hissing like a crossbow bolt, plunging powerfully to the hilt into Cir'ik's right eye. The young Queen-Aspirant vented a shriek, her arms flailing in agonized reflex at her ruined eye, before she toppled back to the floor, dead. X'ant'kissa's two rivals are slain. Once T'cha'k herself is dead, X'ant'kissa will be Queen of the Hive.

But now X'ant'kissa is unarmed and out of position, off balance from the desperate dodge and throw. T'cha'k again lunges forward, her two claws ripping into X'ant'kissa's abdomen, the enraged Queen's mandibles tearing at X'ant'kissa's unguarded throat.

The off-balance leap has left the Queen-Aspirant in the clutches of her enraged mother... but, as planned, it has also left X'ant'kissa standing over the body of K'ivik, whose Iron Dagger is on the floor at X'ant'kissa's feet, held loosely in K'ivik's lifeless hand. X'ant'kissa crouches and snatches up the dagger, shielding herself as best she can with her other limbs against T'cha'k's raking claws and gouging mandibles. X'ant'kissa, with her strength failing, stands from her crouch, in one motion driving the dagger with a wet crunch up under T'cha'k's maxilla and into her skull. Queen T'chak's body goes stiff with agony, and then the dead weight of the Queen's body slowly slides to the floor at X'ant'kissa's feet.

One moment. X'ant'kissa stands, swaying, light-headed, her ichor pulsing and dripping from wounds across her abdomen and thorax, the chitin there crushed and mangled. Two of her legs are broken. Her throat bears long weals from T'cha'k's claws and mandibles. But X'ant'kissa has triumphed. Queen T'cha'k lies dead at her feet, her corpse on top of K'ivik. Yards away, Cir'ik lies dead with X'ant'kissa's Iron Dagger in her eye.

Where there were three Aspirants and a Queen only moments ago, there is now only a Queen. Now is the time for the Equerries and courtiers of the County to acknowledge X'ant'kissa Queen of the Hive and Countess of Kicitchat. Now is the time for the Ittik Defenders to perform their duty: brand her

thorax with the Eye of Yagnar, place the iron crown upon her brow, and seat her upon the stone siege of the County of Kicitchat. But it is silent in the hall. No acclaim is raised. The Ittik Defenders stand to their posts, unmoving.

Another moment. X'ant'kissa waits. Why is there silence in the Hall? Why do the Ittik Defenders stand like witless golems? X'ant'kissa glares around the court.

"By Shadow and Flame, I have triumphed! Acknowledge me!" X'ant'kissa hisses. Silence still. "*I am Queen!*"

There is a click of amused mandibles and the rasp of claws on stone as Cir'ik steps out from behind her pillar, the illusion of her corpse fading at her feet. "By Flame, perhaps, sister. But by Shadow? I think not."

As X'ant'kissa hisses in rage and starts to hurl the dagger in her hand, Cir'ik's hands lazily trace the finishing arcs of her spell, the final syllables spoken before the dagger can snap forward. X'ant'kissa's body is thrown backward by the explosion of fire that arcs from Cir'ik's claws.

Even before X'ant'kissa's smouldering corpse has sprawled on the flagstones, the courtiers have begun to shout their acclaim, the Ittik Defenders moving forward to brand and throne Cir'ik Queen of the Hive.



The new Countess was the recipient of a state visit by the Atuburrk heir, Sydath the Younger, in 1521. He had apparently dropped out of his classes at Atuburrk's Sorcery Academy to travel to his father's vassal of Kicitchat. He came with a proposal and with piles of money.

While he was there, he learned of his father's illness and death in 1523, and it was the new Countess of Kicitchat who first acclaimed him as Grand Duke Sydath III of Atuburrk. She afterwards was the first to do him homage, pledging her fealty to the House of Adhanggar.

**ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ATUBURRK (60w/YG)**  
*His Majesty, Adhanggar Rahnes, Count of Erran, Prince-Regent of Atuburrk.*

*Her Mandibleness, Cir'ik VIII, Lady Tchac'at, Countess of the Kicitchat Hive and Associated Dominions.*

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kumara, Taneki, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za, Zarkhandu

**DP:** Kicitchat (Dependency)

**S**ydath the Wolf, the albino Grand Duke of Atuburrk, journeyed south to Sardarthion, determined to personally cast his vote in the imminent Imperial election. Unfortunately, the icy weather there did not agree with him. He contracted influenza in the winter of 1522, and he died early the next year at the age of 45. His son, sojourning in Kicitchat, became Grand Duke Sydath III. Just a few months later, the youth was unanimously chosen by the Electors as Emperor Sydath II.

The new emperor sent word back that he was appointing his own younger brother Rahnes to be regent of Atuburrk, and, having never set foot in his own Grand Duchy during his reign, he and his companions set off for Sardarthion.

The new Prince-Regent had come of age as an officer in Atuburrk's navy, and he was looking forward to a career as an admiral, perhaps in the new Oratoan colonies. It was not to be. Rahnes threw himself into his work, ordering the construction of four new towns: Sto Lat in Ónimin, Darkfall in Darchi (a double port), Sto Helit in Ardhchi, and the port of Skaro in Tik'kitixi.

The dashing and popular Lord Dolmathes took possession of Lady Ebrel's snowy dowry lands in 1521. Amazingly, nothing rebelled, though the final holdouts in Drogydr perished during the winter of 1523, leaving those lands to the tundra. All religious sites in Dolmathes' southern lands were turned over to the Masters of Yarni-Za.

Dolmathes augmented his fleet to 400 transports. Some 120,000 Kommolek refugees and their goods and livestock soon crowded aboard. The fleet left

Fair Belsünd and sailed north through the Byrrin and out to sea.

There is widespread expectation throughout Atuburrk and the Dolmathes territories that Lord Dolmathes will be ennobled as a baron soon, and his House given direct rule over his territories, either as a dependency or a march.

With the addition of the professional corps of Kicitchat bureaucrats, Atuburrk's government expanded by leaps and bounds. Atuburrk's airfleet is now the best in the world.

In 1525, an Araxean airfleet of forty vessels made a state visit to Ómorron, and a large Kommoleki air and sea force made anchor at Alghin.

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## Central Sahûl

### THE HEART OF EMPIRE

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**ELECTORAL REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA (56M/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 Lanbarnes II, Guildmaster of the Innkeepers, Hereditary Burgrave of Adndar, Chancellor of the Guilds Council of the Imperial Free City of Adndar.*

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

**Trade:** Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrárec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kumara, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**D**Prince Anabrin Darronley summoned a new advisory body, the Hydra Council, to Cappargarnia in 1521. The great heads of the State met and, oddly, summoned an aristocrat from a minor House to their meeting, a young Wenemet named Talik Dern. What they spoke of can only be guessed. Afterwards, great sacrifices to the Hidden

Lords were offered at Arag. At that very moment, hundreds of miles away, a Wenemet merchant burst into a pillar of flame in the streets of Northgate in Sardarthion.

Winter in the Byrrin valley reached its worst in 1522, but the Republic continued to pour public funds into new works designed to prevent any widespread discontent or hunger. Mostly, it worked, but the rumblings of peasant rebellion surfaced in the worst-hit areas of the Republic. When the climate improved throughout the next few years, the danger passed.

Pontiff Fenric V ordered the construction of two new priories in the lands of the Republic. After extensive consultation with the finest legal minds in the Empire, the Pontiff published a carefully crafted proclamation regarding the New World. An early draft provoked a war of words with Ingazi that threatened to snowball until cooler heads prevailed.

A number of Cappargarnia's aging leadership corps died, making way for a new generation. The most prestigious of these was no doubt Grand Marshal Sir Darein Gorthes of the Holy Blood Legion of Swords, Consul-General of the Tempest March, who died in 1524 at the age of 75.

The cities of Hunnychar, Golluz, and Croubal all expanded as the poor from the countryside fled to the cities to find work and food. Cavalry quality improved.

### THE TREK OF THE TEN THOUSAND

**B**anners flying high, Lady Lynnel and her ten thousand Tiryowgli lancers began their long, arduous trek from Siſtrameides in the spring of 1521. Armed with a handful of royal and imperial passports, they enjoyed free movement from all of the Realms they traversed.

From Siſtrameides, they followed the Ducal Road through Elphárec, arriving in Beördhu in Bracûr in the summer of 1522. From there, they entered the Imperial Demense. They arrived in Sardarthion in the early autumn of 1523, in time to take part in the city's welcome of the new Emperor. While it is re-

ported that several officers were seen drinking and carousing with the Atuburrk bon vivants, that sort of behaviour was frowned upon by Lady Lynnel.

Lynnel's Lancers next travelled through southern Cappargarnia and the Tempest March, finally arriving in Araxean Syghor in late 1525, having trekked some 1,200 miles all told.

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

*Sir arCanlann Dirbarn, Tiger King of Arms.*

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

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



ir arCanlann kept the Heralds busy at their many appointed tasks. New arms and achievements were painted for several promoted noble houses.

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

*His August & Imperial Majesty, Adhanggar Sydath II, Count of Odol, Elector & Grand Duke of Atuburrk, Sovereign of Sahúl, 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, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.

**IIP:** 37

*For appointments, please see Gazette.*



s Sardhan the Immortal Emperor continued to be conspicuous by his absence, Sardarthion endured its worst winter ever in 1521. An ice dam formed on the Byrrin, and the young and adventurous skated on the thick ice. The dam broke in summer of 1522 and flooded part of the city, causing untold misery.

Still, the work of government continued on under the watchful eyes of the Chancellor. A new Urdan

priory was built in Sondrim, and the infantry quality of the Emerald Watch improved. Much of the Imperial treasury was spent on public works to alleviate the worst winter suffering. After a bluster of how neither Sakkar nor Zarkhandu would be appointed governors (positions requested by both to help coordinate relief efforts in the worst-hit winter prefectures), both were nevertheless appointed.

Hundreds of Kommolek and Atuburrk ships passed through the city on their way north, and fifty Itaxik warships moored at Sardarthion.

The dragon Sanngrithr, now firmly ensconced in the ruins of the World Priory in Sondrim, entertained a Malebolge visitor from far-off Itaxik. Turns out Malebolge are crunchy when roasted. The dragon pillaged Sondrim again, but she left a new priory there intact, possibly because it was named after her.

Grand Duke Sydath II of Atuburrk arrived, hoping to personally cast his vote for what was expected to be an imminent election. Unfortunately, his health quickly deteriorated in the cold climate, and he died within sight of the Imperial Palace. He was buried in the city's Yagnarišt Cemetery with full honours.

Then, one day in the spring of 1523, the Imperial Crown suddenly appeared in its chamber in the Mausoleum of Paharnes. The almost forgotten cry went through the City: *the Emperor is dead!* Most people could remember no Emperor but Sardhan, who had reigned since 1494. An almost palpable uncertainty and fear coursed through the City.

