

Ambassador to Asavea

Spring 382YE Briefing

Ambassador to Asavea

This briefing has been prepared for the Ambassador to Asavea. It is primarily based on information supplied by civil servants who staff the embassy in Nemoria but there are also letters from Lady Madrianna of the Blue Stones who advises the Plenum on Imperial matters. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing. It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

A Shrine in Sarvos

Lady Madrianna is pleased that you are making progress on securing permission to allow the diplomats at the embassy in Sarvos to construct a temple dedicated to Aseus who Tamed the Wind, patroness of diplomats. She looks forward to news that you have secured Senate approval. As she mentioned previously, the Asaveans would provide the architects needed, as well as all the materials required, and would pay for local labour for the the construction as they did with the Temple at Oran.

On completion the temple would increase the visitors to Sarvos and the embassy from Asavea; that would bring increased benefits for the ambassador as they manage the embassy and would also improve relations with the Plenum and the Asavean people.

The civil service reiterate that almost any Asavean priesthood would leap at the chance to build a temple, of any size, in the Bay of Catazaar area.

Civil Service Summary

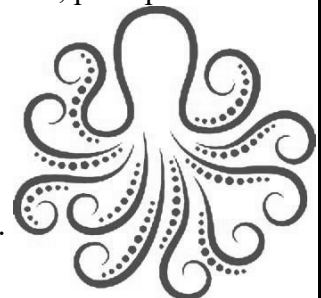
- * Lady Madrianna wishes the Imperial Senate to commission a temple to Aseus who Tamed the Wind, patroness of diplomats near the embassy in Sarvos.
- * The temple would not count as one of the Empire's commissions for the season and the Asaveans would provide all the necessary materials and pay for local labour.
- * The temple would further improve diplomatic relations with the Asaveans.
- * The temple would bring more visitors to the embassy, which would increase the range and amount of materials available to the ambassador each season.
- * If this temple is built, the Asaveans are likely to ask for further temples.

Grendel Diplomacy

Lady Madrianna agrees that peace between neighbours is generally preferable to war. In a somewhat humorous tone, she points out that as the Asaveans enjoy the friendship of the Grendel, and the Empire does not, this grants them more trade opportunities. There is an Asavean embassy in the Grendel city of Dubhtraig, and it is possible that the diplomats there might be asked to encourage the Grendel to accept peace overtures from the Empire. Especially once the diplomats in Sarvos have completed the construction of their shrine to the God of Diplomats, perhaps?

Civil Service Summary

- * The Asaveans have no vested interest in improving relations between the Empire and the Grendel - while the two remain at war and the Asaveans remain friendly to both they benefit from trading with both nations
- * Asavean diplomats are in a position to serve as mediators, or to arrange diplomatic meetings, but they are unlikely to do so without some incentive.
- * Madrianna is hinting strongly that the first step toward securing Asavean



assistance in arranging a meeting would be the construction of a shrine to the God of Diplomats in Sarvos.

Invitation to the Minister of Military Procurement

On behalf of the Ministry for Military Procurement, Lady Madrianna thanks you for your kind invitation but fears she must decline. Sadly, even without the current disruption in the Asavean satrapies, the Master is unlikely to be able to find time to travel to the Empire to engage in a fight against the Empire's finest warriors. She wishes you good fortune, and that the gods grant your team victory.]

Marrowort

House Julianno has taken receipt of the 50 doses of marrowort you provided, and paid the 50 ingots of orichalcum as agreed. They are satisfied with the trade, but future arrangements of this kind will need to go directly through the Ministry for Military Procurement.

Asavean Independent Captains

Lady Madrianna apologises that she is not familiar with the Druj you ask about. She has heard of them, of course - she believes they are a particularly unpleasant tribe of savage orcs that neighbour the Empire. It is unlikely any "independent captains" would be interested in visiting the Empire to suppress angry orcs, however. As you no doubt know, there is currently some minor unrest in a few of the frontier satraps and they have requested Nemorian aid in dealing with these revolutionaries. Consequently, there will be more than enough work for any soldiers whose affection for money outweighs their patriotism. Purely out of academic interest, however, how much would a "suitable fee" amount to? Obviously, Asavean captains would be more inclined to travel vast distances to engage in its foreign wars if there was a temple to the God of War in the Empire - the Black Bull is much more associated with guards and sentinels than professional soldiers.

Civil Service Summary

- * The Asaveans claim to have no contact with the Druj
- * Asavea is currently having difficulty with rebels and revolutionaries; their soldiers find full time employment close to home and have minimal interest in traveling to the Empire.
- * A temple dedicated to the Asavean God of War would encourage Asavean captains to visit the Empire and reduce the incentive that would need to be paid.
- * Lady Madrianna is interested in suggestions for how much the Empire would be prepared to pay Asavean mercenaries to come to the Empire.

Imperial Independent Captains

On the subject of independent captains however... the Minister for Military Procurement has been asking her for information about Imperial mercenaries. They have heard several reports of League Free Companies in particular - indeed several imported pamphlets recounting the exciting activities of the mercenaries and bravos of the League have proved popular in parts of Nemoria.

With a pressing need to restore peace to some of the frontier satrapies disrupted by Sumaah agitators, Lady Madrianna wonders if you can offer her some guidance as to how to go about securing the services of mercenary captains prepared to travel to the Archipelago to fight alongside their Asavean friends. What kind of payment would entice these brave warriors to visit the far west?

Civil Service Summary

- * Lady Madrianna requests suggestions about how to recruit Imperial mercenaries to fight in Asavea



Almodin Oktístis

Almodin Oktístis, Priest of the Builder, has apparently been enjoying his time in the Empire. He has been overseeing commissions for the Senate in several nations and he and his associates and apprentices are proud of the work they have done. At the moment he is overseeing two new commissions each season, but that is the limit of what he can manage by himself. However, if the Imperial Senate invites some more of his fellows from Nemoria to come to the empire, he believes that together they could oversee a third commission each season (provided of course it was worth their time - nothing costing less than 30 wains).

However, since the Senate agreed to *desecrate* the castle of Aleksandra's Watch, he has been beside himself with grief and fury. He has written half a dozen angry letters to your office, and apparently half a dozen more to the Asavean embassy in Sarvos, demanding that something be done. He calms down a little as the season progresses, but sends a clipped letter to the civil service warning them that designing structures for the Empire is a profoundly spiritual act for a devout priest of Baddu. If another of the structures he has built is defiled in this way, he will immediately quit the Empire. If this happens, the Senate immediately lose their additional commission opportunities. Any construction he has been retained to oversee that has not been completed will require another motion from the senate to continue building and count against that season's construction tally.

Furthermore, if Almodin Oktístis quite the Empire in a rage this will certainly damage relations with the Asavean Archipelago. Lady Madrianna herself mentioned letters she has received from the architect. Although she currently presents a neutral face in regards to the issue, she has asked for clarification on the matter. She does caution, however, that reports of the Empire wilfully tearing down statues of the gods will be viewed in a very poor light by the priests in Asavea, and by many of the faithful.

The civil service suggest that one way to deal with this problem might be to make a suitable gift to Almodin Oktístis for his work in the Empire - a shipment of half a dozen white granite for example for him to take back to Asavea for his own projects - and then encourage him to return to Nemoria. Once he is out of the country, as long as the Senate is discreet, it should be possible to adjust the structures he has built without causing further incidents - although this will cost them their additional commissioning options, and it would probably be a good idea to ensure no Asaveans discover these redesigns have taken place.

Civil Service Summary

- * Almodin Oktístis, Priest of the Builder, currently allows the Senate to commission two additional constructions each season and receives an 8 Throne stipend in return.
- * If a temple of Baddu the builder were commissioned, he could recruit more followers of the Builder god and allow the senate to commission a third construction each season.
- * The redesign of Aleksandra's Watch in Karsk has angered him greatly - if it happens again he is certain to return to Asavea where he will denounce the Empire to any who will listen.
- * If the Empire no longer wants his services, a small gift of a dozen white granite and encouragement to return to Nemoria would be sufficient to avoid the impact of any diplomatic repercussions.

Trade in relics

Lord Magnus Tullis, an influential member of a significant Plenum family, wishes to acquire relics of paragons and exemplars for his uncle. Magnus is due to take his uncle's seat on the Plenum, and wishes to show his appreciation by securing spiritually significant objects for his *viagem*. Magnus has secured the services of a Freeborn trader - Jules i Conzara i Guerra - who will be attending the summit during the Spring Equinox to talk to people about purchasing such items. They are expected to arrive in



Anvil around three in the afternoon on Saturday, and intend to set up shop in the Forge tavern. Jules has sent out an open invitation to anyone who wishes to speak to them - and especially anyone who has relics of the paragons and exemplars to sell - but has also specifically requested a meeting with the Cardinal of Prosperity, Cesare Enzo di Trivento.

Jules i Conzara i Guerra is an Imperial citizen, obviously, but is operating on retainer to an influential Asavean noble. Lady Madrianna has informally requested that, as ambassador, you do what you consider appropriate to help them about their task. A satisfactory outcome may well result in another well-placed member of the Plenum who is favourably disposed toward the Empire.

Civil Sevice Summary

A Freeborn trader - Jules i Conzara i Guerra - has been recruited to purchase relics of the paragons and exemplars on behalf of a powerful Asavean noble.

The trader is expected to attend Anvil at three in the afternoon on Saturday, intending to set up shop in the Forge.

Military Procurement

The Master of Military Procurement continues to be keen to acquire Imperial herbs for the coming conflict with the rebellious satrapies. The ministry is especially interested in securing Bladeroot and Marrowort, both of which grow poorly in Nemoria. The Master of Military Procurement is not interested in dealing with individual merchants, and Lady Madrianna has agreed to liase with your office to organise the trade should the Empire be interested.

The ministry is interested in securing Marrowort or Bladeroot in bulk. They are prepared to exchange herbs for ingots of orichalcum or tempest jade, or measures of iridescent gloaming, as per the Ambassador's request. They will play a flat rate of 30 ingots or measures for every 25 marrowort, or 40 measures or ingots for every 25 bladeroot.

