

OTHER MINDS

The Unofficial Role-Playing Magazine for J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth and beyond

OTHER MINDS Magazine Issue 9, February 2010

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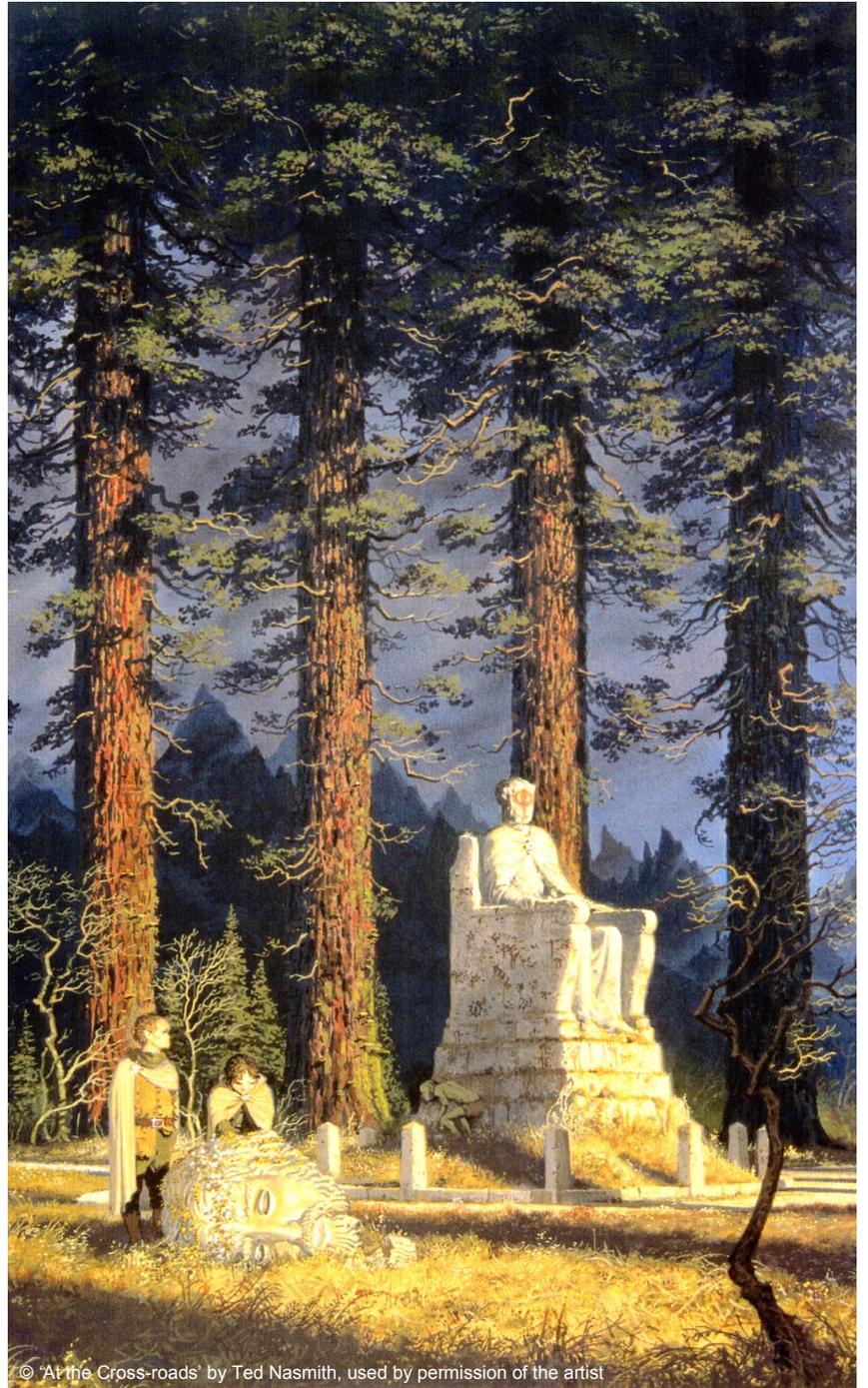
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The next Issue of *Other Minds* is
not themed,
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Submission deadline is
April 1 2010

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MAIN FEATURES

- 2 **Editorial: The Dominion of Man**
by Thomas Morwinsky
- 4 **Inside Information**
by Thomas Morwinsky
- 5 **The Age of Sauron**
by Padraig Timmins
- 14 **The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age**
by Thomas Morwinsky
- 29 **A Fourth Age Chronology**
by Tom Davie
- 39 **Religion in Angmar**
by Thomas Morwinsky



OTHER FEATURES

- 60 **Fine Print and Disclaimers**
- 61 **Creative Commons License**
- 64 **Appendix A: Dúnadan lifespans in the Fourth Age**
- 65 **Appendix B: Alternative ending for "The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age"**

Table of Contents: *Other Minds Magazine*, Issues 1-9

Editorial: The Dominion of Man

This Issue

I hope all of you had a good start to 2010, and that all your wishes may come true! We have had a good crop of submissions, so the first Issue of *Other Minds* in 2010 will make a good Tolkien-related start for sure. Again we have a first-time contributor who was so kind as to offer us his ideas for publication. Concerning the now established broad variety of authors, I firmly believe that *Other Minds* is on a good way.

As announced in our last Issue, we now have a theme again: The Fourth Age. Tolkien, through Elrond, called this the *Dominion of Man*, which we've taken as a fitting headline for content dealing with this time. Naturally, the visions and interpretations of various authors differ considerably. This is hardly surprising, since Tolkien told us little about this time and we deem this multitude of opinions as very fruitful, since it fosters discussion and will result in a better understanding of the period.

We begin with **The Age of Sauron**, as already foreshadowed in our last Issue. This is a fascinating Middle-earth game setting developed by first-time contributor Padraig Timmins. In the present contribution, he deals with the overall setting of this "alternative history": Frodo failed in his quest and Sauron got the One back! Padraig shows us a highly realistic approach to what might have happened once Sauron got his Ring back. This article is focused on the broad description of the Northwest following this pivotal event, leaving much room for further scenarios and pieces built on this great foundation. In fact, Padraig has already promised to provide further details in later Issues of *Other Minds*.

It's natural to put the Fourth Age pieces together, and so **The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age** by myself comes right behind. This is written along

more traditional lines, accepting the course of events as developed by Tolkien. It gives an overview of the major events of the Fourth Age according to my interpretation of Tolkien's scarce evidence about it. Loose ends that were left by Tolkien are further developed, as is an idea of how Tolkien's Secondary World might be blended in into real-world myths. In light of this it comes with two different endings to the Age, allowing readers to choose the one that best suits their own preferences.

Next in line is Tom Davie with his **Fourth Age Chronology**. Here he provides us another vision of the Fourth Age based on the "real" course of events, but with a different angle on how things should further develop after Elessar's and Eldarion's time. In this he picks up the theme developed by Martin Baker in his *Tresco Manuscript* article (*Other Hands*, Issue 13, April 1996), and building further developments upon it.

The final contribution this time is again by me and it fulfills a promise given in *Other Minds*, Issue 7. However this article does not follow our "Fourth Age" focus, but I guess you can live with that. Religion in Angmar is intended to be used in conjunction with "The Angmarrim" from *Other Minds*, Issue 7 and contains my suggestions for revising ICE's take on the religious system in Angmar to something more believable – and especially to conform with statements made by Tolkien himself. Similar to Padraig's approach with the 'Age of Sauron', this is intended as an overview to which specific details will be added in future.

Movie News

There is also some movie-related news – and not in the context of the Peter Jackson trilogy or the upcoming *The Hobbit* movies, but of an old acquaintance. In case you haven't heard already, Warner Home

Video will release a remastered version of the Bakshi *Lord of the Rings* movie on April, 6 2010 (US release). See the announcement at <http://uk.dvd.ign.com/articles/105/1058187p1.html> for more details. Many thanks go to António Simões for digging this up!

A New Middle-earth Roleplaying Game!

Another exciting piece of news is about a new Middle-earth RPG! Two companies (Cubicle 7 Entertainment and Sophisticated Games) in cooperation have obtained a new gaming licence for a game based on *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. They have announced the publication of a brand-new game named *The One Ring: The Lord of the Rings® Role-playing Game* (not to be confused with the similar-sounding and now-defunct game from Decipher). Check out their webpage at <http://www.cubicle-7.com/> for news. They are planning to release the game in the second half of 2010.

We at *Other Minds Magazine* are very excited about the prospect of new movement in the Middle-earth roleplaying sector. Faithful to our motto, we will gladly extend our support to this new game and will welcome submissions related to it.

We will report any news of further developments on the game as soon as we have it.

Last but not least

There is also something to say about the artwork found in this Issue. We are very proud that two artists gave us permission to use their artwork within our pages. First is renowned Tolkien illustrator **Ted Nasmith**! Needless to say, he is among the most noted Tolkien artists and his superb work has been published widely, e.g. in several Tolkien Calendars including the current one for 2010. See Ted's webpage at <http://www.tednasmith.com/> for further information on his huge portfolio of great work.

Jan Pospisil is the other artist who has been so kind as to give permission to use his work within *Other Minds*. His webpage can be found at <http://merlkir.deviantart.com/>. We are greatly indebted to both of you!

Finally, we have a new feature on our website. From now on, a regularly updated Table of Contents for all Issues of *Other Minds* to date will be available for download as well. See the *Inside Information* piece in this Issue for more information on the matter.

For the *Other Minds* team
Thomas Morwinsky
February 2010



Inside Information

Table of Contents available!

Other Minds reader and contributor José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa pointed out that it is becoming difficult to keep track of all the content published in *Other Minds*. For this reason, we decided to make a Table of Contents available to ease the navigation of our growing fund of Tolkien-related material. For the beginning we provide this in two formats: a PDF file sorted simply by Issue, and a spreadsheet with drop-down titles which can be used for filtering according to several criteria: Issue, type of content, author, up to three keywords etc. These will be updated with each Issue and we will keep on improving their usability. In this you can help us too, simply by giving us feedback whether this system works for you or not. Suggestions for improvements are highly welcome as well, since this gives us the option of optimizing the organization of this catalog according to **your** needs.

For the further development of this Table of Content, José Enrique has kindly offered us his support in developing a professional solution. Stay tuned for further developments in this area!

You can find the current Table of Content **at the end of this Issue**.

Other Minds on Facebook!

Other Minds now has its own group on Facebook! Just type "Other Minds Magazine" in the search field at Facebook and you will be led straight on. Alternatively, you may directly follow the link <http://de-de.facebook.com/group.php?gid=272269336247>.

Join us online for the most recent news and help spread the word about our project.

Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game statistics needed!

Another topic worth mentioning is *OM's* game mechanics. Those contributions that provide game data (e.g. adventures, scenarios, NPC's) are currently showing a concentration on MERP/RM. As *Other Minds* is meant to be a gaming magazine for GMs and players of any game system, we would be glad to broaden our range in this respect.

So any reader who is proficient in the *Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* (the Decipher game) and willing to lend a hand to provide statistics for this system is cordially invited to send a mail. This can apply to already published articles as well as future ones.

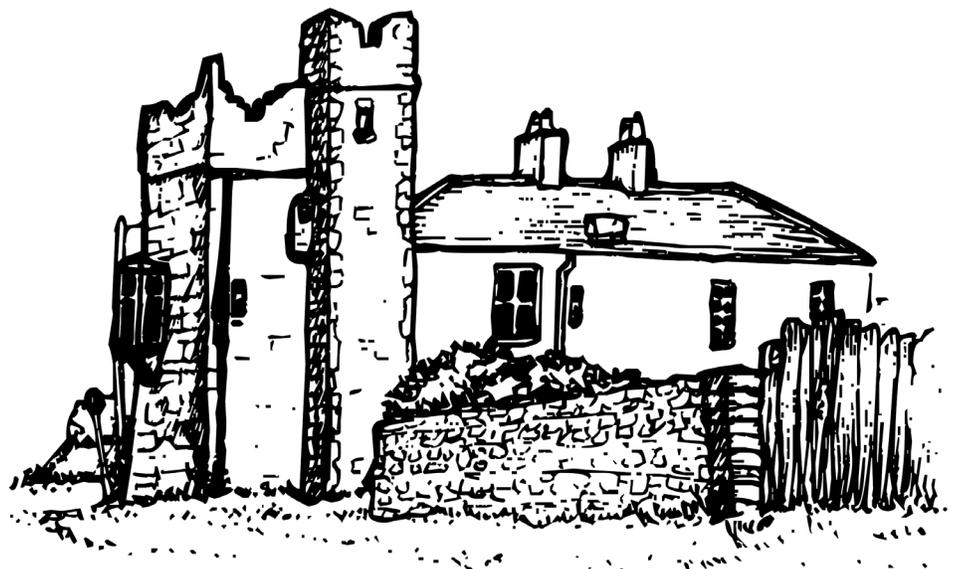
Please send messages to submissions@omzine.org (or use the webform for submissions on our website) and we will help however we can to make this as easy as possible.

The One Ring: The Lord of the Rings® Role-playing Game

As already mentioned in the Editorial, a new Tolkien RPG game will be published in the second half of 2010. We will closely follow developments and share any news we get. In addition, we will of course seek to support this system by publishing game material and any other related information.

Adventures, encounters and other content related to (and including stats for!) the new game will be highly appreciated and we would like to add game statistics for *TOR: LotR RPG* to our back catalog as soon as the rules become available. If you are interested, please contact us, preferably by email at submissions@omzine.org (or the aforementioned submission webform)

It will be good to have an official and supported Middle-earth RPG again.



The Age of Sauron

by Padraig Timmins

(PadraigT@northerntooluk.com) © 2010
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We already announced it last Issue: A scenario idea for a Fourth Age quite unlike what we know from The Lord of the Rings.

There are a lot of "what ifs" to ask when you tackle the subject of an alternative ending to the The Lord of the Rings where Sauron regained the One Ring and subsequently expanded his influence once again over all of Middle-earth.

Now, Padraig has developed a great scenario along this path and we are pleased to present it within the pages of Other Minds.

Ted Nasmith was so kind to give us permission for the use of his works. Within this article you'll see several of his images. These are not the whole images, but cropped ones that are used to illustrate a specific point. Look to Ted's website (see Editorial) for full renderings of this artwork.



Introduction

What if Frodo failed to destroy the One Ring? Worse still, what if Sauron recovered it? What would have happened to the West? The Free Peoples? The Shire? The whole of Middle-earth? I think it is generally agreed they would all be toast. But how would this play out? Who would get hit first? And what kind of resistance would there have been before the ultimate defeat?

In the middle of 2006 a friend of mine told me of a D20 campaign setting called **Midnight**. After he explained what it was all about, it became clear to me what I believed the **Midnight** setting desperately wanted to be. It yearned to be Middle-earth after the victory of Sauron the Great and the story of the Fall of the Free Peoples to the will and power of the Dark Lord.

And so, rather than introduce it to my players, for whom I had run many, many Middle-earth campaigns using many different systems (**MERP**, **Rolemaster** but mostly **Chivalry & Sorcery**), I decided to start working on a new Middle-earth setting, where Frodo failed to destroy the One Ring and Sauron reclaimed it.

Sauron, having recovered his Ring, would become almost all powerful, certainly in comparison to any other being in Middle-earth. To my mind, no other being of such might could have walked Middle-earth since the times when the Valar themselves had freely strode the lands of Endor. Who now in Middle-earth could hope to stand against him?

In this first instalment of **The Age of Sauron**, I hope to give enough of my thoughts to deal with what could have hap-

pened in the first few years after the victory of Sauron and how such a victory would have affected the Free Peoples and their homes. In later instalments, I hope to go into more detail about specific peoples and their homes and trace some of the possibilities for them in a world dominated by the Dark Lord.

The campaigns I have run in **The Age of Sauron** to date have taken my players on adventures across the first century of the **Age of Sauron** and in many of the lands across north-western Middle-earth. Using the term "Age of Sauron" may engender visions that Sauron has ruled for many thousands of years, and so he probably would. But having so far uncovered only the first century of history concerning Middle-earth under the Dark Lord, I cannot say for sure how long his reign might be. Suffice to say, there have already been some significant victories for the Free Peoples but also too many crushing defeats.

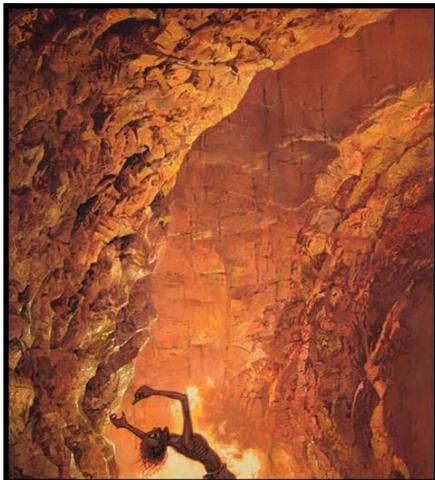
The Age of Sauron is not a time for the faint-hearted. It is a time of courage, a time of fortitude, and a time in which the success of great deeds temporarily holds the line against the darkness, and failure results in death or enslavement to the Will of Sauron.

In my vanity, I wrote a short piece to introduce my players to this campaign, which involved re-writing part of the chapter Mount Doom of *The Lord of the Rings*. My own text begins after the word '**Gollum**' in the second sentence of the second paragraph. I am certainly no author, but I hope the Great Maker himself would not be too critical of my crude attempt to re-envision his work. And so I welcome all who have the courage to read on.

The Dawning of the Age of Sauron the Great

...

And far away, as Frodo put on the Ring and claimed it for his own, even in Sammath Naur the very heart of his realm, the Power in Barad-dûr was shaken and the Tower trembled from its foundations to its proud and bitter crown. The Dark Lord was suddenly aware of him, and his Eye—piercing all shadows—looked across the plain to the door that he had made; the magnitude of his own folly was revealed to him in a blinding flash, and all the devices of his enemies were at last laid bare. Then his wrath blazed in consuming flame, but his fear rose like a vast black smoke to choke him, for he knew his deadly peril and the thread upon which his doom now hung.



© 'At the Cracks of Doom' by Ted Nasmith, used by permission of the artist

The fires below awoke in anger, the red light blazed and all the cavern was filled with a great glare and heat. Suddenly Gollum was lifted into the air; his tight lips stretched wide; his teeth flashing like fangs of blood in the red light as he cried in dismay. Then, an invisible force launched Gollum over the edge of the abyss and a pitiful, hopeless shriek of despair ripped from the wretched creature's throat as he plunged to a fiery death.

Sam's heart leapt. Despite having earlier spared Gollum's life, he knew the vile creature's heart was black and capable of

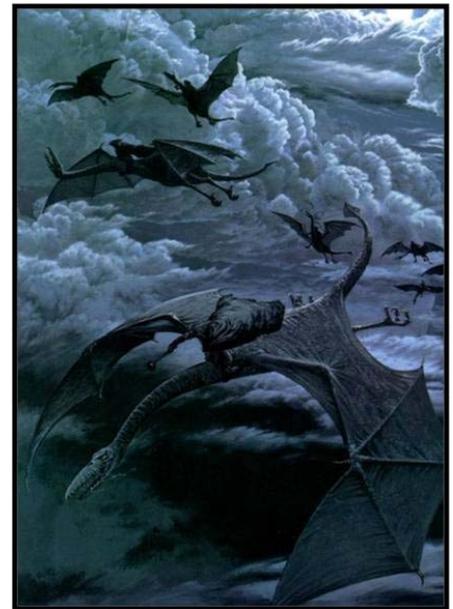
great evil. Choking back sobs of relief and fear Sam dragged himself to his feet and stumbled towards the chasm to where he had last seen Frodo. Before he had taken more than a few paces an unseen force knocked him on to his back and then crushed down upon his chest. A dreadful voice above him uttered words that brought despair to his heart.

"On your back and stay there, Half-wit! A new power is now Lord of these lands, and none will stand in its presence unless given leave!" Frodo's once pleasant tenor was now filled with vitriol and loathing for his former servant and friend.

A second blow to his head caused Sam to lapse into unconsciousness. Frodo, denied his audience, snorted in disgust and passed from Sammath Naur back out onto the mountainside. He scrutinised the realm of Mordor with newfound acuity and clearly discerned events that were far away. To the west, Frodo could see the realm of Gondor and the shining city of Minas Tirith, nursing its wounds and slowly recovering; looking north he saw the massed armies of the western lands embroiled in battle with the forces of Sauron, but Mordor's generals were now in turmoil and Frodo knew why. The lords of war Sauron commanded were now cut free from the Dark Lord's mind and purpose. Bereft of his control and having to take command without the surety that the will of Sauron gave them, they quailed and were flooded with fear.