#### *The Election of 1523*

Thirty days later, the Electoral envoys arrived at the Imperial Palace at dawn. They were met on the palace steps by Grand Duke Pangku Tramandes of Araxes, Chancellor of the Empire, flanked by armed guards of the Emerald Watch. In the icy morning air, the Chancellor administered the oath to the envoys and then led them inside to the ancient imperial audience hall known as the Blue Chamber. Floored in the deep blue Kranthic marble that gave the room its name and lit with the sorcerous lights of nine great hanging lanterns, it stood three stories tall. Delicately

cracked blood red columns supported two balconies and a choir loft on their dizzying way to the vaulted ceiling. At one end of the great hall were massive doors, ornately carved from a single Aradécan cedar. At the other end of the hall, facing the ancient doors, was a deceptively simple iron chair flanked by golden lion statues. It was set upon a stone dais cut with three shallow steps, worn round and smooth by millennia of supplicants and stained with the blood of emperors. Like many other wonders contained in the ancient palace, the simplicity of the throne was a lie. It contained clockwork wonders that had once been used during Imperial audiences on state occasions. Though none had seen it operate in decades, once set into motion, bronze branches with chirping mechanical birds unfolded from the sides of the throne as it rose majestically into the air. The golden lion statues on either side were said to roll their eyes and roar with opened mouth and quivering tongue. The magnificent mechanical marvel had been silent and still since before the turn of the century.

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

Soon, the palace staff could hear laughter from the sealed chamber, and perhaps an hour later, the great doors creaked open. The Zarkhandu envoy, traditionally the ceremonial head of the Convocation, intoned the ancient formula: "long live the unanimously elected Sovereign of Sahûl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All the World, His August and Imperial Majesty, Adhanggar Sydath of Atuburrk!"

The new Emperor arrived in Sardarthion only a few months later. He was young, just twenty-four, and full of boundless energy. The contrast with the

ancient Sardhan was striking, even dizzying. Sydath came with a retinue of fashionable young Atuburrk courtiers, who proceeded to remake Sardarthion society in their image: proud, witty, stylish, and devil-may-care. About the business of government, however, they were deadly earnest, and their new Emperor was extraordinarily plain-spoken and diligent.



After spending the night of their arrival carousing through much of Riverside, all of them were at various government offices early the next morning to present their credentials to startled ministers and functionaries. They were there to work.

Mere days later, in view of the hastily assembled ancient aristocracy of the Imperial capital, the Electoral envoys, the Tiger King of Arms, and representatives from all over the continent, the Curé of Iurdana placed the crown of Paharnes the Great on the noble head of Sydath II, now the 27th ruler of the Second Empire of Sahûl.

#### CORONATION ADDRESS OF EMPEROR SYDATH II

*As recorded by Imperial Clerk Harret Endrahan, on 17 Sextilis 1524, in the Blue Chamber.*

*[His August and Imperial Majesty reads a prepared statement]*

"My Lords and Ladies of the Empire; Electors, Peers, rulers of our Free Cities, Primate, and all free kindred; I greet you all, and I thank you.

"The Electors have cast their votes, and for good or ill, have seen fit to place the Crown upon my head. This is a great honour, but a greater responsibility, and I will do all that lies within my power and ability to be worthy of it. While I wear the Crown, the well-being of the Empire will remain my first, indeed my only, priority. No realm or Faith shall be favoured above another, but rather the Empire shall be favoured above all.

"Every ruler is pulled in many directions, not just the Emperor alone. We are called upon to serve

our Gods, our Empire, our subjects, and our allies. These are all good and noble causes, but I ask you to consider this: how will we do justice to these responsibilities if the Empire fails? Shall we become a rabble of squawking little realms, or shall we stand united? Our beloved Empire is beset by the Ice to the South, and stands on the shores of a New World to the North. In the face of these challenges, we must hold together. Each of us has legitimate conflicts with others: lands, gold, faith and honour, to name but a few. But these times prove the truth of the old adage, ‘only a fool fights in a burning house’. Make no mistake: the house of the Empire is burning all around us.

“But hope remains while the Empire stands. Together, we can restore Sahûl to its rightful glory and power. Let us not allow the Northern realms to see us in disharmony, but rather let them fear our unity. Let us not waste the Empire’s strength in petty disagreements, but rather use its strength to raise up all of the Empire, and all her realms. Let a thousand Emperors follow me, and let each rule over a Sahûl that is richer and better than ever before.

“Each of us is strong, but together we are stronger. My friends, as I so name you all, let us stand shoulder to shoulder as we face the Future. If we stand united, there is no challenge that we cannot overcome, no foe that we cannot defeat.”

*[His August and Imperial Majesty raises his sword]*

“For the Empire!”

*[The assembly repeats the call. Applause. His August and Imperial Majesty looks around the chamber]*

“Well, that should make the Heralds happy, but now we need to really talk. Boys and girls, this place is a gorrām<sup>7</sup> mess. We gotta look into fixing this place up before we either freeze our asses off or get invaded by those tattooed sumbitches<sup>7</sup> in the North.”

*[His August and Imperial Majesty whistles to the former Chancellor, who having heard the speech was retiring from the chamber.]*

<sup>7</sup> Spelling uncertain. An Atuburrk expletive? –scr.

“Where you headed, Chance? I can’t even find my way to the ruttin’ can in this place – stick around and help me out, will ya? If you can put up with the crazy old codger what just left, you can surely put up with me. You wanna keep the job? *[without waiting for an answer]* Great, thanks.”

“Here’s what I’m thinking. First, we need to get all these Shards together. That spell’s coming along, right? Good. Now, if any of you got another one of these back home, I’ll thank you to send for it right now. I been reading the Prophecy of Naskeb, whoever the Hell he was, and I conjure he was telling us pretty damn clear to put the thing back together.”

*[His August and Imperial Majesty glances at the present Clerk, who had been about to speak.]*

“Yeah, I know we’re still lacking a couple. But we gotta start somewhere, right? We’ll use what we have available and hope the spelljockeys can find the missing ones. All of you – tell your bosses back home that I’m asking them nice to bring those shards here. If that doesn’t suit, I’ll ask them a little less nice. But you remind them that I only got those two levels of nice – then I go straight to ornery. If they want paying, tell them they’ll get reimbursed by not freezing to death. Seems like a fair price to me.

“Where’s the gal from Itaxik? Tell your boss we need her, too. Since nobody else worked harder on surviving the big freeze, I’m gonna put her in charge. She can be the... the Ice Minister or whatever the hell job title makes her happy, but I want her to take the point of finding other ways to fight back the cold, and feed folks, and that sort of thing. The rest of us are gonna cooperate as much as we can, right? Right.

“I’m also gonna want somebody to be the boss of handing out donations to the refugees. I figure Itaxik can do that out west, and...” *[scans the Court, then points to the Aradécán envoy]* “... your bunch can do the east, and how about you for the middle parts?” *[directs the last comment to the Elphárec envoy].*

“I’ll make sure that some money gets sent, and you folks make sure it gets spent proper.

“Next, let’s see about all these Northerners. Some of them are ours, and some of them live there already. I figure we should do what we can to help out our local fellas, long as it don’t bring the whole damn continent down on our heads. If you guys got any suggestions, send them to Chance over here. He’ll throw out the stupid ones and we can discuss the rest.

“That’s enough for now. Make sure you all get some chow, and then get on with it. I’ll be in my bunk.”

*[As His August and Imperial Majesty turns to walk away, an elderly wenematron stops him and whispers in his ear. He turns back.]*

“Thanks, I suppose. And...” *[looks back at the matron]* “... tell your bosses I said please.”



Several months later, the Chancellor in his capacity as Grand Duke of Araxes, swore fealty to the Emperor in his capacity as Elector of Atuburrk, making Araxes the vassal of Atuburrk and simultaneously creating in Atuburrk the single most powerful realm in the Empire.

### THE DUEDHYN CRISIS (1506-1525)

**R**hing Rhazahan of Aradéc had apparently lost his temper. In a public proclamation, he instructed his vassal Prince Meriasek in no uncertain words to make a public apology to Prince Merryn, to pay reparations for the destruction of Merryn’s army, and to make use the provisions of *Urged by Faith* to effect the reconciliation of the Raven Orthodox Church with the Church Universal and Triumphant.

If Prince Meriasek had any intention of heeding his liege’s command, he gave no sign.

#### *1521: Same Country, Different Worlds*

Throughout the bitter cold of the so-called “spring” of 1521, increasingly divergent views of reality characterised the actions and communications of the Duedhyn Princes.

#### *In Pareis, Glasdor Prefecture:*

The Prince’s page Fentar looked over the flurry of late-arriving missives and tried to get them in some sort of order, though he knew his Prince would not have time to look over all the documents on this day. “Still, one should always be as prepa...”

Before the thought could be finished, the large double doors leading into the chamber were thrown open and four men wearing black mourning cloaks strode into the room. The first among them removed his cloak and stared at it wistfully for some time. The others in the room simply considered the young Prince in silence.

“Thank you for those words Tyrol. It was... a very fitting ceremony for the end of a dead Prince’s mourning period,” said Prince Meriasek.

“We are all extremely sorry for your loss my Prince,” said the Raven Orthodox Church’s second-in-command. “It’s a tough day for us all.”

The Prince nodded his head. “It *is* a tough day, but we must move forward. Are you ready to...”

“My lord, you may want to take a look at some of these missives...”

The Prince cut his Page off with a crushing glare. “Today I don’t give a shit what they say!”

Fentar swallowed hard and, eventually, pulled one piece of parchment from the pile. “This one,” Fentar whispered, barely being able to muster any voice, “seems to be from Merryn.” Fentar swallowed hard again and cleared his throat. “He seems to be saying he wants peace.”

“Peace,” the Prince whispered as he dropped his eyes down to the mourning cloak still in his hand. “My father sat at the peace table for forty years. *Forty years!*” The Prince screamed. “And most of that time he sat there at that table by himself.”

All stood in silence for a minute. Or two minutes. Or more. Eventually the one Wenemet in the group spoke up. “Prince, you should at least listen if there is going to be an offer. It’s what your father would’ve wanted for his people.”

“Forty years, General Tithitak. Forty years he sat there at the table by himself...” The Prince slowly

walked over to the small shrine he had to his father in the chamber and hung his mourning cloak on part of the shrine. He stood there some time, but finally he spoke.

“Peace was my father’s dream. Every single day he spoke if it. He seemed to think if we could just have peace, all the other problems would go away. Even the ice.” The Prince trailed off, again staring at the shrine.

Eventually the Prince straightened his armor and turned back around to face his companions. “We will listen to the offer. We will sit at the table, the way my father sat at the table. But there will be preconditions. There will be no more getting jerked around for months on end, only to have the other side slink away in the dead of night right when the deal is ready to be signed with nothing to show for our efforts. No, if they want to have negotiations they will prove in advance that they want to talk in good faith.”

“Take this down for immediate dispatch Fentar: We hear your desire for peace and we will sit at the peace table the way we have for all these decades, but we require a sign of good faith, a sign that you are serious about discussing peace. We require the release of our refugees, our pontiff and the remaining few Raven troops that were taken captive during the incident at Keresyk. These individuals are to be released not three years from now, not two years from now, but immediately. This last point needs to be very clear: they must be released immediately.”

“Once they have safely made their way to Pareis a year from now we will sit at the peace table with you.”

The Aradécian Captain-General Tithitak, the Raven Commander Mordrek and the Orthodox Prelate Tyrol all nodded in approval.

“Yes this will be the path. Send the dispatch immediately Fentar.”

“Aye, my lord.”

*In Trenk, Derrow Prefecture:*

The doctors swarmed around Prince Merryn’s cot like bees around a hive. The prince did not notice

the arrival of the herald for several minutes. When he did, he shooed away the doctors and waved the herald to come forward.

The herald stiffly handed the bed-ridden prince a large envelope. “From Prince Meriasek” he said.

“Lord Dhanos” said the prince, gently correcting him.

“As you wish.” The herald bowed.

“I have been expecting this” the prince remarked jovially as he tore open the envelope. As he read the letter, his smile became a frown and then a scowl.

