

The Sahûl Chronicle

LONG LIVE THE GLORIOUSLY REIGNING EMPRESS!

Turn 18

Published by the Printers Guild of Zadres

1536–1540 SA

This Turn is dedicated to the memory of Harley Thomas Herrin.

Gentlemen, it's war.

—Sargrean Barthores, Special Envoy of the Count Palatine of Thace to the College of Electors

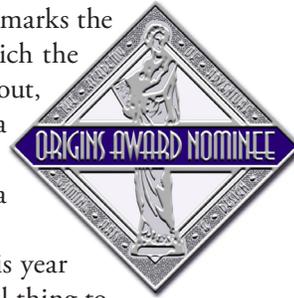


AS WE GO further in time, the world continues to shrink. This Turn marks the discovery of a new continent to the east of Oratoa and Sahûl, which the locals call *Efan*. After watching how the Oratoa landgrab worked out, and the subsequently long shake-out, we're introducing Efan in a slightly different manner. While there are player positions on Efan, as of the moment, only two are *player* positions. Hopefully this will keep the continent a little more mysterious a little longer.

As most of you know, *Cruenti Dei* was nominated for an Origins Award this year for PB(e)M Game of the Year. While we didn't win, it was certainly a wonderful thing to be nominated, and I for one am extremely grateful for the honour. We're rounding up a CD posse to attend next year's Origins Convention. If you're interested, let me know.

The third annual CD confab, *Crunchy Con III*, is being held at Pistachio House in Tacoma on 20 August, 2011. All are invited. RSVP in the Agora.

There are a lot of great openings this turn! We're continuing the referral special. If someone you refer signs up, purchases the rules, and so forth, we'll credit the Realm of your choice an additional two turns.



CURRENT PUBLICATIONS:

The Chronicle, Volume 1—The compiled Sahûl Chronicle from Turns 0 through 10 inclusive, plus some other nifty bits. 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. Paperback (\$22.00).

Cruenti Dei Oratoa Campaign Guide—This campaign guide provides a look at the warm and sunny continent of Oratoa, a land steeped in mystery and deep in the embrace of an Heroic Age (\$20.00).

Cruenti Dei Rules Supplement 1: Errata and Additions—This supplement contains the corrected Movement system, plus many new options for your Realm. Free download or in paperback (\$10.00).

Cruenti Dei Rules Supplement 2: Underlands—This supplement details the Underlands, a series of vast caverns underneath eastern Sahûl. Free download or in paperback (\$10.00).

Cruenti Dei Rules Supplement 3: Age of Discovery—Expands the rules for NSR 10 and beyond. Paperback (\$12.50)

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS:

The Cruenti Dei Great Books Series—A series of relatively inexpensive paperbacks, already published as free PDFs. Titles include: *The Chivalry of the Common Man*, *An Explorer's Tale*, and *The Great Charter*.

NEXT TURN DUE: FRIDAY 02 SEPTEMBER 2011.

Western Sahûl

THE KIT'IXI COAST

COUNTY OF TOKATL (14 I/TA)

Landgrave Tazzix Tarn, Mistress of the Karatz Hive, Regent of Tokatl.

Trade: Averon, Chi'tixi, Kachar, Sakkar, Taneki, ThaceD

DP: None.

The aging Countess Tinikatua spent down her huge treasury trying to improve her navy and government, possibly to get into this whole “colonies” game she'd been hearing about¹. Sadly, progress is slow. The naval uniforms were, however, redesigned as captains and flag officers were given even larger ruffs and enormous hats.

Meanwhile, despite the hat, Vice Admiral of the Green Tapatua drilled the Imperial Fleet under her command in the Bay of Duhrl day and night, each ship vying for the title of “Most Ballista Broadships in a Minute”.

A megalithic structure rose in Ahnupat, designed to be a depot for the proposed “Peer Trade Network”.

Tokatl welcomed the Baroness of Sakkar in regal style for a short state visit. Countess Tinikatua treated her to a spa-week: shopping, massages, and mani-mani-pedis galore. At the end of the week, the Countess had to bid the Baroness, and the County, farewell. For Countess Tinikatua had been appointed Chancellor of the Empire. Vice Admiral Tapatua was extremely disappointed.

ELECTORAL DUCHY OF TANEKI (25 I/YG)

Her Victorious Maješty, Toktoka I, Lady Talkeltik of Akeltl, Baroness Ketatl, Electoral Duchess of Taneki.

Trade: Atuburrk, Averon, Chi'tixi, Itaxik, Kachar, Pexiki, ThaceD, Tokatl, Yarni-Za

DP: None.

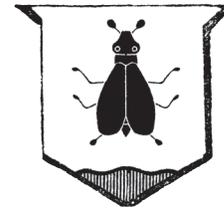
The Electoral Duchy registered their new arms with the Heralds: *Or, in base the sea azure, a beetle assurgeant gules.*

¹ Or possibly she was just mindful of the old proverb, “there are no pockets in a shroud.”

The long-dormant Mount Tann in the east of Taneki Prefecture roared to life in 1536, and a terrible mudslide made the Ataz River impassible for several months. The mountain erupted twice more in subsequent years, though somewhat less explosively. A choking ash fell throughout the prefecture and even in the streets of Akeltl.

The southern road was extended from Tepeuh Prefecture northwards into Koten Prefecture. The Duchy built many new public works, and substantial growth was reported in Utahpir, the ancient capital of the Countess of Tzatz.

The lucky Duchy's government continued to grow, although their other investments have yet to pay off.



ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF AVERON (60 SI/IL)

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

Tiketua VII of Tishrak, the Puny, Margrave of the North.

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

Trade: Araxes, Carcë, Chi'tixi, Itaxik, Kachar, Pehuatoka, Pexiki, Taneki, ThaceD, Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Silia (F), Sorm (F)

Grand Duchess Jera continued the big push in building infrastructure. New public works were built throughout Averon and Yax'te. Averon's engineers built roads from Ab'te to Soren, and from Elowen to Kevelek where the forest town of Lizek rose. The Grand Canal, a cooperative venture with Itaxik, was extended; only a small segment between Taune and Tonnak remains

before a navigable connection between the Miçtian and Xos rivers is complete.

The itinerant prospectors and lumberjacks of Silia and Sorm all retired in obscene wealth.

Princess Derica, daughter of the Grand Duchess Derica I, unexpectedly died in 1537 at the age of 29. Although the coroner ruled that she died of natural causes, many thought it more than slightly suspicious that she died just weeks after announcing her engagement to Lord Dornley of Usutbes.

Meanwhile, Princess Jushana, the Grand Duchess' daughter and heir, lost two more eggs in 1536 and 1538. In frustration, she sent her husband Duke Tarlan into exile and spent her days doting on their sickly son Gondulan.

Thanks to continuing investment, Averon's cavalry, infantry, airship, and sorcery all improved.

THE CHURCH MILITANT (2 II)

Her Holiness Sardula v, Iluvarian Matriarch of the West, Archemandrite of Tikata.



rchemandrite Sardula V entertained numerous visitors, including almost weekly audiences with Brother Huygens of the Orthodox Church². The Church has become quite wealthy over the past few years, and they are looking to purchase materials for the construction of new priories.

The Holy Synod continued their long effort to reform the Western liturgy. It certainly provided them a safe venue to argue about everything from theology to dress codes.

A new movement to sue Averon in the Imperial Chamber Court for the recovery of appropriated religious sites is gaining ground within the Holy Synod. It is generally agreed that the Church must find a new protector. Opinions differ, sometimes violently, as to whether that protector should be the Orthodox Pontiff or an Iluvarian ruler. As the number of Integrationists in the Holy Synod increases, the gulf between them and the Restorationists grows ever wider.

² He was joined in 1539 by a Brother Snell, who now serves as his secretary.

COUNTY OF PEXIKI (23 I/YG)

Her Excellency, Xitar III, Mistress of the Coactoka Hive, Countess of Pexiki, Lady Amoxcali, Lord Admiral of the Green.

Trade: Averon, Itaxik, Kachar, Taneki

DP: None.



or many long years the wizened sorceresses of Pexiki had laid their careful plans for this moment. Long had they laboured, those Malebolge crones with their faded chitin, long mandibles, and improbably tall hats. Deep into uncounted sleepless nights they cast their mighty enchantments that this moment might come at last to fruition. The massive floating fortress eased into the water. Then, as the wondering eyes of half the population stared at it, a thunderous crash of drums and cymbals fell upon them. This was not just a floating fortress; it was a music venue.

Indeed, a great open-air stadium had been built into the very highest pinnacle of the fortress, designed for combination gladiatorial games and very loud musical concerts³. With the stated purpose of “culturally elevating Pexiki, generating revenue, and promote nationalism”, the *Jollyboat Bedlam* proved very popular among Pexiki's post-pupæ set.

The losers of the gladiatorial battles are catapulted off the side of the stadium to plummet to their deaths. Steam is fed through the giant propellers, crafting clouds in the likeness of the victors, so all can look up in the sky and see proof of their glory. A similar system is in place for the popular open stage events, where promising musical acts can try their grab for fame. The magically-augmented “music” can be heard for miles, even as far as the beaches of southern Pexiki.

Mount Kish in Kisar suffered two more volcanic eruptions, destroying the real estate market in the formerly lovely little mountain villa of Montola.

The Countess was somewhat surprised to be appointed Lord Admiral of the Green in 1539.

³ The stadium itself is named “Iridium”, presumably because it's a heavy metal.

COUNTY OF KACHAR (17 I/UR)

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

Trade: Averon, Itaxik, Pexiki, Sakkar, Taneki, Tokatl, Udraháhn

DP: None.

With the war in Duedhyn winding down, the Kachar fleet and army began their arduous trek homeward. Countess Kassa invested throughout her small realm and began to rebuild their once-great navy.

The Naval Academy in Tchantli, among the greatest in the world, expanded even further, even as the Countess mandated that all Kachari leaders attend.

QUEENDOM OF ITAXIK (30 I/UR)

Baroness Chass'ika of Ixkana, Regent of Itaxik.

Trade: Averon, Carcë, Kachar, Pexiki, Taneki, Udraháhn

DP: Nikka (A)*, Lower Tatia (F), Shiakalo (T), Tlani (F), Noyokka (T)

Queen Chath'ecutla set out for Sardarthion, confident in having secured for herself the Imperial Election. She appointed the clever young Baroness Chass'ika as Regent⁴. Only a few months after she set out, news arrived that indeed Itaxik's Queen was now Empress Chath'ecutla I.

Diplomats with large checkbooks were dispatched throughout the western lands once part of the old Electorate. In Temi, they ran into some competition from a smooth-talking Pehuatokan diplomat. Even though the Itaxik spent some decent coin and even had 5,000 infantry with them, it was not enough to overcome the brilliant oratory of the Pehuatokan ambassador. The Itaxik army was obliged to retreat back into Nechyetti from whence they'd come.

On the other hand, Itaxik diplomats were particularly successful in the Landgravate of Nikka. Landgrave Asatdya the Mighty⁵ happily accepted

⁴ The Baroness has little military ability (or for that matter diplomatic or magical), but she is one *very* sharp administrator.

⁵ Also known as "the Mighty Old".

a very large gift to return herself and her army to the Queendom. Unfortunately, large swaths of her territory more or less immediately rebelled. Her two allied leaders (who were at her side) pledged fealty, but the prefectures of Olya and Chilyohan did not⁶. The Landgrave made good use of her army, though, to smash the rebels of Olya. Chilyohan, on the other hand, succumbed to eastern charms.

Investments continued in cold-farming, the University of the Ice, massive public works projects, as well as military technology and magic.

The Queen raised a statue in the capital to the late Captain-General Yix.

LANDGRAVATE OF NIKKA

Asatdya pronounced herself satisfied with the new regime in Itaxik, particularly when the Queen became the Empress. Numerous Pehuatokan agents ran through the Landgrave's lands, but they left the instant the lands became Itaxik's.

COUNTY OF PEHUATOKA (3 I/UR)

Her Excellency, Cipačtonatha v, Baroness Aueuetl, Countess of Pehuatoka, Guardian of Mičtia.

Trade: Averon, Carcë, Udraháhn

DP: Chilyohan (A), Narmona (A), Temi (F)

Cipačtonatha consolidated her troops and sent diplomats far and wide. Some even succeeded. They were extremely careful to stay out of any territories that became part of Itaxik.

The Countess herself pried the Emerald Shard out of Pehuatoka's crown and sent it to the new Empress. The crown now looks a little odd with a big hole in it, but the Countess has made it a point of honour, and the setting remains bare.

Pehuatoka lost the "who's at war with Sakkar this time" sweepstakes. They also tried to trade with Itaxik, but the Queendom's markets remain closed.

⁶ In pacified Poliuz, the garrison remained loyal to the Landgrave.

BARONY OF SAKKAR (18 IS/IL)

Baroness Nenepillah III of Sakkar, the Dim, Mistress of Nelhuayotl, Heir of the Prophet, Imperial Governor of Withidan, Beloved of the Light of Iluvar.

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

Trade: Araxes, Averon, Carcë, Kachar, ThaceE,
Tokatl, Urdraháhn

DP: Tlapan (F), Ta'ia (T)

Baroness Nenepillah stayed away in foreign lands, but somehow the well-oiled Sakkari bureaucracy continued to run the county in her absence. Just how good a job they did is open to debate.

The Delin crisis was resolved. The Isle of Delin with its strange inhabitants was returned to the King of Zarkhandu for an undisclosed payment.

Sakkar continued preparations for the expected return of Winter. They spent some time experimenting with expansions to their localized tunnel systems, in some cases building sturdy above-ground arched hallways between important buildings when tunnelling was impractical or impossible. They proved popular and useful during the long, cold five-month winters.

Lady Lynnel and her Tiryowgli lancers once again rode into the deep, dark forests of Narmona. This time, however, they had come in the guise of diplomats. They had some competition from a Pehuatokan ambassador, who was there on essentially the same mission. Lord Narmona, who had lost a thousand of his infantry to Sakkar just a few years earlier, was in no mood to talk with “those Iluvarian invaders”, and told Lady Lynnel to leave. She did not, and Lord Narmona threw his lot in with the Countess of Pehuatoka.

The Sakkari forces were joined by Dame Tarik Tiketua and the knights of the *Sword of Iluvar* in 1538. Relations with Narmona went from bad to worse as the Order began systematic military operations in the Prefecture under the name of “Operation Convert or Die”. While the Pehuatokan army began its long ride to come to their new ally’s

defense, Lord Narmona himself deployed his infantry to oppose the invaders. Battle was joined in full force near the tiny logging village of Ellar.