Civil Service Summary

* Merchants from the Sarcophan Delves are believed to have already opened negotiations, and are likely to have secured contracts with the Nemorians by the start of the Summer Solstice.

House Tarquinius

Lady Madrianna reports that the Tarquinius have grudgingly accepted the return of three wains of white granite, but they remain less than happy. According to the Tarquinius, *eight* wains were lost to the wreckers operating on the Brass Coast shores. They are pressing to know when the remaining five wains will be returned to them. While Lady Madrianna has passed on your frustration with their attempts to recover their property, she reports that they have largely dismissed your concerns.

In a candid moment, she reminds you that the Tarquinius are rarely happy with the Empire regardless of what they do, but that she and her office at least appreciate your kindness in giving the disgruntled plenum family *some* of their white granite back. Although she is meticulously careful about the words that she commits to paper, reading between the lines it seems that she shares your sense of irritation that the Tarquinius prefer to act independently of her office. Ultimately though there is absolutely nothing that she can do to prevent it - they travelled to the Empire as independent citizens of Asavea, so they were not under the auspices of her office. She is authorized to handle diplomatic relations between Asavea and the Empire, any Asavean who chooses can act independently of her.

Civil Service Summary

* Three wains of white granite have been returned to the Tarquinius family.



- * The Tarquinius want to know what has happened to the other five wains.
- * Official Asavean business with the Empire should be handled by the Ambassador, but individual Asaveans are free to do as they please when pursuing their own concerns. Neither their ambassador nor the civil service have any ability to control such things and it is certain that some of these matters will continue to happen independently of either.

Exploiting Trade Opportunities

OOO Note: If the ambassador wishes to take advantage of any trade opportunity outlined above, they need to make sure the materials are handed in at GOD after the event and logged to their account - then e-mail plot@profounddecisions.co.uk with details of the trade before the end of downtime submission.



Ambassador to Axos

Winter 381YE

Ambassador to Axos

This briefing has been prepared for the Ambassador to Axos. It is primarily based on information supplied by civil servants who staff the embassy in the Towers of Kantor but there are also letters from Ilarch Maxatios, neutral representative of the four citadels. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing. It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador to Axos. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

Spy Network

The news that preparations are underway to secure a spy network in the Mountains of the Moon is well received by Ilarch Maxatious. He looks forward to hearing that work has been completed. Presumably there will be no problem with the Axou assisting the Empire in scouting the territory?

Civil Service Summary

- * Once Ilarch Maxatious receives news that the spy network is built, the Axou will assign five companies of soldiers to help scout the area.
- * The civil service caution that work has not yet begun on the spy network due to difficulties caused by the strategic situation in Zenith and Spiral. If the situation remains stable however they anticipate work will be completed by the beginning of the Summer Stolstice.

Dance of Navarr and Thorn

The ritual text for "The Dance of Navarr and Thorn" is now in the possession of the Halls of Maykop. Ilarch Maxatious has had eight wains of white granite delivered, and anticipates that you will be able to reimburse the Imperial Conclave on their behalf.

As per the earlier agreement, nobody will perform the ritual in Axos without further extensive negotiations with the Empire. The Axou are sensible enough to wish to avoid potentially damaging the relative quiescence of the vallorn. The ritual will not be shared with a third party without explicit permission from the Imperial Conclave. It will be studied only by respected Maykop necromantia. In the event of espionage, the citadel of Maykop will pay reparations to be agreed between Ilarch Maxatious and the Ambassador to Axou should that extremely unlikely situation occur.

Civil Service Summary

- * Following the successful Declaration of Dissemination by the Imperial conclave, the ritual text for Dance of Navarr and Thorn has been delivered to the Axou.
- * Eight wains of white granite have been delivered to the Ambassador, on the understanding that he will reimburse the conclave.

Vallorn Investigation

Ilarch Maxatious is pleased to receive your summary, and has shared it with reputable scholars both in Kantor and the other citadels. They are particularly concerned about the suggestion that weakening the vallorn may make it more aggressive. If that is the case it makes it significantly less likely the Grand Ilarchs will be enthusiastic about the idea of extending the trod network to Axos. The citadels have little interest in facing the destructive force of the vallorn if they do not have to.



That said, Ilarch Maxatious will bear your warning about harvesting weirwood from the vallorn in mind. While weirwood is very valuable in Axos, it is doubtful that securing it will be worth unleashing the fury of the vegetative horror that occupies central Axos.

White Granite Trade

The Ilarch is pleased to accept the trade of 5 weirwood for 5 white granite, but the current informal arrangement is not ideal. Axou captains are increasingly concerned about the threats of being preyed upon by pirates; they are loathe to carry valuable cargos of granite or weirwood as such commodities are of great interest to the orcs. Maxatious has a suggestion however. By applying an extension to the Black Sails Quay, it would be feasible for Axos to export white granite and import Imperial weirwood. The only potential challenge to such an arrangement is the continued threat of Grendel piracy. Extending the docks with additional provisions for Axou warships, however, would both mollify the concerns of these captains and protect the vessels carrying this valuable cargo. Once imported, the white granite could be made available to either the Quaymaster of the Black Sails or the Ambassador to Axos, as the Senate sees fit.

Building such an extension will require 10 wains of weirwood, 20 crowns in labour costs, and require a senate motion to commission. It would count as one of the twelve commissions each season the Senate is able to oversee. There would be some costs involved in handling the materials, giving the Black Sails Quays an upkeep of 5 Thrones each season. In return however either the Quaymaster or the Ambassador (as chosen by the Senate) would be able to exchange up to ten wains of Imperial weirwood each season for an equal amount of white granite, in the same manner as using a ministry.

Maps

Ilarch Maxatious has accepted your offer of seven wains of weirwood in return for a copy of his rough map of the territory south of Spiral which the people of Skoura call "Mahal" and the Grendel apparently call "Mareave." He mentions that his map is somewhat out of date, having been created a century or more ago when the orcs of the Broken Shore overran Mahal and enslaved those Skouran folk who dwelt there and were not able to retreat east into the mountain valleys and deepholds.

Civil service summary

- * A rough map of Mahal/Mareave has been provided by Ilarch Maxatious. As previously mentioned it is not adequate for scrying purposes.
- * The map will be provided by the Secretary to the Diplomatic Corps.

Slavery

The Axou situation with regard to the abolition slavery is now pretty much common knowledge, For now the subject is a major point of discussion for the Axou people. The Ilarch Maxatious waits with interest to see how the situation develops.

Civil Service Summary

- * If the high level of trade is maintained for the next two seasons, Axos will outlaw all trade in slaves and not allow any new slaves to be taken
- * If the high level of trade is maintained for the next five years, Axos will free all their slaves.
- * In the event that the Empire can provide 100 wains each of weirwood, white granite, and mithril the Grand Ilarchs would outlaw slavery immediately, using the materials to compensate for some of their losses.



Contacting Skoura

Ilarch Maxatious seems a little concerned in his reply regarding contact with Skoura. He does not believe he or his office have ever said they would provide such details to you? He would be happy to help, of course, but right now is not a good time. It would also be unethical to share valuable diplomatic information with you without first confirming the willingness of the Skouran people to deal with the Empire. They are after all a very insular people. The Axou have generations - centuries even - of experience handling Skouran sensitivities. Perhaps if you appraise Ilarch Maxatious of your reasons for wanting to contact them, he may be able to pass a message along on your behalf?

The civil service in Axos continue to push the Ilarch. The Axou diplomat continues to prevaricate. In the opinion of those civil service based in Axos the Ilarch will not give the Empire this information without a significant inducement of some sort. The likely explanation is that the Axou value their relationship with the Empire and don't want to give the Empire a diplomatic introduction to another power that might quickly become a rival for the Empire's interest. At the same time, the Axou appear to enjoy favoured trade partner status with the Skourans - and do not wish to risk being displaced by their wealthy and powerful neighbour.

Civil Service Summary

* The Axou likely benefit by their control of access to the Skourans, they would need significant persuasion to be provide any information that would assist with this.

The Khiklotu Khrysoú

As recounted in the Ambassador's last briefing, and repeated here for the sake of completeness, the Khiklotu Khrysoú have liased with the civil servants and arranged a costing for a commission. The intention is to source their own herbs. With that in mind, the costs and potential benefits have changed only slightly. For 12 wains of white granite and 24 crowns, the Imperial Senate could commission a ministry in Therunin that would allow the citizen appointed to purchase orichalcum, beggars lye and tempest jade at the rates shown in the table. For 12 wains of weirwood and 24 crowns the Imperial Senate could commission a ministry that allowed the purchase of mana at the rates shown.

Purchase Price	Ingots
140 Rings	4 orichalcum, 4 beggars Lye, 4 tempest jade
340 Rings	8 orichalcum, 8 beggars Lye, 8 tempest jade
700 Rings	12 orichalcum, 12 beggars Lye, 12 tempest jade
960 Rings	16 orichalcum, 16 beggars Lye, 16 tempest jade

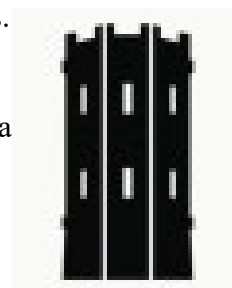
Purchase Price	mana
140 Rings	8 mana
340 Rings	16 mana
700 Rings	25 mana
960 Rings	33 mana

Alternatively, the Empire could commission a single substantial trading enclave in Therunin. That would require 12 wains of white granite and 12 wains of weirwood and cost 48 crowns in total but it would allow a single citizen to be appointed to manage both trade streams simultaneously, and would count as a single commission.

The Khiklotu Khrysoú would ideally like a resolution one way or another to their offer by the end of the year - the opportunity to build this commission will be lost at the end of the Autumn Equinox 382YE. Exarch Maxatious hints that here has already been some interest from another great nation in trading Axou raw materials for herbs and coinage.

Civil Service Summary

- * The civil service have included estimates of the potential for the two ministries.
- * They could be built as two separate ministries using two commissions - and appointing two citizens, one for each.
- * They could be built as a single ministry using one commission and appointing a single citizen to oversee it.
- * The Khiklotu Khrysoú believe they will be able to purchase their herbs more cheaply in Cargo or at King's Quay than through a ministry in Therunin.
- * The opportunity will be lost at the end of the Autumn Equinox 382YE.