For a moment silence fell upon the battlefield, and the Captains of the West, sensing an opportunity to strike at the heart of the enemy's military leadership, changed their purpose and drove home their advantage. The forces of Mordor were pushed back, despite their superior numbers, as the forces of the West drove into their ranks, slaying their captains and their lords, and routing the remainder of their forces. But the victory of the West would be short lived if Frodo had the chance to deal with them properly! And finally, turning to the east, Frodo looked upon the mighty tower of Barad-dûr and met the gaze of the Dark Lord, high in his tower.

Frodo issued the challenge and the Dark Lord responded. Across the vast expanse of ash and ruin the very air pulsed with power as the contest of wills began. But Frodo had no comprehension of the power of the Dark Lord. For even without his Ring, Sauron, among the mightiest of the Maiar to dwell within the confines of Eä, was more powerful and more terrible than any being in Middle-earth could conceive, except perhaps the Wise. Even over such a distance, Sauron's will was vast. Using such command as he could, he locked Frodo in a battle of minds which could have only one ending.



© 'The Nazgûl' by Ted Nasmith, used by permission of the artist

Soon the Nazgûl arrived on their winged steeds, circling Frodo's position like vultures over a wounded beast of the plains. They descended in haste and took up positions encircling the halfling. Sensing the presence of the Nazgûl, Frodo tore free from his mental battle with the Dark Lord, seeking to bring his will to bear on the Black Riders and bend them to his purpose. They stood like statues surrounding him, black shadows against a dark, grey, and broken land.

"Kneel before me! I am your Lord! I command the One Ring! The Master Ring!" Frodo cried as he put forth his will and battled for command of the Nazgûl.

But too little did the young hobbit know of the lore of the Rings of Power. Perhaps one of the Wise could have temporarily mastered the Nazgûl; perhaps Saruman with his knowledge of Ringlore could have achieved that for which Frodo strove. But Sauron still held the Nine Rings for Mortal Men, and through those Rings he held the Nazgûl to his purpose. Sauron knew the power of the Rings all too well, and counted on his servant's loyalty to ensure that the pretender did not escape and to hold him until the arrival of Sauron himself to the slopes of Orodruin.

Frodo stretched out his power and grasped at the minds of the Nazgûl. A moment of uncertainty hovered in the air between them, but then the Nazgûl bowed before the halfling and in hollow voices they bade Frodo look out upon his new domain. With mounting confidence and exhilaration Frodo strode down the mountainside as the Nazgûl spoke to him of the great victories he would achieve and the mighty domains he would rule. But the Nazgûl suddenly withdrew in haste. Frodo, sensing some new reluctance within them, was filled with fury and commanded them to obey. They refused, and the real reason for the Nazgûl's withdrawal became clear.

Frodo, discerning the approach of a Power, looked back east. Moving as swiftly as an arrow propelled from the mightiest of elven bows, a dark and terrifying form approached in wrath, leaving a storm of ash in its wake. The figure slowed as it achieved the lower slopes of the mountain, and the Nazgûl scattered in terror as the dread shape drew near. Frodo cackled, for now he knew his chance for complete victory had come. He would throw down the Dark Lord on his own mountain and assume the Throne of Mordor. He would achieve what even the mighty Lords of the Eldar and the Exiles of Númenor could not. All manner of victories and triumphs boiled in his head, all he had to do was...

Sauron, the Lord of the Rings, the Lord of Mordor and self-proclaimed Master of Middle-earth finally arrived. Frodo put forth his power, more power

than any halfling could have dreamed, to enslave the Dark Lord and crush his will. The command was sent and shattered on the wall of indomitable will that was Sauron's mind.

How preposterous; how absurd; how laughable the efforts of this contemptible and tiny-minded mortal seemed. How could anyone in Middle-earth hope to withhold the One Ring from its true master? Only one of the Wise, one of the great among Wizards and Eldar could have hoped to withhold from the Ring-maker his rightful property. With a thought Sauron struck down the halfling, crippling Frodo's mind and body. With another thought the Ring itself, now burning with a white-hot intensity in response to the approach of its true Master, was torn from Frodo's hand and shot like a burning meteorite into the grasp of Sauron.

Losing the Ring, Frodo fell to his knees, momentarily oblivious to all else that happened.

Sauron raised his periapt of power in triumph, for a fatal, ultimate disaster had been avoided through the weakness of the pathetic creature in front of him. For a moment, everything around the Dark Lord stopped. Orodruin's anger seemed to fade, and the great winds of Gorgoroth died. For Frodo and the Nazgûl (now prostrate before their Master), nothing existed except the sight of the towering figure of Sauron, now seemingly grown to an unimaginable height, holding up his mighty Ring, the One Ring.

As he slid the Ring onto his finger, a dreadful cry of victory erupted from Sauron, and an invisible wave of power and authority issued forth from the Dark Lord's being. Frodo's physical form was thrown back and down, crushed against the unforgiving volcanic rock of Mount Doom. The Dark Lord stepped over the halfling, seeing that the tiny hobbit was about to expire.

"Stay thy mortal soul!" Sauron commanded, stretching out his black hand.

Frodo's broken body, lifted by unseen hands from the ash-covered rock,

was made whole again; cuts sealed and bones knitted.

"The perverse release of death shall not be thine!" the Dark Lord said. "Thou shalt now be taken to my dungeons, and there thou shalt burn for an eternity for thy insolence. But even in those hallowed depths thou shalt understand the true measure of my victory over thee and thine allies. Thou shalt see all that I see; feel all that I feel; and thou shalt *curse* the moment that thou had not the strength to finish thy quest!"



© 'The Shadow of Sauron' by Ted Nasmith, used by permission of the artist

With a mental command, Sauron ordered one of the Nazgûl to fly Frodo to Barad-dûr, there to await the Dark Lord's pleasure. Next, Sauron cast his gaze northward, to the battle before the gates of Morannon. In the time since Sauron had realised the true purpose of his enemies, the battle had swung in favour of the Lords of the West. They had carved their way through Sauron's forces; orcs fled and trolls swung in a frenzy at anything that came near, killing friend and foe alike. The only forces that maintained any semblance of discipline and control were the Haradrim and East-erlings, but even they fought from positions of relative safety, trying to spread the enemy front as thinly and as widely as possible.

Sauron's power, now nearly absolute, stretched forth and all his minions were brought back under his invincible will and purpose. Slowly the onslaught of the West was stayed; slowly the superior numbers of Mordor began to impose their mastery on the battlefield, and slowly they cut into the ranks of the West. Then, with gathering speed, the forces of Mordor began to crush the forces of Rohan and Gondor. Before long the West was routed, and there on the plains before the Black Gates many great

and fair folk fell in ruin. Indeed, few of the West escaped that day.

On the eastern hill the riders of Rohan and Dol Amroth fared better than those on the western hill, but the numbers of Mordor could not be held back. Éomer, King of Rohan, fell while leading a charge to save the noble Prince Imrahil; Beregon and Pippin were slain, their mortal remains consumed by the hill-trolls of Gorgoroth. Only Prince Imrahil and a few of his household, pushed north and cut off from all other friends by the forces of Mordor, escaped the battlefield that day.

Legolas the Elf and Gimli the Dwarf were felled on the western hill, defending each other as no two of the oldest of kindreds of Middle-earth ever had before. Nearby fell the fair sons of Elrond, Elladan and Elrohir, finally brought low by foul orcs, in payment for the tortures suffered by their mother, Celebrían. Almost all the Dúnedain folk of the north who had ridden to battle fell and among them the last of the line of Isildur, Aragorn son of Arathorn, Elessar the Elfstone, finally succumbed to the forces of Mordor, who long had hunted him.



© *The Shadow of Sauron* by Ted Nasmith, used by permission of the artist

Last of all, with all friends about him slain, dying, or in the hands of the enemy, Gandalf the White, last of the Istari to remain true to his duty, was beset by the darkness. He stood alone, surrounded by his enemies and pierced by

many blades. About him the air seethed and crackled with the energies he released in his defence. Orcs could not approach him but were pushed forward by the pressure of numbers at their rear. Those forced near his body burned, and their screams filled the enemy forces with terror. Trolls were flooded with fear, despite the mastery Sauron held over their every thought, and they fell to the mighty wizard's blade, their black blood soaking the hillside. But the sheer volume of Mordor's forces could not be overcome. Finally, Gandalf the White fell. His robes were stripped from him, his blade taken, his staff shattered and Narya the Red, recovered by The Mouth for safekeeping and delivery to his Dark Lord. No songs were sung by any who witnessed or heard of his fall, in either sorrow or triumph, so profound was the loss and so costly was the victory.

With victory at Morannon secured, Sauron's mind stretched forth, farther afield. Sauron saw and commanded all. The West was broken, and whilst there would be many battles still to fight, many victories to be won, Sauron knew his enemies were crushed and defeated. The Dark Lord's triumph was almost complete and as Gondor's power shattered on the plains of Morannon, on the slopes of Mount Doom, Sauron laughed. All his dark servants felt the force of the Dark Lord's terrible ecstasy, but they did not join in their Master's celebration. Sauron's delight was not theirs, for now Sauron's power was absolute. After thousands of years of effort and toil, The Age of Sauron had truly arrived.

North-west Middle-earth on the eve of The Age of Sauron

It is a decade since the Dark Lord's victory and no part of Middle-earth has remained free from his influence. Those already subservient to Mordor have rapidly grown in power in order to better answer the demands of their Master. Those who oppose the Dark Lord diminish in number and power with each passing year.

Sauron's mastery over all facets of life on Middle-earth grows with each year. His power over the weather of Middle-earth is particularly troubling for the remaining Free Peoples, as Sauron tactically uses this power to spoil enemy crops and spread ruin and anguish across the face of the land. From the furthest reaches of Rhûn in the east to Eriador in the west, all lands have felt the power Sauron wields.

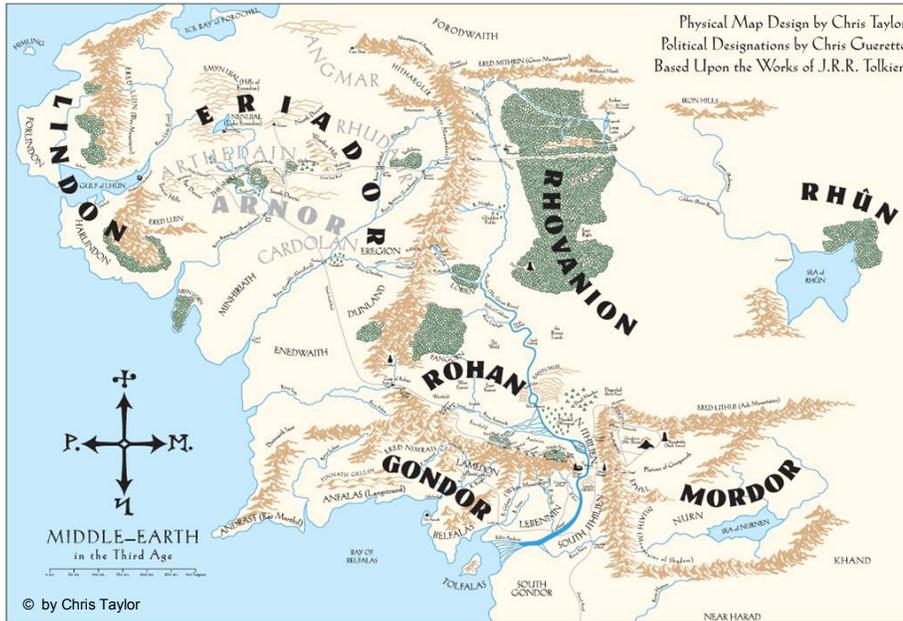
Most of the Free Peoples of Middle-earth have already fallen under the dominion of Mordor for few can resist such overwhelming power. But Sauron, although empowered by the One Ring, still uses servants to enact his will rather than come forth himself. And with the Witch-king of Angmar rendered impotent on the battlefield of Pelennor and yet to reform, the Dark Lord has had to rely on other, lesser, servants to realise the extent of his dominion.

Small enclaves of freedom still exist across the face of Middle-earth, resisting the power of the Dark Lord, most notably in its north-western regions. These enclaves refuse to give in to the forces of Darkness and they stand as proud candles in the dark, striving, waiting, hoping for salvation.

All lands east of the Misty Mountains have felt the full force of Sauron's will and power. These lands have been either conquered or hemmed in by forces of darkness, with little or no hope of escape or contact with the outside world. Victory against the forces of darkness seems unthinkable, and they await the inevitable defeat that will come as Sauron's grip on Middle-earth tightens.

But even Sauron, for all his power, can only progress at finite speed. Consequently most of Eriador remains free of his dominance at this time. The only parts of

Eriador that suffer the constant presence of the servants of Sauron are Enedwaith and Dunland, ruled out of Isengard by The Mouth of Sauron. On his orders Tharbad has been populated again and is being developed as a staging point for the full scale invasion of the northern lands.



to carry all those Quendi who can reach Lindon to Eressëa, before Sauron cuts off all routes of escape to the West. In these early years after Sauron's victory, the fleet remains modest, but is growing- Círdan has forbidden any journey to the West until all hope is lost, and all who can make for Lindon, before the final defeat, have done so.

The Quendi of Lindon patrol the western shores of their realm as far south as Eryn Vorn, attacking and sinking all the enemy vessels they encounter. A stalemate now exists between the Ships of Lindon and the mighty war vessels of Umbar, who are still recovering from their defeat during the War of the Ring.

Eriador

The land between Ered Luin and Hithaeglr is even more of a Wilderland than in the years between the fall of Fornost and the start of The Age of Sauron. The foothills of the Misty Mountains swarm with the foul servants of darkness, which patrol out of Gundabad, and the lands south of the rivers Gwathló and Glanduin are swarming with Dúnedain people, ruled out of Isengard by The Mouth of Sauron.

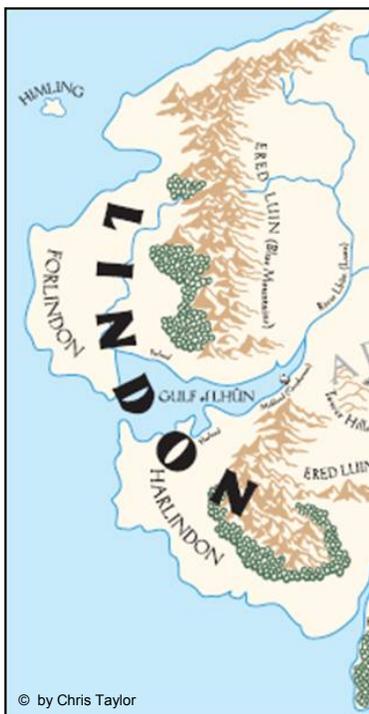
The ancient realms of Cardolan and Rhudaur are regularly patrolled by the orcs and wargs of the Misty Mountains. But the rivers of Eriador act as natural barriers, and the orcs rarely venture across without great need. The lost realm of Arthedain is unmolested by servants of the enemy at this time. The Shire remains the home of the hobbit people, and Bree is one of the last free mannish settlements in all north-western Middle-earth. The remaining Dúnedain of Eriador scout the lands in what numbers they can muster, doing what they can to disrupt the forces of the Enemy, and give warning to the free people of Eriador when danger approaches, so that suitable preparation can be made for the defence of what they hold dear.

The coastline of Enedwaith is scattered with Corsair forts, which are used as bases to help strengthen Sauron's grip on southern Eriador and to make the occasional foray into the waters patrolled by the Quendi of Lindon.

The future looks bleak for this once fair and prosperous land, and many of the for-

The Realms of North-west Middle-earth

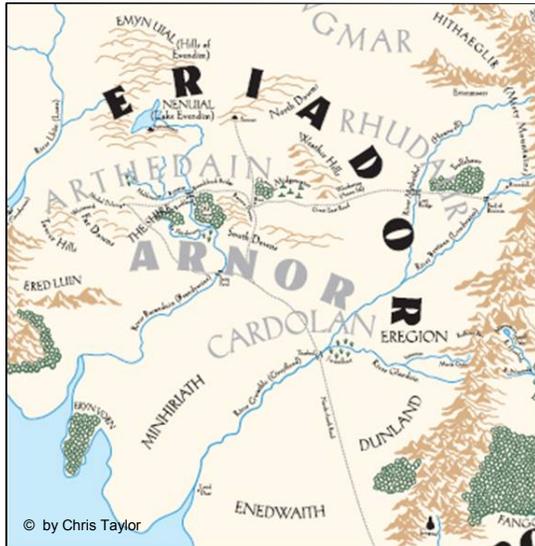
Lindon



Lindon is the last remaining realm of Middle-earth yet to feel the full force of Sauron's power. With Sauron's mind, will, and military might occupied elsewhere in Middle-earth, Lindon's Quendi and their chief, Círdan, have spent their time preparing for a great exodus to Eressëa and in defending the northern shores against this departure.

Lindon's population increased in the first years after Sauron's victory, as Quendi from all parts of northern Middle-earth fled the power of the Dark Lord. Additionally, many of the mortal peoples of Eriador have fled to the eastern foothills of north-eastern Ered Luin as news of Sauron's victory and advance became common knowledge. The Dwarves of Ered Luin have cautious trade with the Quendi and the Eriador refugees, but they always stand ready to seal their halls when news arrives of Sauron pushing north of Tharbad. Fortunately for the Eriadorians, the Quendi of Lindon aid them whenever they can.

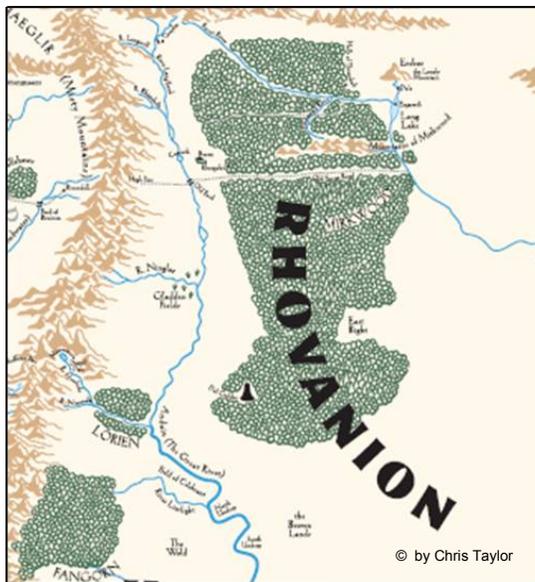
Círdan can see no future for Middle-earth and has set about building a huge fleet of ships. The purpose of this fleet is



Esgaroth, Dale, and Erebor fell quickly to the forces of the enemy, with one of the Nazgûl personally leading the assault on The Lonely Mountain. Mirkwood, north of the Forest River, and The Iron Hills were besieged and are now islands of freedom in an ever darkening world. The Anduin Vales and the Northmen who live there were subjugated by forces swarming down from Gundabad and out of Southern Mirkwood. Rhosgobel, for a long time the dwelling place of Radagast the Brown, is now deserted since he abandoned it to aid Thranduil. The forces of Lothlórien, hard pressed by armies out of Dol Guldur in the days before Sauron's victory, were routed. They retreated farther into the Golden Wood, where, even in victory, the enemy will not yet venture.

mer inhabitants of Eriador have fled to Ered Luin. They now eke out a meagre existence trading with the Quendi of Lindon and the Dwarves of Ered Luin. Although the Quendi of Lindon give aid where they can to these people, they know eventually they must leave them behind or fall with them under the dominion of Sauron.

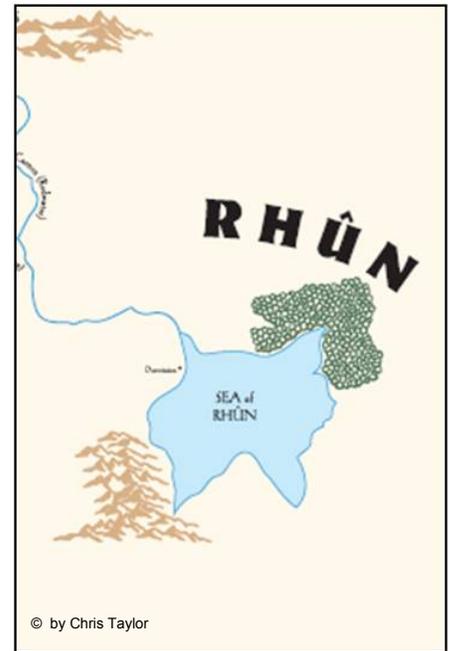
Rhovanion



This land was one of the first to fall to the power of the Dark Lord. Battles in Erebor and Northern Mirkwood, which at first had been favourable for the Free Peoples, turned for the worse once Sauron was able to put forth his new and terrifying strength.