Battle of Ellar (1538)

The Grandmistress, a brilliant military mind, led 23,000 knights, 14,000 shadow knights, and 4,500 Tiryowgli lancers against Narmona’s 9,000 infantry defenders. The region is heavily forested, and the defenders were well-disciplined and aided by a Pehuatokan attaché. Nevertheless, the Grandmistress made full use of the abilities of Lady Lynnel and the sheer number of her knights.

Once again, the Sakkari cavalry had trouble with the Narmonan archers hiding in the tangled undergrowth. This time, however, Lord Narmona could do little against three to one odds. The defenders were obliterated. The Sakkari attackers lost but a handful of their Tiryowgli lancers, and among them, Lady Lynnel. Lord Narmona and a his surviving merry men fled into Dottoria⁷.

With the defenders out of the way, the military conversion resumed.



Sakkar took their duties of Governor of Withidan seriously, distributing aid and public works throughout the Province.

The Military Order of the Sword of Iluvar continued retiring their enormous naval assets, building their new fortress of Nenepillax in Finnedor, even as Sakkar colonized the region (3133)¹. In other Church matters, a resurgence of Restorationism swept through Sakkar, undoing much of the Orthodox Pontiff’s work. Drafts of the new Western liturgies have been printed and circulated, and they enjoy widespread approval. The Sword of Iluvar has already introduced some of the proposed changes into their rites.

Stout peasants founded the town of Oroch in the forests of Oki.

⁷ For the record, the Pehuatokan attaché was among the dead.

The majority of Sakkar's ghostly garrisons vanished, never to be seen again.

Thacia and Aret

THE HIGH PLAINS & NORTHERN COAST

ELECTORAL QUEENDOM OF THE GREAT HIVE OF CHI'TIXI TIRRIX KI (41 I/YG)

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

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

Lady Tchatix Tixit, Grandmiſtreſs of the Military Order of Gidaxa.

Trade: Araxes, Atuburrk, Averon, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Lynnarvor, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za, Zarkhandu

DP: Lich smash!

Officials gave in to public demand and named Chi'tixi's coliseum the *Tarossarium* since other than soccer the most popular event there are gladiatorial games featuring Tarotists (and sometimes lions).

The Queendom expanded their army and their Military Academy at Tirron, and the quality of their cavalry improved, horse and rider.

An attempt to gift the fortress in Chitteri to the Order of Gidaxa failed when local officials explained that there wasn't a fortress there, only a handful of hive forts.

Countess Tannix V of Cærrat died in 1538. She was succeeded by Tannix VI, who isn't nearly as talented as her predecessor was.

There were some minor protests in Chi'tixi's eastern cities against the corruption of the Imperial government and even the Electoral system itself.

The Tapori Deportations (1536–1539)

The patience of the Lich Queen had finally been exhausted. She gave orders that every Tarotist in Tapori was to be rounded up and deported to the Imperial Free City of Zadres. Tens of thousands of Chi'tixi rangers and marines combed through the Prefecture, rounding up all those suspected of being a Tarotist.

Whole villages were emptied, as the Chi'tixi forces cast a rather wide net. The discovery of the slightest bit of physical evidence – a battered old prayer book in the attic or a family heirloom with Tarotist engravings – was enough to condemn entire families. Many thousands more were rounded up on the affidavit of their neighbours, some of whom stood to profit handsomely from a suddenly vacant field or pasture next door.

Resistance was scattered and disorganized as the Malebolge Chi'tixi rounded up the Tarotists, who were overwhelmingly Wenemet. The Tarotists were marched to the port of Tirritix, where they were crammed aboard merchant ships and warships. In many cases, trunks or cases with their belongings were left at the docks or simply thrown overboard as the Wenemet were herded into the overcrowded and stinking cargo holds.

Many thousands died in the scouring of Tapori, and many thousands more died during the voyage. When the deportations wound down towards the end of 1539, however, Tapori was solidly Yagnarist.

Tapori is now (3223)w.

DUCHY OF THACE (34 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: Branahim (F)

Ouke Brannis turned his attention to the Duchy's long neglected military, improving the quality of his infantry and siege forces,

as well as expanding the already impressive Military Academy. Tharninn expanded to a proper city.

The Duke endowed the St. Annír Primary Academy in the capital, naturally staffed by the Order of Saint Annír. The Duke himself attended the ribbon-cutting. He liked the event so much, that over the next few years he broke ground on no less than four new colleges at the University of Ourane⁸. None of the construction got much past the foundation stage, however, as funds dried up pretty quickly after that.

The Church expanded Tarnet Abbey in Sandir, consecrating it a Cathedral in 1540.



The Sorceress Salthia received a letter from the Duke. Afterwards, she spent another year in the Nörn countryside, talking with farmers who weren't there, and on at least one occasion spending some time in some sort of invisible building where today there was only a flat spot of ground. During that adventure, she briefly vanished from view, causing untold consternation to the small corps of scribes and entranced hangers-on who followed her everywhere.

When she suddenly reappeared, she seemed to be holding something made of smoke. It was in the shape of a sheet of parchment, and it shimmered grey and indistinct in the sunlight. She peered at it intently before chanting these words:

*When forty Shannet Princes vied,
When Mikosos of Nikka died,
The Demon Sun had ceased to hide.*

*A thousand stars fell to the earth,
But Urda's Tent still showed its worth
As it had from Empire's birth.*

*But the four great shanks grew weak:
Those Turtle Legs began to creak,
And in the West, the Tent to leak.*

*Then the center could not hold:
Then the center failed to hold,
Shattering the Five-Coloured Stone.*

*No Empire without the Jewel,
So anarchy embraced Sahûl,
And the South began to cool.*

*For forty years the Princes fought,
And war and plague and famine wrought,
Until but five Sardarthion sought.*

*But in these times was Urda reborn,
As placid as clouds of springtime morn;
Yet Holy Yvain would sound the horn:*

*She brought the five sons of the Three
To the Temple of debris
There to accept divided peace.*

*Five Holy Crowns she forged for them:
Each of the Five ruled by their gem,
Together the Five-Coloured Gem.*

*In Tepalis, with clerical gown
Kareiff wore the Sapphire Crown.*

*In the South, Chidor of Syrhahn
The Ruby Crown would build upon.*

*In Nikka, the House they name Black Sun
With Opal Crown a Kingdom won.*

*The Topaz Crown for Peladáhn
Under the flag of the Kongros Swan.*

*And for the Red Tower's withdrawn,
The venerable Fersirom:
The Emerald Crown of Sardarthion.*

As she finished reciting its words, the phantom parchment vanished from Salthia's hand, and ever afterwards she cast no shadow, but the light of the sun and the moon simply passed through her.

*ELECTORAL COUNTY-PALATINE OF THACE (29 S/UR)
His Mošt Excellent Maješty, Brannis VI, the Gallant,
Lord Goshtikka-Snamarthis, Burgrave of Wagga-*

⁸ They were: St. Chlöe College of Law, St. Naskeb College of Theology, St. Nöena College of Medicine, and St. Sebbar College of Engineering.

Wagga, Overlord of Carcë, Electoral Count Palatine in Thace.

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

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Averon, Carcë, Chi'tixi, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Kicitchat, Sakkar, Taneki, ThaceD, Urdraháhn

DP: Solketh (F), Fzhûl (F)



fter leading the nation in prayer for those lost in the Duedhyn wars, Count Palatine Brannis proclaimed a week of celebrations for the news that the Ravens had surrendered to Prince Merryn of Duedhyn. Throughout the County Palatine, people danced in the streets, played music to all hours, and generally whooped it up. A “Victory of Orthodoxy” holiday was even added to the calendar. Right after the celebrations, the Thacians went back to being austere, hard-working, and quietly pious.

Brannis personally broke ground on the *Stadium of the Eternal Rider* in 1536. It was quite a to-do, and the event was attended by much of the Thacian aristocracy. Brannis also took the opportunity to introduce the *Thacian Legions of Urda*, a company of some eighty stone golems who towered over the proceedings. The stadium itself is designed primarily for horse and dog racing, both very popular in Thace and on the steppe.

Thacian engineers extended the Great Steppe Road from Zannemeth to Bleak Carridok. In addition, the military improved both cavalry and infantry *and* the Academy at Esenthis. The primary school system was likewise expanded.

On the slopes of Mount Gor in Belorn, Thace constructed an enormous structure they called an *Arcane Forge*, the first of its kind in Sahûl. For its part, the mountain erupted several times during the building process, which somewhat hampered progress. Belorn was visited by Lord Tremek, son and heir of the Sar of Carcë. He was accompanied by the Carcë Trumpeters, the Sar’s personal guard.

Thacian culture is slowly infiltrating the Imperial Free City of Wagga-Wagga, and the *cultus* of Urda the Indifferent was adopted with indifference.

Lord Ebalondrir and a small group of friends “took pilgrimage” to Sardarthion, where they spent their nights in gambling and drinking, and their days largely unconscious. The Count’s studious third son, Lord Merryn, returned from the University of Urdraháhn with a degree in Imperial Diplomacy. He was appointed first Director of the newly established *Society of Urdan Scientists*. Unlike her other siblings, the Count Palatine’s youngest daughter Lady Tilda did not attend school in Urdraháhn, preferring instead to attend University in Snamarthis. She has cultivated a reputation as something of a society girl.

The Count’s programme for breeding faster and stronger steppe horses in Duzjun received more funds. Similar “Duzjun Stables” have now appeared in other parts of the County Palatine as well.

Orthodox missionaries in Zaculo did little except fan the flames of Tiger hatred. An armed uprising against Thace’s rule erupted. It was put down by the garrison, but not before the locals burned down St. Mennea Priory. Four new Urdan priories were built throughout the steppe.

In the summer of 1538, the Oratoan Expeditionary Fleet finally returned. The celebrations lasted several weeks as sailors and soldiers were reunited with their families. The commander, Captain Baron Retorok Collangio of Forndonim, was particularly honoured. He was called into the palace and spent many a day conversing with Count Palatine Brannis. Several Human and “Elvish” guests proved very popular in the palace.

About a month later, the streets in the capital were shut down from the docks to the University, as crate after crate was unloaded from the ships and brought ashore for study.

The rumour is that artifacts from the North are being studied by the various colleges of the University. Some of these will be put on exhibition in the coming years, including a menagerie of colourful Oratoan birds.

Throughout Thacia and into Araxes, a new series of young adult novels are proving to be something of a phenomenon. *The Azure Chronicles* tell the story of a team of brave Urda teens fighting a secret world-wide conspiracy of villainy, led by a mysterious tattooed Wenemet and his red-robed minions. They have proved so popular that the author, a Miss Keene Constance, has had to employ a staff simply to answer her mail.

LORDSHIP OF CARCĚ (9 s/UR)

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

Trade: Araxes, Averon, Itaxik, Pehuatoka, Sakkar, ThaceD, ThaceE, Urdráhahn

DP: None.

Sar Tahnik II reacted with characteristic disappointment at the news of peace in Duedhyn. He led his army home, though not nearly so swiftly as they once rode to war.

Flush with Thacian cash, CarcĚ invested! New public works were built, cavalry and airship quality improved, and the Great Steppe Road extended into Endrazi.

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ARAXES (30 w/UR)

Grand Duchess Sardierre the Fair, Regent for... His Gallant Majesty, Kapalless IV, Baron Pinyerrel, Elector and Grand Duke of All Araxes.

Trade: Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averon, CarcĚ, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kitchat, Kumara, Sakkar, Taneki, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tokatl, Urdráhahn, Zarkhandu

DP: Tythyen (F)

In 1536, on the heels of the Duedhyn peace announcement, the middle-aged Grand Duke Kapalless III married a beautiful young aristocrat, the Lady Kuakomanh Sardierre, in a ceremony specifically designed to upstage the opulence and grandeur of his heir's wedding of five years' previous. The next year, the Grand Duchess gave birth to a son, the Prince Kapalless. So smit-

ten was the Grand Duke with his first child, that he called the Pangku Clan Mothers to Pinyerrel to confirm the young prince as heir to his throne.

This did not sit well with the supporters of the current heir, Count Tramandes of Thangkar⁹. As he was in Tythyen to the south, there was little he could do, though his numerous supporters petitioned the Grand Duke to reconsider. The cantankerous old Kapalless dismissed their concerns.

The Pangku Clan Mothers met and, after some hesitation, duly named the young prince Kapalless as his father's heir. The supporters of the enormously popular Count Tramandes protested in the streets of Pinyerrel, briefly bringing traffic in the city to a halt. In Tythyen, the Count proclaimed his loyalty to the Grand Duke and the lawful heir, which quieted things down quite a bit.¹⁰

Meanwhile, construction continued on the Trans-Araxean Road, this time from Brandöe into Tishark. The government expanded.

In the spring of 1539, Grand Duke Kapalless III died in his bed¹¹, leaving his two year old son to ascend the throne as Kapalless IV. The beautiful young widow formed a Regency, excluding the followers of House Thiuli, who still support Count Tramandes, and instead promoting members of her own House Kuakomanh to positions of power. Indeed, the rather coveted position of Lord Protector was given to the Grand Duchess' own father, Baron Kuakomanh Sardes.

Mount Gor erupted more or less constantly. The prevailing winds ensured that Gorice was shrouded in a nearly constant twilight of ash. Many of the nomads are seeking pasture elsewhere.

⁹ He descends from Grand Duke Tramandes I (reigned 1456–1503) by way of his daughter Ranierre, who is still very much alive and kicking at age 73 and currently serving as administrator of New Araxes.

¹⁰ Tramandes was allowed to retain the title "Count of Thangkar", normally reserved to the heir, on the theory that an infant hardly needed those estates to support him.

¹¹ There are various theories concerning the cause of the Grand Duke's death, with "having a wife less than half his age" being popularly cited at the top of the list.

COUNTY OF KICITCHAT (19 I/YG)

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

Grandmistress T'ivik of the Nameless.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Hyrágec, ID, Ingazi, Lynnarvor, ThaceE, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: Cauaros (F)

Countess Cir'ik VIII set about rebuilding their realm after what is increasingly known as the "Atuburrk occupation". They expanded the government and built two new towns, named after great Yagnarist figures: T'cha'k in Xik'tik and Onin Zho in Atch'ikitik. Vast new public works projects were initiated throughout the County.

The Nameless

Equerry T'ivik and the Eight – the High Priestesses of Yagnar who advise the Kicitchat Hive – petitioned her Mandibleness Cir'ik VIII to form a new religious Order for their defense. The Countess allowed herself to be persuaded, providing that those who joined must bind themselves by a perpetual vow to Yagnar. The order was to defend all Yagnarists, but especially those within Kicitchat, from worldly and fickle temporal authority.

T'ivik graciously volunteered to head the order. Cir'ik VIII accepted her services, assigned the new order the region of Ollon, and went about building a fortress there.