Finally the prince dropped the letter in his lap. “Herald, take a letter back to Lord Dhanos. From His Highness, Prince Merryn II of Duedhyn, and so on, unto Lord Dhanos Meriasek, greetings. Do not speak to me of peace. Your father was the man who started a holy war, a war that forever tarnished the honor of Duedhyn. You yourself ordered an invasion of my lands. The blood of all those who died at Keresyk is on your hands, and now you want a good faith gesture from *me?*... am I going too fast for you herald?”

“No, Prince. They teach us shorthand during our training. I will write out a... prettier... copy for your seal when we are done here.”

The prince nodded. The herald could see him wince in pain.

“Very well. Continuing... our liege the King of Aradéc... put in his name and titles, will you herald? Our liege has commanded you to make a public apology to me for the actions of your realm that brought harm to the Duedhyni people and to me personally, and to make reparations for the men I lost in your attack.”

“Shall I quote the relevant proclamation, Prince?”

“Good idea. Continuing... Now you make demands on me and issue ultimatums, all in the name of ‘peace’. I do not think that word means what you think it means. As we have already explained to our liege the King of Aradéc... full titles again here, I think herald... we will comply with his order – as we have complied with every one of his orders – to release the refugees across the border into Lowarthow. Once they cross the border, they are your problem,

not mine. As for the prisoners, we are awaiting the ordered apology and reparations before we make a decision about their fate. Until then, they will remain safely in our custody. Sign it with my full name and titles, Herald.”

“As you wish, Prince.”

“And send the doctors back in here. I think they left the leeches on too long. This one on my arm is starting to look like the sausage I had for lunch.”



Spies were again reported by farmers in Derrow, but this time Prince Meriasek’s men caught one. Sadly, he suddenly began spewing bile and dropped to the ground stone cold dead.

Similarly, in Trenk, there was a brilliant attempt to spring the captured Prelate of the Raven Orthodox Church, Artyrs the Zealot. The plan was meticulous and should have worked, but for sheer chance. Artyrs and his unknown rescuer had gotten as far as the outer courtyard when the guard discovered that the Saurian in the cell was actually a drugged janitor rather than their prisoner. As the alarm went up, an unknown Saurian was brought down by crossbow, while the Prelate himself made a break for the nearby woods. He was recaptured within hours by a search party and their dogs and brought back to the prison.

Aradéc Captain-General Tithitak in Pareis was somewhat put out by the fact that the equipment needed to maintain his forces was being doled out to him piecemeal in annual allotments.

Prince Merryn received some reparations in the form of gold... from *Tiryowglas*.

1522: “*A Most Terrible Year*”

As bad as the previous years had been, 1522 was worse. As the harvest failed for the fifth year in a row in many parts of Duedhyn, widespread starvation was reported from every corner of the realm. Wolves strode unchallenged through the streets of Mordeis and villages as far north as Lowarthow and Kothonan. Hungry gryphons proved a terror to the people

of Koes, Tawesek, Pynbrendyr, Gwydhen, Kerghytr, and Breselek. The remaining population of Truthek tried to flee north. Most became meals for the fearsome *leaping snow cat* and other predators.

Still, the conflict ground on.

In Avalow, Captain-General Hendra was determined to bring the recalcitrant Baron Glannyn to heel. The siege of the Baron’s fortress of Skrifys continued, with the hope that the starving defenders would surrender. Unfortunately, the besieging force consisted entirely of cavalry, so they weren’t particularly efficient at long-term siege warfare. More puzzling, the Avalow defenders would occasionally taunt the besiegers by throwing food down upon them, particularly on days proscribed for fasting.

Meanwhile, in Lowarthow, 20,000 refugees had crossed the border from Derrow. Prince Meriasek did not seem to have anticipated their repatriation, though the King of Aradéc had demanded it in his *Third Duedhyn Proclamation*. With no one to greet them or to furnish them with instructions, the refugees began to slowly make their way north.

By late summer, there was snow already on the ground in much of Duedhyn. Privation and starvation was the order of the day, though foreign food shipments arrived into Prince Merryn’s lands almost continuously.

In accordance with the wishes of the Urdan Church, Prince Merryn announced days of fasting and prayer for the reunification of Duedhyn. Worryingly for Prince Meriasek, there was a movement in Avalow to observe this devotion as well.

In the bitter, unremitting cold, it was the smallest and the weakest who suffered most. Prince Meriasek’s youngest daughter Dulaga fell ill and died during the winter.

1523: *Sable and Crimson*

Spring came. In the summer months, to be sure, but it came. The year was noticeably warmer than any of the previous decade.

Prince Merryn, having waited in vain for an apology, or the rest of the reparations, or any sort of reli-

gious reconciliation, once again demanded that Prince Meriasek obey the orders of their liege of Aradéc.

Prince Meriasek's apparent response was something called *The Sable Decree*, which declared the Church Universal and Triumphant guilty of violating Aradéc's (first) *Duedhyn Proclamation* of 1516, therefore absolving Prince Meriasek of any subsequent "theoretical" violations. Frantic communiqués from Duedhyn's overlord of Aradéc were ignored. Indeed, Aradéc's man on the ground, Captain-General Tithitak, seems to have gone native, loudly complaining that his liege the King had not properly supported his vassal.

As the enormity of *that* was sinking in, the elderly and increasingly irrational Tithitak initiated another purge of Prince Meriasek's government, convinced that "motherist" spies were around every corner and hiding in every cupboard. In Pareis, a reign of terror ensued, as anybody with a grudge ratted out their neighbours as "spies" or "enemy infiltrators". Those arrested vanished into the palace dungeons, and their screams could sometimes be heard echoing into the night.

Prisoners were tortured until they confessed, and the crime to which they were required to confess was "I work for the Church Universal and Triumphant". Dozens, then hundreds, were forced to confess.

Meanwhile, twenty thousand starving refugees pillaged their way across Lowarthow, leaving little for the farmers of the region.

#### 1524: *Hard Times*

Peasant rebellions broke out in Lowarthow. The locals were furious that the government had done nothing to protect them from the marauding refugees. As the entire region rose in rebellion, the army finally showed up. Specifically, Grandmaster Mordrek of the Order of the Raven with 25,000 knights and 12,000 auxiliaries arrived and put down the rebellion by force, pacifying the region.

The refugees made their way into Glasdor, and a panic ensued in the countryside. Would they con-

tinue to pillage? Where was the army to protect the simple farmers?

#### 1525: *A More Temperate Cold War*

The weather continued to improve in the northern and central regions, much to the delight of starving peasants everywhere. The glaciers, however, did not retreat, leaving many of the most southern regions uninhabitable.

The Order of the Raven calmed the refugees in Glasdor and brought them under control, much to the relief of the peasants and yeomen farmers.

#### 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 Artys the Zealot, Prelate of the Raven Orthodox Church.*

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

**DP:** Gwydhen (T)

**D**Prince Meriasek himself did very little, but his various lieutenants ran circles through his tiny realm. The government, purged (again), is leaner than in previous years. Ravenist Duedhyn is basically a stratocracy at this point.

Still, there was no Mana in Meriasek's lands.

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

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

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Elphárec, ID, IOC, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Udraháhn

**DP:** Shhh...

**D**Prince Merryn petitioned the Emperor for redress against "the despot" Meriasek and the "rebel" Order of the Raven. The army conducted extensive field exercises in Sansoeth with Araxes. Siege quality improved.

**NOWD MORA TIR: THE NORTHWARD JOURNEY**  
*Baron Goesek Annavas III the Grim of Kommolek.*

**F**ell Kommolek's *Nowd Mora Tir* began in earnest with the brief spring of 1521. Refugees poured northward to the Baron's staging points, guided by a carefully orchestrated dance of soldiers and airships.

To begin the great enterprise, a priory was constructed on *Cleansing Storm*, built from the disintegrated bones of Kommolek's dead. Called "The Spires of Immolation", its sacrificial altars are a lattice of bone and light that can be observed from below.

Throughout the terrible years of 1521 and 1522, driving winds, snow and ice storms, and famine haunted the Kommolek refugees as they abandoned their homes and streamed north.

In their wake, region after region reverted to the governments of Atuburrk and Zarkhandu. Most had not the strength to resist. Only Marneeth renounced its tribute. Dubhara and Kurfowlek were simply lost to the mountain glaciers and tundra. In Colledhu, the locals continued to tough it out under the leadership of Lord Ueramos, who was happy enough to become a vassal of the famous Lord Dolmathes<sup>8</sup>.

By 1523, the weather had marginally improved, though few could notice. Within the next two years, however, it became obvious that the climate, if not exactly returning to "normal" was at least much better than it had been for a decade or more.

*Cleansing Storm*, after coming north through what had been the heartland of Fell Kommolek, ended 1525 in Baradhu, floating above the ancient city of Fair Belsûnd, now the *de facto* capital of Atuburrk's "Dolmathes" possessions.

**COUNTY OF TIRYOWGLAS (29 S&W/IL)**  
*His Excellency, Count Lefans IV, Baron Kwilkyn, Count of Tiryowglas, Defender of the Faith.*  
**Trade:** Aradéc, Cappargarnia, Duedhyn, Ebalon, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Murali, Urdraháhn

<sup>8</sup> There is actually quite a lot of confusion on this score, as Atuburrk has not officially created a March or Dependency in their new lands, and Dolmathes himself led a fleet filled with refugees into the North.

**DP:** None.

**T**inter deepened throughout 1521 and 1522. Count Lefans responded by channeling the County's entire budget into public works and famine relief. The weather warmed in subsequent years, though it is not yet at anything approaching what it was in decades passed.

The heir, Prince Truedhek, married late. He took for his wife a young University graduate from a minor House. The lucky couple announced the birth of their first child, a girl, in 1524.

Naval quality improved. A small volcanic eruption was noted in Tamris.

**ILUVARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (24 IL)**  
*His All Holiness, Pope Harmony VIII, Pontiff of Siſtrameides, Archemandrite of Ilúbir.*

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

**DP:** Yes.

**P**ope Harmony VIII began a whole slew of building projects but actually finished virtually none of them. The Church spent much of its efforts in trying to calm the western waters and seemed distracted from their eastern lands.

The Elphárec army stationed in Raënor suddenly withdrew across the Ogobir in the summer of 1523, as the harsh winters gave way to warmer days. The Iluvarian School of Diplomacy in Siſtrameides was expanded.

**MOST SANGUINE DUCHY OF ELPHÁREC (34 W/IL)**  
*His Excellency, Count Eparreb Gorran, Regent for... His Grace, Eparreb Tashnes V, the Young, Count of Angûron and Siddhan, Duke of Elphárec.*

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

**DP:** None.

**T**he winter of 1521 was the worst on record, and 1522 was even worse. Thousands died as the harvests continued to be a fraction of what they were in former days. The flamboyant Duke Tashnes IV paid nothing out of the treasury except

what was necessary to outfit his family in the latest Tokatl fashions. The Duke had never been more unpopular. The newspapers excoriated him, and the starving peasants rose in rebellion throughout the realm. This was too much for Captain Lord Kenver, commanding the great bulk of the Duchy's knights and cavaliers in the Pontifical Demense. He rallied the chivalry of Elphárec to the cause of the Duke's young son, Lord Tashnes (under a proper aristocratic regency, of course) in the hopes that responsible government would be restored and the plight of the suffering people relieved<sup>9</sup>. With the coming of summer, the cavaliers rode north. Duke Tashnes responded to the crisis by taking to drink.