Rhovanion is a land under the iron rule of Mordor and its allies, and whilst Sauron wants the people of Rhovanion alive and serving him, he wants them to do so in fear. Much of Rhovanion, certainly everything south of Esgaroth and East of Mirkwood, is flooded with Easterling Lords seeking their own fiefdoms and domains to rule. As one of the peoples to fully support the Dark Lord they have gained much with his victory. The old ruined site of Burh Alge has been resettled and rebuilt. It is now being rapidly expanded by its Easterling rulers as their power and influence grows in the region.

Rhûn



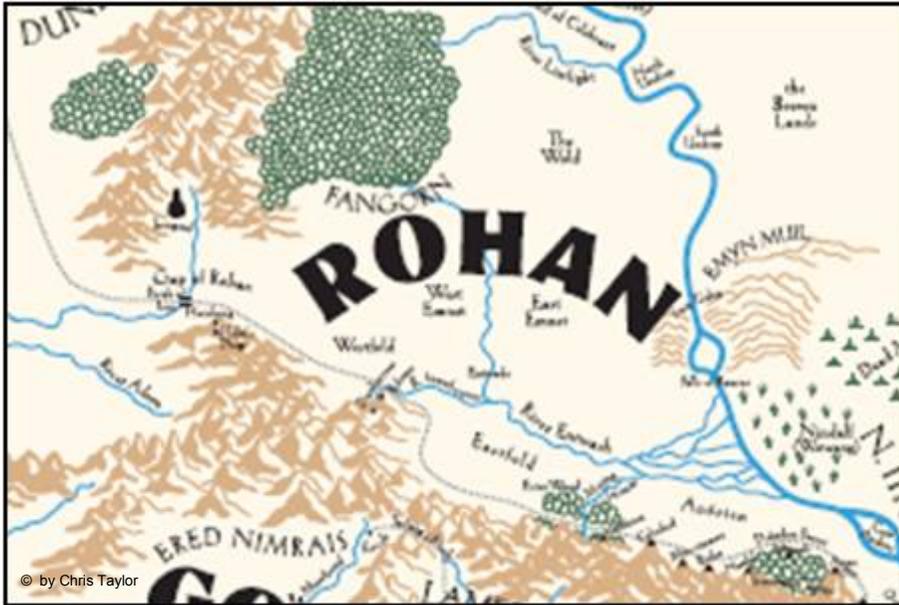
Rhûn has been a dark place for millennia, and with the Easterling people having served Sauron for many generations, after the recovery of the One Ring, his grip on the Easterling civilisation has tightened that much more.

Ever eager to gain more land, Easterling Lords flooded into Rhovanion from Rhûn, leaving Rhûn less populated than in times gone by, but with Easterlings maintaining all the political and military power, it is still a land under the military rule of Easterling people.

The only haven in this land lies deep in the Forest of Rhûn, to the north east of the Sea of Rhûn. Here lies the ever-shrinking Kingdom of Bladorthin, King of the Quendi of the Forest of Rhûn. Bladorthin is an ancient Nandor Teleri and brother to Lenwë, the Teleri who led a sizable portion of the Teleri from the shores of Cuiviënen.

Bladorthin is old, and his folk are a rugged and robust people, who have had to fight for their land and people since long before Sauron's recent victory. Bladorthin and his people are isolated and xenophobic and have little or no interest outside their own borders. Sauron knows this and has little fear that the Nandor King would seek dominion outside of this current realm. In the mind of Sauron, Bladorthin can wait until other more important enclaves of the Free People have been defeated.

Rohan



Once the home of the mighty Rohirrim people, the fair land of Rohan is now a thoroughfare for dark forces moving between Mordor and Isengard. Its people have fared no better than the land, for they are ruled out of Isengard by the cruel Mouth of Sauron. Where once the Rohirrim were lords of the Dunlendings, now the Dunlendings patrol and subjugate the people of Rohan at the command of The Mouth.

Edoras fell swiftly to the forces of Sauron, and now serves as the economic centre for the forces of darkness, where Easterlings and Dunlendings gather to trade in horses and slaves from Rohan. Helm's Deep is a ruin, having been utterly destroyed at the command of The Mouth, in order to serve as a reminder to the once-proud people of Rohan that there can be no victory against the Dark Lord.

Fangorn Forest, on the northern borders of Rohan, has been burned and cut back, but a dread power still dwells in the forest and with the allies of Mordor still enjoying their victory. With no realistic chance of any attack coming from Fangorn again, The Mouth is content to leave the forest to continue to fade.

Gondor



Gondor was the first of the free realms to fall. The few souls who survived the ruin of Morannon fled to Minas Tirith bringing news of the defeat of the armies of the West and the deaths of Elessar, Gandalf the White and many noble men of the realm. Imrahil alone of the Lords of Gondor survived the battle. Faramir, now the Steward of Gondor, would not leave Minas Tirith and he fell with the city. Imrahil, with the Steward's leave, retreated with the remaining forces of Gondor, in a hard-fought running battle back to Dol Amroth.

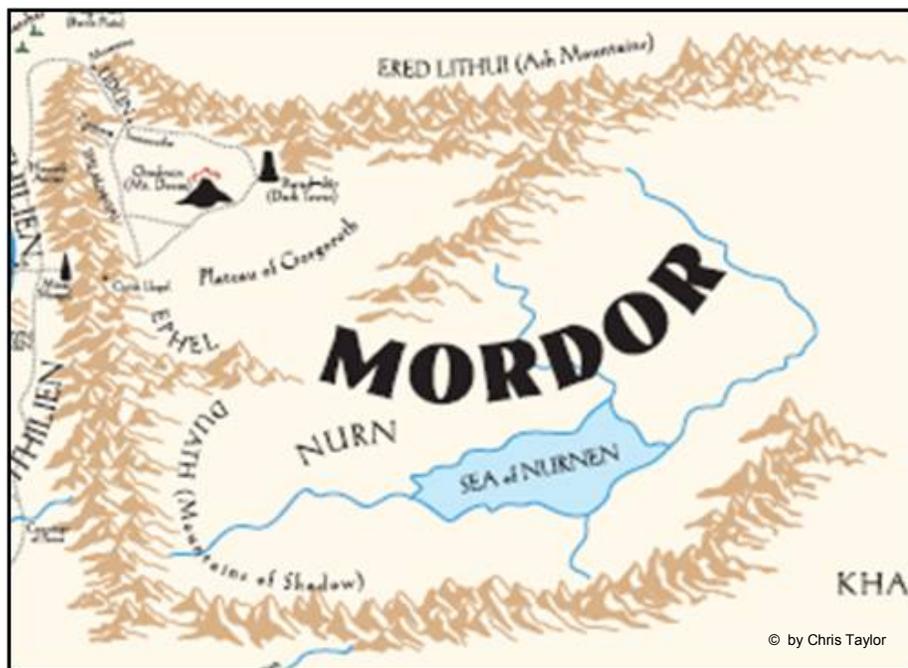
The Swan City survived for two more years, while the lands along the coast of Gondor and to the east of the River Ringló burned. Finally Dol Amroth fell in AOS 2 (TA 3021) and the remaining lands of Gondor were lost to darkness.

But even as Dol Amroth fell, a seed of hope for the people of Gondor was born. Alphros, son of Elphir, son of Imrahil, escaped with some of the Prince's closest advisors, aiming for and achieving the lands of Erech. Once there, they uncapped an ancient well that held back potent waters

infused by the power of Ulmo, a relic from an earlier Age of the world. This well filled the land of Erech with a potency that none of the servants of Sauron could long withstand, and they fled in fear from the land. To this day Erech remains the only unconquered corner of the realm of Gondor. Erech is still ruled by the *hir* of Erech, who

is now quite elderly. The *hir* spends his waking hours instructing the youth Alphros, last Prince of Dol Amroth, on the importance of maintaining the faith in the Lords of the West and the rule of Gondor. The day-to-day governance of Erech is left to Alphros' aides who ensured his escape from the fall of Dol Amroth.

Mordor



Of all the realms of Middle-earth, Mordor has probably changed the least. It remains a dark land of dust and ash. Rumour outside this mountain-walled realm is that it houses armies without end, and that, from the indomitable tower of Barad-dûr, Sauron the Great watches over the realms of Middle-earth, enforcing his almost limitless will.

With the power of the One Ring, Sauron has further fortified Mordor, aping the might of the First Age fortress of Than-gorodrim. Given the recent incursion into the Black Land, nothing, but *nothing* now enters or leaves the realm of Mordor without the Dark Lord's permission and knowledge. He is truly Master of all he surveys and none can see his dominion ending, least of all Sauron himself.

Indeed Sauron's hold on Middle-earth is arguably stronger, more secure and more complete than even the hold his dark master had over Middle-earth in the First Age of the Sun. Whereas Morgoth had expended much of his native power in an effort to gain control over the substance of Arda, Sauron has lost none of his. In fact, Sauron's power is amplified now that he has reclaimed the One Ring. The power of the Dark Lord is absolute, and his vast mind controls almost every detail of the efforts to crush the last resistance to his dominion.

Epilogue

I hope you have enjoyed what you have read so far.

Of course role-playing in a setting that is based on any author's works, such as Middle-earth, is always fraught with problems, and it is a constant balance between running a game that is enjoyable for the players but which is also as close to being true to the author's vision as is possible. Add to this the additional challenge of meeting the expectations of players who are not only seasoned role-players, but who also know the works of Tolkien very well themselves, and one has a potentially disastrous cocktail.

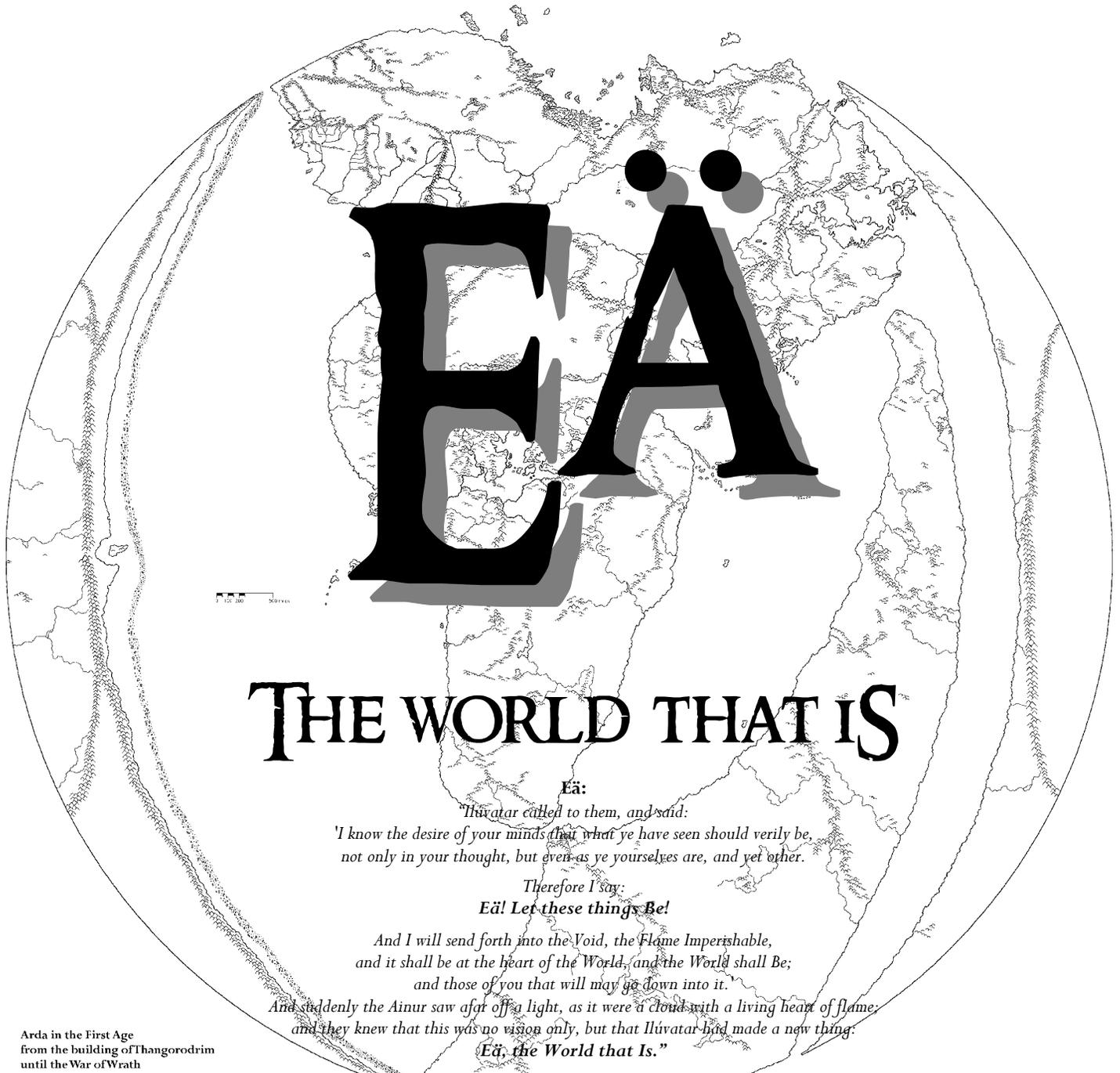
These elements are not necessarily in conflict, but I do always struggle with hammering the square peg that is Fantasy Roleplaying into the perfect circular hole that is Tolkien's Middle-earth. In doing so, one of these elements inevitably suffers. And then, of course I don't know everything about Middle-earth myself, and am always ready to be corrected.

Although I wish to avoid sounding like Mr. Rumsfeld, I do know what I know, and I know what I don't know. The feedback I have received from Thomas and Neville in pulling this piece together has been invaluable and I should like to take this opportunity in thanking them. I should also like to thank the developers of **Midnight**, without sight of which I would never have felt so strongly the need to develop this campaign setting.

There will no doubt be things about this piece with which some people will not agree. That's fine, this is how I see things. Do with it as you please.

I hope to be able to issue further developments of the **Age of Sauron** in future Issues of *Other Minds*. For example, addressing the enclaves of freedom that dot north-western Middle-earth, how they have survived and how they have reacted to further encroachment by Mordor. Another topic is what has happened to key figures of authority amongst the Free Peoples, such as Galadriel, Glorfindel, Elrond and (with some trepidation) Tom Bombadil, and many more.

Padraig Timmins



THE WORLD THAT IS

Eä:

Ilúvatar called to them, and said:

'I know the desire of your minds that what ye have seen should verily be, not only in your thought, but even-as ye yourselves are, and yet other.

Therefore I say:

Eä! Let these things Be!

And I will send forth into the Void, the Flame Imperishable, and it shall be at the heart of the World, and the World shall Be; and those of you that will may go down into it.

And suddenly the Ainur saw afar off a light, as it were a cloud with a living heart of flame; and they knew that this was no vision only, but that Ilúvatar had made a new thing:

Eä, the World that Is.

Arda in the First Age from the building of Thangorodrim until the War of Wrath

—J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, Ainulindalë (The Music of the Ainur).

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The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age

by Thomas Morwinsky
(tolwen@gmx.de) © 2010

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While looking over several older ideas and essays about the Fourth Age, it seemed to me that something was needed that tried to emulate the style and focus that J.R.R. Tolkien showed as in the appendices of The Lord of the Rings.

These are among our most important sources for the general events of the Third Age, and in all the works mentioned above I missed something in this direction. I hope the following solution to the obvious problem of writing something about the whole span of an age hits this mark at least a bit.



Introduction

This essay is an attempt to build a brief history of the Fourth Age upon Tolkien's short description of the heirs of Elessar. It is inspired by *New Middle-earth: Exploring beyond the Mountains*, an article by Martin Baker published in *Other Hands, Issue 13* in April 1996. This article deals with the *Tresco Manuscript*, mentioned later in the present essay. Another major and inspirational source was Chris Seeman's article *Mooreffoc: seven Ages of the world* in *Middle-earth reunion*. For more on these two, see the section 'Sources' at the end of the article. The core idea of this article is mainly based on the following passage which can be found in the *History of Middle-earth*, Vol. 12, "The Peoples of Middle-earth" (*HoMe 12*):

Of Eldarion son of Elessar it was foretold that he should rule a great realm, and that it should endure for a hundred generations of Men after him, that is until a new age brought in again new things; and from him should come the kings of many realms in long days after. But if this foretelling spoke truly, none now can say, for Gondor and Arnor are no more; and even the chronicles of the House of Elessar and all their deeds and glory are lost.

HoMe 12. The Heirs of Elendil

This is one of the very few passages where Tolkien says something (even if only vaguely) about the Fourth Age. The most famous of these is the abandoned essay *The New Shadow*, also found in *HoMe 12*.

Intention

First and foremost, this suggestion for a Fourth Age chronology is intended as a framework to which more details on various topics can be added in later issues of *Other Minds* magazine. It is neither the intention, nor possible, to include all events or developments within the few pages of this work.

Like many RPG supplements, this contribution aims to create, by means of the dynasty of the heirs of Elessar, a plausible, short history of the Fourth Age, even if only for some pivotal elements. It is designed in accordance with the style of the genealogical tables and histories found in *HoMe 12* and Appendices A and B of *The Lord of the Rings*.

Following Tolkien's example, it is presented as an – incomplete – rediscovered collection of lore and made up of several parts by as many authors. You may note that the pivotal quote above states that the chronicles of the House of Elessar are lost. This is of course derived from the implied point of view of Tolkien who had no access to the newly discovered manuscripts that are the subject of this article. All these sources are intentionally abridged as though due to gaps in the preserved documents and therefore open for further refinements in later contributions.

In this, it follows the steps already probed by Martin Baker with his "Tresco Manuscript" (TM) project (see "Sources" at the end of this contribution), but remains distinctly different in that only the means are similar – not the output. The TM concept was published in *Other Hands, Issue 13* (April 1996). In contrast to Martin, I do not delve into the more esoteric aspects, but limit myself to the assertion that what we see later is a translation from a manuscript presumed lost, using the TM idea of a manuscript rediscovered on the Scilly Is-

lands, and do not create a similar mock history of the discovery's whereabouts. This may be a project for the future. The basic idea of the *Tresco Manuscript* would work, as the focus of that work is not the Fourth Age.¹

A short note what this essay is not meant to be might be in order, too: As it strives to emulate Tolkien's method of developing history, it is not made to suit a 'High Fantasy' gaming approach. It was developed with an eye to making the Fourth Age more than a carbon copy of the Third Age, e.g. one in which only new names had been devised for the same things, or in which new persons of note had been added.

Of course, this is not easy, as some things will remain more or less the same (e.g. geography and major powers). Thus, it was all the more important to think of something new in the underlying framework, as shown in the appendices of *The Lord of the Rings*, on which I focus at the exclusion of finer details of immediate gaming value or connection. These must be added later.

Timescale

The further we go forward in the ages of Middle-earth, the more we leave the old "mythological past" and come nearer the historical past. As Tolkien aimed to set his mythic world within a mythological past of our primary world (not a historical past, which would be "patent nonsense" – to use Tolkien's own words), we need to find a good 'hook' to help 'blend' Tolkien's imagined 'Secondary World' into the real one (or at least into its 'real' myths).

In Letter #211 (Oct. 1958), Tolkien speaks to Ms. Rhona Beare about his thoughts concerning the Ages of Middle-

...and I hope the, evidently long but undefined, gap in time between the Fall of Barad-dûr and our Days is sufficient for 'literary credibility', ...*

** I imagine the gap to be about 6000 years: that is we are now at the end of the Fifth Age, if the Ages were of about the same length as S.A. and T.A. But they have, I think, quickened; and I imagine we are actually at the end of the Sixth Age, or in the Seventh. Letters #211, Oct. 1958 (footnote)*

earth:

About thirteen years later, Tolkien made an off-hand remark to an interviewer (see the section "Sources") that 7,000 or 8,000 years ago would be an appropriate timeframe for imagining the events depicted in *The Lord of the Rings*. If we follow the idea that there are a few millennia between the present time and the War of the Ring, we have to fit about three ages of the world into this span. The following distribution might then roughly represent the extent of the ages. Please note the trend of the "quickening" of the ages as mentioned above. The Fourth and following Ages are emphasized, as they are the ones of most interest here.

Age	Approximate length (years)
First	special
Second	3400 ²
Third	3000 ³
Fourth	2,700
Fifth	2,400
Sixth	2,000

The Fourth to Sixth Ages would then have an overall duration of 7,100 years – near the middle of the range (6,000 to 8,000 years) that Tolkien considered appropriate.