Before taking up the role as head of the order, T'ivik journeyed to seek the approbation of the Hidden Masters and to improve ties with Nolvenn. Baron Dorrak of Nolvenn reaffirmed his family's alliance with the Countess, but declined to go any further¹².

Some time after the founding of the Order, a small but heavily armed convoy led by One of the

¹² "It was good enough for my father in 1508, it's good enough for me in 1538."

Eight set off from Tchac'at towards the cold-iron fortress still under construction.

Little is known what occurred on that journey or what happened when it arrived at the fortress, but a transformation occurred in those that escorted the convoy and who worked on the fortress. Soon, T'ivik herself arrived and within months the order declared its loyalty and allegiance to not only the fundamentals of why it was founded, but also to the ancient teachings of the mysterious Oracle, Azanath.

The fortress was named after Azanath and the order took on the designation of *The Nameless*, in reference to the casting off by its recruits of earthly identity, which is a foundation of Azanath's teachings. They adopted a blood red and black habit with the Unblinking Eye emblazed upon it, and each recruit took four vows: the Deliverance of Yagnarists from temporal restraint, the Purification of Individuality, the Castigation of Flesh, and the Ascendency in Immortality.¹³

ELECTORAL GRAND DUCHY OF ATUBURRK (37 W/YG)
His Gracious Majesty, Adhanggar Rahnes II, the One-Armed, Count of Erran and Odol, Imperial Governor of Ardebon, Elector & Grand Duke of Atuburrk.

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

DP: None.

Grand Duke Rahnes lost his left arm in a naval battle off the Oratoan coast. The ship's surgeon was frankly amazed that the Grand Duke had survived, "for the force of the

¹³ The context of their spiritual foundations was that the Kindreds are cursed by Urda with the restraints of mortality, solely for the amusements of the goddess. The Hidden Lords, who claim to guide mortal fate, are equally guilty of arrogance and manipulation. Death and Destiny are a curse and the only way to vanquish the maladies of life was to embrace Yagnar, and walk in the darkness with Him while cleansing oneself of mortal identity, denying the limitations of a dying body, and embracing undeath and the immortality it brings. The weak deserve terror, cruelty, and malice to better illustrate the Shadow of Flesh.

blow alone would have killed any other Wenemet.” The arm was buried at sea with full honours.

In the Grand Duke’s absence, the government spent his money and resources investing in Atuburrk’s military and building five new port towns: Sto Tam in Elbarr, Prutt in Egurundharr, Twind in Erran, Alunda in Kurrch, and P’tanq in Tchi’. The Enychil Academy was dedicated as a University.

Many resources flowed northwards.

Kommolek’s vast airfleet, having made its way at last down the Byrrin, arrived in Alghin in 1540.

Infantry quality improved, and the government expanded again.

Central Sahûl

THE HEART OF EMPIRE

ELECTORAL REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA (81M/TA)
His Sublime Majesty, Deirn Caranthes II, Burgrave of Punchega, 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 Blood Swords, Consul-General of the Tempest March.

Trade: Aradéc, Atuburrk, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, Kumara, Lynnarvor, Thaced, Tiryowglas

DP: None.



ucky and cursed in equal measure, the Republic continued make Cappargarnia’s merchants fat and happy. The plentiful taxes that flooded the exchequer were immediately spent on public works. The vigorous Prince Caranthes led the Republic in sacrifice at Arag to Card VI: the Lovers, perhaps in the hope that he himself would find love. It seems to have worked, both for the Prince and for many others in the Re-

public. The Prince finally married in 1538 at age 36 to a beautiful young Guildmistress from Zadres. They proceeded to hatch two sons over the next years. They were not alone: the Republic recorded a explosion of new births, including many Wenemet twins and even some normally rare Saurian double-yolks.

The Republic continued to settle army veterans into their cities and provide them new employment in building roads. Alkandh, Faralas, Halak, Mordheim¹⁴, Prosperos, and Udhibar all expanded, and two towns were built in the Oratoan colonies. Roads were constructed from Adndar to Marangal in Ilani, from Udhibar in Gurvan to Croubal in Dunvaël and Alkandh in Djarden, from Prosperos in Bufalein to Faralas in Arzhador, from Olba in Plormel through Golluz and thence to Zadres.

A faction has emerged in the Senate that is increasingly dubious about the state of the Republic’s military as a result of decades of indifference and demobilization. As if to answer these objections, Prince Caranthes announced the expansion of the Blood Legion with the construction of the fortresses of Dawnwatch in Plormel and Lifewatch in Gurvan. The Order renamed their other fortresses to match the new style. There was some grumbling when Orionne Castle in Erediar was renamed Daywatch and more when Adndar’s ancient Guild fortress of Nalhul became Nightwatch. They also renamed themselves, shortening their official name from “the Holy Blood Legion of Swords” to simply “the Blood Swords”.

Various spats with the Urdans, mostly centered on the Republic’s words and actions during the War of the Duedhyn Succession, caused the end of trading relations with most Urdan Realms. Curiously, peace and trade were restored with Ingazi.

In 1527, a Kachari fleet of 400 vessels paid the toll in the Adndar Canal and headed down river. They were followed just days later by sixty Thacian galleons.

The Chi’tixi fleet stopped its river patrols and instead dumped Taporí refugees at Zadres, where

¹⁴ Located in Jarvaël, the city was formerly known as Ogiryi.

the city fathers made every effort to accommodate them. Over the course of several years, the process of integration of the refugees into the civic life and guild structure of the city was well begun. Zadres itself expanded as a result.

A very serious new corps of officers graduated from the Cappargarnian Military Academy, which had expanded considerably in recent years.

IMPERIAL FREE CITY OF EINANDHU (4 M/UR)

Sir Forngian Dareth, Tiger King of Arms.

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

DP: It's a living.

The Heralds registered Beetle arms for Electoral Taneki, reserving the Lion arms for Electoral Araxes. Since the Grand Duke neglected to register new arms, for now Araxes continues to use their old *Argent, a chaplet of roses proper*. The Heralds themselves have a competition to design the most appropriate Electoral arms for Araxes, incorporating the Electoral Lion, the Araxean chaplet, and perhaps even elements from the various arms of House Pangku. One of the more striking entries has become quite popular: *Argent, a lion rampant tail nowed sable, grasping in dexter forepaw a chaplet of roses proper*.

The Heralds have renewed their request to the King of Zarkhandu to register new arms.

There being no commonly accepted title for an abdicated Emperor, nor any legislated order of precedence, the Heralds took their best guess in the case of the ex-Emperor Sydath II. The Heralds have taken to referring to Lord Mortain as “your Majesty”, and according him the precedence of an Elector. Since Sydath is unlikely to be attending any dinner parties he isn't hosting himself, this shouldn't be too much of an issue.

THE LAST DAYS OF THE REIGN OF SYDATH II

Following the failed election of 1535, Emperor Sydath fell into a dark despondency. He spent the better part of a month in bed, eating bon-bons and issuing flippant or nonsensical letters and decrees. He would see no one but his heralds and staff. It seemed that his only friend was his faithful dog, Zeke.

The Lady Nyssa had been petitioning to see him for nearly a month, and each time her letter was returned unopened. Finally, as the Electoral envoys completed their negotiations to schedule the new election, Sydath agreed to receive her. She was admitted into the Emperor's chambers for supper.

When the two emerged some hours later, Sydath was back to his old form. While the Lady Nyssa returned to her suite in the Regency, Sydath went into his office and dealt with the piling paperwork.

It was just as well he did, as a rather astonishing amount of paperwork and correspondence piled up over the winter. Even with a rather large number of perfunctory replies, Sydath was at his desk the whole of the day and far into the night before the desktop was clear. He was well pleased that after the initial knee-jerk reaction against the *Great Charter*, it had quickly become accepted throughout the Empire. He was particularly gratified at the flurry of peace treaties that were suddenly being negotiated.

The next morning, Lady Nyssa returned for breakfast. That afternoon, the Emperor issued a patent of nobility naming himself *Lord Mortain*, followed swiftly by an announcement of his impending marriage to Lady Nyssa, to take place the following afternoon.

Needless to say, there was simply no time for the Minister of Protocol to put together a proper Imperial wedding. The poor weneman actually suffered heart failure when he read the announcement and was promptly hospitalized. The First Secretary of the Ministry of Protocol was a much more pragmatic fellow. He found an obscure precedent deep in the archives regarding the deathbed marriage of

Emperor Paharnes VI to his fourth (and final) wife, and he modelled the hastily prepared ceremonies on that.

And then, the race was on. Several of the more spiteful Electoral envoys were determined to elect a new Emperor before the pending nuptials so that Lady Nyssa would never bear the title of Empress. It would be their petty revenge against Sydath, provided they could pull it off.

The Election of 1536

The nine Electoral envoys arrived at the Imperial Palace, only about a month later than they had originally planned. They were met on the palace steps by Count Palatine Gwariva Trememeres IV of Ingazi, Chancellor of the Empire, flanked by armed guards of the Emerald Watch.

In the light of a cold dawn, with snow swirling around their feet, the Chancellor administered the oath to the envoys. Then he led them inside to the Blue Chamber.

The deep blue Kranthic marble floor that gave the room its name was covered in dust and dirt, with scatterings of brown leaves, swept in by the wind. Three of the nine hanging lanterns were dark, and the other the dim light of the others were not enough to dispel the gloom of the cavernous hall. At the far end of the cold chamber, the Emperor Sydath II sat upon the simple, dull grey iron throne. The Electoral envoys could see his breath from where they stood. The throne, flanked by tarnished lion statues, was illuminated by a single nearby lantern on a stand. Throne, emperor, and lantern stand were the only objects upon the stone dais cut with three shallow steps, worn round and smooth by millennia of supplicants and stained with the blood of Emperors.

In the centre of the Chamber stood nine roughly-hewn chairs set around a circular table, carved with an intricate design depicting the Nine Sacred Animals. After each envoy had taken their seat, the Emperor wearily stood and welcomed them. Then

he laid the Imperial Crown on the throne and walked out without another word.

The Chancellor once again began to read the *Great Charter* to the envoys. He hadn't gotten more than about halfway through the Preamble when the Chi'tixi envoy raised a hand.

When the Chancellor affected not to see her and continued reading, the very proper Taneki envoy shouted, "point of order!"

The Chancellor peered over his spectacles at them. "Yes?"

The Taneki envoy stood, saying "it appears the distinguished envoy from Chi'tixi wishes to address the chair."

The poor Chancellor looked even more confused. "Chair? What chair? I'm reading the Great Charter. You folks don't go into committee until I'm done."

The Chi'tixi envoy stood. "I move to accept the *Great Charter* as read."

The hapless Chancellor moved his lips silently for a moment before managing a reply. "What?"

The Taneki envoy, already on her feet, promptly replied "second." There were several murmurs of assent from the other envoys.

"Yes, but... what?"

The Chi'tixi envoy turned to the other envoys and asked, "all in favour?"

The motion carried by acclamation, and the Chancellor left the Chamber in a huff. Soldiers of the Emerald Watch sealed the door behind him.

The debate and vote were unexpectedly swift.



Sydath meanwhile, in what would turn out to be his last act as Emperor, summoned Baron Dolmathes and conferred the dignity of Landgrave on him and his House. Sydath tearfully released him from his bonds of fealty and encouraged him to take a seat in the House of Peers. Landgrave Dolmathes, greying but still *quite* dashing, stiffly bowed before his former master, and then exclaimed, "long live Emperor Sydath and his glorious House!"

About an hour later, the great cedar doors of the Blue Chamber creaked open and the envoy from Chi'tixi (chosen as the ceremonial head of the Convocation) intoned a slight variation of the customary formula to the Imperial court: "long live the unanimously elected Sovereign of Sahûl, Lady of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Empress of All the World, Her August and Imperial Majesty, Chath'ecutla of Itaxik."



At midday, the Imperial crown vanished from the Iron throne upon which Sydath had placed it, only to appear just as suddenly on the head of Chath'ecutla of Itaxik, who was already *en route* to Sardarthion.

Sydath Lord Mortain, no longer Emperor, married his betrothed later that afternoon in a private ceremony in the snowy Lanharnean gardens within the palace grounds. Afterwards, Sydath quietly vacated his apartments in the palace and took rooms at the Regency Hotel.

THE IMPERIAL DEMENSE (14 M/UR)

Her August & Imperial Majesty, Chath'ecutla, Mistress of the Tis'chak, Countess of Takkikik, Queen of Itaxik, Golden Beetle of the West, Sovereign of Sahûl, Lady of the Nine Hills of Sardarthion, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Empress of All the World.

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

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, IOC, Kicitchat, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: None.

IIP: 28

For appointments, please see Gazette.

The new Empress arrived in her capital in 1539, having already made the traditional pilgrimage to the Shrine of Moroko on the way. The coronation rite followed just a few days later, and First Matriarch Jerröe X herself joyfully placed the Imperial crown on the brow of the first Malebolge Empress of Sahûl.

The shout of "long live the Empress!" resounded through the Blue Chamber and into the streets of

Sardarthion, which were filled by those celebrating the coronation. Shouts of joy quickly turned to shouts and screams of terror when the enormous form of the great Wyrms Friebæld suddenly appeared in the pasture land just south of the Imperial District. She fairly well filled the pasture, and the terrified sheep (and shepherds) scattered in terror, fleeing through the streets and in some cases into the River. She turned her mighty head, scaled grey and flecked with patches of dark green moss, stretching her long, sinuous neck across several blocks and down towards the palace, until finally she was looking directly at the third-floor windows. Each of her vast green eyes was a bright oasis shining from the dull stone of her mountainous face.

She spoke but one sentence, which boomed throughout Sardarthion, pounding through the earth and sky and tearing the very air from the lungs of those nearby: "*we obey the sacred crown*". She opened one clawed hand the size of a carriage, and revealed within it two Emerald Shards, one recently entrusted to her by the Count of Murali. The other she had held for centuries.

The new Empress showed herself at a balcony, and the Wyrms delicately dropped the two shards into Chath'ecutla's hands. And then, just as suddenly as she had appeared, she was gone. One of the shards glowed fiercely for a moment, and then resumed its normal lustre.

Once the Emerald Watch had restored order in the city, the Empress let it be known that six

of the shards had been returned to her. With the one forged into the Imperial Crown, only those of Zarkhandu and one other remained missing.

The new Empress was a litany of firsts: first Malebolge, first elected Empress, first non-Elector since the creation of the Electors. She is also only the second reigning Empress¹⁵ and the second Urdan ever elected¹⁶.

Having appointed the Countess of Tokatl as Chancellor from the list of Peers' recommendations even before she arrived, her new administration got off to a running start. Many of the brilliant Atuburrki nobles brought in by Sydath at the start of his reign are now well-entrenched in the Imperial bureaucracy. Having excelled at their exams, they provide a layer of aristocratic sophistication atop the deep professionalism of the Imperial civil service.