The Eater of Hope

Ilarch Maxatious has passed on your interest in entities such as the "Eater of Hope" but warns that the priests and theological scholars of Axos fiercely debate the nature of the Labyrinth and the Creator's jailers. Perhaps if you could be more specific on how much weirwood you would be prepared to offer, and what you would expect in return, he may be able to encourage someone to either write a summary or come to the Empire to discuss the matter with priests of the Way.

Regarding Auras

Ilarch Maxatious acknowledges your concerns on the matter of the altercation between the Axou captain and the Highborn. He is pleased that the the situation was defused, and while those involved may be unhappy, there has been no diplomatic incident. Indeed, he commends you for your careful and diplomatic handling of the issue.

He stresses that priests visiting the Empire are warned that the Way is intolerant of outside spiritual beliefs, but there is a limit to what he can achieve. The Grand Ilarchs for the most part do not attempt to interfere in spiritual matters, leaving believers to their own devices as long as they do not break the law or strive to create civil unrest. He will reiterate the safety guidance to those visiting the Empire.

On the other hand, he believes that the aura in question was created during a discussion between a captain and some merchants in the area specifically set aside for consecration. This area of the quays was set aside for the use of traders who prefer to conduct their business in such a setting. The Ilarch wants a clear legal ruling as to whether citizens of Axos are allowed to freely create consecrated areas at the Black Sails Quays or not. If this is an issue, would it be possible to receive dispensation to consecrate areas at the Quays for those who prefer to conduct their business under Axos spiritual conditions?

If dispensation cannot be arranged, then that will raise significant concerns of an inequity in the relationship between Axou merchants and Highborn merchants. The idea that Highborn priests can freely create auras to assist their traders, but the Axou cannot do likewise could easily be seen as unfair and might lead to complications. The Ilarch will seek advice but suggests that it might be better to remove the area set aside to create auras if that is the case.

Trade Opportunities

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Mahal Map Legend

These additional notes are provided alongside the map of Mahal sent by Ilarch Maxatious. They are by no means current, dating to a time before the Grendel invaded and conquered the territory.

Apulath is, or was, an Urizen outpost in the region of **Keirnath**. The Urizen living here did not retreat west when the Grendel came; its assumed they either fled back to Urizen or were enslaved by the Grendel. There was a lighthouse here, apparently built to the same plans as several other lighthouses along the north-eastern bay. It watched over the main trade route into Urizen.

Olodath contained extensive forests nestled among the foothills of the mountains. There was a high pass here into Urizen that was sometimes used by travelers, but which was impassable to larger forces. There were other high passes in this region, although the Axou believe they were collapsed when the Skouran people abandoned Mahal to the orcs.

Beorath, in the region of **Barreth**, was the main settlement in Mahal. It was built a very long time ago by the ancestors of the modern Skouran people - a fortified port. Much of it was built of white granite quarried in the mountains to the east. The **Red River** flowed down a great cascade south of the settlement.

Marath was an extremely rugged region in the foothills of the mountains. The fortress-mine of **Fundindelf** was found in the southern hills. The mineworkings were apparently responsible for the distinct crimson colour of the river. The fortress at Fundindelf was apparently ruined by the orcs, but the pass it protected into the mountains of Skoura was collapsed as the last defenders retreated east.

Keirsuth was the southernmost region of Mahal. There were several fortified settlements here, intended to resist the regular raids from the southern orc tribes. They were quickly overwhelmed when the major Grendel offensive came. In the northern part of the region stand the **Watchers**, on either side of the Red River. There two great statues depicted an historic meeting between the original inhabitants of Mahal and the mysterious "Sea People"; they gazed out to sea and each was set with a great lightstone to serve as a beacon to sailors.



Imperial Consul

Spring 382YE

Imperial Consul

This briefing has been prepared for the Imperial Consul by the civil service. It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Consul. The consul has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

Otkodov Concerns

A month ago a letter has arrived at the civil service offices from the Thule Ambassador, Rak Who-Speaks-For-The-Dragon's-Undivided, representing the Dragons of Otkodov.

Rak is somewhat concerned that the Imperial Ambassador to Otkodov does not respond to any of his correspondence. He has made repeated queries about matters of interest to both the people or Otkodov and the Empire - regarding such things as the purchase of the Gildenheim Runeforge, the protection of Karsk from Druj invasion, the trade of ritual texts, and serious matters relating to the nature of the people of Skarsind, who call themselves "Imperial orcs".

At no time has the ambassaor deigned to answer any of these queries, even in the negative. There has been only minimal confirmation that the ambassador has shared the urgent warning from the Dragons relating to the use of certain curses in Sermersuaq, and Karsk.

Rak reminds the Imperial Consul that it was the Empire who demanded a formal embassy and an ambassador, when the Thule were content to leave things somewhat informal. Given that is the case, he formally requests that the Imperial Consul liase with the Ambassador to Otkodov as to why his requests go unanswered. It may well prove moot if the Empire chooses to end the peace that has existed between the two powerful nations for the last three years, but if they are still as committed to peace as the Thule are some intercession with the Ambassador to Otkodov might be merited.

Civil Service Summary

* The Thule Ambassador has actively sought out the Imperial Consul and requested their intercession.

* The Imperial Consul is expected to liaise with Imperial ambassadors and similar positions and report back to the Senate

Jotun Emissaries

A band of as many as a dozen Jotun orcs are traveling towards Anvil. They are expected to arrive shortly before the Summit. The contingent is led by one of the northern Jarls, an old pale skinned orc called Ustigar, along with a light honour guard. Observers have also noted the presence of two orcs of the Hierro clan among their number. Both of these former Lasambrian orcs have visited Anvil before - the orc "priest" Kenza and the former diplomat Juevar.

Legally, the Imperial Consul would expect to be the host for any formal diplomatic delegation, but the orcs claim to be guests of Liissá of Sigehold bound for a meeting with the Jarl of the Golden People, Avisena i Kharizmi i Guerra. Their party of five are waiting to hear from their hosts as to when when they should arrive. The Secretary for the Diplomatic Corps is unlikely to be able to furnish you with any information about this delegation – you may wish to liase with the Jotuns' alleged hosts.



The Great Forest Orcs

The Great Forest orcs continue to settle in in Therunin. Work has begun on the Holt of the Oak but then immediately stalled – it appears that insufficient amounts of weirwood and money have been provided to the orcs. They are making little progress.

The orcs have confirmed that they are sending some of their number to Anvil for the Spring Equinox, with instructions to speak to the senators for Therunin and Reikos. Apparently the delegates bear gifts related to the assistance given by the people of those territories in the form of healing herbs.

The delegation is expected to reach Anvil "at some point on Saturday, probably in the afternoon, perhaps". There is almost no chance that the Secretary to the Diplomatic Corps may know more.

The Grendel Orcs

There have been no diplomatic overtures from the Grendel orcs, although it is believed that a small contingent of Wintermark heroes may be meeting with some Grendel to arrange the recovery of the body of Dogri Thulebane on Friday evening.



Ambassador to the Commonwealth

Spring 382YE

Ambassador to the Commonwealth

This briefing has been prepared for the Ambassador to the Commonwealth. It is primarily based on information supplied by civil servants who staff the embassy in Volkavaar but there are also letters from Militärattache Ludkhannah Schöningen of die Stahlhalle. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing. It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador to the Commonwealth. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

Slavery

Militärattache Schöningen remains deeply sceptical of your claims that the Empire is moving Jarm towards a more egalitarian society, without slavery, but they are wise enough not to dismiss you out of hand. If you can demonstrate that your approach works, they will have to accept that, and adjust their own strategy. For now though, they will stick to their principles. At least until you are able to provide concrete evidence that your "conversion through trade" policy has yielding the long-term, tangible results you seem confident it will.

He reluctantly concedes the point that "conversion by trade effectively doubles ones capability of removing slavery in the world since it allows your armies to defeat uncooperative slavers while at the same time defeating slavers without any need of military force." but stresses that this is only really true if the strategy works. Somewhat wryly he points out that the same view could also be expressed by Jarm - that they are slowly converting the Empire to acceptance of slavery by building up trade links between the two nations.

Finally, he expresses another concern. Even if the Empire manages to some concessions from the Jarmish toward their slaves, this will not really change the culture of Jarm. In the Principalities all power rests in the hands of an elite few; those without magical ability are barely citizens; and individual Princes are free to rule their domains as they see fit often to the detriment of the common good. Will your "conversion through trade" help with this untenable situation also?

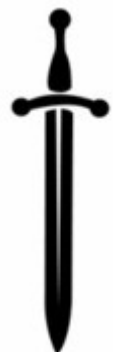
Sumaah

Militärattache Schöningen is a little surprised that the Empire did not treat the declaration of war by the Sumaah more seriously. He cautiously expresses concern that dismissing an act of such magnitude the way the Empire appears to have done sends a clear message that the Republic is right to think the Empire disdains them and discounts their power. Militärattache Schöningen is not an adherent of your Way, but he knows enough to be aware that the Sumaah are - and that the Way teaches that the virtue of Pride is of paramount concern.

Is the ambassador really so confident that after years of treating Sumaah as if they are irrelevant, they will truly be keen to restore positive relations?

Trade in Weirwood

Die Stahlhalle is pleased with the result of the trade, securing 20 wains of Imperial weirwood for 160 ingots of metal. The trade was not without problems however; while transporting weirwood back home the Commonwealth convoy was attacked by Grendel pirates at the mouth of the Bay of Catazaar. Several lives were lost, although the weirwood made its way safely back to Leerdam. With that in mind, the Commonwealth will be unable to commit to purchasing any more weirwood at the moment.



Commonwealth Envoy

Militärattache Schönigen explains that there is some confusion amongst the Militäratt (Military Council) regarding your proposals for a "Slavery Summit". It is clear that they are interpreting this as the start of some kind of anti-slavery Alliance - the term they use is "Abolitionist Bloc" (Befreiungsbloc in Gemeinsamesprache).

