

*Lambent Eye.*

*I believe our Elders will be very pleased with your contribution.*

*Here is a summary report, as promised, for your own use:*

*The vast majority of the writings regarding Nicovar that we found within your Spire's libraries concentrated on Nicovar's early life, prior to even his tenure as Archmage. Notable amongst these were:*

*One early pamphlet written by Nicovar himself - alas, an ushabti-made copy thereof rather than something in his own hand - most probably in his teenage years (from corroborating evidence in other sources, and the relevant timings). It had a few grass stains and a little damage from exposure to damp conditions, but was otherwise very much intact.*

*It was written to warn the Empire of the danger it was in from its reliance on Frederick Ritter van Holberg, who you may know better as Emperor Frederick, for supply of mana for some great work known as the 'Green Glass Labyrinth' - the pamphlet, alas, assumes the reader is familiar with what this refers to. Other evidence suggests that this was some kind of mana-based Great Work in Zenith, perhaps taking advantage of an opportunity to improve the number or quality of mana sites in the region by taming the unharnessed magic that had previously flowed through the valleys.*

*The pamphlet is an attempt to stir up outrage that Frederick is involved at such a level in such a project when he has no personal knowledge of magic, and warns of Frederick's political ambitions - a warning which was clearly not adequately heeded, as Frederick did rise to the Throne - and, we believe, did some serious damage to the ability of the Senate and the Civil Service to reign in the power of the Bourse and enforce loyalty to nation or Empire.*

*While we could not, alas, find any of the primary sources, there were a large body of references to - and some precious quotations from - a large body of work which appeared to be one of Nicovar's defining obsessions before his ascension to Archmage and entry to the wider political stage: research into the psychology and consciousness of non-human life forms, particularly animals.*

*His main topic appeared to be the moral status of animals - and by extension ores, and perhaps even heralds - and what distinguishes rock from plant, plant from animal, animal from ore, and*

ore from human. The fundamental question to which he returned time and again was, "Can a dog be virtuous?" and the subsequent question, "Does it benefit the dog so to do?"

It appears Nicovar was quite an experimentalist in his youth; one of the richest veins of documentary evidence in this area is from offhand comments in other works regarding experimental design, criticising his methods during his exploration of this subject, especially when it came to the use of live subjects.

The evidence of his political campaign to become Archmage, and beyond, is rather thinner on the ground.

We have recovered one mostly-charred document which strongly suggests that it was his strong relationship with Kimus that won him the position; through piecing together a number of allusions, it appears that he gave a decisive address to the Conclave containing some military predictions which proved more accurate than the previous Archmage's scrying results, causing widespread belief that the previous Archmage had been simply pocketing the mana for military scrying results that she believed she could predict herself.

As for his tenure in this position, the most complete document in the collection was a pamphlet by a Highborn author, decrying the codification of Crystal Clarity of the Rational Soul. Whilst this was the direct responsibility of the Provost of the Halls of Knowledge, the pamphlet's author reveals that Nicovar himself prepared the original research on which the codification was based, and suggests that his earlier research into soul-less beings had enabled him to create this magical abomination that suppressed the functioning of the human soul.

Very little about his actual reign remained in your libraries; certainly nothing that particularly deviated from the standard narrative: praise for his work helping the Civil Service to more effectively use the vast array of Day magic that keeps them able to implement the Empire's infrastructure, then worries about the burden of record-keeping that he was imposing on various groups, and then various post-reign excoriations of his final acts regarding the Empire's libraries.

As for Malachai, the only mention that we could find of said 'prophet' was in the recently published *Echoes of the Labyrinth*.

Danae of Ankarian was not referenced in any of the works in your library, but inspection of some of the writings rescued from Ankarian, particularly old treatises on filing systems, turned up a couple which were inscribed with the name on the inside covers - presumably as a mark of ownership.