Others, however, saw this as rebellion or revolution, and determined that it would not stand. The great Northern Army of the young (but brilliant) Captain Sir Morcrades in Kalipara withdrew to the capital of Epadh in hopes of defending the capital against the southern chivalry.

The situation was complicated by the Duke's own brother, Count Gorran. The Count took command of the Duke's army in the capital in his brother's absence and proclaimed a regency of his own. He was not, however, able to produce the young prince: he, his mother Duchess Enebrel, and the Deva Jedral had fled the capital.

### *The Siege of Epadh (1523-1525)*

In the autumn of 1523, Lord Kenver's cavaliers arrived in Gorrigan. They were soon approached by the Duchess (with young Lord Tashnes). She encouraged Lord Kenver's enterprise in their name, and she placed herself in the care of the cavaliers.

Within the capital city of Epadh, meanwhile, Count Gorran had carefully prepared his defenses, including twenty-five large stone golems. He tried and failed to goad the cavaliers into assaulting the city. They could not get in, but he could not get out.

Lord Kenver put the city to siege, but having nothing but cavalry, it was an ineffective siege to say the least. Stalemate continued through the winter of

<sup>9</sup> Or, depending on who you talked to, "to put the peasants back in their damn place."

1523 and into the spring. Meanwhile, Sir Morcrades' army advanced from the east. Which side did he support? No one knew for certain, but it was certain that he would be the single deciding factor in the future of the Duchy.

Still, the stalemate continued, with both sides taking casualties through 1524 with no end in sight. At least it was nice weather for it: the harvests were bountiful and the spectre of widespread unrest ebbed.



As the drama played out in Epadh, the Baron of Kalipara joined his people in repudiating the Duchy entirely.

In the summer of 1525, the third army arrived in Gorrigan. It was clear that whichever side Sir Morcrades supported would have the upper hand in this fight. On his own part, Sir Morcrades immediately sent Heralds to Count Gorran in the city and Lord Kenver asking the great unasked question: where was Duke Tashnes? He had a Deva with him, so he was most likely not just murdered out of hand. Where was he?

Reply came from both camps: no one knew.

If Sir Morcrades was unsatisfied by these replies, he gave no sign. Instead, mindful of the waste of life and treasure if the Duchy were to continue down the road to full-scale civil war, he proposed judicial combat to settle the issue. Judicial combat had fallen out of favour in the past century or so in favour of jury or judicial trial, or even legislative debate, but the right still existed in the law. Such a proposal immediately appealed to the honour (and vanity) of the two principal leaders, and they accepted.

### *Drannet Meadow (1525)*

On the Ides of Sextilis 1525, just outside the city walls of Epadh and surrounded by their armies, the mounted cavaliers Count Gorran and Captain Lord Kenver saluted the Ducal box containing the young Lord Tashnes and his mother the Duchess, saluted each other, and then spurred their horses to the charge.

The crash of their lances could be heard throughout the city, where a carnival atmosphere prevailed despite the privation of the recent siege. Spotters on the wall called down the details of the combat as it unfolded to the waiting crowds below.

The contest was hard-fought, but it was soon apparent that Count Gorran was the better fighter. Lord Kenver fought fiercely, at one point slashing the Count right across his muzzle with the tip of his sword, but he was clearly overmatched. The killing blow, when it landed, was almost elegant in its precision. Lord Kenver fell to his knees, saluted Count Gorran, and then fell face-first into the mud.

Count Gorran arranged for a state funeral for the late Lord Kenver, which pacified much of the distrust the cavaliers still felt for him, and national reconciliation was proclaimed. The young Lord Tashnes, now 13 years old, was crowned Duke, with his uncle Count Gorran as his regent. The Duchess Enebrel remains in public service.

For his part in resolving the crisis, Captain Sir Morcrades was granted the vacant Lordship of Ebléc. In the relatively mild winter he married the new Duke's beautiful older sister, Lady Serrika.

There are no suspects in the matter of the lost schematics of the late Baron Ilkurr Valdiss, Toymaker of Mungg, and the constabulary have reluctantly ended their investigation.

#### KINGDOM OF HYRÁGEC (31 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, Kumara, Tiryowglas, ThaceD, ThaceE, Urdraháhn

**DP:** None.



King Rahnes, delighted with the success of past construction projects, built some more! The city of Balmór expanded, and the new port town of Perendar rose in Endani Prefecture. An additional port was also built in the Prefecture, presumably to help handle the steady stream of pilgrims bound for the Shrine of Moroko. The Royal Road

was extended from Celli in Seni, though the Royal Elbun Forest, to Perendar. All this and public works, too! The King seemed determined to put people to work, perhaps to help keep their mind off the miserable weather.

In accordance with the wishes of the Urdan Church, the King announced days of fasting and prayer for the reunification of Duedhyn. While popular in the countryside, the sophisticates in the cities were less enthusiastic about the new devotions.

Prince Frenthes and Princess Alvitirre had two more children, another boy in 1522 and (finally!) a girl in 1524. Baby Sardira has earned the nickname "Sunny" thanks to her delightful disposition.

Another bright ray of sunshine fell upon Hyrágec in the spring of 1524, and since then the weather has improved to a more normal pattern.

The head of the Hyrágec's army, Captain-General Lord Irrjir Grenthe<sup>10</sup>, taught at the Military Academy in Pahasar for several years, during which he penned a commentary on Moroko's *Code of Chivalry*. The slim volume, titled *The Chivalry of the Common Man*, has enjoyed success throughout Hyrágec.

A shipment of Ketatle Coffee arrived from the Duchess of Taneki with warm wishes.

Naval quality improved.

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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, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Ebalon, Golmath, GUT, Hyrágec, Iäthedain, ID, IOC, Kalipara (5), Kumara, Murali, Nydoon, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, (z)Arkhandu

**DP:** None.

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<sup>10</sup> Lord Irrjir is a member of the Royal House, descending from Prince Irrjir Torthes, the third son of King Rahnes III.

**I**ngazi concentrated its efforts in their colony of New Ingazi. A fleet of galleons, the largest so far assembled, sailed northward with troops and supplies.

Back at home, many new public works projects were undertaken for the relief of the people. The University was expanded, and Ingazi's sorcerers discovered new discoveries.

Count Trememes named Prince Frenthes of Hyrágec a Knight of the East Riding.

**CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT (52.1 UR)**  
*Her All-Holiness Kemalla XVII, the Hunting Lion, First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sabûl.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averno, Cappargarnia, Carcë, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, Iâthedain, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Itaxik, Murali, Sakkar, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Zarkhandu

**DP:** See below.

**F**irst Matriarch Kemalla spent much of her time in deep prayer, reportedly for Duedhyn. She took some time out to welcome a new foreign student to St. Irmengarde's Elementary School, a certain Prince Biard, son of Elector Brannis of Thace. He is a bright and sociable boy, and he was accompanied by a Steppe Hound puppy named Mister Piddles the Third. He is, in fact, quite a bit more sociable than the First Matriarch, and he formed his friendships elsewhere, with old Reverend Mother Rhonda, who taught history and mentored the young Saurian. Some of his classmates joked that the reason the Reverend Mother was so good at teaching history was that she'd lived through it, but young Biard always came to her defense.

The Society of Saint Annír was created as a Monastic Educational Order. The Society is the vision of the theologian Reverend Mother Lœnni, and the First Matriarch embraced her idea of a universal teaching Order. For now, they are headquartered in the Thacian *Tower of Thought*, but they're going to need a religious site soon. Schools in which the Society teaches adhere to a strict uniform policy: black pants or skirts with a white shirt and a cravat or tie

for both sexes. They wear visors and ties or cravats of the color according to their houses.

Cavalry and naval quality improved, and the government expanded back to its previous size and efficiency.

### **GOLMATH AT THE CROSSROADS (1523-1525)**

*or, Whatever has gone wrong?*

**T**he frail Emperor Sardhan drifted in and out of a state of unconsciousness. His advisors frankly expected his death imminently, and many of his aides discreetly took employment elsewhere. In the end, only his Malebolge Chamberlain, Kitterix Jinx, and one of his young grand-nephews<sup>11</sup> remained by his side. The two took shifts so that Sardhan might have company whenever he awoke. The Emperor ate little, and he soon became quite emaciated. And yet, he did not die.

And then, one afternoon, he regained consciousness and feebly demanded that his chamber be cleared out. He wanted to be alone, alone to think, for a while. When Buck and Jinx were called back into the chamber several hours later, the Emperor was a transformed Wenemet. For one thing, he was standing in the middle of the chamber, buttoning up his shirt, on which a few spots of crimson blood seeped from open sores on his chest and arms. He looked thin, but hale, and he sharply commanded the two to pack their bags and go to Sardarthion. "I've got some frakkin' scores to settle before I'm done, and where I'm going, you can't follow."

And then he vanished. It was only later that Buck noticed the tiny crystal shards littering the chamber.



In 1523, definitive news reached Golmath that the Emperor was dead. A week later, Walarri Parndarra the Stern was finally crowned Prince Parndarra I of Golmath. He crowned his son Endarra as Count of

<sup>11</sup> He shared his grand-uncle's name and penchant for the strenuous life. Since there are several Sardhans in House Walarri these days, he usually goes by the nickname *Buck*.

Agdora, and he strongly indicated that the order of succession would be changed to favour him.

The new Prince soon had a win in his column. Lord Wooster had sailed an impressive fleet to Muralis and then proceeded inland to the Murali capital of Karrka. He met there the heir of Golmath (for the moment, anyway), the Volpel Kaidarian.

There the two of them conducted delicate negotiations with the ancient Count Drathnes, plied him with drinks and vast sums of gold, and soon persuaded him to accept Golmathi suzerainty.

Prince Parndarra now ruled a vast Tarotist monarchy extending almost the entire western coast of Sahûl. He did not enjoy it for long, as he died at the age of 69 in late 1523, just months after Sardhan.

In Karrka, Volpel Kaidarian proclaimed himself Electoral Prince of Golmath.

In Golmath, Walarri Endarra produced a document signed by his father summoning the Walarri Clan Mothers to choose a new, Walarri, heir. He dutifully did so and to no one's great surprise, they chose him. Armed with the approval of the Mothers, Walarri Endarra proclaimed himself Electoral Prince of Golmath.

At this news, Golmath exploded.



Prince Endarra's men immediately took control of the capital, the government, and the army in the city. Prince Kaidarian commandeered Lord Wooster and his fleet and set sail for the north in an attempt to rally the cities to his side.

Kanaplila, Minyappa, and Treal renounced their tribute. In Runazar, there was the usual combination of prevarication and chest-thumping on the part of the Clans. Margrave Volpel Tregarion of Ebalon withdrew his allegiance pending some clarification on the status of the Prince. No sooner had he done so, than Caros, Toworrah, and Yuwa rebelled from his control. In Rhuzan, Clan Harret declared their independence.

In the north, religious extremists and cultists of the Yellow Cult formed a theocratic republic based in Kumara, taking Ardanyi, Dalawathi, and Kurl-dayi with them.

The newly ascended Baroness of Nydoon (in Kamadhi Prefecture), seeing her chance to get her lands out from under Golmath's thumb, declared her alliance with the Electorate at an end. The young, charismatic Baroness was soon joined by Warraki, Kukuni, and Malinyi.

Prince Kaidarian landed in the north, but not in Madran Prefecture. Instead, he landed at Pirayi and sought a meeting with the Pontiff at Serri. The meeting went well, and the Fellowship of Connate Tarotists declared their support for Kaidarian. Pontiff Mordican was quoted as saying, "it was either that or those afflicted puritans. I can't stand having dinner with those people, much less lending them support." With Mordican's support, several key wavering Prefectures fell his way, including Daryis and Vara. The Baron of Windra, whose family had been allies of Golmath for over a century, snuck his army out of the city and back to his home prefecture before declaring for Kaidarian.