However, your counterpart passes on the confusion amongst the Commonwealth Generals as to the intended nature of the the Summit, the Bloc and any forthcoming relationship. To that end, they are sending an Envoy - Gesandter Heike Messer - on a fact-finding mission to discuss these matters. They advise Envoy Messer is scheduled to arrive on the Friday evening, and expects to meet with yourself and any others involved in organising the summit.

Militärattache Schönigen takes pains to stress that whilst Envoy Messer has been sent on an official basis, they will not be in a position to say anything that will bind the decisions of the Generals, and are thus not considered a diplomat requiring an official audience.

Further information will likely be available through the Secretary to the Diplomatic Corps, Magistrate Cooper, at the summit itself.

Civil Service Summary

* The Commonwealth will send an Envoy, Heike Messer, to discuss an anti-slavery alliance

* The Envoy is expected to arrive on Friday evening, but will not require an official audience in the Senate chamber

Mercenaries

Militärattache Schönigen has every sympathy for the Empire's reticence to allow its mercenaries to travel overseas in this time of turmoil. As such he is confident that the Ambassador will understand that, with war imminently due with the Principalities of Jarm, there is a similar lack of interest among patriotic Commonwealth citizens in traveling to the Empire.

There is one obvious exception - defending the Commonwealth embassy in Siroc against dangerous Grendel raiders. Commonwealth Ambassador, Mila Eisenfalke has already shared plans to offer protection to the citizens of Madrugá, if the Empire is interested. For now though, while the 8 crowns you mention might be somewhat appealing to some soldiers keen to visit the Empire, there are currently no takers.

Der Bernsteinfarbene Tiegel

With regard to the Amber Crucible, it is unfortunate that the Ambassador was not able to secure interest earlier. Die Bernsteinfarbene Tiegel has made alternative arrangements, and have negotiated a townhouse in the Sumaah Republic city of Zemeh.

Militärattache Schönigen reminds you that he did make clear that the opportunity to host the artisans was available only until the end of the Winter Solstice.

Military Rituals

The Commonwealth is cautiously pleased to hear that you intend to redress the balance by providing them with a ritual text for Bound by Common Cause, and the divination ritual of use in military campaigns. Militärattache Schönigen looks forward to receiving the texts as soon as possible so that Commonwealth magicians can begin studying them. Likewise, if the Conclave does cease all trade in magic with Jarm, that will also be satisfactory, although it is obvious from their phrasing that the Militärattache does not entirely believe such a thing can be achieved in the long term.

He is a little bemused by your reference to the fact that Imperial magicians are interested



in initiating magical trade with the Commonwealth, and inquiring as to what kind of rituals they would be willing to trade. As the Militärattache has said on more than one occasion, the Commonwealth is not interested in dealing in military, or large-scale, magical techniques with the Empire at this time. They remain concerned that any rituals they might share with the Empire would either be shared with their political enemies, or used in pursuit of tyrannical conquest.

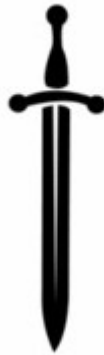
Civil Service Summary

* The civil service remind the ambassador that the Conclave can expedite gifts such as these by naming the Commonwealth as the recipient of the ritual text in the Declaration of Dissemination.

* The Commonwealth have made clear that they have no interest in trading rituals with the Empire at this time.

Trade Opportunities

OOO Note: If the ambassador wishes to take advantage of any trade opportunity outlined above, they need to make sure the materials are handed in at GOD after the event and logged to their account - then e-mail plot@profounddecisions.co.uk with details of the trade before the end of downtime submission.



Ambassador to Faraden

Spring 382YE

Ambassador to Faraden

Over the last three months there have been several letters bearing news of Faraden. Several come from the civil servants who staff the embassy at the Palace of the Five Winds, but there are also letters from Lady Saretta of the Red Moon, adviser on Imperial Trade to the Throne of the Five Winds. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing.

It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador for Faraden. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

Memory of Tal'shar

Lady Saretta is grieved to hear that Ambassador Tal'shar has been slain in battle. She found him a pleasant correspondent, and an accomplished diplomat. She expresses a sincere hope that he will swiftly find his back from the wasteland beyond the world, and return to his family once more. She thanks Gonzola i Riqueza for keeping her apprised of the situation and looks forward to corresponding with the new Ambassador appointed by the Senate.

On the understanding that the new Ambassador will be appointed, she has asked the Imperial civil service to provide a summary of current diplomatic relations between the Empire and Faraden.

Religion

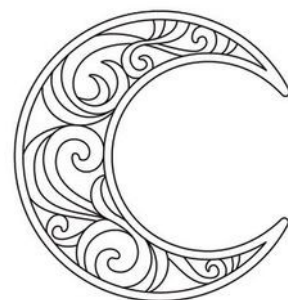
As arranged by Tal'shar, if the General Assembly of the Synod passes a statement of principle welcoming the priests of Faraden to speak at places of learning around the Empire, ideally including the Spire of the Open Hand in Bastion, then the Faraden would be open to receiving Imperial priests who wish to speak about their understanding of spirituality and virtue in turn. However to be compelling such a statement of principle would need to be supported by the Greater Majority of the General Assembly.

She cannot promise it will ease tensions, but it should disarm those priests who claim the Empire fears the teachings of Justice and seeks to suppress Faraden religion. It might also help improve understanding between the two nations, and at the very least beginning a discourse that might help to finally resolve the distrust between the priests of Faraden and the Empire – and vice versa.

An attempt was made during the Winter solstice to secure such a judgement from the General assembly, but it failed. As such, for now, the Faraden have declined the invitation and likewise have not issued an invitation of their own. With the recent mandate by Severin, "*that any attempt to incite people to confront religious differences or spiritual conflicts would be strongly inhibited for the following year*" it is not clear if such an opportunity is feasible.

Civil Service Summary

- * Faraden requests the General Assembly pass a statement of principle with a greater majority welcoming their priests to speak at places of learning around the Empire.
- * Such a statement may lead to at least two mandates – one to support Faraden priests speaking in the Empire, and one to support sending missionaries to speak in Faraden - depending on whether it is judged that doing so would create more spiritual conflict or not.
- * The statement may not ease current tensions, but it will ensure that they do not grow worse.



White Granite and Roads

As per the agreement, the Faraden have provided 80 wains of white granite for use in creating a major highway linking Anduz in Segura with Tassato, via the Blood Red Roads. The expectation of Lady Saretta is that the roads will now be completed, at the latest, by the beginning of the Winter Solstice 382YE.

Civil Service Summary

- * The Ambassador has taken custody of 80 wains of white granite
- * If the road south-western network is not completed by the start of the Winter Solstice 382YE there may be significant diplomatic consequences.

Mercenaries

Lady Saretta and Tal'shar had been in negotiation regarding the possibility of Imperial generals hiring some Faraden mercenaries. The problem, as identified by Lady Saretta, is that mercenaries are not a commodity that can be bought and sold. The best she can do is publicise an offer and see who is interested, then negotiate an agreement between those soldiers and the Empire. There are significant obstacles to traveling to the Empire in the first place that mean any such arrangement would need to be sweet enough to encourage them to overcome those obstacles.

There has been talk of offering each band of mercenary soldiers traveling to the Empire from Faraden a payment of 4 crowns, plus a share of the Guerdon. This represents something of a gamble for Faraden soldiers; the value of a Guerdon share is an unknown quantity. This offer is likely to appeal to the younger, less experienced soldiers who would take the contract merely for a chance to travel to the Empire.

With the death of Tal'Shar i Zabala i Erigo, Lady Saretta is awaiting confirmation from his replacement that this offer still stands, but has some tentative interest from a small number of mercenary bands. The ambassador would also need to provide as much information as possible as to which generals are looking to hire, where they will be fighting, and who they will be fighting. She reminds the Ambassador that the Faraden will not fight the Jotun; this would risk breaching the agreement between the two nations.

The civil service assessment supports Lady Saretta's assessment. An Imperial mercenary unit would expect to earn 9 crowns or equivalent value just for doing paid work in the Empire. Obviously the situation might be different in Faraden - there could be a shortage of paid work there. But devoid of an opportunity of that kind there is no intrinsic reason why Faraden mercenaries would expect to earn any less than Imperial soldiers. Nobody would even contemplate fighting for the Empire for a throne if they can get better paid work in Faraden (which currently they can). To get interest, an Imperial offer would need to be comfortably more than they would earn for paid work.

Civil Service Summary

- * 4 Thrones + Guerdon is likely to get some interest from Faraden mercenaries looking for profit.
- * If the Empire does hire Faraden soldiers, they will not break their peace treaty by supporting any army fighting the Jotun.
- * Confirmation from a legally appointed ambassador along with as much information about the armies they may choose between is needed to cement this offer.

Iridescent Gloaming

It is reasonably common knowledge that a blight that has decimated the already meagre production of iridescent gloaming in Faraden. The Faraden are currently forced to buy most of their gloaming from the Empire and



they would be very interested in an opportunity to restore their forests with blight resistant livestock. If the price was not excessive, it would be seen as a friendly gesture that would improve relations - the vibrant dyes produced through iridescent gloaming are very much in demand in all parts of Faraden society. Lady Saretta's initial confidence that the only challenge would be settling on a price has faded somewhat now that she has learned that eternalists and magicians are involved.

The civil service are at pains to put out that currently the Empire has a very significant competitive advantage over the Faraden which has created valuable new trading opportunities. It would likely take a while for them to replenish the insects in their forests but once they did so it would remove any advantage that the Empire currently has.

Civil Service Summary

- * The Faraden are very keen to acquire blight resistant iridescent gloaming and would like the Empire to name a price.
- * A "reasonable" price will improve diplomatic relations between the Faraden to the Empire.
- * Trading the blight resistant butterflies to the Faraden will remove the trade benefits that the Empire currently enjoys.

Trade Hubs in Volodmartz, and Astolat (Ongoing)

Tal'shar had helped the Faraden secure a trading enclave in Mitwold (Moonwater Hall). The Faraden are also very interested in two additional areas: somewhere in Volodmartz (Triosk seems most sensible), and somewhere in central Astolat (either Laroc and Oldheart would be ideal). This will give the Faraden access to Varushkan timber and ore; and to fine Dawnish fruit, cloth, wine, and metalwork.