Empress Chath'ecutla's reign has begun, as all reigns have begun, with a sense of relief and hope and a firm confidence in the future.

Siege and sorcery quality improved.



The former Emperor Sydath, after sticking around for the coronation, formally abdicated his claim to the Grand Duchy of Atuburrk and several other minor titles in favour of his brother, who is the *de facto* Grand Duke anyway. Sydath and his bride retired to the newly-built castle of Mortain in Torsi to a life of domestic bliss as Lord and Lady Mortain.



In Sondrim, 200 Tokatl warships under the command of Lady Karzax came calling. Tokatl officials spread the wealth of the dragon horde to the people and threw several enormous parties. Parades were held each year to celebrate the deliverance from the dragon, and statues were raised to Lady Tzix (of the

single antenna) who continued to take credit for the vanquishing of Sanngrithr.



Lady Eratha of Hyrágec came to Iurdana just after the coronation of the Empress. After visiting for a few days with her old friend Reverend Mother Margot, she went into Sardarthion. She wandered through the city in a daze, speaking to people not present and looking at things not there. She provided a vivid description of a vast megalithic fortress of crimson stone standing where the Imperial Armoury stands today. Eventually she made her way to Iurdana, where she told her secretaries, "the light of the Steppe has been dead these two centuries, and now Urda calls me in his place."

With that, she faded from sight and was never seen again.

Just a few days later, a rusty old lockbox arrived for Reverend Mother Margot, postmarked from Iäthedain. It was smaller than a trunk, but nonetheless a hefty chest. It was lighter than she expected, and the contents rattled ever so slightly.

Trembling, she took the brass key from around her neck. It had been in the 2,800 year-old envelope delivered to her on Ranarádu, and she had kept it close to her in the years since. As several Church secretaries and First Matriarch Jerröe all crowded around, Margot slid the key in the ancient lock. It was cunningly made, for the ancient locksmiths had arts no longer known; that it would work at all after so many centuries was proof enough of that. She turned the key with a soft click, and the lid sprung open.

The walls of the chest were wood, lined with some sort of brassy metal. Inside was a bulky envelope addressed to First Matriarch Jerröe. What immediately captured Margot's attention, however, was the skull – a Wenemet skull in a box locked before Wenemet walked Sahûl. With wonder in her eyes, she delicately picked it up. As she looked deep into those empty eye-sockets, Reverend Mother Margot's own eyes grew wide. Then, quicker than a

¹⁵ Empress Trudora (reigned 1297–1345) began as regent for her half-wit son Sardahan, but formally reigned in her own right from 1306).

¹⁶ Emperor Ebalondrir the Wise (reigned 1421–1439).

blink she was gone, and the skull fell to the ground and smashed to bits on the cold stone floor.



The card game at the Regency Hotel continued to draw various exiled and ex-patriot nobles from all over Sahûl. Young Lord Black left in 1536, but the elderly Lord Injyi and Colonel Sarrac were joined by Duke Tarlan of Averon and the vacuous and dissipated Lord Ebalondrir, second son of the Count Palatine of Thace.

One particularly memorable game included the barely incognito Lord Mortain, who did quite well.

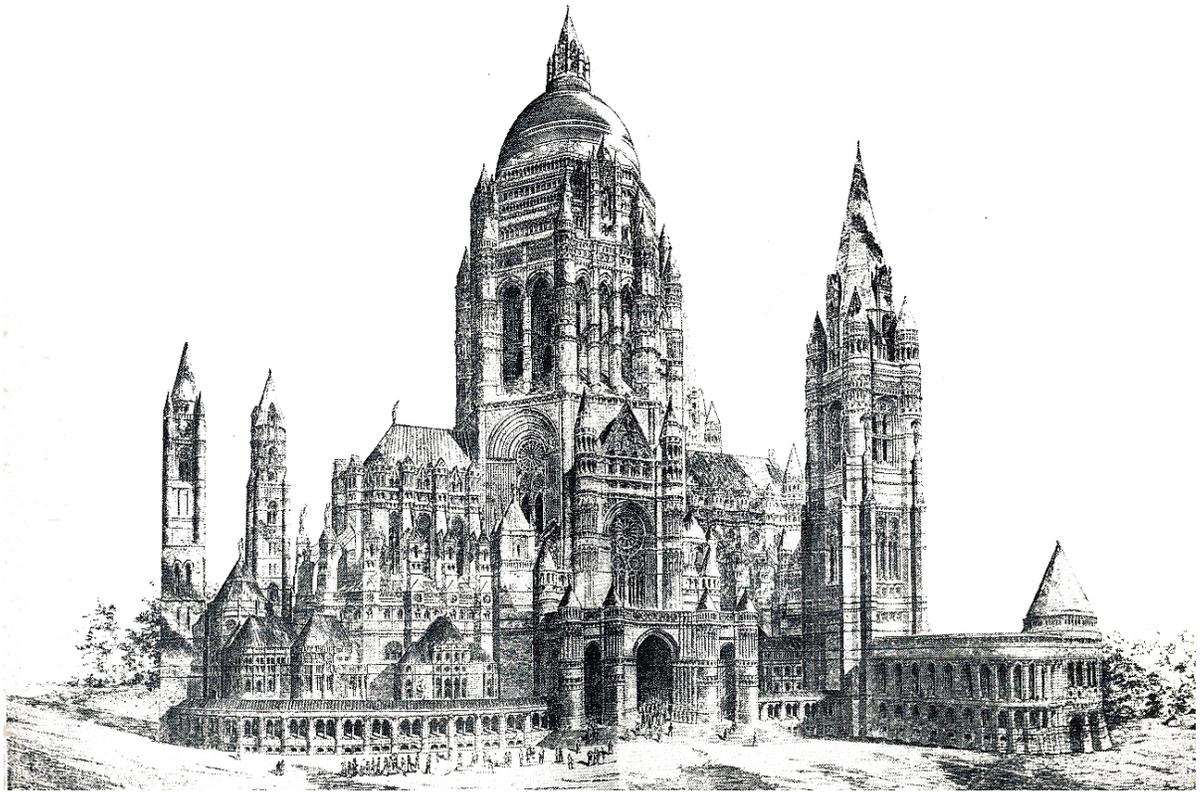


Construction work finally resumed on the Shrine at Iurdana, the largest religious structure in the world¹⁷. The temporary housing in the crypt

was finally replaced by new outbuildings, which completed the original architectural design of the rebuilt complex. Work on the project had begun in 1482 at the direction of First Matriarch Ardana, and First Matriarch Jerröe ceremonially accepted the keys from the third generation architect in 1539. Already the canons of Iurdana are suggesting improvements, including an expanded hostel for pilgrims.



On the very last day of 1540, two visitors craved audience with the Empress. One was an envoy from the King of Zarkhandu, and the other was not. She was, in fact, a Saurian beggar-woman looking for charity and taking clear advantage of Sydath's policy of open audiences, which the new Empress had not (yet) changed. The Zarkhandine envoy presented the Empress with the Zarkhandu



17 That's a level-8 megalith for those keeping track.

Shard, evidently taking considerable delight in returning it on the last possible day allowed by the *Great Charter*.

The beggar-woman identified herself as a widow, and she asked for the merest pittance, that she might feed her family in the coming winter. The Empress rose from the throne.

“We have known harsh winters in Itaxik without number. For generations, we have prepared for them, for the ice is moving, and the Final Winter threatens us all. It is not a merely money for food and shelter that you need. We shall certainly give you the small sum for which you ask, but more than this, we shall authorize our Royal Bank of Itaxik to loan you enough to start a trade or a farm, either for yourself or your eldest child, that your family might prosper in years to come.”

The old Saurian peered into the multi-faceted eyes of Empress Chath’ecutla, as if trying to plumb the depths of her soul. The Empress was puzzled, but returned the stare, even as her ministers scrambled to turn her words into deeds.

For several long minutes, the two women stared at each other. Gradually, the business of the Imperial court came to a halt as everyone paused to take in this peculiar sight.

And still they stared at each other.

Finally, the Empress trembled. She sat back hard on her throne and asked, “who *are* you?”

The Saurian nodded. “Thank you, noble Queen and Empress, but I will decline your offer of charity for now. It was enough that it was offered, though in future I may collect on that promise with considerable interest. Today, I will give to you that which is desired.”

The old, ragged Saurian woman vanished in a puff of smoke, and in her stead a scintillating flash of green fell to the flagstones with ping.

The last Emerald Shard lay at the Empress’ feet.

THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT



he new organs of government created by the *Great Charter* lurched into life. Even before the election, the Peers had voted a

list of three nominees for Chancellor. The Electors became the great debating College that they had rarely achieved in their history. Under their leadership, both Houses collaborated to repeal the *Non-Continuity Ordinance* that one member of the Peers referred to as “a monstrous carbuncle on the face of the *Charter*.”

A vociferous debate ensued after the Aradécan envoy carelessly (and sarcastically) intimated that the Oratoans couldn’t possibly have defeated the Cappargarnian navy without help. Immediately, this was taken by some members of the Peers as an admission of Aradécán aid and comfort to the enemies of some the Empire’s constituent Realms.

Much merriment ensued as the Aradéc government distanced itself from the envoy’s remarks and protested loudly their absolute loyalty to the Empire. The Electors more or less agreed that an attack by an outside force on an Imperial Realm could be construed as an act of war against the Empire itself¹⁸, and that an Imperial Realm furnishing military aid to such an attack could very well be committing treason.

The Electoral Envoys were all having a drink and congratulating themselves on being so darn conciliatory, when news arrived that a coalition of Oratoan Realms had launched an unprovoked attack against an outpost of Electoral Thace.

The Imperial Chamber Court, meanwhile, heard a couple of cases and even decided one.

PRINCIPALITY OF DUEDHYN (8 S/UR)

His Highness, Prince Merryn III, the Great, of Duedhyn, Lord Goslowes, Baron Dhanos, Defender of the Faith.

Trade: Araxes, Atuburrk, Einandhu, Elphárec, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Ravens, ThaceE, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: Rinthes (F), Gwydhen (A)



ince Merryn issued peace terms to the Ravenists by means of Hyrágecan intermediaries. To their very great surprise, the terms were accepted. As Duedhyn’s army kept

¹⁸ There was some allowance for the object of colonial conquests trying to defend themselves, obviously.

a wary eye upon them, the Ravens evacuated their lands under a white flag of truce. Raven churches were disassembled, stone by stone. The remaining Raven fortresses were similarly disassembled.

Prelate Artyrs exhorted his followers to leave Duedhyn. While many Raven worshippers were happy enough with the Ordinariates, many more decided that they would rather face the unknown than give up the faith of their fathers. Raven refugees left their homes in the Raven lands and throughout Duedhyn, walking and riding towards a new life. They rendezvoused with Raven armies and leaders of the Raven Church, who led them ever towards the River Darriow.

By the thousands they streamed toward the Darriow, tributaries of Saurians flowing to the river, to the promise of an Atuburrk fleet to take them to a new land where they would be free to worship in peace. Even in Glasdor, nearly half the population fled with the Raven leadership¹⁹. By the time Prince Merryn the Great arrived at the head of his army in 1538, Glasdor Prefecture was a shadow of its former glory, but the remaining people cheerfully embraced their Prince.

Duedhyn's army, which had (more or less) disarmed the Raven troops until they could board ships, kept within sight but scrupulously maintained a distance of at least ten leagues. Prince Merryn had made it abundantly clear that if any of his soldiers violated the treaty terms, they would be punished with death. Even the army commanders were doubled up, lest one would be tempted to unlawful action against the Ravens.

Merryn's army had to settle for the conquest of Lowarthow. The region was seriously depleted of population, since most of the Raven-worshippers had joined the "Great Journey".

Thacian Lord Korrok arrived in Pareis in 1536 with 10,000 cataphraḫti and hussars for a state visit. Not one of them ever had to buy their own drinks. The following year, Thacian Lady Gollandir ar-

¹⁹ The region is now (4233)s. A rather large number of missionaries brought the remaining population back to the Church Universal & Triumphant. So many of Duedhyn's regions lost population that pretty much every map of the area is obsolete.

rived to pursue alchemical studies at the University of Pareis. Her personal bodyguard of 20,000 cataphraḫti and hussars were fêted throughout the city.

Researchers unpacked the crated volumes of the Library of Pareis. The contents were a mess, with the original catalogue, some of it in code, proving inadequate to the task of reordering the volumes. The new librarians found it particularly interesting that there appeared to be several crates of books that were not on the official catalogue at all. They were never copied by Murali's librarian-monks, nor studied by any of the visitors of past years.

Among these treasures were volumes on the ancient history of the First Empire, including a nearly complete copy of the *Annals* of Vator, with emendations by a later scribe bringing the history right up to beginning of the Third Civil War. The significance of this find cannot be overstated, as it provides modern scholars with a relatively complete time line of Sahûlian history for the first time.

A visitor from the Thacian steppe by the name of Sar Thorvok of Duzjun proved a big attraction in Pareis. He wandered around the city, reeling almost drunkenly, for much of 1539 and 1540, followed by a crowd of curious children. At one point he waded into the river and had to be pulled out by his lackey.

Duedhyn cautiously began to put their country back together. The capital city of Pareis expanded, and many investments were undertaken. Cavalry quality rather surprisingly improved.

RAVENS ON THE MARCH! (2 S/RA)

His Holiness Artyrs II, Prelate of the Raven Orthodox Church.

Sir Dewethva of Pesk, Grandmaster of the Military Order of the Sacred Raven.

Trade: Duedhyn

DP: None.



relate Artyrs took over the Raven effort, exhorting his flock to follow the Raven leadership to the Darriow.

You have seen what the Church Universal and Triumphant thinks about worshipers of the

Sacred Animals, the Tigers and the Dolphins. She kills them and forcibly converts whatever is left. She will put a sword to your throat. If you don't submit, she will slide the sword into your throat and into the throat of every other person that refuses. It has happened before, and it will happen here too.

The Church Universal constantly expresses her disdain for worshipers of the Sacred Animals. When asked about the violence in Duedhyn, the "holy mother" said "Those weren't Urdans, they were heretics. We have a tough stance on that sort of thing."

She will take a "tough stance" on you, do not doubt it! So come with us, all of you come with us, and we will make a bright new future for ourselves away from all this craziness and show our commitment both to Urda and to the Raven for all time.

(Raven Codex, Ch. 14 ¶1-3)

All Raven structures – town, monastery, and fortress – were pulled down. Only Branryn cathedral and the fortress of Brandinas in Breselek were temporarily spared. They stood stark against the empty landscape, their inhabitants awaiting the news that the Atuburrk fleet had arrived in the Darriow.