We have to be aware that regardless of the specific point at which we imagine the "blending" in to occur, it is not possible to avoid changes somewhere in real-world myths to facilitate this joining. I am happy to accept this, as I think that what counts is a believable transfer that resembles Tolkien's style of using real-world background information and inspiration to create something new.

Tolkien always used events of paramount impact as dividers for his 'Ages': Morgoth's final overthrow ended the First Age, Sauron's defeat by Elves and Men the Second, and the final defeat of Sauron and the departure of the Ringbearers (except for Sam) and the last Noldor the Third. When looking at comparable events for the intended eventual merging of the Primary and Secondary World myths, we could look at the former. Here Tolkien's devout traditional Christian faith might be a good hook. In the Bible, we have two events that would fit well into the scheme out-

lined above: The Great Flood/Deluge and the coming of Christ are two pivotal events in the Judaeo-Christian mythology. According to the traditional dating of this mythology by Bishop Ussher in the mid-17th century, the Great Flood took place in 2348 BC. According to this approach, the following table shows the corresponding timeframes.

Tolkien Age	Real-World myth timeframe
First	
Second	Judaeo-Christian
Third	antediluvian period
Fourth	
Fifth	Great Flood to birth of Christ
Sixth	Birth of Christ to approximately end of 20 th century AD

I see this chronology as a good solution to the problem of blending Tolkien's mythology into our own – **if such a blending is desired.**

Several problems persist, however: As stated above, Tolkien's First to Fourth Ages must be considered to be mythical, not established historical fact, just as the biblical antediluvian period, which in turn hardly represents historical fact in the real world. If one can accept this, a blending becomes possible.

Connected to this is the 'Noah-problem': According to the tradition, only Noah, his wife and his sons with their wives survived the Flood to re-settle – and re-populate! – Earth. Tolkien says that the Telcontari contributed their lineage to many royal lines thereafter. If we interpret this as referring only to antediluvian kings, it is not problematic. From the way Tolkien devised his stories, however, it seems more likely that he was referring to historic royal dynasties. This creates the problem of a 'genealogical bottleneck', since the ancestry of Noah and his sons is well-documented in the Bible. In addition, if all post-diluvian men were descended from the 'biblical' survivors, and if the Line of Telcontar extended beyond the Flood, then all men in our scenario would have to be descended from the Telcontari, as well. In my opinion, this is hardly what Tolkien had in mind. Thus, we might assume that other 'good' people survived,

1 Rather, it focuses on the manuscript itself. There is also a strong emphasis on linking esoteric ideas (e.g. Tarot Cards) with the Tolkien myth. The *Tresco Manuscript* also provides great details of the history of the manuscript and its predecessors and its further story in the Fifth and later ages.

2 3441 years exactly

3 3021 years exactly

too (even if barely, and without many possessions – and unknown to the loremasters who wrote the treatises below), to form the base for the majority of post-diluvian mannish re-settlement of Earth. Here we have to ‘bend’ the real-world legends to make Tolkien’s myth consistent with the biblical one. This is the version of events that I prefer.

I am aware, however, that this introduction of Judaeo-Christian theological myth may not be to everyone’s liking. For everyone so inclined, I add a more conventional table concerning the later Fourth Age in Appendix B of this article.

Methodology

A single quote (see beginning of this article) is of course scant evidence upon which to build an entire essay, but this specific passage provides one pivotal datum: The duration of the Telcontari dynasty. In addition, we are told that the end of the direct Telcontari line also approximately marked the end of the Fourth Age as a whole. Beyond this, no information is provided and we have to make up our own stories based on the scarce information available. The calculation of the rule of the Telcontari was built on the basis of roughly 20-25 years for a generation of man. One might object that “100 generations of Men” from the introductory quote might refer to Dúnedain. I do not agree with that. The context suggests a more or less fixed period of a generation, which would not be possible for the Númenóreans – even in the Fourth Age. Thus, in my opinion it is quite reasonable to assume that generations of ‘normal’ Men are meant. This count of generations ties in very well with a shorter duration of the Fourth Age compared to the Third, which itself was shorter than the Second and especially the First. See the table on page 15 above for the approximate length of the Ages.

The additional information that is of use for the Fourth Age is:

- The Númenórean realm(s) as we know them cease to exist after the Fourth Age (see quote above).
- There will be no other ‘mythological’ Dark Lord (e.g. a powerful evil Ainu) after Sauron’s defeat.

The gods then move again, and great power comes out of the West, and the Stronghold of the Enemy [Morgoth] is destroyed; and he himself [is] thrust out of the World into the Void, never to reappear there in incarnate form again ... After which the Third Age began, a Twilight Age, a Medium Aevum, ... and the last also in which Evil assumes a single dominant incarnate shape. Letters, #131 (late

... I have been forced to publish upside-down or backwards; and after the grand crash (and the end of visibly incarnate Evil) before the Dominion of Men (simple History) to which it all led up the mythological and elvish legends of the Elder Days will not be quite the same.

Letters, #191 (26 July 1956)

Sauron, however, was a problem that Men had to deal with finally: the first of the many concentrations of Evil into definite power-points that they would have to combat, as it was also the last of those in ‘mythological’ personalized (but non-human) form. HoMe10. Myths Transformed: Notes on motives in the Silmarillion (probably late 1950s)

In my opinion, the absence of a mythological, personalised, visibly incarnate embodiment of Evil also excludes the remaining Istari as evil antagonists of any such stature. Any evil enemy now must be counted among the Children of Ilúvatar. This is a very important point. After the Fall of Sauron in the War of the Ring, there will be no other ‘demonic’ or supernatural ‘Dark Lord’: neither Sauron or Melkor/Morgoth returning in any form, nor any other Ainu. These have either been destroyed in the meantime or diminished forever as shadows of evil. Tolkien seemed to be very clear that after Sauron, all ‘evil’ antagonists on visible Earth would be of a mundane and not ‘mythological’ nature, and all his notes contemporary to the LotR (or after it) show this. It seems to be one of the few things he was not unsure about or which was subject to extensive changes

throughout the development of his *legendarium*.

- In past gaming supplements (and fan-fiction), the Blue Wizards have been extremely popular either as antagonists or allies of the Free Peoples. Thus it might be worthwhile (for future additions) to make use of these individuals – but only in roles distinct from becoming a new “Dark Lord” due to the points mentioned above. Letter 211 again gives us a hook that at least they had a lasting influence of the eastern history into the Fourth Age:

I think they [the Blue Wizards] went as emissaries to distant regions, East and South, far out of Númenórean range: missionaries to ‘enemy-occupied’ lands, as it were. What success they had I do not know; but I fear that they failed, as Saruman did, though doubtless in different ways; and I suspect they were founders or beginners of secret cults and ‘magic’ traditions that outlasted the fall of Sauron. Letters, #211 (14 October 1958)

- The last High Elves (Noldor) have already left with Elrond at the end of the Third Age.
- The last of the Eldar (Sindar) finally leave Middle-earth in this age or become rustic and secretive, keeping apart from men.
- The other – good – non-mannish (Dwarves) and quasi-mannish (Hobbits and Woses) people enjoy a last revival early in the Fourth Age but they too fade out of mannish history before the end of the age.
- The lifespan of the Dúnedain (both the Royal House and the noble families) wanes further.

It is assumed that the lifespan of the royal house reached the normal human span at around the end of the Fourth Age. The noble families would have lost their unnatural longevity even before that. This finally ends the most conspicuous peculiarity of the Númenóreans that lasted for three ages of the world.

In devising the lifespans of the Telcontari, the same methods as in *Númenórean*

He [Aragorn II] wedded Arwen Undómiel, daughter of Elrond, brother of Elros first king of Númenor [sic], and thus restored the majesty and high lineage of the royal house. But their life-span was not restored and continued to wane until it became as that of other men.

HoMe12. The Heirs of Elendil

Longevity in Other Minds, Issue 6 have been used. The only difference is that now there are no dates given by Tolkien, so we have to make up our own based on the same fundamental assumptions. These are:

- The lifespan of all Gondorian Dúnedain (still the noble élite of the realm) is supposed to blend into that of ordinary men after about three quarters of the Fourth Age. This is based on the rate of decline of the Gondorian Dúnedain in the Third Age since about T.A. 2000. The Arnorian Dúnedain reach this point about two to three centuries later due to their higher average life expectancy at the beginning of the Fourth Age. For a detailed list of these supposed lifespans dependent on the year of birth see Appendix A at the end of this Issue.
- The royal line starts with a – hypothetical – total lifespan of about 225 years (Elessar laid down his life at age 210, before the time of his

natural death and might have lived to a total of 220 or 230 years), so that his son Eldarion lived to a greater age than his father. He did not lay down his life, however, and so this is not directly comparable to Aragorn. For more information on calculating ‘total’ and ‘fit’ lifespans, see the article on Númenórean Longevity in *Other Minds, Issue 6*. For the supposed lifespans within the direct Telcontari line (other than those mentioned) see Appendix A. For cadet branches, the guideline for decreasing lifespan depending on generation from the essay in *Other Minds, Issue 6* can be used.

- All of Elessar’s successors (including his son) again lived and ruled until old age forced them to die (unless they were slain or died from other unnatural causes earlier).¹

In the following texts you may often encounter the old names of ‘Arnor’ and ‘Gondor’ being used, although both realms officially ceased to exist as separate states with the founding of the Reunited Kingdom (RK). The situation is similar to the real-world Great Britain, which encompasses England, Scotland and Wales. Arnor and Gondor are still separate regions of the RK and still known under these names, but they are united under the dynasty of Telcontari. They definitely have ceded many rights of a separate state to the RK, but retained other – internal – regional rulings

and customs. Thus one or the other region can be named by its original Third Age name when only this region is concerned by a specific theme.

The Fourth Age

It was great luck that brought forth at least some of the lost chronicles of the Reunited Kingdom that were presumed unavailable to the great translator of writings on Middle-earth, Prof. J.R.R. Tolkien, and saved them from oblivion. Only parts have been found (although, fortunately, these contain key passages) and it is hoped that more might resurface after further investigations and research.

But even the material already assembled is a treasure, as it brings light into this otherwise largely unknown chapter of the history of Middle-earth for the first time. The following restored fragments of lore are now being made available to the public:

- The Line of the Reunited Kingdom: The Telcontari
- A short account of the resettlement of Arnor
- Timeline of the Fourth Age (fragmentary)
- The Reunited Kingdom and the Heirs of Elessar



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¹ Whether they were not given Aragorn’s choice or willingly abandoned the tradition is debatable. In my opinion, the first option is preferable, as it stresses Elessar’s elevated status.

The Line of the Reunited Kingdom: The Telcontari

All dates pertaining to the Fourth Age unless otherwise noted.

1 Elessar	born T.A. 2931	lived 210 years	died 120
He was crowned in TA 3019 under the name of Elessar. A new era was begun with March 25 th (old reckoning) as the first day of the year. Aragorn restored Gondor and peopled it anew, but kept Minas Tirith as the most important city of the realm. <i>He wedded Arwen Undómiel, daughter of Elrond, brother of Elros first king of Númenor, and so restored the majesty and high lineage of the royal house.</i> ¹			
2 Eldarion	born 8	lived 221 years	died 229
He managed his father's inheritance wisely and carefully extended the influence of the Reunited Kingdom for long years far into Harad and Rhovanion. His reign was long and later remembered to have been of great peace.			
3 Aracambë	born 107	lived 218 years	died 325
4 Celumendil	born 192	lived 214 years	died 406
5 Ostoher II	born 271	lived 209 years	died 480
It was in his time that the people of Arnor became so numerous that the northern part of the kingdom experienced a period of substantial recovery.			
6 Elrúnya (Failaher)	born 349	lived 206 years	died 555
The king was far-sighted and knew that the Reunited Kingdom would face great challenges in the future. He was wise and just, like one of the kings of old, and it was his desire to unite all the Edainic people in peace. He had four children, but only the fourth was a son. He became his successor.			
7 Falasdil	born 443	Lived 202 years	died 645
After the long peace since the days of Eldarion, the southern frontiers of Gondor became threatened by several realms speaking against the Dúnedain of Gondor in his time.			
8 Macalaurë	born 515	lived 197 years	died 712
There was much unrest in Harad, and the kings of the Southlands allied to attack Umbar and Southern Gondor. The King defeated them and extended the influence of the Dúnedain southward.			
9 Artatundo	born 596	lived 167 years	† slain 763
He was slain while fighting the Haradrim, who led a renewed rebellion against the Kingdom.			
10 Hyarmendacil III	born 671	lived 137 years	† slain 808
His original name was Tancoldil. The King avenged the death of his father and led a great army into the Far South. Here he defeated the last foes and extended the realm's influence into these regions. Afterwards, he took the name Hyarmendacil III. He died from a wound inflicted by a wolf while hunting.			
11 Ondorion	born 737	lived 186 years	died 923
His son and heir was born very late in his life.			
12 Formendacil	born 825	lived 138 years	† drowned 963
The king's original name was Mindohér. It was during his reign that an alliance fostered by the king drove almost all Orcs from the Hithaeglir and the western Ered Mithrin. Afterwards, the king took the name Formendacil. He drowned in a storm when his ship foundered on the way from Tharbad to Pelargir.			
13 Altarion	born 891	lived 177 years	died 1068
14 Turastámo	born 954	lived 172 years	died 1126
15 Rómendil	born 1014	lived 128 years	† slain 1142
He was slain by Easterlings while campaigning beyond the Sea of Rhûn.			
16 Rómenwë	born 1073	lived 165 years	died 1238
He was born in Rhovanion while the court of his father dwelt there for a time. The king gave much attention to the East and under his rule the territories of Gondor east of Anduin grew in prosperity and wealth.			
17 Vásandur	born 1131	lived 161 years	died 1292
During his time the power of the Reunited Kingdom reached its height. There was no war and the friendship with all neighbors of the kingdom flourished.			
18 Cemendur II	born 1185	lived 158 years	died 1343
His son was born very late in the king's life.			
19 Calanúmen	born 1262	lived 154 years	died 1416
It was during his reign that the Men of Dale and the Dwarves drove away the last Orcs from the North.			
20 Arcáno	born 1314	lived 150 years	died 1464
21 Ornendil	born 1370	lived 145 years	died 1515
22 Lambentur	born 1420	lived 140 years	died 1560
The king attracted much comment when he married very early for the Dúnedain of his time.			

¹ HoMe12. The Heirs of Elendil

23 Aldeamir	born 1461 lived 119 years	† died 1580
In his time a great pestilence swept through the southern parts of the kingdom, killing the king and his two elder children. Many people, both noble and common, perished as well. His third child succeeded him on the throne.		
24 Aranar	born 1518 lived 132 years	died 1650
25 Eärnur II	born 1566 lived 129 years	died 1695
26 Aramando	born 1616 lived 125 years	died 1741
27 Urundil	born 1660 lived 121 years	died 1781
He spent much of his time in Arnor, a patron to its people.		
28 Angwë	born 1701 lived 118 years	died 1819
29 Túraran	born 1748 lived 125 years	died 1873
30 Telumehtar II	born 1788 lived 113 years	died 1901
31 Calasindë	born 1830 lived 110 years	died 1940
In his time, contact with the Dwarves slowly began to dwindle. This was later seen as a first sign of the failing of the non-mannish people in Middle-earth.		
32 Araharna	born 1867 lived 108 years	died 1975
33 Telumeher	born 1913 lived 105 years	died 2018
In his time a shadow began to fall on the Reunited Kingdom as well as the western lands in general.		
34 Artaher	born 1951 lived 103 years	died 2054
35 Minastur	born 1987 lived 84 years	† slain 2071
Measured by the customs of his day, he married very late. In his time there began a lasting time of peace and prosperity which turned out to be the last one for the realm. This period of bliss lasted until the days of King Telumanar. Minastur was slain by Trolls while travelling in eastern Eriador.		
36 Alcarondor	born 2035 lived 99 years	died 2134
He came to the throne young, and his reign saw the apogee of a time of cultural flowering and bliss that had been unknown for many lifetimes and did not return until the end of the Age.		
37 Carmalaica	born 2077 lived 89 years	† drowned 2166
38 Telumanar	born 2111 lived 96 years	died 2207
His first child was a daughter (Rían) who married the lord of Dol Amroth. His second child was a son, and he succeeded his father on the throne. In his time the last flowering of the Kingdom ended, although more than a century would pass after him before the final crisis of the realm began.		
39 Curundur	born 2148 lived 95 years	died 2243
40 Ciryamir	born 2186 lived 95 years	died 2281
41 Lónandil	born 2222 lived 93 years	died 2315
42 Telepher	born 2253 lived 92 years	died 2345
His reign was overshadowed by many perils, especially tidings about a terrible people out of the East.		
43 Laurëturma	born 2287 lived 92 years	died 2379
44 Fanarama	born 2320 lived 69 years	† died 2389
He was killed in a riding accident.		
45 Nauromehtar	born 2350 lived 92 years	died 2442
During his time the long-expected evil came, and a people named the 'Rochoth' poured into Rhovanion.		
46 Yonwatirno	born 2386 lived 92 years	died 2478
47 Anardil II	born 2420 lived 60 years	† slain 2480
He had not long been on the throne when the Rochoth prepared a great attack upon the realm. Rohan, Alavald Bair en-Emyn and the Reunited Kingdom stood to face the enemy. In 2478, the war began and the king was slain in battle, after a reign of only two years, almost all of which he had spent in the field.		
48 Halatir	born 2452 lived 91 years	died 2543
In his time, the Rochoth began raiding all of Rhovanion regularly. Nearly all of Rhovanion became hostile to the West once again and the successor princedoms of Dale officially allied themselves with the invaders. From this time, there was no real peace on the eastern borders.		
49 Eärendur II	born 2490 lived 90 years	died 2580
He prepared the realm as best as he could for the storm that he knew would be coming.		
50 Tarondor II (Telatan)	born 2525 lived 88 years	† slain 2613
In his days the long-awaited storm came. The king's sons perished and Minas Tirith was wrecked. Rebellion of Belfalas and end of Gondor as a part of the Reunited Kingdom. He is considered the last king of the Reunited Kingdom.		
1 Batarkil (We. "Man of half-Númenórean descent")	born 2594 lived 66 years	† slain 2670
He came from the royal lines of both the Reunited Kingdom and Rohan. With him began a new realm in the North. He married the daughter of the king of Dunland.		
2 Brandatud (We. "Border-guard")	born 2621 lived 49 years	† slain 2670
He succeeded to a realm in turmoil and was slain by his enemies after a reign of only two months. His younger brother Nínzír (We. "Water-wise"; b. 2625) went to Umbar. Of him, much is told later.		

A short account of the re-settlement of Arnor

King Elessar decreed the establishment of the Reunited Kingdom of Arnor and Gondor in T.A. 3019, thereby re-founding Arnor. Although the king dwelt in An-núminas at Lake Nenuial regularly from the early years of the New Age, the old realm of Arnor was mostly devoid of man-nish settlement and his presence chiefly symbolic. The scattered people living there were so few in number that they did not multiply for many years to come. Despite this, the Great King made decrees in preparation for the future order in the re-established realm. He also foresaw the need for timber and initiated the restoration of some of the old Eriadorian forests, especially in ancient Cardolan.

Though Men were barred from setting foot in it, the Shire lent great help: Man-nish settlements began to spring up on its borders, enjoying lively trade with the Hobbits. Consequently, these were the first areas of old Arnor to be re-populated.

The prosperity that Elessar's reign brought to Gondor would prove to be the most important factor in rebuilding Arnor's population as well. At first, this growth served primarily to strengthen and re-settle those lands of Gondor that had previously been lost or diminished in population by the vicissitudes of war, especially in the later years of the Third Age. By the middle of the second century of the Fourth Age, this replenishment of Gondor's territories had largely been finished. Elessar also established the tradition that the heir of the King is named the 'Prince of Arnor'.¹

Until his reign, the re-colonisation of Arnor had been primarily a process of organic growth based on the remnants of the local population, limited mostly to the area around the Shire, the lands of old Cardolan near Tharbad and the small enclave at An-núminas, rebuilt by Elessar, on Lake Evendim. But now, with all of Gondor's lands re-populated and its population still growing in King Eldarion's time, all men willing to leave Gondor for Eriador were offered land in the North. This was the beginning of a process that took more than

two centuries, and it was only in the days of king Ostoher II that the tide of settlers from the South subsided. By then, a size-able population had been established that could grow over time without further in-flux and that could settle all the lands once held by the old realm of Arnor. Accord-ingly, by the end of the seventh century of the Fourth Age, Arnor was a thriving part of the Reunited Kingdom once more.