A basic enclave will cost a minimum of 20 wains of white granite and 20 wains of weirwood, with labour costs of 80 crowns. It would require a commission. Lady Saretta proposes that the Faraden supply the white granite and 40 crowns, leaving the Empire to provide the 20 weirwood and the balance of the money. This is only fair as the Faraden will reap half the rewards from the trading enclave.

If the Empire chooses to build a larger enclave in one of the three territories, Lady Saretta commits to matching their weirwood with white granite one for one, and paying half the labour costs, provided the costs do not become exorbitant. Once the enclaves are completed (work should take one season for each unless they are particularly large), there may be further opportunities to improve trade with those territories, and the Empire as a whole.

The civil service note that each enclave would require a separate commission for purposes of both motions and limitations, but there is nothing to prevent a citizen using a wayleave to announce their nation's enclave.

Civil Service Summary

- * The Faraden hope to build trading enclaves in Volodmartz and Astolat
- * Each enclave requires 20 wains of white granite, 20 wains of weirwood, and 80 crowns. The Faraden propose they provide 40 crowns and the white granite for each hub.
- * If the Empire is prepared to construct larger hubs, the Faraden will pay half the costs, provided each hub costs less than 200 crowns.
- * Each trade hub would require a separate commission but they could be commissioned using a wayleave.
- * A Hub in Astolat would provide 450 rings split between farms and businesses, in addition to the income provided by the Blood Red Roads. In Volodmartz the hub would provide 450 rings would be split between mines and forests.



Hiring Markets in Tassato and Temeschwar (Ongoing)

Once the enclaves in Astolat, and Volodmartz are complete, the Faraden are also interested in building enclaves in Tassato and Temeschwar. Rather than being focused on trade, however, these enclaves would provide “hiring markets” where Imperial mercenaries might be engaged to protect Faraden caravans – potentially quite lucrative contracts. She is still looking into the matter, but there is little rush until the other enclaves are completed.

On the subject of Marad of Ogudai

There has been a request for advice on how to improve relations between the Empire and House Ogudai. The Ogudai are one of the most influential of the warrior-families. A few years ago, one of their most beloved members - the war-hero Marad - attended Anvil to receive a true liao vision. He was returned to his people a broken wreck, his mind and soul shattered. Only through the rare prowess of a certain powerful priest was his fractured spirit healed and, even now over a year later, he has still not fully recovered. It is doubtful he ever will - he can speak and care for himself, but all the fire that made him so well respected has gone out and there is little hope it will ever return.

The fact he has been restored to his father – an influential general and the head of a powerful military family – has done little to slake his thirst for justice for the wrong done to his child, his family, and the Faraden people. She regrets that the desire to see the architects of Marad's suffering brought to Justice has not abated - and indeed it is unlikely it will *ever* be abated unless all those involved in the crime are executed and their heads sent to House Ogudai.

While merchants, priests, and magicians are cautiously prepared to seek stronger ties with the Empire, no loyal soldier of Faraden will do so while the Ogudai hold the Empire to be honourless murderers. Lady Saretta is not a priest – but she has taken counsel from several of them.

If the ambassador makes a formal request to Lady Saretta on behalf of the Empire, seeking an opportunity to provide redress, then it is possible some resolution may be achieved. It is likely to be a slow, difficult, and potentially expensive process especially given how long the situation has been allowed to fester.

Civil Service Summary

- * House Ogudai, a powerful and influential warrior house, blames the Empire for shattering the spirit of the well-beloved war-hero Marad.
- * The Ogudai family demand the execution of all those involved in the incident they characterise as either attempted murder or unforgivable negligence.
- * While the Ogudai oppose the Empire, and until reparations are secured for the harm done to the respected warrior Marad, the Faraden warrior families will continue to oppose the Empire.

The Frozen Hearth

The Frozen Hearth are a Faraden magician family, experts in the use of alchemical transformation. Lady Saretta understands they visited the Empire in 379YE, and made some contacts with the Imperial Conclave. Unfortunately, it appears that they have been suffering a major crisis over the last year or so related to fundamental changes to the nature of alchemy, and problems with the powerful spirits with which they regularly deal. Furthermore, the recent iridescent gloaming blight has damaged their fortunes in some fashion - they no longer have access to the special magical crystals which fueled their magic.

If the ambassador wishes, Lady Saretta can pass a message along to the Frozen Hearth, but she is not optimistic. Since the death of their High Lady last winter, and some setbacks at the hands of their rivals, they have been increasingly introspective.



Ambassador to Iron Confederacy

Spring 382YE

Ambassador to the Iron Confederacy

Over the last three months there have been several letters bearing news of the Iron Confederacy. Several come from the civil servants who staff the embassy in Sarvos, but there are also letters from Jeanne de Hibernat, High Priestess of Evra the Smith, The Temple of Iron Hammers, in Robec and Jean Armand Priest of Farod, in Kalino. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing.

It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

Duke Guiscard, and the Revolutionaries

Duke Guiscard has responded to your winged messenger by sending his army to Feroz. There the army has hunted down the rebel slaves. Those that have not been executed or returned to Kalino have scattered and fled. His army is still in Feroz, but he has expressed his intention to remove it as soon as he is confident all the rebels have been dealt with.

Jean Armand Priest of Farod informs you that the Duke is sending a delegation lead by his representative to Anvil during the Spring Equinox, and anticipates a formal reception by the ambassador. They expect to arrive at half-past seven on Saturday evening. The Duke does not anticipate there will be much to discuss; it is as much to present his thanks to the Empire as anything else. Now that his fortification is complete, if this current problem could be resolved, the Duke would be interested in formalizing a relationship with the Empire to allow any spare white granite to be sold to the Empire at an agreed price.

Barony of Valois Visit

On Saturday afternoon, at two o'clock, a representative of the Valois baronial family from Kalino will be attending the Anvil summit with their retinue. Jeanne de Hibernat requests that the Ambassador ensures that no harm befall them during their visit. She understands that the Valois party intends to visit Dawn on personal business, so they hope it should be a simple matter to ensure their presence does not lead to any problems.

Reinos

Jeanne de Hibernat thanks you for your clarification about Imperial interest in Reinos. She will not be providing a map, needless to say.

Winged Messengers

The civil servants at the embassy in Robec have issued a carefully worded reminder that while it is acceptable to send Winged Messengers to a small number of Suranni, prior permission should be secured before doing so. Jeanne de Hibernat has special dispensation to receive missives from foreign ambassadors, but the average Suranni – even a noble – could be censured for dabbling in “the dark arts of Dumon” if they received such things without suitable supervision by a priest. The civil service suggests Imperial citizens be reminded that they are potentially getting their contacts into trouble if they send them winged messengers without prior arrangements of some sort.

A winged messenger can also be sent for the attention of the Duke Guiscard, via his advisor Jean-Armand, priest of Farod, Keep of Guiscard, Kalino.



Ambassador to Jarm

Spring 382YE

Ambassador to Jarm

Over the last three months there have been several letters bearing news of Jarm. Several come from the civil servants who staff the embassy in Nemoria, but there are also letters from Lord-Magister Anton Trescher, of the Hidden Hook, who advises the House of Princes on matters of international trade and diplomacy. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing.

You are welcome to use this information as you see fit – it is legally your property as Ambassador to Jarm. You cannot be compelled to hand it over to, or share its contents with, any other Imperial office. In the event that a new Ambassador is appointed, they will receive their own briefing.

An Apology

Lord-Magister Anton Trescher, speaking on behalf of the House of Princes, offers sincere apologies for the damage to the Imperial embassy and requests that as compensation the Empire keep the ritual text of the Immaculate Architect that was on loan to your Conclave. He strongly encourages the magicians of the Empire to add the ritual to Imperial Lore so that it can benefit all your people. He seems genuinely contrite about the situation involving the embassy but that said - he did warn that choosing the volatile and unstable east over the north or the south would be a risk - but now is not the time for saying "I told you so."

Regardless, he is at great pains to reassure Imperial citizens that despite the chaos in Rigia, they are still very much welcome in Vezak and Kavor, and the entire House of Princes hopes that this unfortunate internal development will not sour relations with the Principalities.

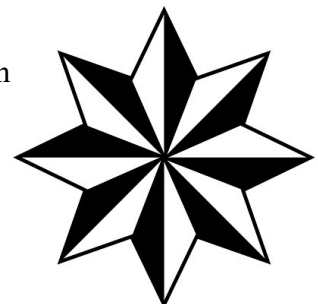
Obviously, the interference of your Imperial Synod means that conditions for trade with Vezak and Kavor is less than ideal, but he is powerless to do anything about the mandates of your priests.

Regarding Rigia

Eriktho Radz - Erictho of Auric Horizon - has stepped down as Jarmish Ambassador. The House of Princes has sent Cionek Rangalla to take her place at the Cargo embassy. Lord-Magister Anton Trescher appears relieved - in a candid moment he admits that he was deeply concerned about what might have happened had some overzealous prince ordered Eriktho's assassination which was looking increasingly likely. An attack of such a nature on Imperial soil - even if it had failed - would no doubt have soured relations between the Empire and Jarm. Relations that he, and most sensible princes, are keen to keep positive.

He is not particularly sad to see Eriktho go, and pleased that she was still Jarmish enough to see which way the mana was flowing. Choosing to step down when she did, and to keep her stipend of mana from his office, was definitely the most sensible thing to do.

As regards Barbara Radz, as soon as she announced changes to the laws regarding the treatment of slaves, and tried to enforce them on her fellow princes, her days were numbered. Members of her own faction were already jockeying for position even before her fateful announcement, and her political enemies in the East were easily able to rally the undecideds and the neutrals among their number with talk of how Radz had become nothing more than an Imperial pawn.



With Eriktho also increasingly seen as loyal to the Empire, when she withdraw her support from her aunt... whether she meant it or not that was a clear indication to the disgruntled eastern faction that Radz had no allies of importance. She was dead within a few days of the announcement - even Anton is surprised at how quickly her enemies moved.