By 1540, the entire mass of Raven refugees²⁰, knights and peasants both, huddled in makeshift camps along the Darriow, principally in Breselek, Tiogyon, and Avalow. What possessions they had were in packs, or on wagons, and they suffered terribly during the winter as they waited. They are waiting still, for no Atuburrk fleet ever came.

Finally, 125 Hyrágecan ships docked in Breselek, where the ghostly town of Rysworhi once stood. Sadly, they were warships and galleons, provided as an escort to the transport fleet that never came. They were far too few to load but the merest fraction of refugees, even had Hyrágecan Admiral Elenthes been willing to do so.

²⁰ An estimated 100,000 all together.

LANDGRAVATE OF LYNNARVOR (11 MS/YG)

Landgrave Ebarrew Dolmathes the Dashing, Landgrave of Lynnarvor and Burgrave of Fair Belsúnd.

Trade: Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Einandhu, Elphárec, Kicitchat, Tiryowglas, Zarkhandu

DP: None.

The new Landgrave, now in his 70s, reached out the paw of friendship to his neighbours, especially Zarkhandu. Indeed, the Landgrave welcomed a Zarkhandu ambassador to his court, spending many long days in entertainment and negotiation, though with little result.

Trading missions and ambassadors were sent to the states of the Byrrin, and the Landgrave has asked for admission into the House of Peers.

COUNTY OF TIRYOWGLAS (34 SW/IL)

His Excellency, Count Truedhek II, Baron Kwilkyn, Count of Tiryowglas, Defender of the Faith.

Trade: Aradéc, Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Elphárec, Golmath, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Lynnarvor, Murali, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: None.

The ancient port city of Alwedh grew and was established as Tiryowglas' permanent capital. In celebration, Count Truedhek declared 1540 a *Jubilee Year*. It was basically a year-long series of celebrations, with the Count disbursing gifts of gold and livestock for families having children during the year²¹, culminating in a huge month-long festival for the dedication of the new capital.

The city's central square was considerably enlarged, redesigned and dedicated to Iluvar. Now named *Archangel Square*, it quickly became the centre of the capital's social life. A new fountain and park were installed. The incomparable Sarsissian sculptor Moreffan Ildulan²² was commissioned to erect a stirring marble statue of an Angel,

²¹ This led to something of a baby boom.

²² He studied under the famous Murali sculptor Jerang Dretha and is widely considered to be greater than his master.

sword upraised, to serve as the focal point of the plaza. Since both the Kwilkyn Palace and Idril Cathedral front on the newly expanded Archangel Square, both received substantial renovations with new public art and amenities brought up to renaissance standards. The façades of both buildings were identically clad in Hunnir sandstone and augmented to reflect the soaring architecture now popular throughout eastern Sahûl.

Four new towns rose: Minnarek in the forests of Mawali, Daredh in Mujovadh, Kurfovek in Mypor²³, and Iluvias in Urdan Sennow. Vast sums continued to be spent on new public works.

The Count's nephew and heir, the young and handsome Lord Sarrik, reportedly has fallen in love with a certain Lady Karvolvas. No news yet on an engagement, and the Count is seriously beginning to look at his young son Kerens for leadership qualities.

Cavalry quality improved.

ILUVARIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH (29 IL)

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

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

DP: None.

Pope Harmony VIII threw more resources at his many half-completed building projects, finally finishing Baret Abbey in Danneseth and Lanji Abbey in Shingeit. The Pontifical bureaucracy continued its inexorable expansion. The cities of Tiryoaël and Pilyirri both grew, and various new public works were installed throughout the Pontifical State.

Papal nuncios continued discussions with the other Iluvarian Churches. They were fairly successful in the East, where the Abbot of Kityara has indicated a willingness to enter into theological talks with the Pontiff. The Pontiff's influence in the Church Militant to the west has never been stronger, and the Integrationist faction of the Holy

²³ A beautiful port town on the Upper Antean River.

Synod is growing by leaps and bounds. In Sakkar, however, it's a different story.

MOST SANGUINE DUCHY OF ELPHÁREC (34 W/IL)

His Grace, Eparreb Tashnes V, the Well-Liked, Count of Angûron and Siddhan, Duke of Elphárec.

Trade: Cappargarnia, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Lynnarvor, Tiryouglas

DP: None.

Tashnes V continued his life of frivolity, retaining his playboy status. The former Regent, Count Gorran, has suggested that the Duke would do well to find a suitable bride and settle down. With the Duke engaged in a sleeping schedule at odds with the government working hours, not very much was accomplished. The treasury is full to bursting, and many of the Duchy's youths have not found gainful employment. Even so, the young Duke's popularity remains high.

The Dowager Duchess Enebrel has apparently become obsessed with the Ring of Djinn. The ring had been entrusted to the head of the Duchy's magical research ministry, Lord Jarien. The Duchess found reason after reason to summon Lord Jarien for audiences. Lord Jarien was furthering his education, and so tried to put off the Dowager Duchess for as long as he could. From 1538 through 1540, however, he was an almost weekly visitor. During these audiences, the Duchess has been noted to simply gaze into the ring's crystal for hours.

Part of the unclaimed Imperial monies and materials for Winter Relief were disbursed to the Kingdom of Zarkhandu.

Engineering and airship technology improved, and the government expanded.

KINGDOM OF HYRÁGEC (31 W/UR)

His Valiant Majesty Irrjir Frenthes V, King of Hyrágec, Beloved of Urda.

Trade: Aradéc, Chi'tixi, Elphárec, Golmath, Ingazi, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Kumara, Tiryouglas, ThaceD, ThaceE, Urdraháhn, Zarkhandu

DP: None.

The great Hyrágecan population explosion continued, and King Frenthes made the most of it. Hyrágec extended their royal road from Celli in Seni to Tirritix in Chi'tixi Taporí. A megalithic structure rose in Aybon, Elanggar Prefecture. It is designed to be a depot for the proposed "Peer Trade Network". In Andogarn Prefecture, the port town of Verthedge rose on the Odelan, as well as another seaside port.

The most impressive of Hyrágec's new building projects, however, was undoubtedly the megalithic *Triumphal Arch* in Endani Prefecture near the river port of the Pilgrim's Way. Several stories tall, it features a beautifully carved frieze depicting the final battles of the War of the Duedhyn Succession, beginning with the capture of Pareis, moving through Lynnyeyn, and on to the final battle of the Grievous Field.

Inside of the *Triumphal Arch* are six naves, each filled with a statue of a fallen lord at one of the great battles of the war²⁴. Underneath each is a dedication plaque, an epitaph for the fallen heroes, listing their name, country of origin, date and place of death, and a saying from either Master Moroko's *Code of Chivalry*, or one of the commentaries²⁵.

Mæstro Johannes' new opera debuted in Perendar in 1538. Called *The Price of Chivalry* it takes place during the final years of the Duedhyn War and features the cooperative effort of the Urdan forces against the heretical Ravenists²⁶. A bit jingoistic, it was not as popular as his earlier works.

On the way to her coronation in Sardarthion, the Empress made her pilgrimage to Moroko dur-

ing the construction of the *Triumphal Arch*. She was given a tour of the site before making her way to the shrine itself.

One of her aides was struck dumb at the sight of Moroko's shrine. When asked to explain, she stammered that she had seen the decorative motifs before... in the published notebooks of the Tikopai Expeditions.



Crown Prince Rahnes graduated from Pahasar Military Academy in 1539 at the top of his class. His brother Prince Andjes took a degree in History from the Royal University the following year. The King's two youngest children are excelling in their studies as well.

The Kingdom's sorcerers made a great breakthrough, and Hyrágec entered into a new age.

The Gawan Peninsula

THE FEUDAL NORTHEAST

COUNTY PALATINE OF INGAZI (37 W/UR)

His Most Urdan Excellency, Gwariva Trememeres IV, Overlord of Gawan, Captain of the East Riding, Burgrave of Deriháhn, Count Palatine of Ingazi.

Trade: Aradéc, Araxes, Atuburrk, Cappargarnia, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Hyrágec, Iáthedain, ID, IOC, Kicitchat, Kumara, Murali, ThaceE, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn

DP: Wanangi (F)

Prince-Regent Razhim launched two expeditions, each intending to circumnavigate the world. Admiral Harran was given command of 75 sloops of war, several companies of marines, and a considerable quantity of supplies and instructed to "sail westward until the entirety of the globe has been circumnavigated and so return home to Ingazi from the east." The fleet set off with unearthly alacrity.

A second expedition under the command of the venerable Commodore Manandorrin set off to dis-

²⁴ The *Six Slain Heroes* are: Captain-General Lord Irrjir Grenthe, Countess Kassa VII of Kachar, Colonel Sir Ronnel Torthes of Araxes, Baroness Miklata III of Uilaokatl, Lord Torrín of Ingazi, and Prince Merryn II of Duedhyn.

²⁵ The Plaque beneath Captain-General Lord Irrjir Grenthe reads: *Devotion, to faith and to country, and ultimately to Emperor, is one of the cornerstones of Chivalry. Devotion, with unwavering loyalty and uncompromising faith, is the greatest act of love for self and love for another that any kindred can commit.*

²⁶ The opera starts with the Siege of Pareis, with subsequent acts depicting the tragedy of the Battle of Lynnyeyn and the Battle of Grievous Field. It ends with an "epilogue" of the dastardly Ravenists slinking offstage while the triumphant Urdans stand bloodied, but victorious on the stage praising Urda.

cover the “circumpolar currents”. The *Antean Anti-Piracy Fleet* hastily set sail in 1536 in what was supposed to be an attempt to circle the south pole. Instead, Manandorin had an entirely unexpected adventure. His fleet, somewhat worse for the wear, limped into Aradéc’s Azure Sea from the east in 1540 with strange news. Rather than “circling the Circumpolar Sea”, he had discovered an entirely new continent... with a Zarkhandu colony already there.

Meanwhile, Count Palatine Trememeres IV had returned from Sardarthion in the summer of 1538, having fulfilled his duties as Chancellor of the Empire and Justice of the Imperial Chamber Court.

Ingazi’s national team got their revenge against the Zarkhandu All-Blacks at Cheesemaker Stadium in 1539, defeating them 8–7. The game was a real nail-biter, and the good-natured rioting afterwards was something of a tension relief. Ingazi’s victory over Golmath in the championship game the following year was something of an anti-climax.

Peace broke out with Cappargarnia and trade was restored. Much of the treasury went into new public works projects, but a large chunk of gold from Cappargarnia refilled it nicely. The University expanded its offerings and hired more staff.

CHURCH UNIVERSAL & TRIUMPHANT (52.8 UR)

Her All-Holiness Jerröe X, the Leaping Horse, First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sahûl.

Trade: Araxes, Aradéc, Atuburrk, Averno, Carcë, Chi’tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Golmath, Hyrágec, Iäthedain, ID, Ingazi, IOC, Itaxik, Kachar, Kitchat, Murali, Pehuatoka, Sakkar, ThaceD, ThaceE, Tiryowglas

DP: None.

First Matriarch Jerröe bid a fond farewell to her young charges, with all of them leaving by 1540. She popped over to Sardarthion to crown the new Urdan Empress, but there was no field trip this time. When she returned to Urdraháhn, Jerröe wore a worried, haunted look.

Cash was sent hither and yon, and much Iäthedain timber was imported for the Church’s various

building projects. Thanks to gobs of money invested, infantry, siege, and naval quality all improved. The largest government structure²⁷ in Sahûl expanded further. In Sandir Prefecture in the distant Duchy of Thace, the Church expanded Tarnet Abbey and consecrated it as a Cathedral.

Mount Pupini erupted three times.

PRINCIPALITY OF GOLMATH (50 W/TA)

His Gracious Majesty, Volpel-Walarri Zhogian, Baron Volpel, Count of Runazar, Electoral Prince of Golmath.

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

Baroness Jejodh Dara of Nydoon, the Beautiful and Beguiling.

Trade: Aradéc, Atuburrk, Hyrágec, Iäthedain, Ingazi, ID, Murali, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Yani

DP: None.

Prince Zhogian rested from his labours. The treasury is fat and full, and the realm requires much rebuilding after the horrors of the Civil War. The Puritans have not embraced the state church, and the Prince has made no move to insist that they do.

The treasury built up to monumental levels.

Not receiving an offer of amnesty from the Prince, Colonel Wilgi and his dragoons made their way to the Imperial Free City of Sarsis and became mercenaries.

In the ruins of Serri Cathedral in Pirayi, the high priests who survived the Puritan pogroms chose one of their member as Hierarch Mordican III. Among the Puritan families of Golmath, he is sometimes jokingly referred to as the pauper pontiff.

A Yani envoy arrived in Pama-Ati to invite Golmath to collect their honoured dead from the Mines of Thamina.

²⁷ Other than the Imperial Provincial governments, of course.

REPUBLIC OF KUMARA (6W/KY/TA)

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

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

DP: Thirri (F), Yambai (F), Mingka (*at war*), Windra (A), Wandirri (T)

The Republic made its bid for the loyalty of the Golmathi Puritans, with some success and one truly spectacular failure. Diplomats blanketed the various independent prefectures, carrying with them the whole of Kumara's meagre treasury.

In Windra, the decidedly *non*-Puritan Baron was given an offer his soul dare not refuse.

ELECTORAL KINGDOM OF ARADÉC (48 W/IL)

His Royal Majesty, Sansollen Deric II, the One-Eyed, Baron of Wanumarra, Count of Abijar, Electoral King of Aradéc.

Urlarra Perrim, esquire, Speaker of the House of Commons.

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

DP: Karruni (F)

King Deric withdrew his great army from Golmath and into Karruni²⁸. Prince Paharnes, a recent graduate of the Military Academy, joined him there with still more troops. Needless to say, the missionary work there went rather well for the Iluvarians, and Lord Karruni forsook his quasi-Tarotist ways. The pair of Devas there certainly didn't hurt the effort.

In 1538, a wizened Saurian and a fiery demon apparated into the throne room at Darnuldeis. The Saurian loudly announced his challenge of King Deric to a duel... to the death! Unfortunately for him, King Deric was still with the army, and the Saurian found himself confronting a rather irri-

tated (and none-too-bright) janitor and a terrified junior herald who was filing some old paperwork. The janitor upbraided the intruder "for scorching up the carpets, which is gonna come out of my pay, innit?" The herald simply fainted.

The old Saurian announced his intention to wait, which provoked another angry outburst from the janitor. He gave the intruder a proper dressing down in the voice often reserved for children or idiots. The old Saurian took it without moving or saying a word. The janitor soon realized that the interloper had died, possibly of heart failure, possibly just of old age. Sadly for the janitor (and the unconscious herald), this meant that the demon was now unbound.