In Golmath City, Endarra's strongest claim to the crown was in his holding the capital, the Walarri Clan Mothers, and the Principality's government. The fact that Endarra is not Runazari is also helpful, as there are still great numbers in Golmath who look upon Runazar as a land of backwater yokels. Still, once you were a couple of hundred miles from Golmath City, Endarra's support was thin or nonexistent. In the far east, Walu, Kulkupa, and Kalikadra support him, but the rest of the Prefectures there slipped away into independence.

Mount Gartnir in Marniyi erupted in 1524 and again in 1525.

Meanwhile, deep in the south, the Thalari remained steadfastly loyal to Prince Kaidarian. They colonized Formagek (2113) and Sinissar (3123) and built a road through each, as well as the double-port town of Inverness in Nurl, though what fool would dare the ice to dock there remains an open question.

**NOTE:** Only the two factions of the Principality (Endarra and Kaidarian) and the Golmath Underlands Territories (GUT) are operating under Civil War rules §10.4.4. The GUT remain loyal to Golmath, but they have not yet declared for either faction. Nydoon and the Ebalon March are both susceptible to a good offer<sup>12</sup>. Trade is a little odd this Turn, but it will normalize next Turn, one way or another.

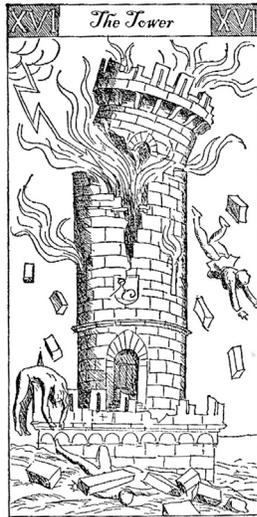
**REPUBLIC OF KUMARA (4W/KY)**

Baron Abmbur Kašten of Dambiyi, First Speaker of the Republic, Servitor of the King in Yellow.

**Trade:** Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Hyrágec, Ingazi

**DP:** Ssssss.

**T**he King in Yellow Cult spread to Dalawathi. The Lords of Ardanyi and Kurldayi swore fealty to the Baron of Dambiyi, who proclaimed a new Republic dedicated to the cult of *Card XVI: The King in Yellow*. Tribute was exacted from Minyappa, bringing all of the cult's regions into the new Republic.



**BARONY OF NYDOON (6W/TA)**

Baroness Jejodh Dara of Nydoon, the Beautiful and Beguiling.

**Trade:** Ingazi, Golmath

**DP:** Nope.

**B**aroness Dara came to the throne after the death of her older brother at sea. Her magnetic personality holds all who meet her under her spell, and her court is that of a true Renaissance Prince. Most of the religious sites of her barony are under the control of the Fellowship of Connate Tarotists, which suits her just fine.

**PRINCE ENDARRA'S FACTION (11 W/TA)**

His Gracious Majesty, Walarri Endarra, Baron of Madran and Kamadhi, Count of Agdora, Electoral Prince of Golmath.

**Trade:** Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Ebalon, Einandhu, GUT, ID, Murali, Nydoon, Tiryowglas

**DP:** None.

**T**he Puritan Endarra holds the core of Golmath, the capital and the government. He bases his claim on the verdict of the Clan Mothers in 1523. His faction has utterly repudiated trade with Urdan realms.

**PRINCE K Aidarian's FACTION (27 W/TA)**

His Gracious Majesty, Volpel-Walarri Kaidarian the Reserved, Baron Volpel, Count of Runazar, Electoral Prince of Golmath.

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

**Trade:** Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Ebalon, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, Murali, Nydoon, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdrahahn

**DP:** None.

**K**aidarian and his kilted Runazari secured the support of the Church, the Thalari, and many other non-puritans.

**MARCH OF EBALON (8 W/TA)**

Margrave Volpel Tregarion of Ebalon.

**Trade:** Aradéc, Golmath, Ingazi, Murali, Tiryowglas

**DP:** None.

**T**he old Margrave, afraid of a forcible retirement, decided to pursue a new course. So far, it hasn't been his most brilliant idea.

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

**T**hrough the collapse of Golmath, the rugby seasons of 1524 and 1525 were severely disrupted, and ARF was forced to cancel the 1525 Championship Series. The Golmath leagues are

<sup>12</sup> Provided, as always, that they remain playerless.

in chaos, and some have proposed going to a “Sahûl Cup” contested by national teams.

### *ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ARADÉC (46 W/IL)*

*His Royal Majesty, Sansollen Deric II, Baron of Wanumarra, Count of Abijar, Overlord of Duedhyn, Electoral King of Aradéc.*

*Sir Onmon Dagames, Speaker of the Commons.*

**Trade:** Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Ebalon, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, Iáthedain, ID, IOC, Ingazi, Kumara, Murali, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

**DP:** Nope.

**R**ing Rhazahan’s fur was shot through with grey; his ruff was purest white. The situation in Duedhyn had aged the frustrated monarch before his time. Though he was only in his early fifties, he looked closer to seventy. His court was becoming restive as the King failed to resolve the situation in Duedhyn. As disobedience piled on disobedience, Rhazahan came to be seen in Darnuldeis as a weak king. Many of the nobles, particularly in the west and amongst the Island Clans, never cared for him in the first place. The Duedhyn situation gave them opportunity to voice their disdain.

The crisis broke when news came that King Rhazahan’s man in Duedhyn, Captain-General Tithitak, had begun taking orders from Prince Meriasek. While some simply dismissed Tithitak as a fool (or a traitor), some of the Aradécán nobles demanded an explanation from the King as to how the situation could be allowed to deteriorate so far. Some even went so far as to question the King’s honor or his ability.

Pressure soon mounted for the King to call the Clanmoot, something not done for over a century. The noble Houses wanted answers, and the assailed King simply didn’t know how to deal with the situation. Many turned with hope to the King’s step-son and designated heir<sup>13</sup>, Prince Deric.

The aristocrats were not alone in their outrage; equally outraged were the powerful merchant class,

<sup>13</sup> In 1524 there were still places in the Islands where the events of 1494 were not forgotten and “King” Deric’s portrait hung in a place of honour.

which in these sorts of disputes usually sided with the King against the nobles. Increasingly angry crowds gathered outside the palace in Darnuldeis, demanding a public inquiry. Fatefully, the King sent the army to disperse the crowd.

### *The Darnuldeis Massacre (1524)*

What began as an exercise in crowd dispersal quickly turned ugly as the crowd refused to move. Words raised in anger led to swords drawn in anger. Archers fired into the crowd. The crowd threw rocks and picked up make-shift weapons and tried to stand their ground. They failed. The King eventually sent tens of thousand of soldiers into the streets, and blood ran in the streets. It’s even said that artillery rained fire upon a dockside neighbourhood. Thousands were killed; an exact count was never made and may well be impossible.

Order was only restored by means of martial law and the stationing of soldiers in strategic places throughout the city.

As news of the massacre was published in the Kingdom’s newspapers, rebellion spread like a contagion. The *Times* openly called for the arrest of the King on grounds of treason. The King sacked his head of Intelligence, which satisfied nobody and greatly upset some with great influence in the bureaucracy.

Karruni, Palha, and Palpika rebelled.

### *The Glorious Revolution (1525)*

It was in this poisonous atmosphere that a group of influential nobles<sup>14</sup> approached Prince Deric with the idea of his becoming King. At first, the Prince refused, but as the situation continued to deteriorate, he allowed himself to become convinced that it might be the only chance to prevent a revolution.

But it was too late. Elements of the army had begun deserting, or more worryingly, joining one of the various rebel factions in the city. Nobles of some of the Island Clans and other Deric supporters marched on the palace. Royal Hussars prepared

<sup>14</sup> Reportedly including Duke Dambana Parcuram and Count ar-Canlann Tiernir III.

to charge the protesters, but the army's cavaliers and knights sought to prevent them. Fighting soon broke out in the capital *between* various elements of the Royal Army. Representatives of the knights and merchants met in council and called for the King's abdication or, failing that, his arrest.

It was, perhaps, to prevent complete anarchy or revolution that Prince Deric finally appeared before the army and the people. He exhorted them to remember their loyalty to Aradéc and to the House Sansollen, and he begged them to reconsider any rash action.

The next day, however, what was left of the Royal Hussars stood down before the might of the Kingdom's chivalry. Under the flag of the "Commons", that is, the cavaliers and merchants, they entered the Royal Palace and effected the arrest of King Rhazahan IV.

When told of the arrest, Prince Deric mounted his horse and rode hard through the now quiet streets of the capital to the palace. He spurred his steed past the surprised guards and right up the main stairs. He found the Commons meeting in the Royal audience chamber, with an elected Speaker at their head.

Prince Deric dismounted and addressed the Commons, "who do you serve?"

The Speaker, an elderly Wenemet Cavalier, stood up unsteadily and replied, "the Commons serve Iluvar, Aradéc, and your Royal Majesty."

The Commons spontaneously broke out in shouting, "*Long live King Deric! Long live King Deric!*"

The new King convened the Clanmoot, which happily confirmed the actions of the Commons. Once the situation had calmed down a little, the new King pardoned the Old King and sent him into exile. King Rhazahan sailed to Kityara, but the expectation is that he will go to Sardarthion to there live out his days.

The Laird of Palha proclaimed his undying loyalty to King Deric.

The lost fleet of Admiral Henri and Captain Dethinok returned at last, somewhat worse for the wear.

Aradéc's military tactics advanced: cavalry, siege, naval, and airship all recorded improvement. The port town of Aloysius rose in Kityara to the delight

of the Abbot, and Kuwinyi in Rereyi expanded to a city. The government expanded, and Aradéc's sorcerers claim to have entered into a "Golden Age".

Much of the rest of the country doesn't agree. The people are still restive, and the noble houses seem intent on keeping the Clanmoot in permanent session "to keep an eye on the King". There's no word yet about what the new King intends to do about the Duedhyn situation.

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

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

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

**DP:** None.

**I**n the deep winter of 1521, the venerable Count Drathnes determined that Murali's best chance of thriving was as a vassal to Sardhan of Golmath, so he swore fealty to him.

In the warm summer of 1523, he remained convinced that Murali's best chance of developing into a modern state was as a vassal to the irritating (but rich) Prince Parndarra of Golmath, so he swore fealty to him.

However, as the leaves turned in the autumn of that year, he was not so delusional as to think that there was any benefit to Murali in swearing fealty to either Prince of a shattered Golmath. He bade Prince Kaidarian a fond farewell and wished him profit in his endeavours. When Prince Kaidarian's ships had slipped over the horizon, Count Drathnes quietly tore up his new letterhead and went back to his palace.

Murali had come out of the entire debacle only one region down, and they counted themselves lucky.

The navy continued joint patrols with Ingazi on the Antean. The Vice-Admiral of the Red executed an Imperial warrant in Zarkhandu. He then sailed to Morcannis and announced that he had in his possession a *second* Imperial warrant, granting the prisoner a full and immediate pardon.

### DRACONIC BARONY OF IÄTHEDAIN (6S/UR)

*Baron Darandain Zharharn II of Iäthedain, the Lovable but Gruff, Lord Dragonwood.*

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

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

**DP:** Nope.

**G**ruff old Baron Zharharn continued to build his tiny realm with the aid of the Urdan Church. A road was built from Naipa to Sital, some public works put in, and an actual government was hired. The last refugees were settled in Karnamú (3133)s and in the town (now city) of Iäthedeis.

