

Ambassador to Asavea

Camilia di Traviciiana di Sarvos 5423.1

Ambassador to Asavea

Over the last three months there have been several letters bearing news of Asavea. Several come from the 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.

Game Information

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On the Subject of Empress Lisabetta

Lady Madrianna wishes to offer formal congratulations to Empress Lisabetta on her ascension of the throne. The Plenum are considering an appropriate gift to show their regard. Lady Madrianna is interested in making a good impression herself, and would appreciate any tips you might give her to help her locate or design a suitable present.

On the subject of quills

Lady Madrianna has prepared a magical quill for you and dispatched it in a delightful presentation box of southern hardwood. The quill is a magical focus and either you or – ideally – a scribe will need to bond to it to make use of its powers.

The item is (Ribbon ID: 11640). If it is not in your pack please query this at GOD.

On the matter of the Temple of Balo and the Black Bull

Lady Madrianna passes on her congratulations in securing the construction of the Temple in Feroz – which is eminently acceptable to the Asavean priesthood and the Plenum alike. She looks forward to news that the Empire has taken advantage of the opportunity to build a Temple of the Lords of Virtue in Nemoria. She also looks forward to hearing who the Senator for Feroz suggests to be the liason between the Empire and the Priests of Balo of the Foam, and the Black Bull.

She does, however, express a *mild* concern. During her previous correspondence she requested details of any pro-Asavean factions in the Imperial Synod. She assumes that your silence on this matter indicates that there is no such faction. With that in mind, there are worries in Asavea that the Synod may attempt to interfere in the construction of the temple – perhaps putting Asavean lives in danger.

Any interference in the building of the temple is likely to be placed at the door of the Synod, and following the assorted insults and threats from that quarter, will significantly sour relations with Asavea going forward. If the Senate cannot bring the Synod to heel, then the Plenum will have no choice but to assume that it is the priests, rather than the Senators, who run the Empire.

On the matter of further temples

Lady Madrianna would appreciate your opinion on something. A small delegation of priests of Baddu the Builder have approached her to sound her out about the possibility of approaching the Empire to undertake the construction of further temples, especially those dedicated to Lord Isso Mãos and to Aseus who Tamed the Wind.

She would like your candid assessment of the Empire's attitude to such an approach.

On the matter of the gods

The priests of Asavea are many and varied. Citizens and slaves alike have a fair amount of freedom in which of the many, many gods they wish to worship – as long as those gods are not inimical to the welfare of the Asavean state. Many, many books have been written on the subject all claiming to be the True Doctrine of their particular patron deity. She mentions several prominent deities:

- Balo of the Foam (a female god) who watches over travel by sea
- the Black Bull (probably male), who is the patron of guardians
- Thessed of the Cup (male god) who is the god of compassion and the patron of healers
- Lord Isso Mãos, the golden handed (a god of no gender), patron of fair handed trade
- Baddu the Builder (a male god), patron of builders, and architects
- Aseus who Tamed the Wind (a female god), patron of diplomats, orators, messengers and all those who make their living through speech

But there are several others, some of whom are not discussed in polite company.

If you – and the Empire – wish to know more, she understands that there is discussion of arranging a Symposium in the coming months. Provided that the Synod raises a judgement to ensure the safety of any visiting priests – something that will protect them from being charged with religious crimes – and issues a formal (polite!) invitation to the priests of Asavea, she is confident some could be prevailed upon to attend that Symposium and perhaps discuss the nature of the Asavean faiths with the Imperials.

Assuming that nobody has burnt the Temple of Balo and the Black Bull down in the meantime.

On the subject of the Tarquinius

An agent of the Plenum – not Lady Madrianna herself but a high ranking secretary of the Asavean government – has written to you on a matter of some concern.

During their recent war with the Grendel orcs, Imperial magicians raised a deadly magical storm over the southern coast of the Urizen nation. At the same time, they transformed the coastline to ensure that there was no safe haven for ships in the area. This has resulted damage to several Asavean ships belonging to the Tarquinius family as well as the loss of several lives.

The Tarquinius family demands reparations to the tune of six wains of weirwood for the damage done to their (neutral) ships by the storms. They also demand the names of the magicians responsible for what they are seeing as an attack against their property. and if this is not forthcoming they plan take the matter to the Asavean judiciary.

On the subject of Asavean Granite

As she indicated in her last missive, the Heraclien and Rangabe families are still interested in arranging a contract to provide white granite to the Empire.

The families are happy to hear that the Temple to Balo and the Black Bull is underway. Anticipating completion before the Autumn Equinox, they will require a small private dock, warehouse, and residence be built in Oran within sight of completed temple. Lady Madrianna suggests that such a construction should cost at least 10 wains of weirwood, and appropriate labour costs.