The throne room erupted into fire and chaos.

Eventually, the demon was killed in an epic battle against two Devas and a rather sizeable garrison, but he certainly caused an enormous amount of damage before the end. The palace itself was completely destroyed.

Parliament has called for an investigation.

Large amounts of resources continued to be invested in public works to promote sustainable cold-weather agricultural practices and methods. To help eat all that new food, two port towns were founded: Carolháhn in Dambana and Ketiho in Palapira. A new royal road connects the town of Phoebe in Phoebe with Lisamet in Pagirri.

Aradéc's venerable Darnuldeis Naval Academy²⁹ expanded, and Aradéc's cavalry and airship quality improved. The Specontuluvda Primary Academy (and associated schools) were well-funded, and rumours circulated that an odd little language school had been established on Kityara.

COUNTY OF MURALI (18 W/TA)

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

Trade: Aradéc, Golmath, Ingazi, IOC, Kumara, Tiryowglas, Urdraháhn, Yani

DP: None.

²⁸ Faithful readers will remember that Sir Onmon Dagames, the elderly Speaker of the Aradéc House of Commons, died here on a state visit several years ago.

²⁹ Founded in 1224, it is the second oldest Naval Academy on Sahûl.

Murali made peace with Zarkhandu. Though Murali gave up their claim to Zadok, they received appropriate compensation. Both sides claimed that they had the better deal.

New public works projects continued to be built, and large investments in the County's future continued undiminished. Sorcery quality improved, and both the Naval and Sorcery Academies were enlarged. Ironically, the Sorcery Academy is only wanting a library to become a full University.

The navy continued patrols on the Antean, though Ingazi's fleet headed out to sea.

DRACONIC BARONY OF IÄTHEDAIN (9 SW/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, Golmath, Ingazi, Urdraháhn, Yarni-Za, Zarkhandu

DP: Nope. But we're real friendly!

Baron Zharharn staked his claim to the forests of Pendiron by leading in an army. Although the land is lush and green, the Iäthedainians noted a distinct lack of animal life and few birds. The common soldiers are uneasy, and even the Baron pronounced the place "creepy".

In return for their continued financial backing, the Barony sent large quantities of timber to the Church.

IÄTHEDEK: THE PROTECTORATE OF FRIEBÆLD

The great Wyrms Friebæld took a wee break to *teleport* into and out of Sardarthion. Apparently she had some items desired by the Empress.

VEILED MASTERS OF YARNI-ZA (34 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, Taneki, Zarkhandu

DP: Why should we tell you?

Ystar's back, baby! He came out of his chambers and killed a few lackeys just to keep everybody in line. Then he sent out orders to begin the biggest building project the Veiled Masters have embarked upon since he was but a little Saurian squidge.

Several priories became abbeys³⁰, the Pilgrim's Road was continued from canyon of Iodeth to the Irusan coast, towns were raised in Yoalti and Yarni-Za itself³¹, and the fell city of Dhin in Iodeth grew.

The Veiled Masters even chartered a bank, the First Yagnarist Bank of the Eye.

APOTHEOTIC KINGDOM OF FELL ZARKHANDU (61 S/DF)

His Dread Majesty, Tirach Bæn, Lord Sakkath, Count of Vúhlath & Mlideen, Duke of Hyáglion, King of Zarkhandu.

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

Trade: Araxes, Chi'tixi, Duedhyn, Einandhu, Hyrágec, Iäthedain, ID, Kicitchat, Lynnarvor, Tiryowglas, Yarni-Za

DP: Failed!

King Tirach Bæn sent his wife Queen Tannika and their son, Prince Sharret Drehl, with a fleet to the east. The King, meanwhile, continued his wife's efforts to put the kingdom back together again. Zarkhandu armies overran Iärdan and took control of the city of Bratarak in Zadok from the retreating Murali. Peace treaties were signed with both Murali and Sakkar.

With the return of the Isle of Delin, Gornya Rogami were again firmly under the rule of their creators. The Zarkhandu fleet desperately ferried them from the island to the mainland. The town of Oömigmak was settled in Delin, and Shakkos, Dekametos, and Temnos were all colonised³². As the Gornya Rogami continued to enjoy explosive

³⁰ Flenser in Bylen and Night's Deepness in Taizhir.

³¹ Barzai and Nath, respectively.

³² Shakkos (2113)G, Dekametos (1112)G, Temnos (2111)G.

growth, there are many more refugees on the mainland now.

The port town of Tannith rose in Yseldyr upon the icy shores of Lake Sardath. A megalithic structure rose in Vúhlath, designed to be a depot for the proposed "Peer Trade Network". The Kingdom built several hospitals in and around Vúhlath.

The Underlands

DOWN UNDER

LORDSHIP OF YANI (21 Y/-)

Mani Tunapri, Lord Yani, Master of the Union Guilds of the Federated Towns of Yangina and Putini.

Trade: Golmath, Murali

DP: Wuka Luyini (A), Larapuna (A)

Yani lost the first suit brought in the Imperial Chamber Court. They began paying their judgement. To make sure this sort of thing didn't become a habit, they built Wulyaku's Wisdom College of Law at the University of Yani.

In Warendiji, Lord Temma ordered that the entire population would have to leave. He ended up having to use the army to roust the people from their homes and herd them into refugee camps.

Many Yaminon gathered for the speech in Nuyina Luini. "Yaminon citizens, we gather today for a glorious event. While the surfacers have their magic and their gods, we require only our brothers and sisters. And today we prove this to all. I now have the honor and pleasure to announce our greatest engineering marvel. I bring to you, the Yaminon War Engine!"

At that, a house-sized mechanical scarab ambled into view, large plates of metal with blades protruding from its front, sides and rear.

The crowd cheered, but the mayor pressed on. "Unleash the Yaminon Anger!" At the command, the mighty war engine gave a roar like Great Wrym's war cry. Plumes of smoke rose from the machine, and the blades began to spin and rotate.

"Let those that dare invade our people know the true anger that is the Yaminon!"

Fabulous Efan

THE EASTERN CONTINENT

NEW ZARKHANDU (1 S/DF)

Her Majesty Queen Tannika, Governor of the Havens.

Trade: None

DP: None



Like an unholy fury, Zarkhandu descended upon the lands of the Red Sargs. Their barbarian "king" was slain in the City of the Crystal Citadel. He and his party were ambushed by a Zarkhandu sorcerer, and a large wolf leapt at the chieftain and tore his throat out.

Mere days later, Queen Tannika led the Zarkhandu fleet to land troops in Danileen. Although she had lost several ships in the crossing, the Queen was still able to land almost 30,000 Zarkhandine soldiers and 7,000 knights. The native army had a number of stone golems scattered amongst their small force. Even so, they were outnumbered more than ten to one.

None of Zarkhandu's soldiers or knights were killed in the conquest of Danileen, and Queen Tannika pronounced herself satisfied.

Several of the native Saurians were captured and questioned. It turns out that their language was related to Old Imperial, so some communications were possible. If nothing else, the natives were able to give the invaders their local place names, which helped them fill in their rather sketchy maps.

As the Zarkhandu garrison set up their barracks, the locals showed unfeigned astonishment. Surely the invaders were not going to sleep in *that*?

The Zarkhandu soldiers paid no mind to the primitive barbarians.

And then, late one night they were woken by a horrific noise. Largesshapes were crashing through the trees, bellowing with an unholy roar. The locals fled, some shouting "Dinosaur! Dinosaur!"

At the sentry post, the guards were in a state of high tension and readiness, but nothing could prepare them for what actually happened.

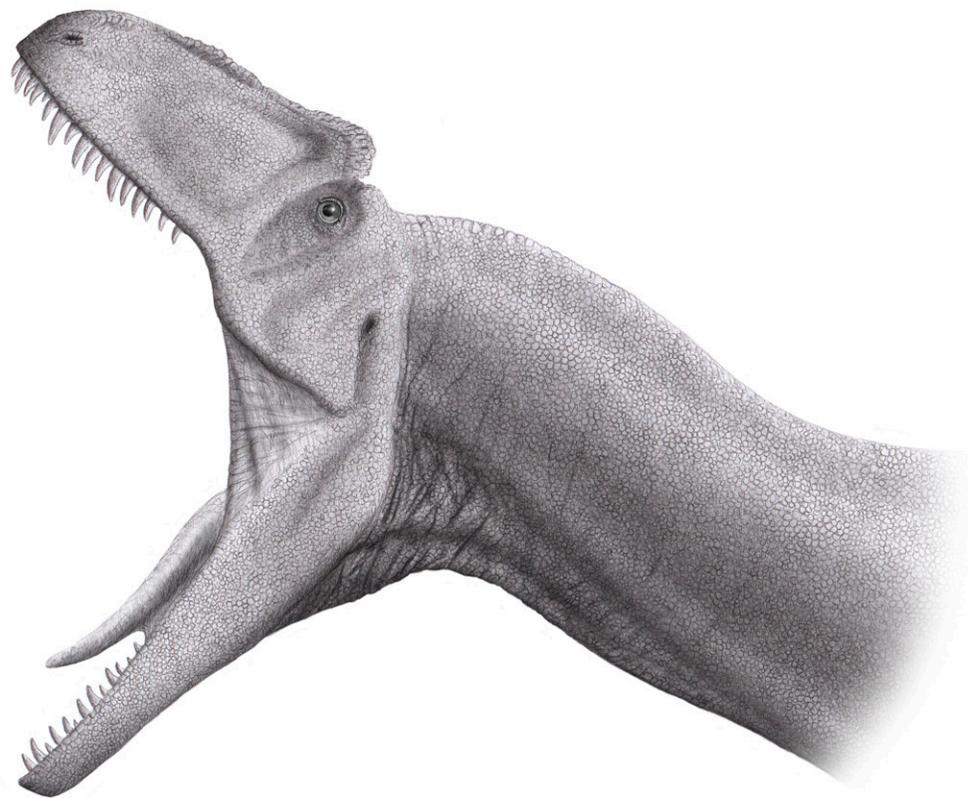
Giant, two-legged predators thirty feet long leapt from the woods into the midst of the barracks, easily clearing the wooden stockade. There was pack of them, some smaller, one larger. All of them had dagger-like teeth, and within seconds they were swallowing up soldiers whole and biting horses in half as if the Zarkhandu camp was a buffet.

The infantry never stood a chance. Within minutes, the Zarkhandine knights were scrambling to put on their armour and grab their weapons. They were able to chase the monsters away, but casualties were fierce.

As the days and weeks progressed, Zarkhandu's garrison learned that the countryside was infested with these "dinosaurs". There were large plant-eaters, as well as predators of all sizes. Though they have learned to cope with the local megafauna somewhat, they have requested the construction of stone fortifications. Otherwise, they will continue to take casualties.

Baron tak Gantheth, meanwhile, was dropping off garrisons in the lands on the banks of the River Narl. Many of them were eaten. Apparently the scavengers are every bit as vicious as the predators.

An Ingazi exploration fleet zoomed up the coast, only stopping briefly to effect some repairs.



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Her August & Imperial Majesty
Empress Chath'ecutla

Mistress of the Tis'chak, Countess of Takkikik, Queen of Itaxik, Golden Beetle of the West, Sovereign of Sahul, Lady of the Nine Hills of Sardarthon, Holder of the Emerald Throne, and Empress of All the World.

APPOINTMENTS

During the Reign of Emperor Sydath II:

To Governor of Artier, Chos, Dranchoal, Iasedior, Kordier, Mondahan, Thebia: *by examination.*

During the Reign of Empress Chath'ecutla:

To Imperial Chancellor: Countess Tinikatua of Tokatl.

To Lord Admiral of the Green: Countess Xitar of Pexiki.

IMPERIAL OFFICES

Chancellor of the Empire:..... *Tokatl*

Speaker of the House of Peers:*Hyragec*

Justices of the Imperial Chamber Court:

..... *Chancellor of the Empire*

.....*Speaker of the House of Peers*

..... *Chi'tixi* (through 1574)

..... *Averon* (through 1569)

..... *vacancy*

Lord Admiral of the Blue:*Cappargarnia*

Lord Admiral of the Green: *Pexiki*

Lord Admiral of the Red:.....*Murali*

Marshal of Thacia: *Thace (Duchy)*

ENNOBLEMENT

During the Reign of Emperor Sydath II:

The Emperor Sydath II and his House are granted the dignity of Lord Mortain.

The Baron Dolmathes of Lynnarvor, his House and his Realm, are elevated to the dignity of Landgrave of Lynnarvor.

FREE COMPANIES & ERRANTRY &C.

GREY DRAGOONS—48dr, 17mc

Captain: Colonel Wilgi (LA84W) TR age 33

Spells: Gills, Lightning Bolt, Luck, Wards Grtr

Location: *Imperial Free City of Sarsis*

Min. Bid: 75GP / TURN

HAWKWOOD COMPANY—32mc 18pk 10mi

Captain: Lord Dwinbi Sardes (L974W) TR age 51

Location: *Pagumath, Makulali Pref., Kaparis Prov.*

Min. Bid: 60GP / TURN

WILLEFORN'S SPEARS—14mi 4li

Captain: "Spears" Willeforn (LA53W) TR age 39

Location: *Yukarra Prefecture, Kaparis Province*

Min. Bid: 20GP / TURN

PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS OF THE EMPIRE

Province	GPv	Ref.	Governor	Province	GPv	Ref.	Governor
Agador	55	—	bureaucrat	Kembul	50	—	vacant
Anabreis	45	—	bureaucrat	Kiermon	65	—	bureaucrat
Aradaun	75	—	bureaucrat	Kinsidan	25	14	bureaucrat
Arador	55	—	Aradéc	Kordier	60	14	bureaucrat
Ardebon	50	—	Atuburrk	Kumarand	55	7	vacant
Artier	60	8	bureaucrat	Lambris	35	—	bureaucrat
Balashan	60	—	bureaucrat	Larloc	55	14	bureaucrat
Belegaridor	55	—	bureaucrat	Mondahan	8	—	vacant
Biralis	65	14	bureaucrat	Muralis	50	—	vacant
Chos	45	—	bureaucrat	Narchoal	25	7	vacant
Dorthacia	25	—	bureaucrat	Nauatidran	5	8	bureaucrat
Dranchoal	45	8	bureaucrat	Orinos	65	17	bureaucrat
Dranmul	50	—	bureaucrat	Sachon	35	—	bureaucrat
Drazhan	10	—	bureaucrat	Sardior	100	17	bureaucrat
Endior	45	—	bureaucrat	Sistramidior	65	—	bureaucrat
Iantier	55	—	bureaucrat	Tepalis	50	7	bureaucrat
Iasedior	35	—	vacant	ThaciaMaior	70	11	bureaucrat
Kaidu	35	17	bureaucrat	ThaciaMinor	60	11	bureaucrat
Kanapad	10	8	bureaucrat	Thebia	45	—	bureaucrat
Kanmul	75	—	bureaucrat	Tramelis	65	17	bureaucrat
Kaparis	65	10	bureaucrat	Withidan	50	—	Sakkar
Kassaria	25	—	Zarkhandu	Yann	15	17	vacant
Kastier	40	8	bureaucrat				

For each Province of the Empire, the income (GPv) and Turn of the most recent reform (Ref.) is given, as is the holder of the Governor's office.