Lord Anton doesn't really blame them. Radz had pinned too much on an alliance with the Empire, and listened too closely to her distant niece when she should have been paying attention to her neighbours. The fate of the Eastern Alliance had been suborned to this plan of Erikthos that Jarm free all their slaves. When that inevitably failed, the East moved quickly to make sure that their entire alliance did not go down with her.

The new Magician-Prince of Rigia, Barbara's nephew Barov, and his new husband Konstantin, have taken the mantle of the principality. They are much more sensible - more pragmatic. They are overseeing repairs to the docks at Rigia, but it is unlikely that the eastern port will be open to Imperial shipping again for several seasons. Off the record, Lord Anton suggests that the abolitionist faction in the Empire will find the new Magician-Prince of Rigia a good deal less interested in the desires of the Empire than his predecessor. Given everything that has happened, they may well wish to keep a certain distance from the Empire for the time being - they will not want to risk the same fate that befell Barbara Radz.

For their part, the Northern and Southern princes have grudgingly admitted that the Eastern alliance is not going away. While it is not as politically powerful as the other two, both major factions see the value of cultivating relations with this third faction. The low-key political maneuvering to try and break the alliance apart has largely subsided; with Barbara Radz and her radical reforms removed from the equation there is room at the great table of Jarmish politics for a third faction. He hopes that with Barbara dead and Eriktho retired this means that relations between the Empire and Jarm will be on a much firmer footing going forwards. Lord Anton sincerely hopes that matters of state can now be conducted between himself and Oswi without the involvement of any outside parties with disruptive agendas.

Civil Service Summary

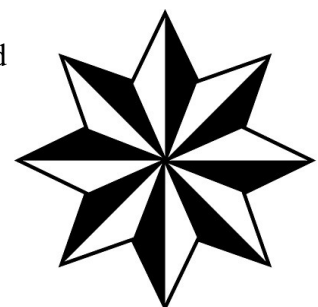
- * The port of Rigia is currently closes to Imperial fleets.
- * Vezak continues to offer additional crystal mana to Imperial fleet captains.
- * Due to the Synod mandate passed during the Winter Solstice, any fleet captain that trades with Vezak or Kavor will receive significantly less profit until Winter Solstice 382YE.

Civil Servants Abroad

When the fighting broke out in Rigia, Lord-Magister Anton's agents were fortunately in just the right position to help evacuate the civil servants resident at the embassy. He is sad to announce that the damage done during the riots was extensive. One misguided faction, whipped into a frenzy by violent rhetoric, apparently believed claims that the Empire was seeking to interfere in Jarmish politics, as part of a scheme to collapse the country so that their Commonwealth allies could invade without resistance. All sensible Magician-Princes know that there is no evidence for such claims, but the damage has been done.

The civil servants are currently guests at the Jade Palace in Vezak for now. For the time being Lord Anton has had to ask them to remain within the bounds of the Palace - so that he can guarantee their safety - but he assures you that they are fine and his staff are ensuring that they are being well looked after.

If the ambassador wishes, he is more than happy to arrange for the Palace to be turned into a pro-tem embassy until more permanent quarters can be found.



Sadly, the opportunity to open an embassy in the city of Jarm itself is no longer available - there is now too much suspicion of Imperial wrong-doing around the violence in Rigia. Perhaps in a year or so, when tempers have died down, a proper embassy can be established.

If the Ambassador prefers to locate the new embassy in Kavor rather than Vezak, then Lord-Magister Anton will do everything in his power to ensure a smooth transition to new quarters - once the current difficulties have passed.

Civil Service Summary

- * The civil servants from the embassy in Rigia are guests of Lord-Magister Anton Trescher in Vezek.
- * The opportunity to move the embassy to the city of Jarm is not available for the moment.
- * If the ambassador would prefer the embassy to be in Kavor, Lord-Magister Trescher will ensure a smooth transition once the current difficulties have passed.

Trade and Politics

Anton is pleased to hear that you are happy with the current arrangements, although disappointed at the intransigence of your Imperial Synod. He has been discreet with the information you provided about mandates, revealing it only to the more sensible members of the trade committee. It certainly explains the sudden decline in Imperial vessels visiting Kavor and Vezak. A shame. Still, he continues to persuade the merchants of Vezak to offer favoured status to captains from the Empire, and he continues to support endeavours to sell Belove Zerno to Imperial magicians.

Anton absolutely agrees with you that it is often frustrating when angry people fail to appreciate that foreign nations are made up of just as many competing factions as their own. Occasionally it brings him to his wits' end. He understands that there are factions in the Empire who would prefer the Principalities to sacrifice the entire basis of their economy on the altar of sentiment - and he is not unsympathetic. After all, there are factions in Jarm who cannot understand why the Empire allows people other than magicians to hold office, and send him letters on a weekly basis demanding that he make the Empire change their entire political structure!

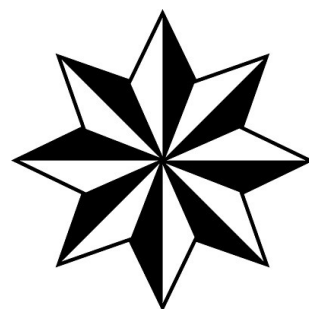
Sensible people know how to get along in the world however. As thanks for your personal endeavours to try and maintain good relations between your two nations he has dropped your name into the ears of a few merchants, and suggested to Cionek Rangalla that you are someone whose good graces it would be wise to cultivate. You may well see many more merchants keen to curry favour with you over the coming months.

(OOC Note: An additional level has been added to the ambassador's ministry. We will not be adding this to the wiki page for the ambassador unless an ambassador specifically request it. It represents the personal approval of Lord Anton and the "sensible" Magician-Princes of Rigia for your efforts to date.)

Naval Requests

An odd request has come to Lord-Magister's office from an Imperial citizen named "Mirislav", writing on behalf of a rich Imperial prince named "Achilles". They are inquiring as to the possibility of Jarm constructing a navy for the Empire. Anton confesses he is a little nonplussed, but asks that you pass along his apologies.

It would be impossible for the Principalities of Jarm to produce a navy for the Empire. They will not sell one of their existing navies with the current tensions between the Principalities and the Commonwealth. Even if they could, the distances involved are prohibitive - it would be next to



impossible for the navy to be transported to the Empire, never mind the time and effort required to train Imperial sailors in the techniques of sailing Jarmish vessels.

Further, while Achilles may be wealthy, it is very likely even they would balk at the kind of costs such an endeavour would incur. The cost to tie up a Jarmish shipyard; the purchase cost of the weirwood; securing the sheer number of slaves required; not to mention the salary for the hundreds of sailors required to spend a year or so bringing the navy to the Empire, and their passage home.

Then there are the legal implications; Anton Trescher knows enough about the Empire to know that they do not approve of their citizens owning pRigiate armies no matter how wealthy they are.

If you could pass on to Mirislav and Achilles that Jarm politely declines to build them a navy, he would appreciate it.

Civil Service Summary

* A citizen named Mirislav sent a message to Lord-Magister Anton on behalf of someone named Achilles enquiring if the Jarmish could build a navy for them.

* Lord-Magister Trescher requests that you let them know this would be impossible.

Brother of Tian

The Empire's extensive body of Imperial Lore is always of interest to the Jarmish. Each Magician-Prince maintains a jealous watch over their won store of ritual texts, much to the frustration of the unification faction in the House of Princes. There are some rituals that are commonly known, and where possible the unification faction works to create something similar to the Imperial ideal of a truly communal body of Jarmish ritual lore. Such a thing can only strengthen the nation for the coming war against the Commonwealth. As trade advisor to the House of Princes, Anton remains discreetly neutral about the unification faciton, but that neutrality itself is a little bit of a give-away that he has no sympathy for their cause.

With that in mind, however, he has been asked to make an offer to the Empire. News of a remarkable ritual named "The Brother of Tian" has reached several Jarmish princes, and the unification faction is very interested in acquiring it. They are not alone in their desire - the militant factions in Jarmish politics are *very* interested in acquiring a copy of this ritual, which apparently enhances the ways that an army naturally recovers from the stresses and losses of conflict.

The House of Princes has instructed Anton to make an initial offer for the ritual text of 15 wains of mithril, paid to you directly. The payment will be made following a successful Declaration of Dissemination instructing your civil service to provide the ritual text to Jarm, or in the event that you acquire a copy yourself and inform Lord Anton he will dispatch a courier to collect the text directly. Either way, it is of course up to you how you choose to approach this - candidly, if you can secure the Imperial Conclave's approval for this move without mentioning the mithril, or secure it at a lower price, you are free to do as you wish with the difference.

The civil service have investigated the unification faction; they represent a political alliance of magicians who wish to see Jarm move toward a more united society. Their main interests are to establish a shared body of magical lore, breaking down centuries of prejudice against sharing magical power with one's rivals, and to reduce the power of the individual Magician-Princes in favour of increasing the power of the House of Princes.

Civil Service Summary

* The unification faction of Jarmish magicians would like to acquire the ritual "Brotherhood of Tian" from the Empire.

* Lord-Magister Anton Trescher has been instructed to offer 15 wains of mithril for a copy of the ritual text

* If the Conclave passes a declaration of dissemination, the ritual text could be bestowed directly to Anton Trescher

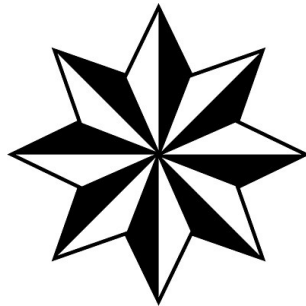


Imperial Suitors

There are, of course, opportunists who would leap at the chance to marry a son or daughter, or a niece or nephew, to the Throne of the Empire. Lord-Magister Anton has let it be known that Imperatrix Lisabetta is seeking a consort. Trescher's tone is amused - he very much doubts any serious contenders will emerge from the lesser Jarmish houses, and the major houses are unlikely to risk forging stronger links with the Imperial government in the immediate aftermath of the Rigia riots.

Trade Opportunities

OOO Note: If the ambassador wishes to take advantage of any trade opportunity outlined above, they need to make sure the materials are handed in at GOD after the event and logged to their account - then e-mail plot@profounddecisions.co.uk with details of the trade before the end of downtime submission.