Sadly, the Baron died in the deep winter of 1523, succeeded by his grand-nephew of the same name.

### IATHEDEK: THE PROTECTORATE OF FRIEBÆLD

**P**ace prevailed. Once the winter years passed, river travellers noted a tough brown grass growing throughout the Wyrmwaste, and thick vegetation in Scagadon.

### VEILED MASTERS OF YARNI-ZA (17 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:** Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Iäthedain, Zarkhandu

**DP:** No.

**Y**star the Lich became suddenly wealthy in Cathedrals as the Yagnarišt realms, particularly Zarkhandu, transferred a number of religious sites to the control of the Veiled Masters.

Infantry quality improved, and Yarni-Za's sorcerers announced a breakthrough in their fell arts. More bureaucrats were hired.

### ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ZARKHANDU (50 S/DF)

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

*His Majesty, Tirach Zhur the Magnificent, Prince Imperial, Grandmaster of the Order of the Second Sons.*

**Trade:** Atuburrk, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Iäthedain, Ingazi, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za

**DP:** None.

**Z**arkhandu's dark winter continued. As famine wracked the realm, the King himself led the effort to minister to and resettle the refugees, making him very popular indeed. The majority of the refugees were settled in Hebith (6543)s and its city of Synath. The remainder found homes in Meenath (4221)s.

The King dissolved the Regency in 1521. If his father, the Prince Imperial Tirach Zhur, had any cause to complain, he did not voice it. Indeed, he had sequestered himself away on a project of great importance to the Kingdom. To celebrate, the King ordered the construction of a Royal Palace in Vúhlath.

In 1522, the Imperial Red Fleet sailed into Zarkhandu. Vice-Admiral Torrfín presented King Tirach Bæn with an Imperial warrant for the arrest of Zarkhandu's mysterious prisoner. He asked that the prisoner and his effects be turned over to him immediately. After peering suspiciously at the warrant for a few moments, the King shrugged, saying "he has certainly ceased to be amusing to us. Perhaps you can find some new sport in him."

The Vice-Admiral took the prisoner aboard the Red Fleet's flagship sailed away the next day.

The Queen Mother, Tirach Zhur's wife Leniqua of Azinorn, died later in the winter of 1522, keenly mourned by her children and her nation.

Zarkhandu's military garrisoned the empty wastelands of Derridon, Tyldek, and Yannek, cementing control over the former Draconic lands south of the Antean. Shortly thereafter, the legendary Captain-General Turanis Akkethes died in Derridon.

### *Duels in the Snow*

In the summer of 1523, Colonel Sir Mattahonga Lazar, Grandmaster of the Order of the Second Sons, found himself on assignment in the frozen depths of

Asaiman, raising an army of zombies in the icy ruins of Syrháhn. To his very great surprise, he had no sooner formed his new legion than they all crumbled into icy dust.

From the shadows stepped a gaunt Wenemet. He wore fur-lined plate mail, and the visor of his helm was firmly closed. The stranger said, "Colonel Mattahonga, you are a traitor to the Emerald Watch."

Mattahonga winced. "Large words from such a skinny Wenemet. My guess is you're trespassing here. I've half a mind to arrest you."

The stranger snorted. "Half a mind is all you have. You're a disgrace to the Imperial uniform. Hell, you're a disgrace to your frakkin' Kindred."

Mattahonga drew his sword. "You'll have to apologize for that, friend."

The stranger drew his own sword, a style of battlesword not used in the better part of four decades. The two Wenemet cautiously circled each other a few steps, before the stranger said, "Not only will I not apologize, I challenge you. You have no honour left to defend, so perhaps you will defend your worthless carcass in a duel."

"With pleasure," Mattahonga sneered.

With that, battle was joined. The stranger was clearly old – his reflexes were slow and his breath was laboured after only a few parries – but he fought with almost supernatural strength and stamina. Mattahonga himself had a lifetime of training and drill behind him, and though he was still hale even at 70, he also clearly had his own sorcery favouring him.

The two old Wenemet fought for hours, past what should have been the point of exhaustion for both of them. Finally, the flagging stranger pulled off his helm and gasped for breath. It was only then, when Mattahonga saw the stranger's face, that he realized he was duelling the Emperor of all Sahûl.

"Your majesty," he gasped in surprise, but Sardhan replied with a sudden upward slash of his sword. Blood welled across Mattahonga's chest, and the startled Colonel leapt back to the attack.

As the fight wore on, Sardhan's movements became more and more disjointed, as if he were simply a marionette in the hands of a phantom puppeteer.

Finally, Mattahonga's skill and training won out, as he landed first one, then another, brutal stab into Sardhan's breastplate, piercing the steel and drawing blood. The Emperor sagged to the ground. Mattahonga knelt beside him and softly asked, "do you yield?"

Sardhan laughed at him and coughed. Mattahonga lifted Sardhan's head. Sardhan coughed again, and blood trickled from the corners of his mouth. Then the Emperor closed his eyes and died in the arms of the man who had killed him.

Moments later, the entire area erupted into a firestorm. Dozens of Mattahonga's men were killed instantly, and the very air seemed toxic. And then, just as suddenly as it began, it was gone. The Emperor's body was untouched by the pyrotechnics, as was Mattahonga, but most everything for a quarter mile around was reduced to cinders, including all of the Zarkhandu supply wagons.

Colonel Sir Mattahonga Lazar ordered his remaining men to bury the Emperor's body with full military honours in the nearby tundra. It took them two days to dig the grave, and within hours of his entombment, Emperor Sardhan's grave site was lost to the drifting snow.

The wizard Narresh, meanwhile, was busily raising up the frozen dead over in Mendileen. He was quite surprised to be confronted by a white snowbear, wearing leather armour. It was the wizard's first encounter with a Thalar.

He identified himself as Lord Artair, and, after appropriately insulting Narresh's lineage, visage, scent, and gender preference, he challenged him to a duel. The by-now furious Narresh drew his blade and accepted. In Lord Artair's hand, a glowing orange blade of pure Mana suddenly appeared, and he cut down the Saurian as casually as a cow might brush aside a fly.



Colonel Sir Mattahonga Lazar died in the summer of 1524. The Prince Imperial was elected in his place as Grandmaster of the Order of the Second Sons.

Zarkhandu welcomed Lady Ennor's Dowry Lands from Fell Kommolek. The transfer was not quite as smooth as anticipated, as Lord Marneeth renounced his tribute, and Dubhara and Kurfowlek were simply abandoned to the tundra.

Even with the warmer weather in 1524 and 1525, the glaciers in the Zîman highlands have shown no sign of retreating. If anything, they seem to have grown. Zîman-Heth is now completely deserted. Darush Priory in Zîman-Dath stands abandoned. If this continues, many fear the entire highlands may be lost in the next few years.

The Human double-port town of Rirenga rose in Narrek.

There were reports of anti-Urdan incidents in the port cities of Zarkhandu. Merchants found their shops the targets of graffiti and bricks through windows. One particularly bad incident in Arrendeis involved the lynching of a wealthy Ingazi merchant. The constabulary made several arrests but failed to find the perpetrators.

#### KHURDÁN RIDES!

**D**eep in the cold Eastern Steppes, in the barren stretch known as Chorken, the third horseman approached the small cluster of yurts known as the village of Artet. Thin summer snowdrifts clung in the shadows, and a small herd of undernourished yaks pawed at the hard ground. The third horseman rode alone. He was expected. His way had been prepared.

*The year before the Comet  
the Blue Jackal prowled.  
On Rending Day in Artet  
of Chorken, he howled  
for the Mother to cosset  
the Father of Lies.*

*(The Secret History, 2:1-3)*

The third horseman was pushing forty, a respectable age for a Saurian. His face bore the scars of other missions, all dangerous, but none perhaps so important as this one. He wore the garb of a simple tinker,

and his saddlebags bulged with the appropriate tools. A worn woolen blanket covered his shoulders for a cloak. He looked the part perfectly, but eyes more careful even than his saw through his disguise.

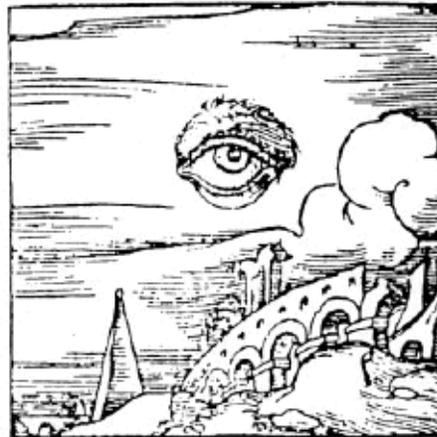
*He hatched with the cold light of the glacier in his eyes, screaming a challenge to all the living.*

*(The Secret History, 1:18)*

A boy of perhaps twelve summers stood in the road, leaning on a shepherd's crook. Three thin sheep stood nearby, pulling up at the tough grass. The false tinker reigned his horse and asked the boy, "can you tell me which is the house of Khuris?"

The boy looked up at him, expressionless. "The woman Khuris is dead. You are looking for me." He pointed to the three grazing sheep. "You are the third horseman. The third sheep, rather. The signs are now fulfilled, and my time is nearly come. I name you *Tachg*, for you shall be my knife."

The third horseman stared at the boy in silence. For his part, the boy absentmindedly scratched the Eye of Yagnar in the dust with his crook.



*Quo modo Deum.*

*The snow that year buried all the yurts of Artet, and the food was in scant supply. Both mother and son knew that there would not be enough food for the two of them to last until the spring. On the day he turned 13, on Rending Day, Khurdán's mother left the yurt to fetch in more dung for the fire. Khurdán followed her outside and cleanly slit her throat from behind. Her blood froze as she died in the pile of dried yak dung. Khurdán buried her in the spring.*

*(The Secret History, 3:2-6)*

Tachg, the third horseman, took tea in the yurt of the boy Khurdán, the boy who was Yagnar. Khurdán sipped his tea, and then commanded him, "go back to your five hundred and bring them to me."

"Why would I do that?" the horseman asked jovially, "I was sent to bring you to my master."

Khurdán leaned forward, and whispered "I am your master now."

Tachg knew that he was right. Tachg suddenly knew without hesitation and without doubt that his entire life to this point had only been to prepare him for this moment. All his loyalties and responsibilities fled from his mind, to be replaced with a single idea: obedience to Khurdán was obedience to Yagnar. Tachg cleared his throat. "What must I do?"

Khurdán sat back and smiled, and it was as if a storm had suddenly passed, leaving cold, clear sunshine. "You must go back to your five hundred, the horsemen you have hidden over the horizon. You must bring them here. I will speak to them. And then we shall ride."

*Death and Pain are the true Monarchs of this world, with Fear as their Chancellor. Honor, justice, and truth are mere puffs of air from the lips of the cowering Kindreds, small, futile wards against the long, cold night. The destiny of the world is written with blood for ink, a pikestaff the plume, sealed with flame.*

*The Iluvarians deny it. The Tarotists mask it. The Urdans temper it. Only we know the truth.*

*(Teachings of Khurdán, Chapter 1)*

The next morning, the five hundred rode west. The villagers of Artet had never seen such a sight, though they were quite pleased that the horsemen took with them the orphan shepherd boy, Khurdán. Most people found him uncomfortably odd, even frightening, and they were well glad to be rid of him.