The Heraclien and Rangabe will formally commit to offering fifteen wains of white granite each season. They will expect fifteen thrones for the first five wains; then a further twenty thrones for the next five wains; and the final five wains will cost a further twenty-five wains (so if the Empire purchases all fifteen wains in one season it will cost sixty thrones).

However, Lady Madrianna caution that the Grendel ambassador has already agreed that if the Empire has not made a solid commitment by the end of the Autumn equinox, she will be more than happy to purchase the granite at the listed price and provide a suitable structure in Dubhtraig.

On the subject of Jiuvianna Orichalcum

The Jiuvianna – the minor house mentioned in your last correspondence – are still interested in providing orichalcum to the Empire in return for a grant of land and the construction of a compound for their exclusive use.

Lady Madrianna believes this would require the construction of a *folly* somewhere accessible to ships – somewhere either on the Bay of Catazaar or along one of the four rivers. The investment of at least 4 wains of white granite and 4 wains of weirwood, and the expenditure of 16 crowns, should be sufficient to build a compound for the Jiuvianna.

In return they would provide an individual of your choice with 12 ingots of orichalcum each season for as long as the Empire remains at peace with the Plenum.

Sekretariat Kellua Itsepainen
Of the Sussivari Oathsworn Fyrd
Imperial Consul

I am writing on behalf of Militärattache Ludkhannah Schöningen, who is responsible for communication with your Empire. It was our understanding that Beatrix Amalia Novarion Zu Solberg had been appointed as Ambassador to the Commonwealth from the Empire.

However, shortly after their appointment we received a message from Captain Cael of Splitrout, claiming that all future correspondence must pass through them - but giving no indication that they were a temporary proxy such as we are familiar with dealing with.

As advisor to the Senate on international affairs, we are seeking guidance from you as to what is going on here. It is highly irregular for a third person to announce that correspondence should pass through them. It is entirely possible that an attempt to subvert your processes of state is underway.

Our office would like clarification please - who has been appointed as the Imperial ambassador to the Commonwealth?

Captain Cael has been at pains in their letter to try and reassure us that the Empire remains committed to ridding the world of the evils of slavery. These are fine words. But even if he were the ambassador, these words would not carry the same weight as a formal declaration from your Senate. It is interesting that the Senate appears loathe to give such a declaration.

(Im namen von)
Militärattache Ludkhannah Schöningen,
die Stahlhalle
Bolkavaar

Captain Cael

I am writing on behalf of Militärattache Ludkhannah Schöningen, who is responsible for communication with your Empire. It was our understanding that Beatrix Amalia Novarion Zu Solberg had been appointed as Ambassador to the Commonwealth from the Empire.

Your letter has greatly confused the issue. It is not clear if you are a proxy or not - and we have experience of dealing with proxies. You seem to imply that you are in some way a co-Ambassador? It is highly unclear.

Therefore, before we continue we are seeking guidance on this situation from the Imperial Consul.

Your words attempting to reassure us that the Empire remains committed to ridding the world of the evils of slavery. They are fine words. But even if you were the ambassador, they would not carry the same weight as a formal declaration from your Senate. It is interesting that the Senate appears loathe to give such a declaration.

(Im namen von)
Militärattache Ludkhannah Schöningen,
die Stahlhalle
Volkavaar

Beatrix Amalia Novarion Zu Solberg

I am writing on behalf of Militärattache Ludkhannah Schöningen, who is responsible for communication with your Empire. It was our understanding that you had been appointed as Ambassador to the Commonwealth from the Empire.

However during the last summit we received correspondence from a Captain Cael of Splitroute, claiming that all future correspondence must pass through them - but giving no indication that they were a temporary proxy such as we are familiar with dealing with.

This letter has greatly confused the issue. It is not clear if you intend Captain Cael to serve as proxy or not. You are clearly the person who was appointed to the title, are you the ambassador or not.

We are planning to seek guidance on this situation from the Imperial Consul, but it appears that someone is attempting to subvert the business of the Imperial state.

(Im namen von)
Militärattache Ludkhannah Schöningen,
die Stahlhalle
Volkavaar

Ambassador to Faraden

Ricardo Almieda Desmodo di Tassetto

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, but there are also several letters from Lady Saretta of the Red Moon, advisor on Imperial Trade to the Lord of the Four Winds.

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On the subject of Empress Lisabetta

Lady Saretta wishes you to pass her personal regards to Empress Lisabetta, and congratulate her on her ascension to the highest office in the Empire. The Faraden are intending to send a small gift in recognition of her appointment as Imperial head of state. That delegation will have some leeway to discuss other matters, potentially relating to the trade routes that Lady Saretta is keen to see established in the Empire.

On Balmora and Gargantula

The rivalry between these two families is well known and it is unfortunate that both were at Anvil at the same time. It is a constant source of conflict with the Empire that the Faraden faith enshrines the virtue of justice against those who have wronged a Faraden or their family. But it is part of the Faraden way-of-life to protect one's honour. It is disappointing that Imperials are prepared to condemn the Faraden in this regard – the shared understanding of Courage teaches both nations that people should stand up for their beliefs and practice them regardless of criticism from others.