Due to this reconstruction of a long-lost realm, and the many ethnicities in-volved, the majority of the people of later Arnor were of far more mixed ancestry than those of Gondor. Due to their experi-ence as simple 'Rangers', the Dúnedain of Arnor were also less haughty or 'class con-scious' than their Gondorian cousins, treat-ing their new subjects with great respect. Still it remained a marvel of the Northern Dúnedain that their lifespan decreased a little less than that of their southern coun-sins.



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Timeline of the Fourth Age

Editorial comment: This timeline is unfortunately very fragmentary and assembled from many different sources. The fact that the reign of King Elessar is covered in greater detail than other parts of the history suggests that more sources from the early-Fourth Age have so far been discovered than from later times.

3019 [...] In Gondor a new era and a new calendar was [sic] made, to begin with the day of the fall of Barad-dûr, March 25, 3019. But the Third Age is not held to have ended on that day, but with the going of the Three Rings. [...]

3021 In the autumn of this year Elrond, Galadriel, and Mithrandir, the guardians of the Three Rings, rode westward through the Shire to the Grey Havens. With them went, it is said, the Halflings Bilbo and Frodo, the Ring-bearers. Círdan had made ready a ship for them, and they set sail at evening and passed into the uttermost West.

With their passing ended the Third Age, the twilight between the Elder Days and the Afterworld which then began **Peoples of Middle-earth, HoMe12. The Tale of Years of the Third Age.**

Year Event

- 1 The realm of Núrnien is established.
- 4 The two lost *palantiri* of the North are found.
- 7 The rebuilt Corsair fleet is brought to battle by the King and decisively defeated. The followers of Sauron are overthrown in Umbar.
- 11 Elessar leads his army into Rhovanion in an attack against the remnants of Sauron's followers.
- 15 Elessar dwells for the first time in An-núminas with his court. Plans are made for the rebuilding of the tower of Amon Sûl.
- 24 Second war in Rhovanion. A great army marches beyond the Sea of Rhûn. The last remnants of Sauron's forces in these lands are defeated and killed.
- 24-28 Reconstruction of the old tower and fortress atop Amon Sûl.
- 27-30 The fortress of Helm's Deep is greatly strengthened by Dwarves under Gimli's leadership
- 30 Núrnien is by now sufficiently stabilized to exist without external help.

¹ This is similar to – and intentionally made in emulation of – the title of “Prince of Wales” (a *de iure* separate realm) held by the heir of the British king in the real world.

Year Event

- 31 Elessar grants the Westmarch as an addition to the Shire. Many Hobbits remove to it.
- 32 Power in Umbar is seized again by followers of Sauron.
- 34 Elessar leads an army south to conquer Umbar. The King's forces lay siege to the city.
- 38 Umbar is finally taken by Elessar's army. The last remnants of Sauron's followers are slain.
- 40-50 Campaigns in Harondor, which again falls under Númenórean lordship.
- 63 Éomer, king of Rohan, and friend of Elessar, dies.
- 65 Éowyn, wife of Faramir, dies.
- 70 Re-conquest of Gundabad by an alliance of Men and Dwarves.
- 82 Prince Faramir dies.
- 110 Passing of Elladan and Elrohir over the Sea.
- 120 Death of Elessar and later Arwen, Passing over the Sea of Legolas and Gimli from the Fellowship of the Ring.
- 170 The last Orc-holds close to Gondor and Rohan are destroyed.
- 172 Findegil's copy of the Red Book is completed
- 220 An 'Orc-cult' conspires against the King. It is quickly put down.¹
- 231 The crystal ball of the monument commemorating Sauron's defeat is re-discovered in Umbar.²
- 325- The Second War of the Dwarves and Orcs. Durin's Folk re-conquers Moria.
- c. 470 The people of Arnor become so numerous that the Northern Realm no longer is a border-march. For many years to come, however, Arnor remains by far the second to Gondor in the Reunited Kingdom.
- 485 Final reconciliation of the Dúnedain with the Dunlanders.
- c. 500 Around this time it was first noticed that the Brown Lands slowly begin to grow green again.
- 632 The Southlands once more speak against the Reunited Kingdom. For now, there are no open hostilities.
- 647 Shortly after the death of King Falasdil there is open warfare with the Men of the Harad.
- 652 King Macalaurë, having assembled his forces, marches south to meet the challenges of the Southerners.
- 658 The King wins a great victory against the Haradrim.
- 762 The Haradrim rise against Gondorian rule and King Artatundo leads a great army to deal with the rebels.
- 763 The King is killed while battling the Men of Harad.

Year Event

- 770 After long preparations, King Tancoldil finally defeats the Haradrim and extends the Reunited Kingdom's influence even into the Far South. He assumes the name of Hyarmendacil III.
- 802 King Engold of Rohan dies. There is strife between his sons over the succession.
- 805 Division of Rohan between king Engold's two sons. Éaling, the younger son, becomes king of the new realm of Ehwathrumavuld north of the Onodló. The older, Théoram, inherits the kingship of Rohan.
- 900 Around this time, Lórien is abandoned by the last Elves. Círdan the Shipwright accompanies the very last of the Sindar over the Sea. Lindon is entrusted to the lordship of the Telcontari.
- 925 Durin VII appears in Moria, leading his people into its final age of glory.
- 934 The Cleansing of the North. The last Orcs are driven from the Misty Mountains and most of the Grey Mountains.
- 980 The realm of Alavald is founded south of Greenwood.
- 1250 The Reunited Kingdom reaches the zenith of its power.
- 1399 The last Orc-holds in the eastern Grey Mountains are stormed and the age-old threat to the Westlands is finally ended.
- 1579- A great pestilence sweeps through the southern parts of the Reunited Kingdom. King Aldëamir and his elder children are among the victims.
- 1590 The realm of Ehwathrumavuld fails. Rohan begins to reclaim some of its old lands.
- 1920 Contact with the Dwarves and remaining Elves begins noticeably to dwindle.
- 1950 The realm of Dale ends. Its last king dies and his sons vie for power in several lesser princedoms.
- 1900- Around this time, the lifespan of the southern Dúnedain becomes indistinguishable from other Men. The royal line and those of the Dúnedain of Eriador still show greater vigour.
- 2071 King Minastur is killed by Trolls in eastern Eriador.
- 2150 Dunland (Bair en-Emyn) becomes a kingdom. About this time, the Dwarves finally disappear from mannish history.
- 2200 Around this time, contact is lost with the Elves of Greenwood, the last-known Firstborn.
- c. 2330 The first rumours of a terrible new people from the East reach Gondor. In this time, the lifespan of the northern Dúnedain becomes indistinguishable from that of other men.

Year Event

- 2362 Artamir, a descendant of Curundur, becomes Prince of Dol Amroth after the line of Imrazôr fails.
- 2401 First Rochoth Invasion. King Nauromehtar wins a narrow victory on the Dagorlad. This marks the beginning of two centuries of struggle with the powerful Rochoth.
- 2427 The realm of Núrmen is conquered by the Rochoth.
- 2428- Fortification of the passes over the Ephel 34 Dúath.
- 2480 King Anardil II is slain while fighting the Rochoth in the second Rochoth Invasion.
- 2500- King Halatir is able to contain the progress of the Second Rochoth Invasion, though almost all of Dor Rhúnen has to be abandoned.
- 2565 Work on the Isen Wall begins.
- 2583- The Third Rochoth Invasion. Defeat of the forces of the West on Dagorlad. Minas Tirith is ruined when the earth trembles.
- 2586 Lord Imrazôr of Dol Amroth overthrows Gondor. King Tarondor II flees to Rohan. Arnor remains loyal.
- 2591 With help from Arnor and Rohan, King Tarondor II attempts to re-capture Gondor.
- 2593 Defeat of King Tarondor II and the death of his sons. He flees to Arnor.
- 2613 Fourth and final Rochoth Invasion, this time against the remnants of the Reunited Kingdom in Eriador. King Telatan (Tarondor II) is killed in battle. End of the Reunited Kingdom.
- 2615 Pelargir and Dol Amroth are raided by great fleets from Umbar. Destruction of the Gondorian fleet.
- 2616 Gondor announces an open alliance with the Rochoth. Serfdóm is introduced in Gondor.
- since Arnor, Dunland and the remnants of
- 2620 Rohan merge into a new single realm of Edainic people called Adûzâyan (We. "West-land")
- 2631- Gondor attacks Adûzâyan for the first time. The line of the Isen and the Hithaeglir are held.
- 2643 Nînzîr, second son of King Batarkil, is sent to Umbar.
- 2651 Gondor attempts to seize Umbar. Nînzîr organizes the defense.
- 2667 Gondor attacks Adûzâyan for the second time.
- 2670 Defeat of Adûzâyan and death of all members of its royal house.
- 2671 The Great Flood. End of the Fourth Age.

1 This is inspired by Tolkien's unfinished story "The New Shadow" found in *The History of Middle-earth, Volume 12: The Peoples of Middle-earth*.

2 This is inspired by the following passage: '... and on the highest hill of the headland above the Haven they had set a great white pillar as a monument. It was crowned with a globe of crystal that took the rays of the Sun and of the Moon and shone like a bright star that could be seen in clear weather even on the coasts of Gondor or far out upon the western sea. So it stood, until after the second arising of Sauron, which now approached, Umbar fell under the domination of his servants, and the memorial of his humiliation was thrown down.' **LotR.Appendix A**

The Reunited Kingdom and the Heirs of Elessar

There were 49 kings of the Reunited Kingdom after Elessar, who restored the majesty and power of the Dúnedain in Middle-earth. Though war was far from unknown in the Númenórean realm, there were also long periods of peace, prosperity and bliss rarely seen in mortal lands before or since. It was held that this was due to the return of the grace of the Valar, even though the lifespan both of the Dúnedain and the royal line diminished constantly, even though this slowed after the restoration of the kingship, and it was only by the end of the second millennium of the Age it became indistinguishable from that of other Men. The royal line showed greater vigour for some time afterwards, although it, too, was waning.

It was the wonder of the Telcontari that even during this long decline, the line of kings never failed until the end. It was the first king, Elessar, who rebuilt Anúminas, his ancestral city, and capital in the North whenever he dwelt there. He also initiated the re-building of the whole realm of Arnor, although there were to be many long years before a large population thrived there again.

Early in the reign of King Elessar there was a reconciliation with the Dunlending chieftains. The borders of Dunland were fixed so that none should trespass without the consent of the Dunlendings. These borders lay to the north the Glanduin, eastward lay the Hithaegir and in the west the border was formed by the Great North-South Road.

Elessar's numerous wars also re-established the old Gondorian borders in Rhovanion, Harondor and Umbar. There was already turmoil in Umbar. It was ruled by former servants of Sauron, but these were overthrown by Umbar's angry population, which felt betrayed by their former masters, a few years into the Fourth Age. The new rulers were friendlier towards the Númenóreans. After some years, however, Sauron's former minions regained power in Umbar by force. Many people sought refuge in Gondor and were welcomed as guests and friends. The renewed coup caused a war of revenge on Sauron's followers, and it finally ended their rule. Umbar again came under Elessar's rule.

The King also had to fight off remnants of Sauron's forces threatening other borders, as well as Men who attacked Gondor for plunder and ravage. Harondor and Umbar both again came firmly under Númenórean rule. In Harondor, many former servants of Sauron had set up petty lordships, which were finally defeated after the conquest of Umbar.

Elessar also granted Sauron's former slaves around the Sea of Núrn their freedom. A kingdom was founded there that was known in the West by the name of Núrn, though the men there called their realm Nidmar. From the beginning, the people of Núrn were loyal and steadfast allies of the Reunited Kingdom and remained so for many long years, protecting Gondor's eastern flank. Through them, much new knowledge of Sauron's former empire in the East came to the Númenórean Kings. A relationship similar to that with Rohan developed later, making both realms stronger than would have been possible by mere military cooperation.

Later in his reign, Elessar also helped create an alliance that finally drove the Orcs from Mount Gundabad, re-claiming the ancient Dwarven citadel once and for all for Durin's Folk. Orcs fleeing the onslaught and trying to make new homes for themselves were a problem in the surrounding northern lands of Rhovanion and

Eriador for some time, and the border-guards of newly re-established Arnor were hard-pressed to contain these incursions.

The reign of Eldarion, Elessar's son, was marked by a long period of peace. His father's many wars had eliminated almost all threats to the realm, and for a long time Gondor was not threatened by war or other perils. He is well-remembered for the reconstruction of Osgiliath (though that city never regained the status it had in the Third Age), thereby re-establishing a visible part of Gondor in its old heyday. Due to his wise and reconciliatory reign, the last hostile sentiment toward the Númenóreans among the people of Umbar ceased in his time, and Umbar finally became loyal to the realm. The long-lost remnants of the monument commemorating Sauron's defeat in the Second Age were also rediscovered late in Eldarion's reign. The monument was rebuilt and once more shone above the haven. Eldarion also oversaw the strengthening of the re-claimed former Gondorian provinces of Harondor to the South and Dor Rhúnen as an entrepôt for Rhovanion. The king spent much time in Arnor and oversaw the re-building of Eriador from Tharbad, even though the population still remained small in his time.

It was not until the time of the fifth king, Ostoher II, that the people of Arnor grew strong again, ending the long years of desertion of the northern realm.

The sixth king, Elrúnya, was a man of great wisdom and noble spirit. Even though the lifespan of the Númenórean Kings was dwindling, it seemed to his people that in him one of the ancient Kings of old had returned, so noble was his bearing that later in his reign earned him the epithet of Failaheh (Q. "Just Lord"). It was not only that he clearly foresaw that great perils were to assail the realm, even if these times were still far-off. He also that he felt that, despite all good relations and lasting peace, the Númenóreans still had one wrong of the past to set right. The Dunlendings had long been at peace with the Dúnedain and Rohirrim, but were still a people apart. Therefore, he went to Dunland and met its lords. There he asked their forgiveness for the injustices that the Númenóreans had visited upon their ancestors. He also acknowledged their distant



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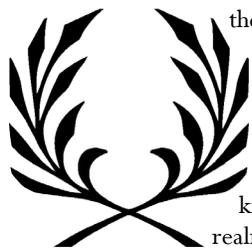
kinship, naming the Dunlanders relatives of the Haladin and therefore ultimately the Edain – though of different stock.

The Dunlendings were amazed at this noble gesture by the King of the Númenóreans and forgot the last reservations which they had retained despite the centuries of – more or less – good neighbourliness. From this arose a new and strong friendship of the Reunited Kingdom with the people of Dunland. It was also in this time that the official borders of that realm were drawn anew, for the Dunlanders had become numerous. Roughly half of Enedwaith from the Gap of Rohan towards the mouth of the Gwathló was officially recognised as part of Dunland.

It was also in the days of this king that the Brown Lands, devastated by Sauron long ago, showed first signs of recovery. It was a sign to the Wise that even though many evil things that Sauron had built on the One had crumbled to dust, the evil of his destruction in these region took long years to fade, years far beyond the lifespan of Men. Under the reign of Falasdil, the seventh King, Arnor, having recovered its strength, became a vital part of the Reunited Kingdom again. However, unrest again spread in the South and he and his successors were troubled. Falasdil's first son died in 561 of disease, leaving his third child and second son Macalaurë to be his successor. King Macalaurë fought a war against the Southrons who plotted war against the realm. Khand was among the leaders of this unrest. The realm of Núrnén was instrumental in uncovering the plans of the enemy, as well as in participating in the campaign to defeat them.

Unrest persisted at the beginning of the reign of Macalaurë's son, Tancoldil, who in 769 finally defeated the Men of Harad and extended the power of the Kings further south than ever before. It was also in this time that Núrnén – ever in league with the Reunited Kingdom – established itself as the predominant power in the area of eastern Mordor, Khand and the mountains eastward. After his great victory, Tancoldil took the name Hyarmendacil III.

In his days, the kingdom of Rohan split over disputes concerning the succession of King Engold. After a short war, Rohan was divided into two successor-realms, with



the Onodló (Entwash) forming the border between them. The younger son, Éal-ing, becomes the king of the new realm called Eh-wathrumavuld¹ north of the Entwash. Éal-ing proved an able king, thus mastering the problems associated with the small population of his realm. He used the advantageous position of his realm along the river Anduin to become a reliable and able partner in trade and war in the region.

For the Reunited Kingdom, the situation became somewhat problematic owing to the inherent rivalry between the remnant of Rohan and the new realm of Eh-wathrumavuld, but by the middle of the ninth century, relations had improved. Eh-wathrumavuld became a strong guardian of the Anduin border region north of Nen Hithoel, keeping good relations with the Númenórean realm.

The reign of the eleventh King of the Reunited Kingdom, Ondorion, saw the last of the Eldar of Lindon and Lórien leave Middle-earth. The ancient lands of Lindon were given into the custody of the Númenóreans, though for a long time Men did not live there.

With Mindohér, the twelfth King, began the line of the five “Inland-kings”, who focused their interests on Gondor's northern and eastern lands and neighbours, and permanently extended Gondor's sway north to the Sír Ninglor (the Gladden) and to the Sea of Rhûn. Mindohér and his allies finally drove the last Orcs from the Misty Mountains, as well as from most of the Ered Mithrin. After this great victory, he took the name Formendacil. Dwarven culture and mansions in the Northwest entered a time of flourishing that would last for centuries as a consequence of the peace in the North. King Durin VII is said to have appeared in Moria around this time, assuming rule in the year 925. Although it was not understood at the time, much later it became clear that this event was connected with the passing of the last Elves from Lórien and (later) the increasing reclusiveness of the Dwarves. The non-mannish races were fading, and although

there were remnants – and for the Dwarves even a last flowering – the Fourth Age was the Dominion of Man. During the reign of King Mindohér's son Altarion, a new realm called Alavald was established by men south of Greenwood. This once thriving region now became settled again. It also included the former Brown Lands, which had regained some of their extraordinary beauty—and it was said that although they were gone, the care formerly bestowed on their gardens by the Entwives had but slumbered in the ground. To those versed in ancient lore, it was living testimony to the weakness of evil.

The fifteenth King, Rómendil, was slain while fighting Easterlings east of the Inland Sea. His son Rómenwë triumphed over the enemy, and a time of great prosperity for all of Rhovanion began. The realm of Mistrand south of the Sea of Rhûn became a part of the Reunited Kingdom in this time. It was during their reign, that the realm of Eh-wathrumavuld extended its influence north up the Anduin, assimilating the Northrons of that region. Eh-wathrumavuld became the primary power on the Middle and Upper Anduin, using its position between Eriador and northwestern Rhovanion and the North and Gondor to increase its wealth through protecting the trade amongst these. Especially the control of the reloading point at Rauros gave the realm great power.

It was under Rómenwë's son, Vásandur, that the Reunited Kingdom reached its zenith. Far and wide the Númenóreans were recognised as lords; the tongue of the Reunited Kingdom was spoken in many countries far abroad, beyond the boundaries of the traditional usage of Westron. Its traditions were held in high esteem among many different peoples.

During the reign of the nineteenth King, Calanúmen, the Dwarves and Men of the North drove away the last remaining Orcs from the region. The Reunited Kingdom sent troops to support this war, and its success ended this age-old threat for the Free Peoples.

It was in the reign of King Lambentur, as the loremasters realised later, that the last flourishing of the Dwarves began to wane, although their power remained un-

¹ The name of this realm was deliberately chosen by Éal-ing; as a reference to the roots of the Rohirrim and a presumed renaissance of these in the new realm.

broken for some centuries. In his days Mistrand became an independent realm once again, though closely allied with the Reunited Kingdom.

A great calamity struck the realm when in 1579 a great pestilence came from the South. King Aldëamir and his elder children were among its victims. Fortunately, this was a time without conflict with other realms. Also, the North was affected very little. When the disease subsided in 1581, Gondor had peace to heal its wounds. The great pestilence hit Ehwathrumavuld especially hard and it failed in 1590 as a consequence of the loss of much of its population. The Wold and other lands of Ehwathrumavuld along the western shore of the Anduin came under the rule of Alavald, while the remaining lesser princedoms were reclaimed by Rohan over the next decades.

In the days of King Calasindë, the fading of the Dwarves became noticeable. Their contacts with both the Northmen and the Reunited Kingdom became increasingly infrequent. Even when there was such contact, the Naugrim were much more reclusive than before. Later, this was held as a sign that they dwindled in numbers rapidly at this time and that their days were ending.