Ambassador to Otkodov

Spring 382YE

Ambassador to Otkodov

Over the last three months there have been several letters bearing news of Otkodov. Several come from the civil servants who staff the embassy in Thule lands, but there are also letters from Rak Who-Speaks-For-The-Dragon's-Undivided who represents the Dragons of Otkodov. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing.

It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador for Otkodov. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

The Jotun

Rak Who-Speaks-For-The-Dragons-Undivided, Thule ambassador, has informed the Imperial Ambassador to Otkodov that he Jotun have made a formal delegation to the Dragons. Rak is not responsible for dealing with the delegation - his area of responsibility is the Empire - but his people have offered hospitality to the Jotun and have listened to their diplomat. While the details of the negotiation are not relevant here, he wishes to assure the Ambassador that the Thule will not secure any peace treaty with the Jotun that might cause them to break the treaty they have with the Empire. This obviously would include providing them with information that the Thule have about Imperial defences, or the location of the new mithril mine in Sermersuaq.

The Sermersuaq Mine

Ambassador Rak is aware that the Empire has a mithril mine in northern Sermersuaq which the recent Jotun invaders, he believes, are unaware of. Obviously, the Empire must be concerned that the Jotun will capture the mithril mine. Even if they do not, they might make it impossible to transport the mithril back into Imperial territory - if they captured both East Floes and Suaq Wastes for example. In the event that this did happen, Rak wishes to let the Ambassador know that the Thule would be prepared to discuss allowing the Empire to move its mithril through Thule-controlled territory into Skarsind, in return for a small and reasonable levy.

Violent Criminal

A former Thule warlock by the name of "Kort the Bold" has disobeyed the direct commands of the Five and crossed the border into Volodmartz intent on raiding Imperial citizens. This will not stand - Kort has been stripped of their title, and if they return to Otkodov they will face summary and bloody execution as a warning to others that the words of the Dragons are not to be disobeyed. Rak Who-Speaks-For-The-Dragons-Undivided appears to be absolutely furious about Kort's actions - about their disregard not only of the Dragons but of centuries of Thule tradition.

Having been stripped of citizenship, Kort should not be granted any quarter by the Empire. If he can be tracked and killed while in Imperial lands, Rak urges you to do so.

The divinations of the Burnished Orb suggest that this traitor will be in Volomdartz, in a place called Opascari, and has made camp in a forest clearing near the Granites of Veltgorsk. If Skif's understanding of the Sentinel Gate is correct, there will presumably be a conjunction that will allow you to slaughter him and his confederates. Kort is an accomplished magician who has allies among the courts of Winter - but few orc allies. It is likely his first action on entering the Empire will be to find a battleground and with



the aid of his Winter allies raise a contingent of husks to aid him in his murderous rampage.

If he is killed, Rak will pay the ambassador a bounty of 15 crystal mana. He considers this should be sufficient restitution for Kort's crimes but if not then he awaits the Empire's reasonable assessment of the damages done by the raiding orc, as per the existing peace treaty.

Civil Service Summary

* A former orc warlock named Kort the Bold has disobeyed the Dragons and started raiding Volodmartz.

* The warlock has been stripped of their citizenship – the Dragons no longer consider them to be Thule.

* The ambassador has placed a bounty of 15 crystal mana on this criminal's head.

* He is believed to be in the vicinity of Opascari, heading towards the Granites of Veltsorks with a company of husks. The egregore may know more.

Peace

Rak Who-Speaks-For-The-Dragons-Undivided will be returning to Anvil on Saturday afternoon. His intention is to arrive around half-past five in the evening. After the inconclusive meeting during the last summit, he hopes that further concrete steps can be made towards securing a new peace treaty. As before, he is coming as formal representatives of the Thule, and anticipate a formal reception after which more informal negotiations can take place.

As stated during the first round of negotiations, the Thule have no interest in surrendering the land they control in Sermersuaq or Karsk. They are keen to recover ancestral holdings in Skarsind as well, but accept that the Empire may wish to negotiate closely on this matter and they do not intend to be intractable if a palatable alternative can be found.

Once the negotiations with the Ambassador are concluded he anticipates further negotiation with representatives of the Navarr and requests that the Ambassador offers assistance with that. Given their reputation for perfidy, he needs somewhere to meet with them other than their own camp, somewhere safe and central. The Ambassador will of course be free to sit in on any such negotiations.

Civil Service Summary

* The Thule Ambassador will be in Anvil from half past five, and is expecting a formal reception. The civil service will work with the Ambassador to Otkodov to arrange this.

* The Thule Ambassador has requested the Imperial Ambassador's aid in arranging a meeting with the Navarr somewhere central away from the Navarr camp.

Warlock Skif

Rak Who-Speaks-For-The-Dragon's-Undivided passes on the thanks of a Warlock named Skif, who accompanied him to Anvil. Skif was given an opportunity to examine and understand the nature of the Sentinel Gate at the Winter Solstice. He notes that the sketches and notes produced by Skif have been of great interest to his people as scholars of arcane lore, and expresses admiration for the Empire's willingness to discuss such interesting artefacts. There is clearly keen for any further information the Empire could provide about the Sentinel Gate, and how it works, but understands that such things are closely held Imperial secrets.

Reki of Skaos

A Thule merchant of some repute, Reki of Skaos, is visting Anvil during the summit. A descendant of the line of Skao the Impaler, a potent warlock, they possess no real magical power but their line is



still respected. They intend to speak to the Imperial Orcs on matters related to mundante trade. Ambassador Rak does not expect the ambassador to do more than ensure that Reki of Skaos and their group returns safely to Otkodov. The ambassador may wish to speak to Reki, or may leave the matter to the Imperial Orcs to resolve.

On the matter of correspondence

Rak Who-Speaks-For-The-Dragon's-Undivided notes that the Imperial Ambassador appears disinterested in correspondence. He has taken steps to address this, but also notes that he sees no point in attempting to secure any further opportunities for trade through the Ambassador's office until the situation changes.

Trade Opportunities

OOO Note: If the ambassador wishes to take advantage of any trade opportunity outlined above, they need to make sure the materials are handed in at GOD after the event and logged to their account - then e-mail plot@profounddecisions.co.uk with details of the trade before the end of downtime submission.



Ambassador to Sarcophan

Spring 382YE

Ambassador to Sarcophan Delves

Over the last three months there have been several letters bearing news of Sarcophan. Several come from the civil servants who staff the embassy in the Cargo, but there are also letters from Bedelaar Huisbaas Annike, at the Tower of Crows, in Sarcophan. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing.

It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador for the Sarcophan Delves. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

Looting Wrecks

Bedelaar Huisbaas Annike is not impressed by the accusation that Sarcophan Delves captains have been looting Imperial wrecks after they have been attacked by the Grendel, and demands to know what evidence you have for this. In fact, Sarcophan captains have put themselves in harms' way to attempt to rescue Imperial citizens beset by the Grendel and thanks in no small part to their interventions literally dozens of Imperials are returned safely to the Imperial or Sarcophan ports who might otherwise have been living out the rest of their lives in salt mines.

She does not deny that her people are opportunists; on discovering a wreck they will of course salvage whatever they can recover rather than let it be claimed by the sea, but she assures you the Grendel - like most pirates - leave no such salvage behind.

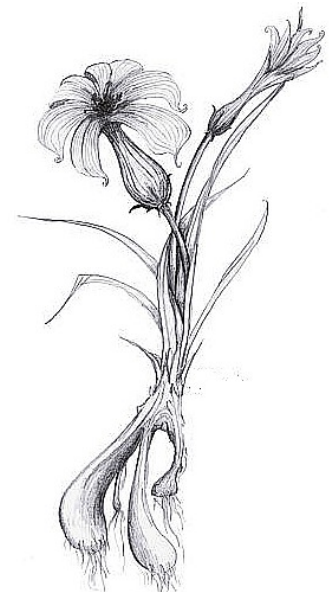
Safe Passage

At this time the Empire is offering nothing that matches the value of peace with the Grendel. The Sarcophan are not a warlike people - there is much more opportunity for wealth in peacetime than in time of war. Protecting Imperial vessels would mean fighting with the Grendel, which would mean at best an end to the safety Sarcophan ships enjoy in the Bay of Catazaar, and at worst open war between the orcs and the Delves.

At the absolute minimum, such a state would add significant additional costs to the transport of white granite to the Concordium Docks, requiring the Bedelaar Huisbaas Vandearsar to, at a minimum, raise their prices. It would also discourage Sarcophan merchants from visiting Imperial ports, purchasing Imperial goods, and selling their own commodities. The Sarcophan Delves thrives on its neutrality - and for it to sacrifice that neutrality without simply abandoning trade with the Empire as well would require an extremely significant incentive.

Unless you are considering a situation where Imperial ships cease trading with other nations - where your mines, forests, and businesses sell their produce only to Sarcophan ship captains for transportation abroad. In this case the neutrality would work in your favour, attracting more ships from the Delves to the Empire.

The civil service cautions that arranging for Sarcophan Delves ships to transport Imperial goods would have a negative impact on those Imperial ship captains who rely on access to such commodities to sell overseas for their own profit.



The Vanhooten Concern

The Vanhooten Concern has delivered 50 ingots of orichalcum in return for the agreed price of 6 Thrones. They consider their current business at an end, but reassure you that there is no ill will. They will reconsider their position and make contact again if they feel they have a better offer.

The Kruidenkenner Warehouses

The Kruidenkenner have discussed the matter thoroughly and are prepared to accept the restriction that they will not use their Imperial warehouse to trade with

Purchase Price	Herbs
216 Rings	12 cerulean mazzarine
408 Rings	24 cerulean mazzarine
592 Rings	36 cerulean mazzarine

any nation the Empire is at war with, not trade goods purchased in the Empire to ports belonging to such people. They understand that this will restrict them from trading with the Grendel, and with the Sumaah Republic. They ask in return that the Empire agrees to give them a "grace period" of one season between declaring war on someone and the expectation they will cease trading. They also request that they be allowed to end the arrangement with the Empire - giving up their trade enclave - with a season's notice, If that is acceptable, they look forward to establishing their new trade within Imperial borders.