She asks you directly – is it the advice of the Ambassador that Faraden citizens do not come to Anvil for fear they may damage international relations?

On the Conclave

Lady Saretta understands the problem facing the Conclave and is somewhat sympathetic. She also does not want to see the Conclave take a side in the complex network of rivalries, vendettas, and alliances among the Faraden families – candidly, there is literally no way she can see this ending well.

She suggests that you prevail on the Conclave as a whole to issue a Declaration of Concord expressing their intention to work with all the magicians of Faraden without favouring one over the other. Everyone accepts that individuals or small factions may favour one family or another – but that is a local, individual problem rather than a house of Imperial power taking sides.

Such a statement would still leave some leeway for individual factions to make announcements of their own – but would reinforce the reality that the conclave *as a whole* is remaining above individual alliances.

This is the attitude that Lady Saretta herself takes – she endeavours to ensure she deals only with families that understand her position of neutrality as regards inter-family politics.

On the subject of Marad of Ogudai

Lady Saretta accepts and has passed along your commendation of Marad to House Ogudai and they have politely accepted them while remaining clear that action and not words are required to resolve this situation. They have restated their desire for the architects of Marad's destruction to be brought to Justice.

On the subject of William Talbot

A Marcher named William Talbot has contacted Lady Saretta asking that a military advisor be sent to Anvil to discuss war with the Empire. Lady Saretta asks that you might explain the delicate situation as regards Faraden/Jotun relations. Even apart from the problems with House Ogudai, the Faraden have signed a peace treaty with the Jotun that will not allow them to send forces to aid the Empire in return for ensuring their trade routes through the ex-Lasambrian territory.

Ambassador to Sumaah

Vera Runova Helgerod (6343.1)

Ambassador to Sumaah

Over the last three months there have been a handful of letters bearing news of Sumaah. They include a couple of letters from Heln Stanser, Censor of Wood Metal and Stone, The High House of Prosperity, and a few letters from secretaries in the service of the Sumaah präst.

The letters are, without exception, chilly in tone and very formal in nature. They are each written in the same Sumaah tongue with which you addressed your own letters.

Game Information

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On the Subject of the Symposium

In response to requests for a summit, Heln Stanser presents a counter-proposal. She has apparently been appraised that there are efforts afoot to arrange a Symposium, potentially to take place in Autumn, and sees this as an opportunity for congress.

If the Symposium goes ahead, and a formal invitation is extended to Sumaah, then they will send delegates to discuss matters of doctrine – and see if a solution can be found to the current problems. *However*, the Sumaah will *only* attend on the understanding that the Symposium will not encourage heresy. Indeed, not only should the Synod avoid issuing any sort of judgement encouraging heresy, if they wish Sumaah to attend they should issue a statement of principle reminding all citizens of the importance of Imperial doctrine in keeping the Empire together, and that the Symposium should not be used as an opportunity to disseminate views or information that conflict with doctrine.

In the event that the Empire meets these criteria and the House of the People agrees to grant permission to attend, there may be a präst prepared to address the Imperial Synod if time is allocated for them to do so.

She mentions in her letter that only the urging of Asher of Felix's Watch has convinced the Republic to extend this concession.

On the Subject of Cardinal Atla

The chilly tone of Heln Stanser's first letter is nothing compared to the cold fury of her second letter. In it she quotes from a missive she received from Chaplain Atla, the alleged Cardinal of the Way.

“I am writing to let you know of the exciting developments within our Synod. Our general assembly has agreed the incorporation of the nature of the orc soul explicitly into doctrine. Whatever it may prove to be, and the way the Way applies to orcs is now a priority. We are taking steps to reflect this in the law, for example the dangers of malign influence on the souls of all. I am also sure you will be interested in the work of Bonewall Cole and Rek who will be collating evidence for the new doctrine. We would welcome any missionary you would wish to send to contribute or observe our doings.”

She asks how this relates to the implication of your own letter that major changes to doctrine are something to be discussed rather than simply forced through – presumably you can see how the Sumaah (who deny the existence of the orc soul) might view such a change to doctrine as proof of heresy and blasphemy?

Further, she points out that this change to doctrine has come a year *after* the Synod has already declared the murderous anarchist Thrace to be an Exemplar of Ambition, further undermining the Empire's case.

Finally, she quotes the Doctrine of Reincarnation and the Doctrine of Human Destiny. *“The Human Spirit is Immortal”, “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 not only personify Virtue but the full potential of humanity.”*

Both are quite clear. Orcs do not have souls.