It was during King Araharma's reign that the realm of Dale failed. Whether this was caused, in whole or in part, by the dwindling of the Naugrim in the North is not known. Whatever the cause, strife erupted among the sons of the last king of Dale, and this realm broke into several lesser princedoms among which there was almost never peace. Thus ended the Golden Age of prosperity in the North. The realm of Alavald inherited some of the influence in the region, although it remained centred to the south of Eryn Lasgalen (Wood of Greenleaves).¹

The days of the thirty-third King, Telumeher, saw the dawn of the third millennium of the Reunited Kingdom as well as

the shadows of future plights that would put the faith of the Dúnedain to a hard test. In this time, it was first observed that customs unknown in the West since Sauron's time were returning. Holding other men in thralldom and slavery or the practice of dark magics were the most easily recognisable signs of the return of these evil legacies. At first, they were only seen in the realms of eastern Rhovanion and those beyond the Sea of Rhûn that were allied with the Dúnedain, but it was not long before such things were heard of even in the Reunited Kingdom and Rohan. The king was greatly troubled by these developments. It seemed that such wickedness long existing in lands far to the south and east of Númenórean rule but had begun to spread to the Northwest despite the best efforts to contain it.

The thirty-fifth King, Minastur, is well-remembered. It was under his rule that the Reunited Kingdom began its last period of peaceful prosperity. He is also remembered for being slain by Trolls while travelling in eastern Arnor. Afterwards, a last lair of these creatures was found and cleansed. This was the last time that these creatures were seen in the Northwest. Minastur's son Alcarondor succeeded him after the tragedy and ruled wisely. It was seen only later that the apogee and reinvigoration of Númenórean traditions, culture and lore had been begun under Alcarondor's father was to be the last.

This loss of contact with the Elder Races fell into the reign of King Carmalaica and that of his son Telumanar. After the latter's days, no news of the Firstborn and the Naugrim was ever received and it was surmised that their days under the Dominion of Man were ended.

The reign of king Telepher was marred by the first shadows cast by a new scourge for the Reunited Kingdom, and which would prove fatal in the end. The Rochoth Invasions threatened the realm for one-and-a-half centuries. The Rochoth were men from the East who rivalled and some-

times even surpassed the Rohirrim in horsemanship. Throughout the years, the kings gained some knowledge about these people. It is held that they had their ancestral home in the wide grasslands far to the east of Rhovanion and gradually subjugated all the people in the vicinity. Within a few decades they had created a mighty Inland Empire, rivalling in extent even Sauron's former empire. All who had experienced their onslaught told of hordes of deadly horse-archers, shooting from almost every position, even from full gallop. Their armies appeared unstoppable, crushing all resistance before them. Beyond that, they are reported to have incorporated the particular strengths of their defeated foes to their own military repertoire, thus always honing their skills and reducing the chances for other enemies to resist them. They were ruled by a mighty king far to the East. Their armies were commanded by his sons or brothers, all of them being fiercely loyal to their overlord.

At first, there were only reports from the East, but it soon became clear that these people were moving westwards, defeating all resistance in their path.

In addition to the looming threat of the Rochoth, there were disasters within the realm. In the year 2361, the last descendant of the House of Dol Amroth died heirless, after the line had been in decline for nearly a century.

King Laurëturma wanted to grant the fief to his own younger son, but at this the Council of the Great of Gondor rebelled, fearing that too great a power might lie in the hands of the king. The Council favoured Artamir, a descendant of King Curundur.² The King bowed to the pressure and in 2362 appointed Artamir in order to ensure stability for the realm. At first, this was hailed as a felicitous decision. However, as became evident only later, it was the beginning of the realm's downfall. Beginning in 2370, Artamir began to strengthen Belfalas' armed force, claiming this as necessary for times of peril should

¹ The former Mirkwood

² At that time the real events had not been known and it was not until the time of Tarondor II, the last King, that they were fully understood. The secret and ancient teachings of the Great Enemy and his lieutenant Sauron had not been totally forgotten. The oldest child of king Curundur (r. 2207-43) was a daughter. Though she was ambitious, the law of the time would not allow her to become Queen. The law that the eldest child of the last ruler should rise to the throne had been changed in the days of king Eärnur II in favour of younger male children, but she still held herself as the rightful monarch. Whether she discovered old tomes or was taught by sorcerers from the East (or both) is unknown, but she saw in this knowledge a tool to further her ambitions. She immersed herself in learning and later educated her children in them as well. Ever afterwards, her descendants employed the ancient sorcerous arts to their advantage in working to achieve the position their mother desired so greatly. Knowing that a direct assault on the crown would end in failure, they worked towards the fall of the line of Dol Amroth. By their sorcerous arts, they led princes into despair and caused miscarriages and further ills.

Gondor be besieged.

Under the reign of King Nauromehtar, the First Rochoth Invasion fell upon Rhovanion. The realm of Mistrand fell quickly, opening the way further west for the enemy. The king assembled a host of all those that could be spared and the Rohirrim and Alavaldings sent a mighty force to his aid. Together with detachments of Dunland he marched upon the plains of Rhovanion to halt the enemy's advance far to the East of his heartland. On the other side, not a few among the once proud and free Men of the North of former Dale had made alliance with the enemy and had mustered under his banner. Núrnien was not able to send aid as well, as that realm was hard-pressed by another Rochoth attack that had been launched even before the Rochoth advance into Rhovanion. The battle was long and fierce and the outcome was long in the balance. Just as the King's host began to give way, there came strong and unexpected help from the Men of Núrnien. Then the enemy was finally defeated, but the Rochoth could not be driven from Rhovanion again due to their alliance with the Northman princes around Dale and along the Celduin.

It was King Nauromehtar's grandson Anardil II who would bear the brunt of the first full-scale attack on Gondor itself. He had little time to consolidate his rule, as the long-awaited war came only months after his ascension to the throne. In 2480, the King was killed in battle, and although the Rochoth were weakened enough not to seek open battle again for some time, they still firmly held northern and eastern Rhovanion. His son, Halatir, came to the throne young and soon proved to be an able leader, although he could but contain the Rochoth threat. At the time, Gondor did not believe that the Rochoth could suffer a decisive defeat. It was also during these times that many spoke out about what they saw as a merely defensive strategy against the Rochoth. Unusual times needed unusual means, they claimed, and that to revitalise Gondor's strength, it would be necessary to accept 'new' ideas, binding the commoners to their lords and thereby curtailing their freedom while strengthening the lordly powers. These measures would ensure the realm's stability and enable it to defeat the new invaders. The King dismissed this as the

thoughts of the old Enemies: Enslaving men and reducing them to thralldom might bring the desired military results, but it was unworthy of the Faithful. For the time these thoughts were put down, but neither their proponents (the Lord of Dol Amroth among them) nor the King forgot that such ideas had been given voice to by some of the Great in Gondor.

Anardil's son Halatir struggled for 40 years to defend his realm against frequent attacks by the Rochoth, but his success was limited. Step by step, the Reunited Kingdom had to abandon all of its territories east of the Morannon and the Dead Marshes. Worse still, the successor realms of Dale now were in full league with the Rochoth and deep in the confidence of their leaders, serving them well and providing knowledge of the people and alliances of the West. Those few that opposed this were persecuted and either slain or quickly driven away, finding shelter to the west or south in Arnor or Alavald, which now found itself on the forefront against the Rochoth. From this time onwards, most of the Northmen of Rhovanion were more and more loyal vassals of the Rochoth and over the Undeeps they launched daring raids through Alavald even into Ro-



© 'The Northmen' by Jan Pospisil, used by permission of the artist

han. A common strategy countered this, and around 2540 these regular raids lessened, although the danger on the northern and eastern borders never really ceased until the end of the kingdom. Many people fled from the eastern provinces, most of them moving to Arnor. Eärendur II foresaw that in the case of a decisive defeat on the eastern battlefield, all the realm would lie open to the Enemy. Therefore, he took counsel with the kings of Rohan and Dunland as to how a better defence might be established. It was decided that it would be best in the case of a disaster to retreat and hold the Gap of Rohan. Work on the

'Isen Wall' began in this time. It was not long after this that Alavald finally succumbed to the threat on its eastern borders, and declared itself neutral, wishing to preserve its strength and not wanting to be caught on the wrong side in the likely case of a Rochoth victory. This made northern Gondor and Rohan even more vulnerable. Not long afterwards, Alavald entered the fold of the Rochoth-led eastern alliance, not wishing to be conquered by force.

The long-awaited storm of the third Rochoth Invasion came in 2583. The King assembled all his troops and allies according to plans long laid ready. After some inconclusive minor clashes and raids into Rohan and Gondor, a great battle commenced in 2585 on the Dagorlad, the place of many ancient Númenórean victories. In the same hour as the battle, the earth trembled in Gondor, rending the impregnable walls of Minas Tirith and toppling the White Tower. The battle was lost. Strangely, the Rochoth did not immediately press home their success and invade Gondor in full strength. Later it was learned that they had temporarily retreated due to dynastic squabbles among their lords.

This time of defeat was chosen by the Lord of Dol Amroth, Amilanâth II, to make a bid for the throne of Gondor. He had secretly held back many of his best troops from the war. Now that the King was de-

feated and Minas Tirith was in ruins, he claimed lordship over the kingdom of Gondor, stating that Tarondor II was unable to rule and defend the realm adequately. Having just lost a great battle, his troops in disarray, and faced with a determined and well-equipped enemy in the person of Amilanâth, the King had little choice but flight. He barely escaped with his sons when they were attacked on the way to Rohan, but the Queen and most of their retinue were slain. Many heirlooms were lost as well – both to Amilanâth and in the fall of Minas Tirith. Amilanâth prevailed

over Tarondor and crowned himself king of Gondor, moving the royal seat of the Stone-realm to Dol Amroth.

Two years later, the king came with an army from Arnor, loyal Gondorians and help from Rohan, to challenge Imrazôr in Gondor. The latter had by now established his power and had even secretly made alliance with the returned Rochoth. The armies met before the gates of ruined Minas Tirith, and a great battle ensued. It was going in the King's favour when, completely by surprise, his flank was suddenly attacked by strong Rochoth cavalry swarming onto the battlefield from near Osgiliath, where they had lain hidden. The enemies dealt a crushing defeat to the King's forces. All the king's sons were killed and many of the Great loyal to the king were captured, only to be tortured to death later.¹ Only the King barely escaped with his most loyal knights northward up the Anduin. Amilanâth and his Rochoth allies then attacked defenceless Rohan and crushed it within a year. The region was re-named Calenardhon once more and made into a part of Gondor. The Rohirrim were reduced to serfdom: a new institution recently introduced by Amilanâth on the model of his new eastern allies. The king of Rohan was killed, and only his daughter and a few of her people made good their escape beyond the Isen. Of all the former regions of Gondor, only Umbar remained loyal to the remnants of the faithful Telcontari and held fast to this alliance until the end, as a southern exclave of the new realm in the North.

Gondor then made open alliance with the Rochoth, swearing allegiance and paying tribute. The remaining Dúnedain of Gondor embraced their new lord and his allies, dreaming of renewed power and greatness within the Rochoth empire. It was in this time that sorcery and other dark arts long thought to be forgotten were practised openly in Gondor, aiding the king in his goals and giving high status to those with such knowledge. Almost all the men of that realm forsook what was left of their Númenórean heritage in exchange for a greed for power. Even the Cult of Mûlker is practiced again.

Thanks to the wisdom of King Eärendur II, the line of the Isen could be held by Tarondor II and the Rochoth and their Gondorian rebel allies were stopped there. Isengard remained in loyal hands as well as the Hornburg, which served for long years as a bastion of the Free Peoples against Gondor and the Rochoth. The King was wedded again, this time to Aeldryth, the daughter of the king of Rohan who escaped the disaster. A late son was born to this marriage in 2594. Afterwards, he chose a new name, Telatan, as he foresaw himself being the last of the Númenórean House of Elessar. He named his last son Batarkil in the Common Tongue, as the use of the Elven tongues ceased in this time. Batarkil later married a princess of Dunland, thereby sealing the union of that realm with Arnor. Under a renewed attack by the Rochoth in 2613 and allied Gondor, the aged King was slain while he valiantly defended the Wall at the Fords of Isen. His son held the Wall and for a while the realm was secure. The death of Tarondor II, called Telatan, is considered to be the point at which the Reunited Kingdom ended. The Fourth Age was, however, not yet over.

Here ends the tale of the Reunited Kingdom

Later events concerning the Telcontari and their heirs until the end of the Fourth Age

Beginning in 2465, the Gap of Rohan along the Isen was heavily fortified with a wall running along the river as a defense against further attacks by the Rochoth. In 2616, Gondor under Amilanâth allied itself with the Rochoth, marginalising the remnants of the faithful Edain near the Sea. In the North, the 'new' realm was called Dyrna-Gaer or Sakalzâin (S. "Seaward-lands" or We. "Shore-lands"), not recognizing its claim to the ancient Faithful name of Gondor. This was furthered by news that serfdom and other non-Faithful laws and manners had been established in former Gondor. The evil magics of old were now believed to be commonplace there and embraced by the population. The people in old Gondor continue to call the land by its

ancient name, claiming the right to this name and denying the northern King any legitimacy.

The defence of the Isen was successful, although a second fortification in the gap in the western Ered Nimrais (the Gap of Enedwaith) had to be constructed after Belfalas' betrayal.

Shortly after the border fortifications had been extended, the King called together all the lords of of Eriador to confer on the new situation. The remnants of the Rohirrim who made it to safety were given the hitherto largely unsettled regions of southern Enedwaith from the borders of Dunland to the Ered Nimrais as a province of the new realm. This made them, together with the Dunmen, the primary guardians of the walls into the former Rohan and Gondor. Dunland watched the southern Hithaegllir while Arnor guarded its central and northern reaches.

This was the dawn of the Fifth Age, and little did the Lords or the Wise know then that not long after an end would come to all of the realms and peoples of old. From the people of Arnor, the remnants of the Rohirrim and the Dunlanders would arise a new people and a new realm to succeed Gondor, Rohan and Dunland² that would carry on the legacy of the Edain, and the merging of the Rohirric, Dúnadan (and in the next generation, Dunnish) royal lines, heralded a new era. For in the year 2620, all of these realms would finally be merged into a new – and final – Edainic realm before the world was changed. That realm was called Adûzâyan (We. "Westland").

Shortly thereafter, Sakalzâin in alliance with the Rochoth attacked Adûzâyan with the intent of putting an end to its rulers and histories. Their stout defense of the Isen and the Hithaegllir proved too strong, and a naval threat was contained by the combined might of Umbar and Adûzâyan.

In order to strengthen the ties between Umbar and the realm of the king, Nînzîr, the younger son of king Batarkil, was sent to the old Númenórean fortress-haven. He was of noble spirit and well-liked by the people and quickly proved himself a strong

¹ It is said that the Rochoth tortured many of the noble prisoners to death by lying them on the ground and then building a floor of wood above them, upon which they feasted their victory.

² Named "Adûzâyan" (We. "West-land") in the Common Speech as the lore and knowledge of the Elven tongues fell out of use even for ceremonial occasions by now. It might be that this was to reflect the increasingly non-Númenórean nature of the new realm.

© 'Dale units vs. Rhun' by Jan Pospisil, used by permission of the artist



commander in the struggle with the southern forces of Sakalzâin. It was in these days that one of the Great of Umbar, a man called Lamech in the local tongue, lost his son in the service of Adûzâyan, and Nînzîr allowed himself to be adopted by that man and received the local name of Noah (meaning 'Rest' in the local language).

In the year 2667, Sakalzâin launched a second attempt at crushing the remnants of the Faithful. Supported by sorcerous arts learned from the most skilled teachers from the East and aided by the Rochoth, it put the defences of Adûzâyan to a hard test. During these times Nînzîr had visions of a great danger in the form of a flood destroying all life on Earth, dwarfing even the Fall of Númenor itself. He sent urgent messages to his father, but the duties of the war kept the northern realm from heeding these pleas. Plagued by dark premonitions, he began to build a special ship that should house many plants, animals and men alike. In 2670, Sakalzâin at last breached the defense of the North, conquering everything before it and succeeding in destroying the royal line.

It was just when they reached and devastated Lindon in 2671 that the Great Flood of Nînzîr's visions began. The waters rapidly rose higher and higher, engulfing the land, and earthquakes brought down mountains. Volcanoes erupted all over the

mortal world, plunging it into weeks of living inferno. The cataclysm ended the Middle-earth shaped by the defeat of Melkor in the Battle of Powers, the War of Wrath, and the Sinking of Númenor. A new world was formed that was not the ancestral home of Ilúvatar's Children for four Ages of the world. The lands that rose out of the waves when they receded, were of different shape from the old ones.

With this flood the Fourth Age of Middle-earth ended and the Fifth began. Many fair things were lost forever, as well as much ancient lore, but some was preserved. It seemed that the old wisdom was not extinct, and that not all men had ignored Nînzîr's warnings. In Rivendell and Mithlond there still lived scholars versed in Elvish lore, and some had travelled from the inland haven to the haven on the coast with carts full of treasure and books of lore about the past ages of the world. Ships were ready at the Grey Havens, and those who boarded carried the most noble traditions of the ancient realms in their hearts. Sailing out of the long Gulf of Lune, slipping away from the enemy's approach, they took themselves to a far distance from the land, hoping to escape the punishment that was in store, shortly before the waters rose, little knowing that in the south Nînzîr's ship had also escaped. Riding the waves for weeks in storms and hardships,

they had scarce hope of being saved. However, when at last the winds calmed and the waters receded, and they found hospitable shores again, theirs was a new beginning. It is thought to be through these men that the lore of the Elder Days has come to us, but we have no knowledge of their lives after this, or whose peoples' ancestries they founded.

Elsewhere it is told how men desperately sheltered in high places and clung to mountainsides that were not wholly under the waves. The Cleansing did not eradicate the failings of man but it was held as a small solace that the old and wicked teachings of the Dark Lords were at last gone forever. And so happened that which had already been written in the Red Book of the Westmarch, that the world would be changed again long after the end of the Third Age.¹

Those days, the Third Age of Middle-earth, are now long past, and the shape of all lands has been changed;...

**The Lord of the Rings.
Prologue (Concerning
Hobbits)**

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¹ This is already hinted at:

*There at last when the mallorn-leaves were falling, but spring had not yet come, she [Arwen] laid herself to rest upon Cerin Amroth; and there is her green grave, until the world is changed, and all the days of her life are utterly forgotten by men that come after, and elanor and niphredil bloom no more east of the Sea. **The Lord of the Rings. Appendix A***

The cataclysm of the Great Flood is in my opinion a good interpretation of "...until the world is changed..."



"Then Ilúvatar said to them: 'Of the theme that I have declared to you, I will now that ye make in harmony together a Great Music. And since I have kindled you with the Flame Imperishable, ye shall show forth your powers in adorning this theme, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will. But I will sit and hearken, and be glad that through you

great beauty has been wakened into song.'"

- Ainulindalë (The Music of the Ainur)

The Silmarillion

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A Fourth Age Chronology

by Tom Davie

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It's always good to have several views on the same subject. Concerning the Fourth Age, we are lucky to have another view how this age might have developed over its course.

Its close relationship to the already mentioned 'Tresco Manuscript' offers great possibilities for all gamers who already use this idea to further detail this vision. Happy reading!



Introductory Notes

For some time now I have wanted to organise a chronology of the events that occurred in my vision of the Fourth Age of Middle-earth, up to the point that I start my Return of the Shadow campaign, as previously when I first ran my campaign many years ago I was a bit vague on what was the temporal setting of the campaign, what the political situation was like elsewhere, and what events had occurred previously. So I decided to look at what others had already done in regards to Fourth Age chronologies.¹ The resulting chronology below is an attempt to synthesize the ideas of both myself and others. My reasons for choosing certain events have been based on the following:

- I rejected events that I regarded as not in keeping with Tolkien's main themes, or did not seem to be possible in the world of Middle-earth, as against an AD&D type setting for example.
- What does the Dominion of Men mean in practice? I take this to mean declining birth rates of all non-human races, there is very little change initially I think, but with the passage of years and with wars, plagues etc., taking their toll, this decline becomes more noticeable.²
- A common theme with Tolkien is that the works of men initially flourish, then discontent sets in, resulting in conflict and then decline. I have used this with the Reunited Kingdom, where the Reunited Kingdom grows and flourishes until it becomes an Empire at its height, then contentments start resulting in conflicts.
- I have used Martin Baker's "*The Tresco Manuscript*" as my central reference, as I liked the attempt made by him and others at the Alternative Tolkien website to treat *The Red-book of Westmarch* as real (as Tolkien himself did). This means that

for the line of High Kings of the Reunited Kingdom, they end with Arbeleth II and the invasion of 976. The reign of each High King is used to divide up the chronology, the names of which I have taken from the various references used. As a guide to how long the High Kings reigned, I noted from Appendix A of *The Lord of the Rings* that the average reign of the Kings of Gondor in the Third Age was just over 80 years, if not slain or died prematurely. Interestingly, as Tolkien noted that the kings became childless and did not relinquish their power willingly, their reigns actually diminished (and more bad things happened). I have tried to replicate this process, in keeping with Tolkien's common theme.

