

An den geehrten

Atla,
Richtungskardinal,
Kaplan der Orken,
Feldlager der Orken,
Anbil

Greetings from the Commonwealth! My name is Blutsauger Wargan and I hold the position of Hauptpaladinlehrersgehilfe in the College der Gemeinsamwohlpaladine of the Unibersitaet of Volkabaar: I would consider my station and rank to be a little bit like yours, I suppose, as my colleagues and I are responsible for the guardianship and direction of the philosophy of our people, orc and other alike.

Please allow me to convey the formal congratulations of the College der Gemeinsamwohlpaladine upon your appointment and achievements. My colleagues and I have been encouraged by the enlightenment shown by your Empire in the recognition of virtue not only in humans but in all creatures, and you seem to have convinced them to 'put their money where is their mouth' and raise up the great Thrace as an example to be followed! In fact I write today to offer if we at the College can be of aid to your people - orc and other alike - in following that example in the metaphorical sense. Just as Thrace fought to set free the bodies of your people, so you are on a quest to set free their minds, are you not? We would assist with this. We would see the development of your Way into a path of right-thinking and most importantly right-action that can be taught and make sense equally not just to humans but to orcs and other races.

When I come down to the heart of it, I think that the success of the Gemeinsamwohl among the orcs of the Commonwealth and the success of the Way among the orcs of the Hierro have a thing in common: and not a thing that it is perhaps easy to see up close. It is the focus on right-action. The ignorant savages that were our ancestors can howl as they will, until we find something to shut them up for good. The supposed 'soul' can look after itself. Given that I cannot see it or talk to it or affect it in any way, I will choose to look after my people's bodies instead! Talking about souls is a hard sell to people who have never thought about them. How many times have you heard the common soldiery say "Let the scholars talk of souls and superstitions: give me my ale!" But you do not need to tell a slave why Liberty is good. You do not need to tell a soldier what use they have for Courage. You do not need to tell a scholar why Wisdom is useful, or explain Fidelity or Justice to a general. So it is that by focusing on what people should do, and showing them how that changes their world today, by building for the conquered a hospital and an aqueduct and bringing in grain by the wagonload to the hungry, that you bring them to your congregations.

In the Commonwealth, you see, the same philosophy is taught to all - it is not a matter of teaching that, say, Courage is somehow more good for the person than Wisdom, of teaching that the will-to-succeed and the will-to-survive or the lust-for-life and the lust-for-blood are somehow not coexisting partners. We recognise many of the same virtues you do - but while I cannot speak for you, I know that when I was first taught of the Gemeinsamwohl my thought was not that my heart was so filled with the lust-for-life that there should not be room for the will-to-succeed! I am never so full of my Prosperity (excuse me if I use the word the way you do not) that I do not have time for Ambition. Why would I be? It is not logical. It is hard already for me to understand, even before asking me to teach other people to preach it.

And what I read of the judgements of the Synod over the past year is leading me to see that perhaps there are people within the Empire who think as I do - that the Way is exactly a tool for improving people's bodies and minds. That if there is indeed a soul then we should be forging ahead of it by our actions, not being dragged behind it like some kind of useless appendage. That an "Exemplar" is as the word suggests someone to be followed and emulated, not a stepping stone on the personal ambition of an individual. In fact, some of my colleagues have suggested that even your people's slaving should be seen in the light of this narrative - that you are paying the decadent Farnish to conquer savages and ship them to you in some attempt to teach them reason - rather than that these poor people are being indentured into your fields as our common enemies would have us believe.

Tell me that this is true. Tell me that the Empire is finding creative ways to forge ahead into the future rather than falling into the decrepit darkness of Asavea or the indulgent tyranny of Farn. Tell me that the Empire is our ally in finding a new and enlightened philosophy of life - or at least that there are those within the Empire we could work with to this aim. And despite any differences between our nations let us open a dialogue. Each of us would be fools to think that there is nothing that we could learn from one another.

Perhaps we could send some people to you to talk with your Way-Assembly and Orc-Assembly about your experience of the practice of reason in the face of superstition. I know people who would love to talk with your High-Exorcist - your recognition of exorcism as a basic function of religious practice was the talk of the refectory when we first heard of it, and I hope that the fact that this position is still filled by the same man means that he is good at his job and not a sign that it is yet another meaningless political appointment.

Hochachtungsboll, in Wahrheit und für das gemeine Wohl,
Blutsauger Wargan,
College of the Paladins of the Common Weal,
University of Volkabaar