To claim that they do *in the absence of proof* is “*The willful rejection, or perversion of, the Orthodox Doctrines of the Faith as laid down by the Imperial Synod, or actively teaching and promoting false doctrines.*” The Imperial Cardinal of the Way is a heretic.

To claim that a brute beast is the equal of Ademar the Lion, Atuman, Zemress, and the others appears to be a pretty clear case of “*The denigration of the Paragons and the Paths of Virtue.*” The Imperial Cardinal of the Way should be investigated on charges of Blasphemy.

Finally, the Empire is categorically guilty of placing orcs in positions of temporal and spiritual power – and of exalting an orc, a creature that is not human. This is “*Subsuming human will and destiny to any inhuman entity or force. This includes the worship, veneration or exaltation of any such being or power.*” The Synod is guilty of Idolatry by reason of exalting an orc.

On the Subject of Orc Souls

In her third letter, she becomes a little more conciliatory. She restates her belief, and the beliefs of the präster of Sumaah, that orcs do not have souls. They do not reincarnate. They are not human. They are by definition less than humans, whose souls are the greatest in all Creation.

There are factions in the Republic who are not unmoved by arguments that in the Empire there are orcs who follow the Way. But she does not accept that following the Way is the same as having a human soul. She compares orcs to the brightly coloured birds of the Sumaah jungle who can mimic human speech, yet demonstrate no true understanding of what they are “saying.”

It might be possible that the Sumaah could be convinced by reason that the orcs are capable of understanding the Way and following it, even though they cannot themselves reincarnate, experience past lives, employ spiritual techniques encapsulated in the ceremonies, or even stomach the taste of liao.

But they will be convinced *only* by proof, not by brute force attempts to change Doctrine to reflect what the Empire itself appears to admit it has *no evidence to support*.

On the Subject of Exemplars and Paragons

At this time, Heln Stanser is not interested in providing the Empire with detailed lists of the exemplars and paragons recorded by the Republic. Perhaps when the current state of war is resolved, but even if it were the Sumaah would prefer to answer specific questions rather than going to the effort of making their entire body of theological study available to foreigners.

On the Subject of Zemress

An Imperial citizen named Ophelia Sanguineo Rezia di Tassato has written requesting information about the Exemplar Zemress Ezmara. With the intention of ensuring that the Synod does not further deviate from the truth, she asks the Ambassador to pass on to Ophelia, to the Assembly of the Nine and the Greater Assembly that the Sumaah Synod has a record of a past life vision in which the visionary claims to have been Zemress Ezmara.

Given that the foremost sign of the soul of a Paragon is that “*is capable of freeing itself from the Labyrinth of Ages through transcendence*”, the Sumaah Synod does not accept that Zemress Ezmara is a Paragon, although they remain convinced that she is a true Exemplar of the rewards that hard work and commitment can bring.

Details of the vision and of other information relating to Zemress will not be further discussed until the Sumaah are no longer at war with the Empire.

On the Subject of Asher

In her third letter, which is considerably more cordial than the proceeding two, she refers to a conversation with Präst Jarom, of the Assembly of Courage, concerning Asher of Felix's Watch. She indicates that the Assembly of Courage have been instrumental in encouraging the rest of the Sumaah Synod, and the House of the People, to temper their fury with Wisdom, as a result of Asher's correspondence.

His clear commitment to returning the Empire to the Path of Virtue gives hope to the Präster that peace may be achieved once again, and that there is common ground to be achieved.

She wishes you to express her condolences to the Synod on the loss of Asher – and praises Accalon of Felix Watch for their missive detailing the death and alleged bodily ascension of the Highborn priest.

The Sumaah Synod appreciates Accalon's invitation. They are discussing whether they will accept it. Heln Stanser wishes to make clear, however, that any delegation from Sumaah will be interested solely in investigating the signs of the Paragon and not empowered to discuss politics or doctrine. In the event that such a delegation is dispatched, it is requested that the Ambassador ensure that Priest Accolon is available to serve as a guide.

On the Subject of Lucifer

In a letter to Xepicotle of the House of Ambition, an Imperial citizen named "Lucifer" has proposed that the current crisis between Sumaah and the Empire could be resolved by performing a trial by Inquisition. This suggestion has been briefly discussed by the praester and dismissed.

The virtue of individual citizens – or lack thereof - is not the problem. What is in question is the direction the Imperial Synod is leading the Empire, and their attempts to redefine the Doctrine of the Way to suit their political agenda.

Furthermore, the Cardinal of Vigilance wishes to suggest that the content of Lucifer's letter to Cardinal Xepicotle is deeply inappropriate. They request that as ambassador you advise him that if he genuinely has feelings for Xepicotle he should reconsider expressing them unless he wishes to destroy her standing among the praester of the House of Ambition by providing her political opponents with evidence of collaboration with a people the Republic is at war with.

Ambassador to Jarm

Oswi Twice Burned (3079.1)

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 attends the House of Princes and advises them on matters of international trade and diplomacy.