While the Kruidenkenner accept that the cost of the enclave is high, they are confident that the benefits of having them trade with the Empire will far outweigh the initial set-up costs - especially if the opportunity to participate in the Northern Trade Network is available. Ideally, the warehouses would be located along the Bay of Catazaar, preferably Crowns Quay, or the city of Sarvos. Information from the Sarcophan Delves embassy in Cargo has lead them to request that it *not* be built there - the proximity of the savage orcs concerns them greatly.

As previously stated, the opportunity to take advantage of this ministry remains until the end of the Spring Equinox 382YE. if work does not begin on the warehouses, then the Kruidenkenner will consider the matter closed and look for other opportunities. To reiterate the existing opportunity: the kruidenkenner offer Cerulean Mazzarine for a warehouse built to their specifications and assigned to their use.

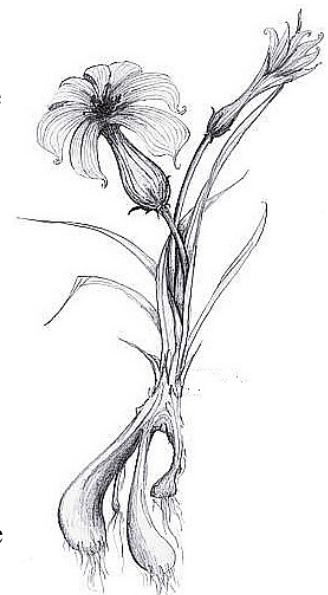
The warehouse would require 8 wains of weirwood, and 16 crowns, and would take a commission and a season to complete. It would provide an opportunity to purchase cerulean mazzarine as a ministry does – but rewarding the buyer if they choose to buy in bulk. The Empire would need to assign a suitable person to oversee it, but the Sarcophan Delves have no interest in how that title would be appointed. The civil service suggest that the well worn path for a title such as this would be to assign it through the Imperial Bourse, but that it could be an Imperial or national position.

The agents at the embassy in the Delves suggest that the kruidenkenner are actually more flexible than they appear about the location where it could be built– as long as it is on the Bay of Catazaar, or easily accessible by one of the four major rivers, they are unlikely to turn down the opportunity to trade with the Empire, but it would be wise to discuss this with Bedelaar Huisbaas Annike. They are adamant however that they do not wish to be within striking distance of the Druj orcs.

They also remind the Ambassador that one reason the kruidenkenner are keen for this arrangement is that they will also be able to use the warehouse to support their own trade. Wherever the ministry is built, it will also see an increase in the number of Sarcophan herb- and apothecary-traders engaging in private deals with Imperial citizens.

Civil Service Summary

* The Kruidenkenner are prepared to accept some restrictions on their use of warehouses in the Empire.



The Ongellukig

Bedelaar Huisabaas Annike is happy that you are content, but she asks for further information if you are willing. Why are the priests of your Synod really so concerned about the nature of the Ongellukig? What is really going on? She asks off-the-record and assures you that if the answer is in any way sensitive she will not share it with anyone else. She merely wishes to be certain that the Synod are not going to use the Ongellukig to somehow cause trouble for the Delves.

She asks that if you really wish to show you appreciation, you could arrange for her to acquire a dose of the true liao - the unique narcotic that is impossible to buy on any sort of market, open or otherwise. From the tone of her letter, it is clear she is not entirely serious - she is making a joke - but also she would not turn a dose down were it offered.

Supporting an Army

Unfortunately, Bedelaar Huisabaas Annike does not think it is feasible to maintain an army at long distance. There is more to consider than merely food and weapons; an army relies as much on the support of its people as it does on trade goods. As such she can see no easy way to arrange the support of an Imperial army in this way.

The Funeral of the Imperatrix

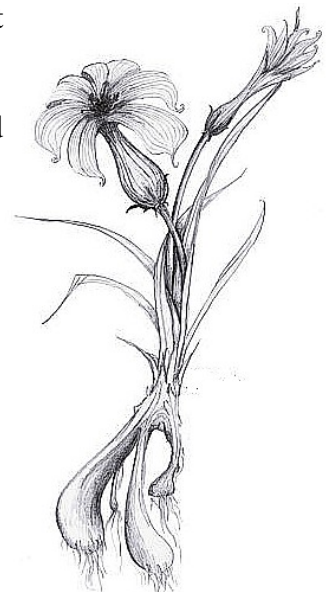
Annikе is not sure what to make of your request, but she answers as best she can. Under normal circumstances, the funeral feast would be overseen by a priest within the family. A family that has no priest themselves will pay for a professional to perform the rites. The funeral is more for the family of the departed than for the dead person themselves; after all, the guest of honour is unable to take an active part. A guest list is usually drawn up by the departed as part of their will, although there are also circumstances where *zielweven* have called the shade of the departed back from the Houses of Silence to determine their last wishes. Family and valued friends gather together to reminisce about the departed and consume a fine feast at which the choicest parts of the departed are also consumed. The departed individual will often specify that certain parts be given as bequests to certain guests. The bones are then washed clean, wrapped in white linen, and interred in suitable prepared tombs along with items that symbolise the wealth of the deceased.

Bedelaar Huisabaas Annike presumes that the Empress is not herself an adherent of the faith - but that should not be a problem. While the ceremony is spiritual in nature, it is not by default *religious* as such. Most Sarcophan have little time for religion, after all. Not only would there be no problem arranging a priest to officiate over the funeral rite, provided at least a few months notice were given. There would be a charge, as appropriate to the wealth of the deceased, but to perform the ceremony for so prestigious an individual as the Throne of the Empire... there would be priests leaping at the chance to officiate. The body would need to be preserved while the priest made the journey to the Empire, but as with any meat there are a number of simple tricks that can be used to ensure it can be suitably prepared for the funeral feast.

Finally, Annike assures you that she will maintain absolute discretion on this matter.

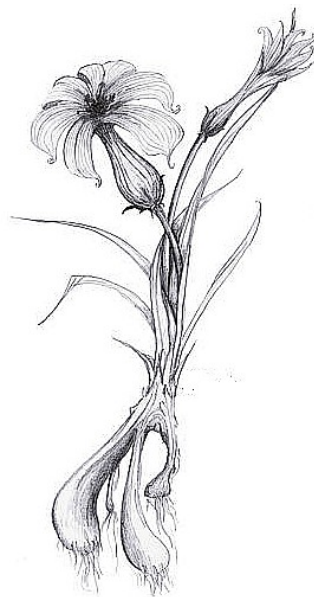
Civil Service Summary

The civil service is not aware of this request, so there is no civil service summary.



Trade Opportunities

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Ambassador to Sumaah

Spring 382YE

Ambassador to Sumaah

This briefing has been prepared for the Ambassador to Sumaah. There is currently no real Imperial presence in Zemeh, so most of these communications come from the Embassy at Necropolis which maintains a skeletal staff. Heln Stianser, Censor of wood, metal and stone, of the High House of Prosperity, officially handles formal communication with the Empire. The civil servants who work at the embassy have collated this information to compile the following briefing.

It is the legal responsibility of the Imperial civil service to render this report only to the Imperial Ambassador. The ambassador has complete discretion to choose with whom they share this report if any.

The Sumaah Diplomats

Heln Stianser has written a short letter to inform the civil service that an ambassador from the House of the Way will be arriving in Anvil at nine o'clock on Friday evening. They will be empowered to negotiate a peace treaty on behalf of the Sumaah Republic, or to extend the current ceasefire if a peace treaty is not agreed but the diplomat is confident one may be secured. They will be enchanted such that they can converse freely in Imperial, with the usual ramifications of such a magical effect.

Civil Service Summary

* An ambassador from the House of the Way will be arriving in Anvil at nine o'clock on Friday evening. They have requested a formal meeting. The civil service will work with the Imperial ambassador to arrange a suitable location.

The Doctrine of Sumaah

At this time the accepted wording of the Doctrines, translated into Imperial, are as follows:

The Doctrine of Reincarnation

The Doctrine of Reincarnation states that the human spirit is immortal. It inhabits mortal flesh for a time within this world before being liberated again, having gained knowledge and enlightenment. It traverses the Labyrinth of Ages before being reborn to mortal life.

The Doctrine of Human Destiny

The Doctrine of Human Destiny states that only human spirits reincarnate, therefore humans are the greatest of all beings in creation for only human spirits gain strength, knowledge and enlightenment through rebirth. The paragons personify not just Virtue but the full potential of humanity.

The Doctrine of Seven

The Doctrine of Seven states that there are seven Virtues that guide the spirit through the Labyrinth of Ages. These are Ambition, Courage, Loyalty, Pride, Prosperity, Vigilance and Wisdom. Other qualities may benefit humanity, but lend no aid through the passage of death to rebirth, and some may hinder it.

The Doctrine of Paragons

The Doctrine of Paragons states that a spirit of true virtue, one that is a paragon of Virtue, is able to release itself from the Labyrinth of Ages through transcendence. A paragon spirit can be identified for having completed at least six of the eight signs of the paragon, after which it can be recognised by the House of the Way.



The Doctrine of the Creator

The Doctrine of the Creator states that human destiny is our own. The Creator, whose hand is visible in all patterns of nature, desires no dominance of, control over or communion with human spirits.

The Doctrine of the Labyrinth

The Doctrine of the Labyrinth states that the Labyrinth of Ages is a place of pure spirit and beyond the true comprehension of any but a paragon. Flesh and blood may not enter, only that which is of spirit may enter or leave it, and it has no peer.

The Paragons

The House of the Way has not recognised any new paragons in forty years. In a terse letter, Heln Stianser explains that the Sumaah consider the recognition of a paragon or exemplar to be a very serious matter. A candidate must have lived a truly virtuous life, offering inspiration to all and leaving a profound legacy. The Sumaah recognise no more than a handful of exemplars in a decade, and rarely recognise a paragon at all. If the current conflict with the Empire is resolved satisfactorily, then the House of the Way may agree to compile a list of those renowned exemplars and paragons for whom a place of pilgrimage has been constructed.

Trade Opportunities

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