Khurdán's five hundred rode west until they found the Old South Road. They turned northwest, and in the autumn of 1525 they arrived in Vænor.

In the common room of the Red Hawk inn, Tachg finally asked their destination.

Khurdán called the officers together and said, "I asked you to ride, and you rode. Now, I think, you should know my will, for it is Yagnar's will. From here, we will ride west until we come to Treskaw in Kommolek, and thence to Fair Belsûnd. There we shall board ships or airships heading north, and so sail on until at last we come to Oratoa."

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## The Underlands

### DOWN UNDER

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#### GOLMATH UNDERLANDS TERRITORIES (6W&Y/TA)

*Lord Minippygi Gussie, Conqueror of Pama-Ati, Regent of Golmath's Underlands.*

**Trade:** Golmath, Ingazi

**DP:** None.



Lord Gussie, who is almost pathologically loyal to his country, is holding the Underlands together for Golmath, whichever Golmath that ends up being.

#### THE PUTINI & YANI ALLIANCE (16Y/-)

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

**Trade:** Murali

**DP:** None.



Mani expanded the town of Noroani in Nuyina Luini into a city. Some new digging were begun. Mana Prupari died in 1521. His son Marcian became Provošt and was elected Guilds

Master, and he took the name Mani Tunapri. Life remained pretty pleasant.

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## Oratoa

### THE NEW WORLD

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#### NEW ATUBURRK (Ø W&E/YG)

*Lord Kourbiedes, Governor of New Atuburrk.  
Methorchir the Scythe, Master of the Kura Riders of Nenalph, Lord of Usk.*

**Trade:** None.

**DP:** Usk (A)

The Atuburrk flying fortress remained over Usk, which the Oratoans call “Nenalph” in their tongue. After years of hostilities, a small force of airships landed safely and engaged in talks with the local bird-rider chieftains<sup>15</sup>. Surprisingly, the two parties discovered they shared religious views, and the Usk agreed to join Atuburrk.

Experimentation in various farming techniques were carried out under the watchful (and sometimes disbelieving) eyes of Atuburrk’s new allies.

In 1524, a great council was concluded aboard the Flying Fortress. Who was involved and what it portends, none know, but reports on the ground indicate a *Human* was involved.

#### BARONY OF FELL KOMMOLEK (Ø M/YG)

*Baron Goesek Annava III, the Grim, of Kommolek,  
Lord Treskaw, Burgrave of Fair Belsûnd.*

**Trade:** None.

**DP:** None.

Kommolek army crossed the river and invaded Wrexym. Commanded by Subjugator-General Vulpine, an army of 9,000 infantry, 5,000 cavalry, and a demon swept into the region. The defenders were largely obliterated by a well-placed Firebolt, and the region was conquered.

The Kommolek, like the Atuburrk, subsisted largely on fish. Consequently, many fell sick and died

until the right combination of river and sea fish were discovered.

#### THE GREAT NORTHERN WAR (1516-1525)

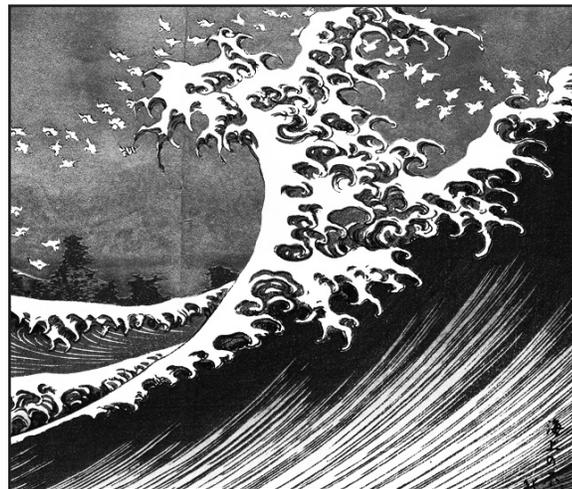
*Aihettoa, Kuroa vs. New Ingazi*

Aihettoa built a mighty fleet to transport their Kingdom’s armies and take the fight to New Ingazi. Vast numbers of Aihettoa’s military forces converged on Rangi for the campaign.

#### *The Fate of the Great Fleet*

The Regent Ihu Crooknose himself took command of the Great Fleet, some 190 ships, loaded to the gunwales with warriors, kura, and their equipment. The leaders of all of Aihettoa’s great houses, magnificent in their in their battle array, loaded themselves, their retainers, and house troops onto the ships of the Great Fleet. Truly the finest warriors of a generation gathered under Ihu Crooknose on the grand adventure to attack the fuzzies of New Ingazi and their Human subjects and drive them back to whence they’d come.

The fleet sailed with the tide, leaving Rangi on a warm midsummer’s morning in 1522. At sea, they were augmented by the Kuroan Royal fleet, some 125 ships led by the relatively inexperienced but valiant Lord Kiritôpa.



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<sup>15</sup> The Atuburrk made a point of learning the native language as quickly as possible.

They were, none of them, ever seen again in the lands of the living. They met a terrible storm in the Ninghan Sea. Wave piled upon wave, as a hurricane fiercer than any yet recorded transformed the sea into an impenetrable wall of water. Winds in excess of ninety knots tore through rigging and hull alike, smashing the Great Fleet to flinders. There were no survivors.

**VICEROYALTY OF NEW INGAZI (29 W&H/UR)**

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

**Trade:** None.

**DP:** None.

**N**ingazi continued their defensive war against Aihetoa, employing various sorceries to prevent an invasion of their colonies. In the east, meanwhile, they secured Kúat through military force and the settlement of fuzzies from the south. They named their new colony New Walu. Another force landed at Wattirri with a similar agenda and success.

Urdan missionaries inundated both New Dara and Oamnga, intellectually devastating the arguments of the Dolphiništa anarchists but also converting the hearts and minds of much of the general population.

The first Urdan priory of the Church Universal and Triumphant was built by New Ingazi near their capital of Saint Ilana. It is called *Martyrs of Walu*.

Viceroy Lord Trouserdale is now Viceroy *Baron* Trouserdale and a new flag was unveiled over the Viceregal palace: quarterly 1 & 4: gules, a tower argent; 2 & 3: vert, a galleon or.

The Viceroy announced in no uncertain terms that New Ingazi claimed “all islands bordering or within the Ninghan Sea, excepting only those territories on the Island of Ruwtam which may be under Araxean administration, and no other lands in Oratoa”. He did, however, also indicate that should the Aihetoans press their attack, he would consider all Aihetoan territory fair game.



# Imperial Gazette

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



His August & Imperial Majesty  
**Emperor Sydath II**

*Count of Odol, Elector and Grand Duke of Atuburrk,  
Sovereign of Sahûl, Lord of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion,  
Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Emperor of All  
the World.*

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS OF THE EMPIRE

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

## APPOINTMENTS

*During the Reign of Emperor Sardhan:*

To Governor of Kassaria: King Sakkath Tirach Bæn of Zarkhandu.

To Governor of Withidan: Baroness Nelhuayotl Nenepillah II of Sakkar.

To Governor of Agador, Anabreis, Dranmul, Kaidu Kanmul, Kordier, Lambris, Orinos, Sistramidior: *by examination.*

*During the Reign of Emperor Sydath II:*

To Chancellor of the Empire: Grand Duke Pangku Tramandes II of Araxes.

To Minister of State for Climate: Queen Tis'chak Yautlatoaya II of Itaxik.

**OPEN OFFICES**

Due to death, retirement, or incapacitation of the previous office-holders, the following are now vacant:  
Lord Admiral of the Green,  
Governors as indicated.

**ENNOBLEMENT**

*During the Reign of Emperor Sardhan:*  
The Laird of Trouserdale and his House are elevated to the dignity of Baron of Saint Ilana.  
The Baron of Ardhalka and his House are elevated to the dignity of Count of Ardhalka.

**FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

ALL BANK LOANS must be repaid within two Turns at 120% of the original amount of the loan. Those wishing to borrow from the Imperial Bank must contact the Board of Directors in advance.

IMPERIAL BANK OF SAHÚL  
Locations: ..... Einandhu, Sardarthion  
Available to borrow:..... 4,160 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 ..... 6\*
  - House Pangku of Araxes ..... 4\*
  - House Gwariva of Ingazi ..... 3\*
  - Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds..... 3\*
  - Printers Guild of Zadres..... 1

*Loans:* Atuburrk (840/t15)

BANK OF ITAXIK  
Location: ..... Itaxik  
Available to borrow:..... 3,054 GP  
Ice Relief Fund ..... 100 GP  
*Loans:* Itaxik (240/turn 17)

**FREE COMPANIES & ERRANTRY &C.**

WILLEFORN'S SPEARS-14mi 7li  
Captain: "Spears" Willeforn (LA53W) TR age 29  
Location: *Dalgányi Prefecture, Kaparis Province*  
Min. Bid: 21GP / TURN

HAWKWOOD COMPANY-32mc 18pk 12mi  
Captain: Lord Dwinbi Sardes (L974W) TR age 36  
Location: *Susa, Dalkurnu Prefecture, Kaparis Province*  
Min. Bid: 60GP / TURN

**NOTICES**

Second Duedhyn Proclamation (1521)

HAVING REVIEWED THE FACTS at our disposal, we find the following:

Prince Dallyn did violate our orders in attempting to move refugees north through the lands of Prince Merryn without coordinating that effort through us. Furthermore, by not confiding in us his intentions he made a grievous error that cost the lives of tens of thousands of the Duedhyni and brought much harm upon Prince Merryn.

Mana comes from the deities we worship. The Raven priesthood claims to worship Urda but has no mana. Clearly Urda has expressed her displeasure with their current actions of separating themselves from the Church Universal and Triumphant.

The Church Universal and Triumphant with its most recent proclamation did make attempt to bring peace between themselves and those Urdans of the Raven sect, but by doing so they did cause Raven regions to abandon the Raven Orthodox Church, and by doing so did indirectly bring harm upon Prince Dallyn.

Prince Dallyn has met his end, and he now stands before whatever fate awaits him for his actions in the beyond. He is beyond my jurisdiction and has paid the ultimate price. His son now rules in his stead. While responsible for the actions of his nation as its ruler, we cannot in good faith fully condemn him for actions his father initiated. He must be given a chance to prove himself for the man he is to be.

THEREFORE, we hereby task Prince Meriasek with the following:

1. Make a public apology for the actions of his realm that brought harm to the Duedhyni people and Prince Merryn.

2. Make reparations to help replace all troops lost by Prince Merryn and pay additional wergild for the men lost.
3. Prince Meriasek will inform me as his liege of all actions he is undertaking beyond the normal duties of ruling a realm in advance with adequate time for me to give him the benefit of my council and make any diplomatic arrangements that might be necessary to aid those efforts.
4. To prevent further pain and suffering to his people, to prevent rebellion and kin feud and bloodshed, to bow to the reality of the will of Urda, and as his father and thus the state of Duedhyn has undertaken to make matters of faith the domain of the government of the Duedhyn realm, the Prince is ordered to undertake the reconciliation of the Raven Orthodox Church with the Church Universal and Triumphant under the Holy Mother's proclamation, which allows the Raven priesthood to retain their priesthood and for the Duedhyni people to retain their Raven faith, and to abide thus once again as a faithful sect within the church of Urda. The Raven military order should once again be separate from the control of the Raven priesthood and its own entity. We would counsel the young prince to find a new path for these armed men sworn to serve Urda that would reconcile their Raven beliefs with a path that brings them within the will of Urda as well.