- The main Enemy in my campaign I have adapted to being behind many of the events that occurred, it will be easy in my view to adapt the events for other adversaries. That there is a mysterious force at work behind the scenes is also to me in keeping with Tolkien's own ideas, especially in regards to The Third Age and the various machinations of Sauron.³

For ease of usage, I have used several font styles in the following timeline:

- Text in normal style could be remembered by PC's with a reasonable History skill roll
- Text in **blue** are 'common knowledge' or legends which all PC's would have at least heard of
- Text in **orange** are for gamemasters, usually information that PC's will not know.

Timeline of Events

Events that cannot be pinpointed exactly have the abbreviation c.Year (meaning *circa*, e.g. c. F.A.195, which means that the event occurred around this time.

Background events (end of Third Age) :

- The Army of Elessar enter into Mordor after the Fall of Sauron and destroy all the fortresses of the land. It is rumoured, however, that a Lieutenant of Sauron survived the destruction of Barad-dûr and escaped the forces of Elessar. Elessar's army was able to destroy most of the fortresses of Mordor, but some orcs and trolls managed to escape as some orcs holds were well hidden deep inside the mountains. Furthermore, the army did not find the town of Ostigurth and the fortress of Barad Sereg (located on the eastern side of the pass from Gorgoroth into Nurn) as the mountains collapsed around it, transforming it into a hidden fortress (the army believed it to be destroyed by the mountains). The rumours of a Lieutenant of Sauron surviving are true, as the Mouth of Sauron survived the collapse (he fell into a ravine but survived through sorcery).
- Celeborn resides in Rivendell with the sons of Elrond. After a few years Elladan becomes the ruler in Lórien, Elrohir in Rivendell. Celeborn later leaves Middle-earth at some time prior to the arrival in F.A.409 of the Elves of Aman. Celeborn provides news of the decline of his people and his concerns to the Valar in Aman, prompting the voyage undertaken by Inglaur Ingwiel 'back' to Middle-earth. The 'Hooded Wanderer' (Gandalf returning perhaps, or another Maia), also sent with Inglaur to act as the Valar's emissary, but spends a long time travelling all over Middle-earth. The sons of Elrond spend many years in Middle-earth continuing their private war against orcs. Only after several hundred years at the height of the Great Peace do they decide to leave. The sons of Elrond also later play a large role in

helping men to settle former Elvish lands along with the Eldennori.

- The second son of Fëanor, Maglor returns from his wanderings across Middle-earth and is recognized by Elrond prior to the Halfelven's departure, some time after which Maglor then moves to Ost Helevorn in Lindon.⁴
- A permanent mist/fog hangs over Cirith Gorgor, and the pass is still rumoured to be haunted. The Ruins of Barad-Dûr are also haunted, especially by spiders and evil spirits. The Barad-Dûr ruins are in fact haunted by the spirit of Sauron, who is not destroyed but unable to reform into a more coherent entity. This means that 'bad' things tend to happen to anyone brave enough to enter the ruins (in game terms dice rolls that would normally succeed do not, etc.).
- Fangorn Forest expands gradually down to the Gap of Rohan, as far as Dol Baran. This is a natural progression of the Treegarth of Orthanc, so that the entire former Vale of Saruman becomes swallowed up by the forest, which indeed expands also to the western side of the Misty Mountains. As the vale really begins at Dol Baran, the hill that overlooks the Gap of Rohan on the north western End, with Helm's Deep overlooking the south eastern end of the Gap, a fortress was soon constructed on top of Dol Baran (and later an accompanying town at its foot), and becomes a highly strategic post. Orthanc itself thus becomes isolated and cut off due to the forest.



The Reunited Kingdom – Fourth Age 0 -976

REIGN OF KING ELESSAR I (0 -120).

Elessar's reign can be viewed overall as one of recovery, scouring and laying down the seeds for later prosperity, as the scars of war had to be healed in many areas, and many areas still had to be conquered or at least quelled of resistance.

F.A. 5 – The elven settlement of Fimbar in Ithilien is begun by Legolas Greenleaf, along with a small population of Elves. Elessar declares the settlement and the surrounding woods to be the preserve of the Elves, not under the authority of the Reunited Kingdom (similar to his declarations regarding the Woses of Drúadan forest etc.). Fimbar was situated just south of the Eryn Arnem in a long, narrow wood, between the Anduin and the Harad Road, and had the largest population of Elves and especially elf-children in the whole NW of Middle-earth, as only here was the birthrate in the early Fourth Age okay, whereas elsewhere the elven population was decreasing as most Elves began thoughts of leaving Middle-earth. In the later Fourth Age Fimbar is also affected by declining birthrates.

F.A. 10 – King Elessar I offers land packages in Arnor as many areas are underpopulated.

F.A. 15 – Rebuilding of Annúminas commences.

F.A. 20-25 – The Barrow Downs are scoured, forcing Tom Bombadil to move further into the Old Forest. Some particularly nasty barrow wights were not destroyed, just sealed into their tombs (awaiting later release by stupid PC's?)

F.A. 35 – Gelydion of Lórien becomes the tutor to the children of King Elessar I and becomes known as Rómendil.

F.A. 49 – Emperor Dhiegas of Khand, King Esrotef of Amomag (the only Haradan nation that opposed Sauron) and King Elessar I sign the Frontier Agreement in this year. Umbar submits to the overlordship of King Elessar, although some Harad tribes continue to resist. Umbar only submitted unwill-

ingly and there is always an undercurrent of resistance in the city and surrounding areas.

- F.A. 50-65 – The Nurniags and other former slaves of Sauron build a city on the shores of the Nurnen Sea near the SW tributary river, called “Elessardil” in honour of King Elessar, on the ruins of the former Sauronic fortress of Thaurband. The Kingdom of Lithlad (nominally subject to the Reunited Kingdom) is also established by the former slaves in Nurn, and is soon a densely populated farming area very pro-Reunited Kingdom. At this same time, various fortresses (such as ‘The Teeth’ are either rebuilt or renamed for the guarding and garrisoning of Mordor. *Lithlad is pro-Reunited Kingdom due to being given their freedom by Elessar, and also by becoming swiftly a prosperous area. This attitude gradually changes over time with the misrule and prejudice from Dûnadan overlords. The garrison of Mordor (more correctly Gorgoroth) becomes known as the ‘Outer Wall’ in the army, and service in this garrison is not regarded fondly, due to the constant threat from orcs etc.*
- c.F.A. 80 – A large town named Nibnar springs up outside the Hornburg due to the growing trade with the Dwarven city of Aglarond. *Such towns are typical close to dwarven settlements, as dwarves did not grow much food or tend livestock themselves, so needed to trade with men for these things. Many such towns sprang up around this time as trade with dwarven settlements flourished, and those that already existed such as Dale and Esgaroth expanded.*
- F.A. 110 – The Key & Stone of Orthanc are given to Aiwendil (Radagast), the Elostirion key & stone given to Thucedro, Rhosgobel and Rivendell also become centres for learning and magic under Elvariel and Camthalion. *The giving of these items was due to the increased isolation of Orthanc (being now surrounded by Fangorn forest) it was now suitable as a residence for Radagast, and similarly the Tower of Elostirion was not seen as being of use for the kingdom. The idea*

of utilizing isolated places such as these for learning was part of a general desire at this time to ensure that knowledge was not lost to later generations.

REIGN OF ELДАРION I (120 -227)

Eldarion’s reign can be seen as initially a continuation of Elessar’s reign of renewal and sowing the seeds of prosperity, and then later in the reign the results of long peace can be seen with increased prosperity and the rise in trade, even to distant lands. However, towards the end of Eldarion’s reign the first signs of dissatisfaction appear, as some men become disillusioned with peace and begin searching for something better, especially with the fear of death. This movement (treated in Tolkien’s sequel “The New Shadow”) is the first stage in a gradual process of decay and decline, generally increasing from this point as more men share feelings of dissatisfaction and searching for something better.

- F.A. 135 – Minas Tirith is renamed *Minas Mallor* (Tower of the Rising Sun) by Eldarion I.
- F.A. 137 – A trade city called Sarn is founded at Sarn Ford. King Eldarion also reverses the decree of his father Elessar forbidding men to enter the Shire, although men were still forbidden to settle in the Shire. *The reversal was done to help further the growth of trade in the area.*
- F.A. 140-150 – The City of Osgiliath is rebuilt during Eldarion I’s reign and becomes the new capital, with the Steward of Gondor based in Minas Anor. *The dwarves who assist with the rebuilding then found a new mining colony in the southern part of the Mountains of Shadow known as Krath-Zabar.*
- F.A. 2nd century – Rise in trade in all areas and a growing prosperity. This results in the rise in importance of Khand, and also Relmether and its capital Relerindu, both nations being in a central position and thus important as gateways to the east and south.
- F.A. 161 – The New South Road is built, and where the road crosses water or skirts around woods bridges and/or villages are built. The largest village (called ‘Carandin’) at the approximate halfway point between Tharbad & the Gap of Rohan is run by Dûnadan settlers not Dunlendings. The *Greenway Road* as it is generally known is patrolled due to continuing threats from Dunlendings. *The Dunlendings are similar to the Haradrim, being a collection of clan tribes who continually resist any attempts to impose authority on them. Some Dunlending tribes also continue to despise the Rohirrim.*
- F.A. 183 – The *Parma Taratirion* (Book of Visions) is compiled by Rómendil for King Eldarion I in this year, and copies are kept at Annûminas, Dol Amroth and Minas Tirith.
- c.F.A. 195 – Dwarves colonize the Grey Mountains and trade flourishes with men, and the town of Carnen on the Carnen River in the Iron Hills is also founded as part of this trade. Other dwarves under ‘Durin VII’ recolonise Moria around this time. Later events prove the title of ‘Durin VII’ to be false, and historians also have shown that Moria was only a mining colony (for mithril) at this time, not a proper dwarven settlement.
- F.A. early 3rd century – Institutions formed around this time included the Royal Guild of Philosophers, and the Guild of Magicians and Artificers. Universities are also established in major cities, and centres of learning and magic are also established at Minas Tirith, Annûminas and Szrel Kain, to complement the earlier ones already established at Orthanc, Elostirion, Rivendell and Rhosgobel.
- F.A. 211 – Mithi I becomes the ruler of the dwarven mining colony in Moria.
- F.A. 220 – The Loremasters of the various centres of learning form the Council of Wise, and establish the Orders of Wizards, Magicians, Loremasters, etc. Also established at this time are standard tests for accepting new members into the orders, but few common men initially are accepted, being usually open only to younger sons of nobility.
- F.A. 226 – Ost-en-Ernîl the city is founded in the Eryn Arnem in Ithilien, an indication of the growing trade and rise in population in the area.

ELDARVIR I (227-258)

The ending of peace is due to the expansion of trade. During Eldarvir's reign there is increasing dissatisfaction amongst several Easterling tribes over the increased number of trade caravans travelling through tribal lands, which eventually erupts into war.

- F.A. 255 – The **Plains War** between the Reunited Kingdom & Easterling tribes breaks out over Easterling raiding of trade caravans.
- F.A. 258 – King Eldarvir is killed in a minor skirmish with Asdriag tribesmen.

ELDARVIR II (258 -376)

The victory of the Reunited Kingdom over the Easterling tribes was only possible due to the superior cavalry of Rohan, who become the pre-eminent military force for many centuries. From this time there is a massive expansion in trade, and the goods, ships and forces of the Reunited Kingdom start to be seen as far south as the Múamakan and east to Relmether. Although many Dûnadan nobles get richer and richer from the increased trade, there is also a growing desire for something better, hence the latter part of King Eldarvir II's reign also sees the beginnings of exploration and long journeys, and other various searches for 'truth' such as alchemy, magic etc. also become more popular.

- F.A. 261 The Treaty of the Plains ends the **Plains War**, by which treaty the Reunited Kingdom is allowed to construct a road through the central plains area. High King Eldarvir II is renamed Rómendacil III. *Some Easterling tribes continue to harbour resentment at what is regarded by them as a humiliating backdown.*
- F.A. 272 – Rómendacil III divides the administration of the Reunited Kingdom into two, with separate administrative, legislative and military establishments for the northern and southern kingdoms. *This was done to speed up administration and the machinery of government due to the increasing demands placed on the Reunited Kingdom due to population growth, but had important consequences as this facilitated the growing apart of the two kingdoms.*

c.F.A. 300 – The few Elves who still have contact with men become known as experts in lore and scholarly pursuits.

F.A. 311 – After the intermarriage of Rohan's and the Reunited Kingdom's rulers (the son of King Rómendacil III to the daughter of Rohan's king), the Imperial Cavalry is founded and becomes responsible for policing much of the empire. The Marches of Haradwaith and Rhovanion are created as frontier patrolled areas.

c.F.A.320 – *An Evil Magician/ Necromancer builds a stronghold called Minas Ormë in the eastern Grey Mountains and calls himself Dredman the Black, to distinguish himself from the Order of Wizards. Over the next few years he begins to gather forces in the Far North and travellers notice that orcs in this area begin to multiply again. Dredman is the evil source of what would later be known as The Northern Scare.*⁵

ELEMMIR I (376 -460)

The main event of High King Elemmir's reign is the '**Northern Scare**', which causes a lot of trouble for some years afterwards.⁶ *Otherwise the growth of trade and exploration from the previous reign continue.*

F.A. 380 – A large force of orcs retakes Mount Gundabad (which had until this time been largely empty except for the occasional adventurer party). These orcs are acting under the orders of Dredman the Black. This event is largely ignored by the Reunited Kingdom.

F.A. 390 – Elemmir I is the first king to appoint his eldest son as the ruler over Arnor, and he establishes the tradition whereby the king spends the summer in the North (at Annúminas), and the eldest son rules as Viceroy in Arnor the rest of the year (from Fornost).

F.A. 408 -409 – The '**Northern Scare**' occurs in these years, and rumours abound that Morgoth has returned to Middle-earth. In 408 a Council is held at Rhosgobel to discuss the threat, and Moria and Erebor are evacuated by the dwarves, only Erebor is reclaimed once the **Northern Scare** is deemed over,

which is not for many years. In 409 an attack on Orthanc is made but is defeated, and Rivendell is besieged, but the siege is lifted by the unforeseen arrival of Elves from Aman. The enemy in these events was not Morgoth as many rumours were put about at this time, but Dredman the Black who was acting as Morgoth's servant. From this point in time the Reunited Kingdom starts becoming more 'military' in outlook, becoming more noticeable in the next reign. This event is also seen as the ending of the '**Long Peace**', with all nations paying more attention to military matters.

F.A 409 – Elves from Aman under the Vanya Elf Inglaur Ingwiel arrive at Mithlond, and are met by King Elemmir and Maglor. These Elves are called the 'Eldennori', and they work to recuperate lands abandoned by the Elves by helping men to settle these lands. Maglor is named Lord of Lindon by both Inglaur Ingwiel and King Elemmir. The mysterious stranger known as 'The Hooded Wanderer' begins to be seen in the lands from this time. In actual fact the Eldennori's main purpose is to establish contacts with all remaining elven communities throughout Middle-earth, and to help slow the 'fading' of the Elves. The Eldennori also were not met at the Havens by King Elemmir, but on the battlefield close to Rivendell, helping lift the siege. Their arrival also gave impetus to the growth of exploration and travelling around Middle-earth. In this movement another of Rómendil's works, 'Travels through Endor' was considered the preeminent text.

c.F.A. 450 – Elves of the Avari with the aid of some of the Eldennori construct a secret refuge on the peak of Mt. Luumentarma known as Pelperion ('Halfway House') in the southwest of the Rhûn Mountains. This refuge is part of a number of such refuges constructed around this period as a way of creating a network of contacts, this site was chosen as a reasonably central place so Elves from the far east and south can stop here on the way to the

Havens.

c.Mid – fifth century. – Magic is now learnt by common men. Although the standards for learning magic had been established years before by the Council of the Wise, only now does the learning of magic become more popular, as part of the general search for answers, and also due to the desire of the Eldenori to pass on knowledge to mankind.

ELENDIL II (460-507)

The growth of peaceful trade and exploration that characterized the previous two reigns is replaced by a more aggressive policy of conquest and exploitation of new areas under Elendil II, making use of the military might now built up on both land and sea over the previous years. This aggressive policy leads to the coalition against the Reunited Kingdom by Umbar and various Haradrim, resulting in *The Sail War*.

Late 5th century – By this time the rule of the Reunited Kingdom had become exploitative, resulting in discontent everywhere, especially in areas not traditionally ruled by the Reunited Kingdom such as Umbar and Mordor.

F.A. 496 – Umbar declares its independence from the Reunited Kingdom. This is because the exploitative policies of recent governors made the city population restless.

F.A. 506 – A dispute over control of trade on the Harnen River (in Harondor) leads to *The Sail War* between the Reunited Kingdom and an Umbar/Haradrim coalition. This had always been a bone of contention between Gondor & Umbar in former times, made worse due to Umbar's recent rebellion against Reunited Kingdom rule.

F.A. 507 – *Battle of Ethir Harnen* during the Sail War. The Reunited Kingdom is victorious over a large Umbar/Haradrim/Variag coalition army, but King Elendil II is slain. North Kingdom (Arnor) troops suffer the most loss during the battle, and contribute to a weakening of the North Kingdom.

ISILDUR II (507-512)

The younger brother of Elendil II, he carried on the war against Umbar and was eventually victorious, although he also died prematurely during the siege of Umbar. By the end of the war the Reunited Kingdom was unchallenged in military might, and Isildur's successor Anárion II reaped the benefits of the might of the Reunited Kingdom. The 'Great Peace' is considered by historians to begin from this time.

F.A. 508 -512 – Umbar and coastal Harad south of Umbar conquered by the Reunited Kingdom, although King Isildur II is slain during the siege of Umbar (in 512).

Umbar and surroundings were never actually conquered by King Elessar (see F.A.49 above), these areas were now conquered and indeed expanded.

c.F.A.512 – '*Commentaries of Rómendil*' appears around this time. The mystery of the tome's origins are due partly to its appearance when many of the 'more important' people were busy with the war down in Umbar.

ANÁRION II 'THE GREAT' (512-630)

The Reunited Kingdom reaches the zenith of its power and influence during High King Anárion II's reign, and in extent it stretches from the Blue Mountains in the west to the Rhûn Sea in the East, and from Angmar in the north to Central Harad in the south. The northern capital is at Osgiliath, the southern capital at Umbar. With Anárion II's rule the king is now called the 'High King', with his sons later ruling over the N. & S. kingdoms, but this is only in the later years of the reign.

F.A.562 – The 'Prince of the Sands' is the title given to the ruler of Umbar (under the High King at Osgiliath), and is first given in this year to the king's eldest son. This becomes a traditional title given to one of the king's sons, like the Viceroy of Arnor. The title of 'Viceroy' is given to the various governors of provinces, e.g. Viceroy of Lithlad, etc.

F.A. 580 – A new province is formed from the former province of Dorwinion and the coastal areas around the Sea of Rhûn. The former kingdom of Lithlad also becomes a province of the Reunited Kingdom. This is all part of a reorganisation of the machinery of government done at this time.

ANÁRION III (630-636)

Anárion III succeeded to the throne when he was young because his father did not have children until very late in life. Anárion died without an heir.

F.A. 636 – Anárion III, the last legitimate king of House Telcontar (founded by Elessar I) dies without an heir defending Ramba-Din (the former Cirth Ungol) from orcs. A civil War of Succession (known as the First Civil War) results which lasts for several years and serves to drain the kingdom of resources. At this time the takeover of



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the former independent Kingdom of Lithlad resulted in increasing orc raids in Mordor, culminating in the attack on Ramba-Din. The 'Great Peace' ends with the outbreak of the War of Succession.

BELEG II (636-675)

Although Beleg II was the victor in the Civil War of Succession, his rule was never recognized fully by certain areas loyal to other contenders for the throne, so most of the first half of his reign was spent in legitimizing his reign and defeating rivals. He spent most of the second half of his reign trying to control (without success) his two sons, the eldest (Arbeleth) did not even observe the full mourning period before declaring himself the High King.

ARBELETH I (675 -692)

His reign was never certain due to problems with his younger brother Beleg, and he was murdered in suspicious circumstances.

F.A. 675 – The death of the High King Beleg II sees the younger son (Beleg) declare war on his older brother (Arbeleth I), the Reunited Kingdom is engulfed in civil war, known as the Second Civil War by loremasters. During this war the fortress of Helm's Deep is finally successfully taken by troops of the High King, but the fortress is irretrievably damaged.