REPORT OF IMPERIAL REVENUE AND EXPENDITURES, 1536–1540

INCOME		Urban Expansion.....	110.0
Regional and Provincial Income.....	539.6	Castle Mortain	30.0
Public Works Income.....	1030.0	Public Works	2650.0
City Income.....	23.0	Grant to Raven Church	10.0
International Trade (Tariffs)	3581.2	Lynnarvor Development Grant	1000.0
From Exchequer.....	1831.4	Miscellaneous purchases.....	300.0
TOTAL	6609.2	Counter-Intelligence.....	200.0
		TOTAL	5398.1
EXPENDITURES		To EXCHEQUER.....	1211.1
Army Support	98.1	* Note that this budget reflects the inclusion of Lynnarvor.	
Infantry, siege, spycraft investment	750.0		
Sorcery investment	250.0		

RUGBY

All-Sahùl League play:

All Realms may enter up to two teams in the League, subject to the approval of the League Trustees.

Current ASL teams are:

Aradéc, Chi'tixi, Golmath, Ingazi, Murali, Runazar, and the Zarkhandu All-Blacks.

Tournament results!

Round 1 (1537)

Aradéc 3 at Murali 17
Chi'tixi 5 at Golmath 11
Runazar 3 at Ingazi 8
All-Blacks (bye)

Round 2 (1539)

Murali 6 at Golmath 10
Ingazi 8 at All-Blacks 7

The Championship game at Ingazi's Cheesemaker Stadium in 1560 featured the home team versus Golmath. These two rugby giants played a grueling championship match, but in the end Golmath was just outplayed and their fans out-shouted. Good natured rioting followed the match.

Golmath 5 at Ingazi 11.

Next cycle's matchings are:

Round 1 (1541)

Golmath at Aradéc [yellow]
Murali at Chi'tixi [blue]
All-Blacks at Runazar [red]
Ingazi (bye)

Round 2 (1543)

Yellow at Blue
Red at Ingazi

Championship match to be played in Golmath City in 1545.

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 SAHÛL

Locations: Einandhu, Sardarthion

Available to borrow: 4,960 GP

(No single borrower may borrow more than 700 GP)

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

Shares:

- Guilds Council of Adndar 8*
- Imperial Exchequer..... 7*
- House Gwariva of Ingazi 5*
- House Pangku of Araxes..... 4*
- Ancient and Undaunted Order of Heralds... 3*
- Printers Guild of Zadres 1

Loans: None outstanding

BANK OF ITAXIK

Location: Itaxik

Available to borrow: 3694.3 GP

Ice Relief Fund..... 195 GP

Loans: None outstanding

FIRST YAGNARIST BANK OF THE EYE

Location: Yarni-Za

Available to borrow: 1000 GP

Loans: None outstanding

Loans entirely at the discretion of the Veiled Masters.

NOTICES

Imperial Honours List (1536)

By Order of His Imperial Majesty:

Echuca Aginares, Colonel in Chief of the Adhanggar Guard, is hereby invested with an Imperial Knighthood.

Ebarrew Dolmathes the Dashing, Baron of Lynnarvor, is hereby awarded the Loyal Order of the Buffalo with oak leaf clusters and ice cream bars.

Zeke, Imperial Canine, is hereby awarded a new chew toy. Maybe a bone.

Tirach Ben, King of Zarkhandu, is hereby awarded a warm hat.

By Order of His August & Imperial Majesty, *Sydatth II*, Sardarthion.

Statement of the Queen of Itaxik (1536)

LONG HAS ITAXIK SACRIFICED much to the Empire, not just for people we called friends and compatriots, we sacrificed for All of the Empire whether they were Illuvian, Tarotist, Urdans or Yagnarist so all could benefit. Itaxik has now paid the ultimate sacrifice for the empire with our blood.

Do we like that we were stripped of Electoral status? No. Are we angry that we were stripped of our Electoral status? Yes. We can take some comfort in the fact that our sacrifice has benefited others in Sahûl and has made Sahûl somewhat more equitable for all. We only wish if the Emperor felt it was necessary to sacrifice Itaxik to enact unilateral changes that these changes would have been broader and more sweeping.

However, these things are in the past and those live in the past, die in the past. The Heralds have spoken in support of the Emperor's authority to take the actions that he did, so Itaxik will abide by their ruling and accept the burden laid upon on us by the Emperor for good or ill.

We of Itaxik have long prided ourselves on our academic nature so we will take away from this the lessons we have learned.

We have learned that some we thought to be our friends were perhaps our enemies.

We have learned that some we thought to be our enemy were perhaps our friends.

We have learned at what point an already strained relationship can take no more.

We also learned that perhaps some space may be the best medicine to heal a strained relationship regardless of who they are.

Despite all this, we do not fret because Itaxik is not a great and noble realm because a piece of parchment stated we were an Electorate. Itaxik is a great realm and a noble realm because our people, the heart and the spirit of Itaxik, are and have always been strong and great. As long as these exist in Itaxik, we have and always will be a great and noble realm.

So we reach out to our fellow kindreds of Itaxik – those current and those swept up in the chaos – and ask that we move forward and continue down the path of

greatness we have lain out in the past and the path we continue to pave into future.

*Queen Chatb'ečtula I,
Servant to the People of Sahùl.
Queendom of Itaxik.
Akassa, Uelmatia Prefecture.*

Official Statement (1536)

An Official Statement from the Church Universal and Triumphant in regard to the Great Charter's Ousting of Itaxik from the Electorate.

A GREAT WRONG has been committed and we, the Church Universal and Triumphant, will work tirelessly to right this wrong. To say we are outraged is a gross minimalization of current events.

To begin with, the Church Universal and Triumphant orders all Urdans to a day of Prayer for the Reunification of Itaxik. Symbolically, it will be on the 1st of Primilis, the day that the Empire stripped her of her Electoral status, a heinous and unjustifiable act.

Secondly, she orders all Urdan realms to rally with whatever support can be given to the Queen of Itaxik for the restructure of her realm. The Church Universal and Triumphant has been mandated by the same document that disassembled her, to protect the assembling Itaxik. As tireless as the Church was to the restoration of Duedhyn to her former glory, so shall she be for these efforts as only a mother can be. For if we were anything less, we would be remiss in our duties to the faithful of the Queendom both before this dastardly act and in the future.

Thirdly, the Church so orders the Shrine of Iurdana to hold vigil for one year for Itaxik's people to be imbued with the quiet strength of Urda the Gentle, the indefatigable strength of Urda the Fierce and the face of Urda the Indifferent to be unimpressed with this recent setback and to move towards her true greatness as a loyal leader of Urdanism.

Lastly, The Church Universal and Triumphant will take no questions on this matter, she will take no excuses from any Urdan realm or make any for herself in the efforts for returning Itaxik's full Electoral status by any and all legal means.

Urda is balance. Urda is hardship and plenty. As Her children we must walk through the shadow to once again bathe in the light and never falter.

Her All Holiness,

Jerröe X, the Leaping Horse

First Matriarch of Urda, Protector of Sahùl.

The Peace of Duedhyn (1536)

LET IT BE KNOWN that through the mediation of the Kingdom of Hyrágec and the wisdom of the Urdan Ravenist Church and Prince Merryn of Duedhyn, peace has been reached. For the next five years, the Urdan Ravenist Church has agreed to the terms set forth by Prince Merryn of Duedhyn. The war in Duedhyn is over, and peace reigns supreme.

Terms

1. Unconditional surrender of all lands held by the Ravenists. They will be given sufficient time to disassemble any remaining fortresses and religious sites and to evacuate any towns or cities, if they wish.
2. All Ravenist forces to be disarmed. The Prince of Duedhyn will guarantee them safe passage out of Duedhyn in a reasonable amount of time. Arms will be given back once they are safely aboard ships or transiting out of Duedhyn.
3. The following Spell Crystals to be forfeited by the Ravenists to the Prince of Duedhyn: Summon Dragon, True Sight, Wards Greater, Wards Lessor, Brambles, Fire Bolt, DeAnimate, Crumble, Immortality Less and Psychometry.
4. Any and all dragon bones to be remanded to either the Prince of Duedhyn or the Church Universal & Triumphant.

The Urdan Ravenist Church has arranged privately for transportation out of the Duedhyn region under a flag of truce, and Prince Merryn has agreed that the Urdan Ravenist Church will be permitted to vacate the regions of Breselek and Koes unmolested.

The War is over! Praise Urda!

King Frenthes V,

Kingdom of Hyrágec.

Pahasar, Kerneveg Prefecture.

Edict of the Lost (1536)

PEOPLE OF HYRÁGEC! We have suffered a great loss defending our fellow Urdans in the Principality of Duedhyn. We are a peaceful people. We follow Urda. We work. We play. We love. We laugh. We prosper. And we live. But today, we mourn.

War came to our brothers and sisters of our most glorious faith, and we answered their cries for aid. For Urda. We marched to war to secure peace in Duedhyn. For Empire. Upon the fields of Lynnyeyn, the best of us fell. Our blood stains Duedhyni ground in a testament to faith, to chivalry, and to honor. Many of you, my people, have suffered from the loss of brothers, sons, and fathers who fell upon the field of battle. You have worn the dark colors of mourning. So too, do we wear the darkness of mourning. It is in recognition of this most... noble and dedicated sacrifice, that we now proclaim the Edict of the Lost. For one full year, the people of Hyrágec shall be in mourning.

We ask that during this period, you donate to charity through the Church. Today we pledge our donation to the widows and orphans of this war: a full fifty thousand gold crowns to provide for their welfare and safety. War takes the best of our chivalrous soldiers on the fields, and takes the best of our beloved family members from the hearth and home. We recognize that gold cannot and will never replace the lost, but we would be remiss in our duties if we did not provide for their families.

May Urda bring blessing upon the nations of Hyrágec and Duedhyn. May Urda's gaze fall upon us with favor.

King Frenthes V,
Kingdom of Hyrágec.
Pahasar, Kerneveg Prefecture.

The Nolvonn/Cauaros Agreement (1536)

A Treaty between the Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia, the Electoral Grand Duchy of Atuburrk, and the County of Kicitchat

1. *The Oath of Peace*

Cappargarnia and Kicitchat pledge there shall be no wars between them.

2. *Monies and Trade*

Cappargarnia and Kicitchat will continue to conduct international trade with each other.

3. *Regions: Nolvonn and Cauaros*

Cappargarnia forsakes claims upon the Kicitchat region of Nolvonn and the region of Cauaros, recognizing that said regions are within the sphere of influence of Kicitchat. The Electoral Grand Duchy of Atuburrk agrees to compensate the Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia a sum that is to remain undisclosed for relinquishing claims upon Nolvonn and Cauaros.

4: *Duration*

This treaty is intended to be durable and bind these realms in perpetuity.

Prince Deirn Caranthes II,
Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia.
Cappargarnia, Erediar Prefecture.

Grand Duke Adhanggar Rahnes II,
Electoral Grand Duchy of Atuburrk.
HMS Count of Erran, at sea.

Countess Cir'ik VIII,
County of Kicitchat.
Tchac'at, Tik'tik Prefecture.

The Treaty of Bear Mountain (1536)

THE REPUBLIC OF CAPPARGARNIA acknowledges that their airships landed unlawfully in the lands of the County Palatine of Ingazi. The Republic states that this was not done out of malice, but by accident.

Nevertheless, in order to reestablish peace and satisfy the honor of the Count Palatine, the Republic agrees to the following articles:

1. The Republic and the County Palatine of Ingazi will open trade with each other.
2. The Republic will pay one million Gold Crowns to Ingazi over the next ten years.
3. The Republic will never land inside Ingazi without permission or contract to do so.
4. The County Palatine of Ingazi will return to the Republic the person of Sevas Porrin and his six captured Spell Crystals.

This treaty will last twenty years, at which time the two parties can renew. The two parties will enter into a state of peace and prosperity.

Prince Deirn Caranthes II,
Electoral Republic of Cappargarnia.
Cappargarnia, Erediar Prefecture.

Count Palatine Gwariva Trememeres IV,
County Palatine of Ingazi.
Sardarthion.

House of Peers: Chancellor Nominations (1536)

To the College of Electors,

LET IT BE KNOWN that upon this day, the House of Peers has faithfully discharged their duties to create a list of three nominations for the Office of Chancellor. This list, consisting of the County Palatine of *Ingazi*, the County of *Tokatl*, and the Queendom of *Itaxik* is hereby presented to the Heralds. Whereupon a new Emperor or Empress is elected at the pleasure of the Electors, this list will be given to the Emperor or Empress to choose His or Her Chancellor in good faith under the Great Charter. Long may the Empire stand.

Irrjir Lucian,
Speaker for the House of Peers.
Sardarthion.

An Open Letter to the Emperor (1536)

Can the Emperor please verify the status of the following statement and provide any clarifying information? Our main concern is were you speaking for the Empire or for Atuburrk during this communication with Orofer.

Does this make the Mark of Orofer a protected delegation from Oratoa, in regards to only themselves and/or possible their alliance? Can others, now approach the Mark of Orofer or their Alliance with regards to their statement of war and possible peaceful relations?

Our second concern is where does the Empire stand regarding "our Oratoan Yagnarist brothers"?

The letter quoted:

To Corualadh Half-Elven, Takriki of Orofer and Warden of the Mark,

Greetings from His Majesty Sydath.

Thanks for your temperate words. We assure you that those Realms of the Empire that venture forth into the Lands of Oratoa are faced with a choice—they may choose to remain loyal to the Empire and therefore subject to its laws, or they may choose to release themselves from such loyalty and therefore lose the protection and benefits of the Empire. Kommolek has chosen the former, and remains an Imperial Realm in all ways.

Those Realms currently in Oratoa may petition for inclusion within the Empire, and swear allegiance to it; they will then enjoy all the rights and privileges accorded to similar Realms in Sahul. But this is their choice, and no coercion is applied; we respect the independence of the Northerners. But make no mis-

take – those Oratoan Realms which have no part in the Empire can lay no claim to its rights and protections.