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On the Subject of Empress Lisabetta

The House of Princes has dispatched gifts to recognise newly crowned Empress Lisabetta as head of the Imperial state, and he asks that you do everything you can do ensure that the gifts are presented and accepted with the appropriate level of decorum. He warns you that each gift represents a powerful interest in the House of Princes; the Empress' response will be key in shaping future Imperial relations with Jarm.

On the Subject of Prince Tuernin

Lord-Magister Trescher declines to serve as a go-between to Prince Tuernin at this time. He cautions you that it is very rare for a Magician-Prince to leave Jarm for any extended period of time, and as such a trip to Anvil to experience a true-liao vision is likely to be out of the question.

If the Synod is disinterested in sending a priest to Jarm, a possible compromise might be to offer the Prince an opportunity to send someone to collect the dose of true liao on his behalf.

As it is, Lord-Magister Trescher has advised Prince Teurnin to take the matter up with the priests of Limitu Principality House of the Way, and the new liason.

On the Subject of Pärnau Principality Weirwood

In response to your request for reassurances that the weirwood potentially available from Pärnau principality would not be gathered with slaves, Anton's tone becomes slightly amused. Lord-Magister Tescher cannot, in fact, confirm that the weirwood will be harvested without slave labour. In fact, he can categorically confirm that it *will* be gathered with slaves because slavery forms of the basis of all large scale industry in Jarm.

If this is going to be a problem for the Empire, he suggests that they are going to find it extremely difficult to continue to trade with Jarm, which would be a shame. On a more serious note, he points out that if the Empire continues to push their political agenda on the House of Princes, it is likely to sour relations between the two great nations.

To recap: Pärnau Principality is known for its weirwood groves. The new Magician-Prince sees the Empire as an interesting market for the valuable wood. This opportunity remains available until the end of the Autumn Equinox after which it will need to be renegotiated. It would involve a *ministry* that would allow an Imperial citizen to buy Weirwood. A basic structure would require an investment of 15 wains of weirwood and 15 wains of white granite, and 60 crowns in labour costs

Once completed, it would permit the purchase of up to 21 wains of weirwood each season with the first 7 wains costing 31 crowns a wain; the next 7 costing 30 crowns a wain; and the final 7 costing 28 crowns a wain. This would of course require a motion from the Senate.

The Magician-Prince places the restriction that the Empire remain at peace with Southern Jarm; that the ministry is built on the Bay of Catzaar (or in Cargo); and that the individual named to operate the ministry is a magician.

Anton mentions as an aside that although the Magician-Prince is most interested in Imperial coinage – he does not explain why – she might be prepared to accept tempest jade instead.

On the subject of Slavery

According to a report from the Imperial civil servants working at the embassy in Rigia, they continue to receive several offers each week to sell “fine quality” slaves to the Empire. In particular, they have heard reports that some of the eastern Princes – specifically the minor houses of the **Yulmadel** and the **Grabitel** – have been preparing military strikes beyond the borders of Jarm to capture *more* orc slaves explicitly to sell to the Empire.

They formally request that you ask the Senate for a clear statement as to how they should proceed. Is the Empire interested in dealing with the Jarmish to purchase slaves – for whatever reason – or does it condemn the practice of slavery? In the absence of a clear mandate from the Senate the civil servants supporting the embassy in Jarm will follow the existing guidelines and inform the Jarmish Princes in no uncertain terms that the Empire is *not* interested in the purchase of slaves and that for an Imperial citizen to trade in slaves would be a crime.

In particular, they have received several enquiries from Lord-Magister Anton Trescher as to the legal situation, with the implication that if the Empire is interested in more slavery deals, there are several actions in the House of Princes who would be prepared to discuss lucrative deals.

Again, the civil servants remark that many of the people coming to them from the North and South are attempting to sell *human* slaves. They stress that only a *fraction* of the slaves the Jarmish keep are orcs, after all.

On the subject of opportunities to purchase slaves

Lord-Magister Anton requests that you pass this information along to Duke Ferrero, who is apparently interested in purchasing slaves.

There is a message about **Magician-Prince Ivarob of Hishun Principality**. He has a cadre of extremely well-trained orc gladiators that he uses to enact mock battles. He is becoming bored with the gladiator-slaves, and considering selling them – out of appreciation for the work Duke Ferrero has done he is prepared to offer all twenty slaves for four wains of mithril.

There are also two minor households on the eastern borders – not really principalities as such for all they claim seats in the alliance and in the House of Princes. The **Yulmadel** and the **Grabitel** have more contact with orcen tribes than many of their peers. Between them they can muster a further thirty slaves, primarily miners, but they are disinterested in mithril or crystal mana. They will sell the slaves for a measure of orichalcum apiece. The price is steep, but each of the orcs has been trained from youth to operate in the treacherous mines of the far-eastern borderlands.