FURTHERMORE:

We request Prince Merryn reply in a timely fashion to our private communications so we may assess what reparations will need to be made and commend him for his diligence and obedience as a vassal. We also extend our deepest sorrow at his profound loss; a good wife is worth more than all the gold in the world, and we can only imagine at the dark night her loss must have wrought for him. We grieve with him.

We most humbly beg the Holy Mother to give us adequate advance notice of any proclamations she may be considering that would effect the Duedhyni people, that we might have a chance as their liege to plead their case for what might or might not be as results to impact them direct or indirect. We humbly offer our private counsel for its very limited value, not that in any way to have any say in the faith and workings of the Urdan faith, but to offer perhaps perspectives not yet considered and to undertake the role of supplicant otherwise that would be that of Prince Meriasek to perform as an Urdan lord of an Urdan realm. We thank her for her efforts to bring peace

and send our greatest wishes that peace will come to the Duedhyni people through her efforts.

As our vassals find deepest winter encroaching upon them, we thank the Urdan Church and people that have undertaken to aid their co-religionists in Duedhyn. We will undertake to aid the Raven people as well, and hope that with time both people will find aid from the church and from their liege in equal part. Depending on the state of our vassal Prince Meriasek's realm's economy, we may undertake to send gold in his place to fulfill his obligations.

Finally, we enjoin upon our vassals the wisdom in seeking unity. Seek now for the displaced heir of Moroven, that the rose of Pareis might once again bloom. He will rule in good faith over both of you, allowing you both to serve the Duedhyni people as vassals under a true Duedhyn liege lord that we have so far only been indirectly capable of serving in a limited fashion.

*King Rhazahan IV*  
Electoral Kingdom of Aradéc  
Darnuldeis, Pranyi Prefecture.



Proclamation of Fenric V (1522)

WE HAVE HEARD OF THE RUMORS and seen some of the evidence that humans inhabit Oratoa. With these discoveries, we in the south have found evidence that the Urdan religion is present. This leads the Church of the Illimitable to believe that Tarotist may be on this new continent. Our goal is to seek out these people and make contact with them. We must prepare ourselves, so that we will be able to help these fellow Tarotists. We must also be prepared that they do not worship Tarot the same way. The Northern Tarotist may not worship the entire Tarot Deck. These will be stepping stones to help them join the Empire. These are the following guides if and when we meet any fellow Tarotist.

*Open Arms policy:*

We will welcome all Tarotists as if they are long lost brothers. We will not attack and the Church of the Illimitable will abstain in any conflicts with Tarotist. We promise this to the lords of Chaos.

*Education policy:*

We will freely trade information about the deck. We will also be open to the exchange of ideas and faiths of Tarot. This is the opportunity for us to educate and be educated. We will also exchange information of tools, weapons, architecture, culture, food, etc.

*Defense policy:*

We will arm and train Tarotist members of the Empire. This will better equip them in their defense efforts, if they are needed. Should a foreign power of the Tarotist faith make war on belligerent intentions toward the Empire, the Church of the Illimitable will seek to intervene and restore peace, or if no peace is to be had, then to stand aside for the greater good of the Empire, never turning any of our forces against a loyal subject of the Empire of Sahûl.

*Disciple policy:*

If Tarotists are found, we will enter into their religious schools and churches. They will also travel south to enter our churches. This is hand in hand with the Education policy.

So is ordered by the Church of the Illimitable. May the Deck protect,

*Pontiff Fenric V*

Church of the Illimitable  
Golluz, Arétar Prefecture.



## Third Duedhyn Proclamation (1522)

WE ORDER THE RAVEN REFUGEES in Derrow and Breselek to peacefully submit to being escorted by Prince Merryn's forces northwards to the border with the lands of Prince Meriasek to enter said regions peacefully, upon which we request Prince Meriasek send forces to escort them to what ever resettlement arrangements he has made for them.

*King Rhazaban IV*

Electoral Kingdom of Aradéc  
Darnuldeis, Pranyi Prefecture.

## Declaration of Urdan Unity for Duedhyn (1522)

|               |              |            |
|---------------|--------------|------------|
| FREEDOM.      | DELIVERANCE. | RELEASE.   |
| EMANCIPATION. | RESCUE.      | SALVATION. |

The Duedhyni people have everything to lose. They will lose their homes, their lives, their very identity as Urdans because of the defiance of the Ravens to their Goddess. So we must, as servants of Urda, in obedience to the order of the universe, act as a unified Church. It has become clear to all of Sahûl that the actions of the Raven Orthodox Church have caused strife, war, and desolation upon the children of Urda in Duedhyn. Bereft of mana, a sign from our Goddess, they are not in unity with Her and will never receive Her gifts if they remain apart from Her beloved Church.

The Raven's wings are broken. Let us mend them.

The concept of spiritual ecumenism has been embraced by many of the Urdan Raven ordinariates within the lands of Duedhyn almost immediately upon the declaration "Urged by Faith". They call to return home to Urda and they want, more than anything, to be within the symmetry of the Church Universal and Triumphant. As Urdans, we respect the traditions and understand the ways of many, stipulating however that Urda comes first in prayer. We believe that many will find their way back to Urda through these Ordinariates created for them by the Church Universal and Triumphant.

But they cannot do it alone.

Brothers and Sisters of Urda across Sahûl, at the noon hour of the 31st of Paharn, the brightest hour of the darkest time, in each of these next five years, we call upon all of you to stop what you are doing and pray as one unified balanced and beloved body of Urdans to our Goddess. Pray together at that moment for the unity of Duedhyn under the House Dhanos Gloslowes, that is, the line of Prince Merryn, an Urdan—not a Raven. Take the outstretched hand of your Urdan brother or sister beside you and look

to the Roof of the World, limb to limb across Sahûl, and pray for the deliverance of Duedhyn from the wars that have overtaken them in the name of the Raven.

Let the name of Raven no longer be associated with deception and lies but take its place again as a revered Sacred Animal. Let the Children of Duedhyn come home to be nestled in the loving arms of Urda's Church Universal and Triumphant once again.

Her All Holiness,

*Kemalla XVII the Hunting Lion*

First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sahûl.

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The Sable Decree (1523)

WE FIND the Church Universal and Triumphant guilty of violating Aradéc's *Duedhyn Proclamation* of 1516 against any aggressive action and of violating Imperial Law relating to conversion of regions by their 1518 decree and subsequent actions in our lands. This violation nullifies any other theoretical violations later, as the Church Universal and Triumphant was already in breach. The government in Pareis is considering proper damages as the violations continue.

*Prince Meriasek*

Principality of Duedhyn

Pareis, Glasdor Prefecture.

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Additional Signatories to the Treaty of Punchega

THE BARON OF KOMMOLEK affixes to this treaty his signature and seal and thereby pledges to confine all Kommolek settlement in Oratoa to the west of the Punchega treaty line.

*Baron Goesek Annavas III*

Barony of Kommolek

*in transit.*

THE GRAND DUKE OF ARAXES affixes to this treaty his signature and seal and thereby pledges to confine all Araxean settlement in Oratoa to the east of the Punchega treaty line.

*Grand Duke Pangku Tramandes II*

Grand Duchy of Araxes

The Chancery, Sardarthion.



# Imperial Strength Index

| #                       | Realm              | Player                       | Forum Name            | E-mail                         | ISI     |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------|
| <i>The Great Powers</i> |                    |                              |                       |                                |         |
| 1                       | Atuburrk / Emperor | Adam Sherman                 | Gonnagle              | mad.angus@yahoo.com            | 3,465.1 |
| 2                       | Aradéc             | Charles Hurst                | Xanthi                | charlesh@teleport.com          | 2,278.0 |
| 3                       | Cappargarnia       | Kyle Kinghorn                | Doppleganger          | kyle.kinghorn@gmail.com        | 1,880.4 |
| 4                       | Zarkhandu          | Theo Moriarty                | Mandala of Blood      | tmoriarty@gmail.com            | 1,585.5 |
| 5                       | Thace, Elector     | Gareth Anderson              | kolgrim               | kolgrim@gmail.com              | 1,549.1 |
| <i>Major Powers</i>     |                    |                              |                       |                                |         |
| 6                       | Itaxik             | Michael Warner               | Galen                 | me1451@comcast.net             | 1,490.7 |
| 7                       | Araxes             | Christopher Hord             | chordam7              | chordam7@yahoo.com             | 1,478.8 |
| 8                       | Chi'tixi           | Steve Cagg                   | Priest King           | ragnarstation@hotmail.com      | 1,422.5 |
| 9                       | Averon             | Kevin Lawrence               | Averon Inc            | privatej67@yahoo.com           | 1,386.2 |
| 10                      | Ingazi             | Harry Jago                   | jago                  | jagoh@yahoo.com                | 1,332.0 |
| 11                      | Church U&T         | Anne Porter                  | Cupcake               | crabbycupcakes@gmail.com       | 1,284.8 |
| 12                      | Pexiki             | John Schmid                  | Magus                 | magus@spellcaster.org          | 988.2   |
| 13                      | Elphárec           | Lisa Kaattari                | Kaattari              | kaylee.robinson@rocketmail.com | 955.9   |
| 14                      | Thace, Duchy       | Jake Roberts                 | Jake                  | jacob.roberts1@gmail.com       | 901.5   |
| 15                      | Taneki             | Don Wynne                    | meriden               | dpatrickwynne@gmail.com        | 860.3   |
| 16                      | Tiryowglas         | Mike Johnson                 | Minister of Defense   | printermanmj@aol.com           | 832.5   |
| 17                      | Hyrágec            | Paul Copenhagen              | Wombatia              | rossclannoble@yahoo.com        | 825.7   |
| <i>Regional Powers</i>  |                    |                              |                       |                                |         |
| 18                      | Golmath/Kaidarian  | Jon Powell                   | Golmath               | jon.g.powell@gmail.com         | 764.4   |
| 19                      | Veiled Masters     | James Hazeltine              | Von Malvalken         | jhazeltine@pleiadesmm.com      | 743.0   |
| 20                      | Murali             | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 702.4   |
| 21                      | Putini-Yani        | Miles Luna                   | Ryushi                | meryushi@yahoo.com             | 666.1   |
| 22                      | Golmath/Endarra    | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 592.4   |
| 23                      | Duedhyn/Raven      | Alex James                   | Clan Dhanos of Duedyn | ClanDhanos@yahoo.com           | 577.2   |
| 24                      | IOC                | Jason Pearl                  | redoubtable1          | redoubtable1@comcast.net       | 522.6   |
| <i>Minor Powers</i>     |                    |                              |                       |                                |         |
| 25                      | Yax'te             | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 451.8   |
| 26                      | Tokatl             | Shelley Woodberry            | Skipperway            | desrik@comcast.net             | 438.1   |
| 27                      | Sakkar             | Nelson Merritt               | hemmy                 | nelson.merritt@wachovia.com    | 433.0   |
| 28                      | Duedhyn/Merryn     | Rick Bishop                  | ouroboros             | drbishop99@hotmail.com         | 410.0   |
| 29                      | Carcë              | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 375.0   |
| 30                      | Kommolek           | Cortlandt Winters            | Cortrah               | cwinters@notebookmargins.com   | 296.7   |
| 31                      | Nydoon             | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 160.6   |
| 32                      | GUT                | <i>NOT open for a player</i> |                       |                                | 152.5   |
| 33                      | Iäthedein          | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 148.5   |
| 33                      | Kumara             | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 131.4   |
| 34                      | Ebalon             | <i>open for a player</i>     |                       |                                | 116.5   |



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