We cannot speak for the other Sahùlians in the North as regards their intentions upon Oratoa. For Atuburrk, we wish to establish a point of trade and contact with the North, and to reach out to our Oratoan Yagnarist brothers. We hope that they will be permitted to continue to worship the Dread Lord as they have been accustomed to do, and we will strive to protect that freedom as we are able. We do not seek the dominion over the other faiths in Oratoa, nor to deny the peoples of the Northlands the right to live their lives in as much peace and goodwill as they are willing to extend to us and ours. We look forward to further dialog with you, and with any Oratoanwilling to parlay in good faith.

In deepest respect,

Curtis Interruptus,
Imperial Minister for Poetical Writing

Baroness Nenepillah III,
Barony of Sakkar.
Sahn'akl Cathedral, K'ah Prefecture.

To Baroness Nenepillah of Sakkar: a Reply (1536)

THE EMPEROR WISHES me to convey to you that the statement is quite clear and quite explicit in both wording and intent. Nevertheless, His Imperial Majesty has authorized me to clarify the salient points of his letter, a letter it should be noted, that was not addressed to you.

Realms of the Empire that go to Oratoa may choose to remain loyal to the Empire and subject to its laws, or they may choose to release themselves from such loyalty and lose the protection and benefits of the Empire.

The County Palatinate of Kommolek is a loyal Imperial Realm.

Oratoan Realms may petition for inclusion within the Empire (please note that this is covered explicitly in the *Great Charter* promulgated by his Imperial Majesty)

As we respect the independence of the Northern Realms, the Empire will not bring any Realm into the Empire through coercion.

Oratoan Realms which have no part in the Empire can lay no claim to its rights and protections.

The remainder of the letter concerns the Electoral Grand Duchy of Atuburrk and some closing pleasantries.

We hope that our Department has been useful for your inquiry.

Lois Denominator,
Imperial Assistant Deputy Minister for Making Lists.
Sardarthion.

Treaty of Taporí (1536)

EXECUTED HEREIN TODAY by faithful representatives on behalf of Her Most Puissant Majesty, Taxitiki II, the Illustrious Mistress of Tirrix & the Great Hive, Black Claw Baroness of Tichiiir, Duchess of Chax and Tix'itikata, Countess Itax, Elektor and Lich Queen of Chi'tixi and His Valiant Majesty Irrjir Frenthes V, King of Hyrágec and Beloved of Urda, for the closer growth and common security and economic prosperity of the people of the Elektorale Queendom of the Great Hive of Chi'tixi Tirrik Ki and the Kingdom of Hyrágec. In the year 1536, we commit our hands to this parchment for the commission of greater trade and mutual security with the provisions outlined below.

Article I – Provision for the Construction of roads, canals, and other venues of trade.

The Nations of Chi'tixi and Hyrágec, desirous of greater trade exchange between our two nations, shall work together to commission roads, canals, and any other venues of trade under this Article as deemed necessary and proper to assist the growth of trade and mercantile traffic between the Great Hive of Ch'tixi and the Kingdom of Hyrágec.

Article II – Provision for the movement of troops and refugees.

Should the Great Hive of Chi'tixi fall under attack from any foe, foreign or domestic, troops and refugees under a flag of truce, shall be welcomed and allowed to pass through Hyrágecan lands unmolested and allowed free use of any roads, ports, canals, or byways. Likewise, the Great Hive of Chi'tixi extends Hyrágec the same privileges.

Article III – Provision for the mutual security of territory.

In these uncertain times of discovery and exploration, the Kingdom of Hyrágec and the Great Hive of Chi'tixi do hereby commit themselves to pledges of confraternity under the auspices of the Empire. Chi'tixi blood shall be as Hyrágecan blood. Hyrágecan lives shall be as Chi'tixian lives. In the event of attacks by any foe including external foes from the continent of Oratoa, Hyrágec and Chi'tixi form a pact of mutual aid defense.

The undersigned, as due representatives of His Valiant Majesty, King Irrjir Frenthes V of Hyrágec, and

Her Most Puissant Majesty, Taxitiki II, Elektor and Lich Queen of Chi'tixi, commit their respective nations in this bond of filial love and everlasting friendship.

Lady Chattori,
for Chi'tixi.

Lady Whirripi Andjit,
for Hyrágec.

An Open Letter to Emperor Sydath II (1536)

The herald of Aradéc seems to believe that you are at the beck and call of us all and that there is no need for the courts. Thus we make this request in order to ensure due diligence.

It is our belief, through our close contact in the past, that the point of the courts was to have this sort of issue resolved by them and that this case is clear enough in its questions of law to establish clear precedent and legal standing on the two issues to which it pertains.

The citizens of Kommolek believe that the issue is clear as it is, but request that you either explicitly explain to Xanthi, herald of Aradéc, that to provide the northern Illuvarians with crystals or other military aid would be considered a crime.

Or that you clarify to him that it is an issue for courts to rule upon and for the next emperor to enforce or overrule as his or her own conscience dictates, as it seems that the Great Charter intended.

We thank you for your time and apologize for its use, which we did not feel should have been required.

Cortrah, Herald.

Envoy of the County Palatine of Kommolek.
Sardarthion.

An Open Letter to Emperor Sydath II, Pursuant to the Erroneous Claims of Kommolek (1536)

ARADÉC HAS REPEATEDLY DECLARED itself to be loyal and law-abiding, and we have supported the courts and coupled our only issue with the powers of the court with a suggested remedy. But as to matters pertaining to international relations between the Empire and the rest of the world, we were not aware that this had been defined by a set of laws and put under the domain of the imperial court system.

We remind Kommolek of the vassalage agreement he is under with the Emperor (as are we all), and that this

includes as part of the feudal system the right to request such an audience of our liege lord. Request, not demand.

Furthermore, why are you wasting the Emperor's time, which you seem to feel is limited and not sufficient for addressing basic matters of state, with an issue you define as under the law and thus under the purvey of the Imperial court system?

Xanthi, Herald.

Envoy of the Electoral Kingdom of Aradéc.
Sardarthion.

Memorandum of Reply to the Envoys of Aradéc and Kommolek (1536)

HIS MAJESTY WISHES me to reprimand the gentlemen from Kommolek and Aradéc for their failure to bring bon bons.

Is the question really "is it all right to arm people who are making war on imperial subjects?" Because I can't believe I have to answer this. Ask any child in the streets the question. They can school you.

Curtis Interruptus,

Imperial Minister for Making Sure Everyone Understands His Majesty's Opinion.

An Open Letter to the Emperor and the Imperial Chancellor (1536)

WE GREET YOU IN THE NAME TIRACH BÆN, King in the South, and we pray this message find you in good health and with a plethora of bon bons. Unfortunately we have someone who, being slain, is in far worse health. It's true. Since the previous Emperor has seen fit to send a spy into our realm and pardon him after being caught. We ask if this new spy, who was also a wenemet, was in Imperial Employ and has a pardon waiting for him post-dated perhaps with the Heralds? If so, you may collect what is left of his person.

If not, we will be using the opportunity to make use of a recently designed spell of ours that rips the spirit back from the beyond and ties it to the interrogator as a minor bound immortal. This forces the spirit to either serve the caster loyally until death or unbinding or answer a series of questions on their actions.

We have no wish to parade around with an Imperial servant bound to our mage, due to the respect for the office, but we have no qualms for any other realm who may have sent them. In conjunction with our psychometric castings and the testimony of the spirit itself we shall have

all that we need for a case requesting an Imperial Bann. Or better yet and more fitting that the realm who spied shall have to pay their trade income to us as penalty. Yes, that is very fitting.

We thank the Emperor and Chancellor for taking time to read our missive and we do hope that if the dead weneman is their servant that they will claim him in timely manner and with all proper legal paperwork.

Sincerely,

King Tirach Bæn,

King of the Apotheotic Kingdom of Fell Zarkhandu.
Zarkhandu, Vúhlath Prefecture.

Proclamation of King Deric II (1537)

AS WE HAVE BEEN ADVISED the matter is not completely clear to every party, no Aradécans ships have ever sailed north of Sahúlian waters. Neither have we have ever met any Oratoans in person, not does Aradéc trade with any Oratoan realms. As we have said repeatedly, Aradéc is a loyal, law-abiding Imperial realm and the public record entirely substantiates this claim.

Furthermore, we are not responsible for the actions of any other party beyond those of the subjects of our realm at this time, having no vassals and no alliances compelling such responsibility.

King Deric II,

Electoral King of Aradéc.
Darnuldeis, Pranyi Prefecture.

Treaty of Bratarak (1537)

Hostilities between the Kingdom of Zarkhandu and the County of Murali shall cease, effective immediately, and by this treaty peace is established between these two realms and according to the following articles.

1. The Kingdom of Zarkhandu cedes control of the region of Toworrah to the County of Murali.
2. The Kingdom of Zarkhandu will release all Tarotist slaves within their realm, giving them travel papers to the County of Murali.
3. The County of Murali will evacuate the city of Bratarak and the fortress of Rhetan in Zadok Prefecture in good order, leaving them neither despoiled nor damaged.
4. The Kingdom of Zarkhandu will allow the armed forces of the former March of Ebalon to

leave, with arms and honours intact, from the region of Zadok, to travel to Muralian territory with a guarantee of safe passage, or else to leave from the docks of the city.

King Tirach Ben,
King of the Apotheotic Kingdom of Fell Zarkhandu.
Zarkhandu, Vúhlath Prefecture.

Count Kilyara Torthes II,
Count of Murali.
Karrka, Muralis Prefecture.

The College of Electors to the House of Peers:
Repeal of the Non-Continuity Ordinance (1537)

IT IS WITH GREAT JOY and hope for the future of Sahûl that we present to you, the House of Peers, the results of the Electoral vote regarding the removal of the *Non-Continuity Ordinance* in its entirety from the *Great Charter*.

With an overwhelming majority of eight for and one against, we give over to you the honourable task of taking up this Amendment, for proper discussion and vote and hope for advancement to the Empress for ratification.

Lady Gritterix of Gnak,
Electoral Envoy of the Queendom of Chi'tixi.
Sardarthion.

Edict of Joy (1537)

PEOPLE OF HYRÁGEC! The year of mourning has passed. While many will still grieve in their hearts and minds, and we will continue to recognize that grief with all due compassion and love that we owe to our neighbors, the time has come to bring brightness to the Kingdom of Hyrágec once more.

In the spirit of healing, of growth, and of new life, we have, today decided to create a subsidy among the dye-makers and textile guilds for the purpose of providing new clothing to the poor. Today we make clothing available to the common kindred filled with bright and bold colors.

We have recently ended our trek through the valley of pain and sorrow as a Kingdom. And as a Kingdom, we shall cleave fast to one another under the glorious heritage of our Kingdom, our Empire, and our most righteous Faith in Urda. As an outward show of our passage from darkness and despair into light and the spring of new life, we commission the dye-makers and textile

guilds to provide, free of charge to the common kindred, dye and cloth for the creation of one new garment per member of the household.

King Frenthes V,
Kingdom of Hyrágec.
Pahasar, Kerneveg Prefecture.

House of Peers: Repeal of the Non-Continuity
Ordinance (1538)

With a vote of 9-1, establishing a quorum of Peers, the Peers vote to repeal the *Non-Continuity Ordinance* in its entirety from the *Great Charter*.

The Peers join their Electoral brethren in the Empire and we are proud of all involved, Elector and Peer, for their diligent work and effort in securing the future of the Empire. With this vote, the repeal goes to the Empress for approval.

Irrjir Lucian,
Speaker for the House of Peers.
Sardarthion.



Imperial Strength Index

#	Realm	Player	Forum Name	E-mail	ISI
<i>The Great Powers</i>					
1	Aradéc	Charles Hurst	Xanthi	charlesh@teleport.com	2,398.9
2	Itaxik / Empress	Michael Warner	Galen	mel451@comcast.net	2,362.3
3	Thace, Elector	Gareth Anderson	kolgrim	kolgrim@gmail.com	1,920.6
4	Cappargarnia	Kyle Kinghorn	Doppleganger	kyle.kinghorn@gmail.com	1,820.8
5	Averon	Kevin Lawrence	Averon Inc	privatej67@yahoo.com	1,796.3
<i>Major Powers</i>					
6	Chi'tixi	Steven Cagg	Priest King	ragnarstation@hotmail.com	1,751.9
7	Araxes	Christopher Hord	chordam7	chordam7@yahoo.com	1,669.2
8	Ingazi (all)	Harry Jago	jago	jagoh@yahoo.com	1,646.3
9	Zarkhandu	Theo Moriarty	Mandala of Blood	tmoriarty@gmail.com	1,540.7
10	Church U&T	Anne Porter	Cupcake	crabbycupcakes@gmail.com	1,512.0
11	Golmath	Jon Powell?	Golmath	jon.g.powell@gmail.com	1,467.1
12	Atuburrk	Adam Sherman	Gonnagle	mad.angus@yahoo.com	1,374.4
13	Elphárec	Lisa Kaattari Garbush	Kaattari	kayleerobinson@gmail.com	1,215.6
14	Thace, Duchy	Ken Ditto		quilldrake@gmail.com	1,054.1
15	Pexiki	Don Crysler	Plymouth Superbirds		1,024.0
<i>Regional Powers</i>					
16	Taneki	Don Wynne	meriden	dpatrickwynne@gmail.com	994.6
17	Veiled Masters	James Hazeltine	Von Malvalken	jhazeltine@pleiadesmm.com	912.5
18	Tiryowglas	Michael Johnson	Minister of Defense	printermanmj@aol.com	908.1
19	Hyrágec	Paul Copenhagen	Wombatia	rossclannoble@yahoo.com	852.8
20	Murali	Sigvald Thorsen		sigvaldmartin@msn.com	799.3
21	Yani	Miles Luna	Ryushi	meryushi@yahoo.com	794.2
22	IOC	Jason Pearl	redoubtable1	redoubtable1@comcast.net	625.9
23	Sakkar	Nelson Merritt	hemmy	nelson.merritt@wachovia.com	581.0
24	Kicitchat	David Harrington	Sarnath		557.0
<i>Minor Powers</i>					
25	Kachar	<i>This Realm is open for a player!</i>			469.1
26	Duedhyn	Rick Bishop	ouroboros		464.1
27	Carcë	Attie Kremmling	Attie		442.8
28	Tokatl	Shelley Woodberry	Skipperway	desrik@comcast.net	439.1
29	Lynnarvor	<i>This Realm is open for a player!</i>			428.9
30	Pehuatoka	<i>This Realm is open for a player!</i>			218.7
31	Kumara	<i>This Realm is open for a player!</i>			216.8
32	Iäthedain	<i>This Realm is open for a player!</i>			194.3
33	Ravens	Alex James	Clan Dhanos of Duedyn	ClanDhanos@yahoo.com	182.2



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