On the subject of mithril

Your offer to purchase 15 wains of mithril at the cost of 4 Thrones per wain is absolutely acceptable to Lord-Magister Trescher. Provide him with the funds with a Wingéd Messenger and he will provide Imperial wain certificates by return of post – his office maintains a store of wains specifically for trade in this fashion.

Indeed, if you have the funds available he can offer up to a total of 20 wains at this price, but the deal remains available only until the end of the Autumn Equinox after which it would need to be renegotiated.

On the subject of crystal mana trade

Lord-Magister Anton has assessed the starting Imperial offers for crystal mana and is interested in arranging opportunities to sell at 1 crown 5 rings per crystal. He is prepared to offer you 32 crystal mana for 40 crowns. The mana would be with you by the start of the Autumn Equinox following receipt of money. Alternatively, you could purchase 27 crystal mana at the same price and it would be with you before the end of the Summer Solstice – the difference in quantity reflects the need to employ a potent

ritual to send that many crystals via a magical messenger.

On the subject of green iron trade

Lord-Magister Anton has assessed the starting Imperial offers for green iron, and has determined that it is not feasible for him to secure the material at the price you have quoted.

He has placed a counter-offer of 19 rings per ingot for up to 40 ingots. Providing the material for you by the Autumn equinox would be straightforward; if you are prepared to pay an additional five crystals of mana to cover transportation costs, he is confident he could have the ingots to you by the end of the Summer Solstice.

On the subject of Jarmish history

Tescher has passed your request for information about Jarmish history around scholarly circles, and it has been met with mild disinterest at best. Works of Jarmish history are readily available for purchase in the port-cities of Jarm and any visiting Imperial captain is free to pick up as many as they can pack into their holds.

If there are any specific questions that Camillius of Endsmeet would like to discuss, then Lord-Magister Anton would be prepared to pass those questions along and negotiate a suitable price – although Jarmish scholastic expertise does not come cheap.

On the Subject of Religion

Emissaries of the Sumaah Republic have continued to defame the Imperial Synod as having lost “the Way” - citing in particular their exaltation of orc souls to place them equal to human souls despite a complete lack of proof to support this.

Lord-Magister Treschler is largely disinterested, but the civil servants associated with the embassy report that there a strong feeling among adherents of the Way in Southern Jarm in particular that the Empire no longer speaks for them in religious matters. They are looking to Timoj, rather than Bastion, on spiritual matters.

The presence of Limitu Principality House of the Way has impeded Sumaah attempts to turn the Northern Jarmish followers of the Way against the Empire, at least to a degree, but pressure persists.

The Imperial Synod has expressed an intention to build a Temple of the Way in Rigia – and the civil service *strongly suggest* that they begin construction as soon as possible. While gratitude to the Empire for their work establishing Rigia is still strong, it will not impede the Sumaah diplomats for much longer. Prince Barabara supports the Imperial version of the Way at the moment, but she is a politician first and foremost, and if her alliance becomes critical of Bastion, she will have no choice but to rescind her invitation.

Ambassador from Jarm

To Eriktho Auricspire (3201.1)

Ambassador from Jarm

Over the last three months there have been several letters bearing news of Jarm from Lord-Magister Anton Trescher, of the Hidden Hook, who attends the House of Princes and advises them on matters of international trade and diplomacy.

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On the Subject of Confidence

Lord-Magister Trescher reassures you that for now at least he is minded to trust you, but he is developing doubts as to your commitment to Jarm as a whole rather than to the interests of your Eastern Alliance. You will have ample opportunity in the coming months to reassure him of your loyalty to the Principalities through your actions.

On the Subject of Empress Lisabetta

Lord-Magister Trescher wishes you to offer formal congratulations to Empress Lisabetta on her ascension of the throne. The House of Princes has dispatched gifts to recognise her as head of the Imperial state, and he expects you to do everything you can do ensure that the gifts are presented and accepted with the appropriate level of decorum. He warns you that each gift represents a powerful interest in the House of Princes - the Empress' response will be key in shaping future Imperial relations with Jarm – and that in this you will be expected to act as a neutral agent. He does not wish to hear reports of your prioritising gifts from the East over those from the North or the South.

On the Subject of Slavery

Lord-Magister Trescher is privately less than amused by the Imperial attitude to international affairs when it comes to slavery. He seems to believe that their constant demand for reassurances regarding the provenance of trade goods are rude, even offensive, and represent a form of cultural Imperialism that he is not interested in tolerating.

If there are citizens of the Empire who are prepared to deal with the Princes of Jarm as long as everyone pretends that the goods involved are gathered by free citizens instead of slaves, then he is prepared to facilitate this – but he considers it to be an insult to the Jarmish people.

If you provide specific details of the kinds of deals these unnamed private Imperial citizens are looking for, he will however discharge his duty. Yet if he is ever asked, he will be quite clear that in his opinion everyone involved in these trades knew fine well they were dealing in goods gathered and prepared through the use of slave labour.

The Pärnau Principality Weirwood opportunity remains available to ambassador Oswi until the end of the Autumn Equinox. If the Empire has not made a firm commitment at that point, you will be free to negotiate with one of your “private citizens”. He advises you to lay the groundwork now, however, as you will need to be fairly quick off the mark if you are to secure the trade.

On the subject of the mithril trade

At the moment, Lord-Magister Trescher is offering Oswi the chance to purchase up to 20 wains of mithril at the cost of 4 Thrones per wain. He empowers you to further negotiate on his behalf for a further 20 wains. If you can secure interest by your “private citizens” during the Summer Solstice, he will endeavour to provide the wains in return for payment by the end of the solstice.

If you are able to secure the purchase of all the mithril – or at least more of it than Oswi is able to commit to purchasing – then he will consider using you to secure future deals rather than the Imperial ambassador whose delicate sensibilities appear to be in danger of overcoming his pragmatism.

On the Subject of Prince Tuernin

Finally, as you are no doubt already aware, the Magician-Prince of Limitu recently succumbed to his long illness. His successor is his son Tuernin of Limitu. He has engaged in a period of public grieving due to last a year. The old Prince's wife, the mother of the new Prince, is sympathetic to the Imperial Way which presents an opportunity to improve relations between the Casinean Empire and the Principalities. If Prince Tuernin (or his mother) could be provided with a “true liao vision” it might see more interest in the Way and in improved Imperial relations as a consequence.

Ambassador Oswi is apparently unable to get the Synod to commit to sending a named priest with a dose of “*true liao*” to Limitu. If you are able to resolve this situation satisfactorily it will be a feather in your cap and do much for your standing with the Northern alliance.

Ambassador to Sumaah

Vera Runova Helgerod (6343.1)

Ambassador to Sumaah

Over the last three months there have been a handful of letters bearing news of Sumaah. They include a couple of letters from Heln Stanser, Censor of Wood Metal and Stone, The High House of Prosperity, and a few letters from secretaries in the service of the Sumaah präst.

The letters are, without exception, chilly in tone and very formal in nature. They are each written in the same Sumaah tongue with which you addressed your own letters.

Game Information

You are welcome to use this information as you see fit – but this document is out-of-character and should not be shown to other characters during the event. Instead please use it as the basis of your roleplaying regarding the events described.

On the Subject of the Symposium

In response to requests for a summit, Heln Stanser presents a counter-proposal. She has apparently been appraised that there are efforts afoot to arrange a Symposium, potentially to take place in Autumn, and sees this as an opportunity for congress.

If the Symposium goes ahead, and a formal invitation is extended to Sumaah, then they will send delegates to discuss matters of doctrine – and see if a solution can be found to the current problems. *However*, the Sumaah will *only* attend on the understanding that the Symposium will not encourage heresy. Indeed, not only should the Synod avoid issuing any sort of judgement encouraging heresy, if they wish Sumaah to attend they should issue a statement of principle reminding all citizens of the importance of Imperial doctrine in keeping the Empire together, and that the Symposium should not be used as an opportunity to disseminate views or information that conflict with doctrine.

In the event that the Empire meets these criteria and the House of the People agrees to grant permission to attend, there may be a präst prepared to address the Imperial Synod if time is allocated for them to do so.

She mentions in her letter that only the urging of Asher of Felix's Watch has convinced the Republic to extend this concession.

On the Subject of Cardinal Atla

The chilly tone of Heln Stanser's first letter is nothing compared to the cold fury of her second letter. In it she quotes from a missive she received from Chaplain Atla, the alleged Cardinal of the Way.

“I am writing to let you know of the exciting developments within our Synod. Our general assembly has agreed the incorporation of the nature of the orc soul explicitly into doctrine. Whatever it may prove to be, and the way the Way applies to orcs is now a priority. We are taking steps to reflect this in the law, for example the dangers of malign influence on the souls of all. I am also sure you will be interested in the work of Bonewall Cole and Rek who will be collating evidence for the new doctrine. We would welcome any missionary you would wish to send to contribute or observe our doings.”

She asks how this relates to the implication of your own letter that major changes to doctrine are something to be discussed rather than simply forced through – presumably you can see how the Sumaah (who deny the existence of the orc soul) might view such a change to doctrine as proof of heresy and blasphemy?

Further, she points out that this change to doctrine has come a year *after* the Synod has already declared the murderous anarchist Thrace to be an Exemplar of Ambition, further undermining the Empire's case.

Finally, she quotes the Doctrine of Reincarnation and the Doctrine of Human Destiny. *“The Human Spirit is Immortal”, “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 not only personify Virtue but the full potential of humanity.”*

Both are quite clear. Orcs do not have souls.

To claim that they do *in the absence of proof* is “*The willful rejection, or perversion of, the Orthodox Doctrines of the Faith as laid down by the Imperial Synod, or actively teaching and promoting false doctrines.*” The Imperial Cardinal of the Way is a heretic.

To claim that a brute beast is the equal of Ademar the Lion, Atuman, Zemress, and the others appears to be a pretty clear case of “*The denigration of the Paragons and the Paths of Virtue.*” The Imperial Cardinal of the Way should be investigated on charges of Blasphemy.

Finally, the Empire is categorically guilty of placing orcs in positions of temporal and spiritual power – and of exalting an orc, a creature that is not human. This is “*Subsuming human will and destiny to any inhuman entity or force. This includes the worship, veneration or exaltation of any such being or power.*” The Synod is guilty of Idolatry by reason of exalting an orc.

On the Subject of Orc Souls

In her third letter, she becomes a little more conciliatory. She restates her belief, and the beliefs of the präster of Sumaah, that orcs do not have souls. They do not reincarnate. They are not human. They are by definition less than humans, whose souls are the greatest in all Creation.

There are factions in the Republic who are not unmoved by arguments that in the Empire there are orcs who follow the Way. But she does not accept that following the Way is the same as having a human soul. She compares orcs to the brightly coloured birds of the Sumaah jungle who can mimic human speech, yet demonstrate no true understanding of what they are “saying.”

It might be possible that the Sumaah could be convinced by reason that the orcs are capable of understanding the Way and following it, even though they cannot themselves reincarnate, experience past lives, employ spiritual techniques encapsulated in the ceremonies, or even stomach the taste of liao.

But they will be convinced only by proof, not by brute force attempts to change Doctrine to reflect what the Empire itself appears to admit it has no evidence to support.

On the Subject of Exemplars and Paragons

At this time, Heln Stanser is not interested in providing the Empire with detailed lists of the exemplars and paragons recorded by the Republic. Perhaps when the current state of war is resolved, but even if it were the Sumaah would prefer to answer specific questions rather than going to the effort of making their entire body of theological study available to foreigners.

On the Subject of Zemress

An Imperial citizen named Ophelia Sanguineo Rezia di Tassato has written requesting information about the Exemplar Zemress Ezmara. With the intention of ensuring that the Synod does not further deviate from the truth, she asks the Ambassador to pass on to Ophelia, to the Assembly of the Nine and the Greater Assembly that the Sumaah Synod has a record of a past life vision in which the visionary claims to have been Zemress Ezmara.

Given that the foremost sign of the soul of a Paragon is that “*is capable of freeing itself from the Labyrinth of Ages through transcendence*”, the Sumaah Synod does not accept that Zemress Ezmara is a Paragon, although they remain convinced that she is a true Exemplar of the rewards that hard work and commitment can bring.

Details of the vision and of other information relating to Zemress will not be further discussed until the Sumaah are no longer at war with the Empire.

On the Subject of Asher

In her third letter, which is considerably more cordial than the proceeding two, she refers to a conversation with Präst Jarom, of the Assembly of Courage, concerning Asher of Felix's Watch. She indicates that the Assembly of Courage have been instrumental in encouraging the rest of the Sumaah Synod, and the House of the People, to temper their fury with Wisdom, as a result of Asher's correspondence.

His clear commitment to returning the Empire to the Path of Virtue gives hope to the Präster that peace may be achieved once again, and that there is common ground to be achieved.

She wishes you to express her condolences to the Synod on the loss of Asher – and praises Accalon of Felix Watch for their missive detailing the death and alleged bodily ascension of the Highborn priest.

The Sumaah Synod appreciates Accalon's invitation. They are discussing whether they will accept it. Heln Stanser wishes to make clear, however, that any delegation from Sumaah will be interested solely in investigating the signs of the Paragon and not empowered to discuss politics of doctrine. In the event that such a delegation is dispatched, it is requested that the Ambassador ensure that Priest Accolon is available to serve as a guide.

On the Subject of Lucifer

In a letter to Xepicotle of the House of Ambition, an Imperial citizen named “Lucifer” has proposed that the current crisis between Sumaah and the Empire could be resolved by performing a trial by Inquisition. This suggestion has been briefly discussed by the präster and dismissed.

The virtue of individual citizens – or lack thereof - is not the problem. What is in question is the direction the Imperial Synod is leading the Empire, and their attempts to redefine the Doctrine of the Way to suit their political agenda.

Furthermore, the Cardinal of Vigilance wishes to suggest that the content of Lucifer's letter to Cardinal Xepicotle is deeply inappropriate. They request that as ambassador you advise him that if he genuinely has feelings for Xepicotle he should reconsider expressing them unless he wishes to destroy her standing among the präster of the House of Ambition by providing her political opponents with evidence of collaboration with a people the Republic is at war with.