F.A. 683 Beleg loses the conflict with his brother, and is exiled to the Isles of the Dead that Live.

F.A. 692 High King Arbeleth I & all his sons are murdered in suspicious circumstances. No proof is found that Beleg II is behind the murders, but his claim to the throne is not accepted by many provinces, so another civil war erupts, known as the Third Civil War. Many provinces declare independence from the Reunited Kingdom. *I have left open for GM's to decide who is behind the murders.*

REIGN OF BELEG II 'THE USURPER' (692-700)

Beleg II's reign is not officially recog-

nized in the records of the Reunited Kingdom, which is why he is not considered the eleventh High King. His reign was one of civil war, and Eldarion Arbeleth's nephew becomes the focus of rebellion against him.

F.A. 697 – The turning point of the Third Civil War, when mercenary troops under Beleg's control sack Osgiliath and the *palantír* is lost again. From this time support swings away from Beleg towards Eldarion, the nephew of Arbeleth I.

ELDARION II (700 -783)

The decline of the Reunited Kingdom continues despite the attempts made during Eldarion's reign to reverse the damage done in the previous reigns, as nearly fifty years of war meant that areas were depopulated, trade had collapsed and there was little central control of government, most local lords ruled with little interference. He changed his name as a way of trying to hearken back to 'better' times; in itself a comment on what was happening during his reign.

F.A. 700 – One of Eldarion's first acts as High King was to end the tradition of the king's sons governing provinces, instead the sons were required to stay at Court. *This was done to prevent rebellions occurring in the provinces led by the King's relatives (as in the previous century), but it had the unforeseen affect of distancing the Royal Court from the provinces, and thus furthered the transition towards growing local autonomy.*

F.A. 710 – Northern capital moved back to Annúminas as Osgiliath gradually becomes ruined again. *This was initially just a temporary measure on the part of Eldarion II, but subsequent events mitigated against Osgiliath being made prosperous again.*

F.A. 752 – The Current Viceroy of Gondor names a new king at Minas Mallor despite Eldarion II still reigning, he puts down the rebellion after a few years (in 756). *The rebellion itself is a comment on the growing separation between North & South, as King Eldarion II was seen as spending too much time in the North.*

ELESSAR II (783-921)

Although Elessar II's reign is long, it is not peaceful as there are continuous problems in various areas, but worse is the growing decline both militarily and in other ways of the Reunited Kingdom. By the end of Elessar II's reign the central court had become isolated from the outer areas, and many nobles were able to rule virtually autonomously, a progression from the previous reign.

F.A. 862 The Kingdom of Adunabar (Mordor, Ithilien and the Emyrn Muil) is founded after a rebellion by the younger brother of King Elessar II with the new kingdom using the Star of Earendil as its symbol. *This kingdom is a focus for any discontent with the Reunited Kingdom, and a secret Shadow Cult arises, and grows more influential in this area. The Kingdom of Adunabar includes the old Kingdom of Lithlad, and the former capital of Elessardil is now renamed Adunabar.*

ARBELETH II (921-977) THE LAST HIGH KING

The problems that plagued Elessar II's reign continued and worsened under King Arbeleth II, but having grown up at court (see F.A. 700 above) he was completely unaware of any discontent with his rule. Helinon was simply another border noble who saw a chance for more power and seized it. During Arbeleth II's reign there is a growth of rivalries between border lords and increased corruption at Court, but Arbeleth does not notice the growing discontent with his rule, especially in the South as Arbeleth spends most of his time in the north.

F.A. 970 – Helinon, the son of the current Viceroy of the South Kingdom, declares his intention to become High King.



F.A. 976 – A fleet from the South under Helinon invades the area formerly called Eriador, all the lands are overrun (including the Shire) up to the Baranduin, and Dunland up to the Misty Mtns. This event is known generally within this area as ‘[The Southron Invasion](#)’. Helinon has himself crowned High King as Arbalad I, the ‘heir’ to King Arbeleth II, but later in the year the Southern forces are finally defeated by King Arbeleth II in alliance with Rohan at the [Battle of the Gap of Rohan](#), although the current High King Arbeleth II dies. Arbalad being defeated, he flees to Harad and founds a new realm in Amomag. A new king for Arnor is crowned at Annúminas. [Arnor decides to be independent as the invasion of Eriador is blamed on the kingdom being too large, thus the Reunited Kingdom is officially split \(from the beginning of 977\) into the old realms of Arnor & Gondor. The Battle at the Gap of Rohan sees Rohan suffer grievous losses, and the current king of Rohan declares the Ancient Agreement between the two nations to be finished as a result, with growing distrust between the Rohirrim and the Dúnedain.](#)

The Kingdoms Divided

With the Reunited Kingdom having ended, times get tougher for the inhabitants of North Western Middle-earth. There is also a general collapse of trade and contacts, especially between the North and South Kingdoms, and it is from this time that the decline in other non human races becomes more noticeable.

F.A. 990 – ‘Girdle of the Shire’ is created with the aid of Elven magic. *This is due to the suffering experienced during and following the invasion in 976. From this time the hobbits of the Shire also police their boundaries more, which shrink back to the original boundaries of the Shire Grant in order for the Girdle to be effective (thus no Westmarch anymore).*⁷

c. Beginning of the new Millennium – Rise of ‘[Lassi-lore](#)’ (tarot cards) in the North and ‘[Stone-lore](#)’ (Rune-stones) in the South, common-folk versions of [The Wisdom of Life](#) as ways of dealing with increasingly harsher times. [The Wisdom of Life](#) is taught by the Wise to the upper classes, from the teachings

of Rómendil. [Also because times were harsh and one millennium was ending, there is also an upsurge in popularity of pursuits such as magic and the monastic way of life, as life itself was increasingly seen as ‘corrupt’.](#)

F.A. 997 – A Fire-drake invades the north around Esgaroth. The following year some of the Beornings found a colony in the Misty Mountains with the aid of the Great Eagles. [This is because the Fire-drake had caused much devastation and loss of life amongst the Beornings, but the Great Eagles came to their aid in driving the Fire-drake away.](#)⁸

c.F.A. 999-1003 – [The Red Death](#), a plague that kills over a quarter of the population, comes from Mordor. The plague is so named as victim’s break out in red rashes. [The main garrisons in Mordor are left unguarded due to the shortage of troops. Ramba-Din \(Cirith Ungol\) is soon reoccupied by orcs, and travel into Nurn from Ithilien becomes increasingly hazardous. Elsewhere the plague’s main impact is to create labour shortages everywhere and the prices of many goods rise. There is a large variety of attempts to find cures, including magic, alchemy etc., and this also reinforces the millennial viewpoints.](#)

c.F.A. 1001 – [The Brotherhood](#), a monastic society is founded during the Red Death, and becomes popular as many people decide to renounce normal ways of living. The order of the Druids is also founded around the same time. [Monks, druids and the growth of temples all represent the search for ways to combat the plague or to find out why things are so bad.](#)

F.A. 1006 – A female prophet goes around claiming to have cured people of the Red Death, and is a follower of the Vala Estë. After her death a religious movement called the Esbeni (‘followers of Este’) is founded by her followers, with temples founded to all the Valar, especially Estë.

F. A. 1st century 2nd millennium – [During this time the military decline of both Gondor and Arnor continues, and certain trade routes become dangerous, such as the East Road to Relmether, as Easterlings are able to raid without fear](#)

[of reprisals. Also the Easterlings at this time have improved military tactics, due to the many years in proximity to the forces of the Reunited Kingdom.](#)

F.A. 1046 – Szrel-Kain sacked by Easterling tribes led by a charismatic new leader named Arvedis Khalban, who welds the tribes into a nation. The victorious chieftain declares himself Emperor Arvedis I, and claims the throne of the Reunited Kingdom.

F.A. 1052 – Emperor Arvedis and his Easterling warriors overrun all the lands up to the East Bank of the Anduin. His empire stretches from the Anduin in the West to Relmether in the East, and from Khand in the South to Northern Rhovanion.

F.A. 1054 -1056 – [The Eastern War](#) between Gondor and the new Easterling Empire, with Gondor only victorious at the [Battle of Dagorlad](#) (1056) with the aid of rebels in the newly conquered areas such as Dorwinion. Arnor refuses to send troops to the aid of Gondor, further deepening the distrust between the two kingdoms. [In actual fact, Gondor only succeeded at the Battle of Dagorlad and subsequently by tacitly recognizing Emperor Arvedis’ legitimacy in giving him a Dúnanadan princess in marriage, but Emperor Arvedis died before he could make further claims. His empire dissolved almost as rapidly as it formed, as his sons squabbled over the succession.](#)

c.F.A. 1057 – Minas Kuru is a tower founded by wizards (perhaps one of the legendary blue wizards Alatar or Pallando) at the mouth of the Celduin river on the Sea of Rhûn, where many new settlements are founded with the collapse of the Empire.

c. Early 11th century – Dunlendings start raiding in Western Rohan again. [As with the Easterlings, there is now little fear of reprisals. Rohan and Gondor also become estranged during this time. This actually dated back to the Battle of the Gap and the heavy Rohirrim losses, but subsequent events had increased the separation.](#)

F.A. 1060 -1062 – Rohan erects a defensive wall in the Gap of Rohan to guard against Dunland, on the east bank of the Isen.⁹

- c. late 11th century – Rivendell becomes gradually abandoned and ruined, but remains hidden.
- c. F.A. 1060 – Acharn Nel, a fortress at the foot of the Mountains of Shadow in Western Khand becomes a focus for evil (known as the abode of ‘The Dread Lord’), and the lord manages to influence the chief Haradrim tribe into declaring war with Gondor (F.A.1062), known as the Southern War. At about the same time, Angmar is resurrected (under The Wraith Lord) and becomes a threat to Arnor. Both of these evil lords are actually servants of Herumor, still secretly residing in Mordor.
- F.A. 1065 – Gondor becomes a republic, under The Repudiation of Kings, as the Declaration becomes known. This is due to dissatisfaction with the recent kings of Gondor, who were seen (with some justification) as corrupt and self-serving, especially in regards of the conduct of the war with the Haradrim.
- F.A. 1066 – Conscription is introduced in Gondor, the Army becomes the National Army, the Navy the National Navy etc. The war with Harad continues, but now Gondor starts winning.
- F.A. 1060-70 – ‘Jaeg’s Wall’, a series of defensive forts, is built by Arnor (in honour of Jaeg I, the king of Arnor) to defend the Northern frontier from attacks.
- F.A. 1067-1072 – Gondor conquers much of the Harad area, and many tribes are forced to submit. Slavery is made legal in Gondor (1072). This critical decision was originally done to appease the allied Harad tribes who aided Gondor (who customarily sold their enemies as slaves), but also fitted with the Dûnedain’s view of themselves as superior.
- F.A. 1075 – Gondor declares war on Dunland, known as ‘The Dunnish War’, and Dunland becomes part of Gondor, with a massive expansion in slavery. Some of these slaves are Rohirrim (which was illegal) but no action is taken despite protests from Rohan, further antagonising the two countries. Ironically the war was initially waged to appease Rohan (and merchants concerned at the dangers of the Road), but as in other areas at this time, the conduct of the war was cruel and harsh. Many Dunlendings simply retreat into the hills and mountains to conduct guerrilla warfare from this time.
- F.A. 1088 – Invasion of the Northlands by the forces of Angmar, called The North Invasion. Jaeg’s Wall proves unsuccessful, and Arnor is dissolved, with Arthedain re-established. The invasion is beaten back, but Angmar itself remains a threat. The main problem in the North is that there is just not enough population to enable the kingdom of Arnor to continue.
- c. early 12th century – The Cult of Mûlker¹⁰ is secretly re-established, with the preaching for the Dûnedain all about re-establishing ancient power & might, whilst in the South priests preach resistance to the Dunedain and recovery of ‘traditional’ Southron virtues. The Cult is most successful amongst discontented nobles and merchants. The Cult had in fact been in existence in Adumar for much longer, but it now becomes more widespread.
- F.A. 1170 -1178 – Rebel Harad tribes and discontented Dûnadan nobles initiate a new Civil War, the Fourth Civil War (although only in Gondor), known generally as ‘The War’. *This Civil War is actually between two factions: pro-monarchists or ‘Monarchists’ and anti-slavery, vs. Republic and pro-slavery faction, known as ‘Republicans’.* After the Battle of the River was fought in and around Osgiliath in 1175, the fortunes of the conflict turned towards one of the few surviving heirs of the Gondor kings as his personality and kingship came to the fore, and he (according to accounts) had the Hands of a Healer, and he was crowned King of Gondor as Tarondor II. *The main legacy of the war was that Osgiliath was damaged beyond repair, so the capital was moved to Minas Mallor, and there was still underlying bitterness towards some of the more recalcitrant Dûnadan nobility, many of whom were secretly Republican.*
- F. A. 1179-1180 – These years are spent in troop recruiting and movements of troops by Tarondor as part of quelling all resistance to his rule, and also to secure Harondor and the Harnen river.
- F.A. 1182 – Battle of the Poros River between Gondor and the Army of the Dread Lord, who was regarded as the main agent of resistance to Tarondor’s rule. Gondor is victorious.
- F. A. 1184 – Invasion of Khand and the Siege of Acharn Nel, the fortress of the Dread Lord, who is defeated but disappears. A Peace Treaty is agreed between Khand and Gondor. *The Dread Lord is in fact a servant of Herumor (the real Enemy), and probably joins him in Mordor at this time.*
- F.A. 1185 – As part of the settlement to end the conflicts, trade treaties are also agreed between Gondor and Harad, and also with Umbar.
- F.A. 1187 – King Tarondor II is married amid much pomp and celebration early in the year, and these celebrations are dwarfed by the birth of a son, the nation spends a week in celebration. In the years following the end of hostilities, Tarondor as part of trying to renew the kingdom of Gondor sent out many officials to investigate all areas of the kingdom, one was sent to Mordor but his report came to the king at the time of the celebrations so was largely forgotten. In his report this official makes mention of a ‘rumored secret fortress of evil’ in Mordor. Tarondor did act on the report in some areas by renewing the border garrisons of Mordor at this time.
- F.A. 1189-90 – The Long Winter – the land is gripped by a very severe winter and there is much suffering and loss of life, especially in the North. King Tarondor sends aid to the North and re-establishes contact with Arthedain, although this is by sea rather than by land, as the South Road is by this time too dangerous, and neither Gondor nor Arthedain could spare troops for patrols.
- F. A. 1197 – Military reforms of Gondor’s troops are put through in this year, as part of a general attempt to reform and streamline the administration of the kingdom. *However, one result of these reforms was that areas with only skeletal garrisons were closed as they were deemed too costly to continue maintaining, and many garrisons were merged into more central ones. An unforeseen result was that many Mor-*

dor garrisons were closed as a result, and after ten years the rumours of evil were forgotten.

- F.A. 1200 – Orcs multiply again in Angmar, Mordor and the Misty Mountains and start attacking travellers from this time. **In Mordor this is connected to the military reforms made a few years earlier.**
- F.A. 1209 – The whole land suffers from a bad harvest. **Due to a blight on crops sent from Mordor.**
- F.A. 1210 – As a result of the bad harvest the previous year, the land is gripped by famine, particularly bad in the North. Later in the year an uprising of peasants in Nurn is quelled only with some force by Kingdom troops, as the forces generally overseeing the area prove inadequate. The uprising is encouraged by promises made by a mysterious personage known to the poor peasants as **The Redeemer**. Warrants are issued for his arrest but he is never found. **The Redeemer is a guise of Camling, one of Herumor's servants. The brutal suppression of the peasants continues to be a problem for Gondor and creates a lot of resentment in Nurn.**
- F.A. 1215 – A horse plague kills a large proportion of horses throughout Middle-earth. A variant of this, known as the **Sneezing Sickness**, also kills some 10% of people, the Rohirrim and other 'horse-folk' being the worst hit. **This plague comes from Mordor and is a tactic aimed at reducing the cavalry of the Free Peoples. The cost of horses becomes prohibitive for many, and all other forms of transport also rise in price.**
- F.A. 1216 – A State funeral is held for the King's mother, who dies in this year of the Sneezing Sickness, and was much admired as a paragon of womanly virtue.
- F.A. 1217 – Umbar breaks the trade treaty with Gondor. **This is due to the disputed customs at the crossings of the Harnen river, always a major problem of demarcation.**
- Two of the main noble houses of Gondor become involved in a major feud, after the conduct of a duel between the

sons of the houses becomes quite violent. **One of the sons is a secret Cult member and Republican.**

A member of the ruling oligarchy in Umbar arrives in Minas Mallor on a diplomatic visit, in an attempt to resolve differences between the two nations. **His visit is not a success as the Umbar diplomat is treated badly during his visit, an intentional ploy by the Enemy.**

- F.A. 1218 – A comet is seen in the skies for several months during this year and is seen as a bad omen by many. This year is also memorable for raids from pirates, either Umbar corsairs or others, as in this year the raids become more frequent, larger in scope and even seem strategic. **Umbar was not 'directly' behind these raids until this year.**

The human wizard Thucedro VI, the head of the Order based at Orthanc, claims to have made a major magical breakthrough in reducing the wearying affects of using magic. **This breakthrough is indeed true and occurs at the same time as the comet's appearance, but the breakthrough means using Sorcery and the 'Morgothian' element, and is thus more corrupting. The breakthrough was in fact discovered with some assistance from Enemy sources, including finding Saruman's secret room in Orthanc. Thucedro himself becomes a secret servant of the Enemy from this time, and his secret is in the form of a magical link or channel to Herumor in Mordor.**

The Grand Master of The Brotherhood, the Order of Monks, has to resign in disgrace after being discovered in a compromising position by the King. In the following year (1219), the King orders a review of the Order, and many monks are dismissed. A new Grand Master is appointed who comes from the monastery in Udûn. **This scandal is set up by the Enemy as a way of putting his servants into important posts in the Brotherhood.**

- F.A. 1219 – The 'Hooded Wanderer' comes to Minas Mallor for the first time, and according to rumour speaks to the King. Who he is a mystery, al-

though many whisper that the Wanderer is a Wizard. An earthquake shakes the region although its effects are only felt in the South, and it is rumoured to centre in Mordor. The dwarven mining colony of Krath Zabar in the Mountains of Shadow is destroyed, although there is only minor loss of life. **This earthquake is the first failed attempt by the Enemy to harness Mount Doom.**

Later in the year the Anduin river rises in flood, the worst in living memory. Although loss of life is minimal, there is much loss of property and displacement of people, so a new temporary refugee town is set up outside Minas Mallor. **The river flood is a delayed result of the earthquake.** This year and the next sees much travelling as a result, both of dwarves and other folk having to find new homes.

- F.A. 1220 – In the beginning of the year the land suffers through a cold winter, although not as bad as the Long Winter. A terrible accident in Minas Mallor is caused by a runaway wagon cart that manages to crush and kill many people while descending the steep streets of the city.¹¹
- F.A. 1223 – The works of the Book Hall in Minas Mallor are taken to Dol Amroth, and the Book Hall of Annûminas is destroyed by fire.

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Notes

- 1 See the section on sources for a detailed listing of the publications that served as inspiration
- 2 An example is Rivendell, which I see as initially a centre of healing and learning in the early Fourth Age, but by the time of my campaign is a (secret) deserted ruin.
- 3 My campaign is titled "The Return of the Shadow" and I hope to submit instalments for future articles. The key event for the campaign is F.A. 1223, mentioned in "The Tresco Manuscript" as when the library in Annúminas burned to the ground, which I decided made a good time for the campaign to be placed around. As *The Tresco Manuscript* did not explain the event of the burning of the library, I decided this could be explained as an action of the Enemy's.
- 4 I liked the idea that Maglor survived (since according to Tolkien he wandered off, but on the other hand I have always wondered, how did Maglor's Lament become more widely known; unless he did return? I also thought that Maglor returning would give a focus (along with Glorfindel, who also stayed) for the few Noldor still in Middle-earth.
- 5 I have left it up to GM's to decide where he came from, but I strongly suggest that he was trained in Rivendell, as this is one of the first targets of his invasion force during The Northern Scare.
- 6 See *The Farbanks Folios* for more on running an adventure at this time.
- 7 As to the Girdle's powers, I see it as an extension of what was already there at Perilussi (see ICE's *The Shire*), but this is up to each GM to decide.
- 8 As to why the Fire-drake invaded, that is up to the GM, the important point here is that militarily there were no garrisons to stop the drake.
- 9 Like the Great Wall of China, the wall is only heavily fortified and guarded at certain points, such as the Fords of Isen area.
- 10 This was the name for the Númenórean cult that worshipped Morgoth founded by Sauron.
- 11 Start of my campaign in this year, from this point on the PC's will be involved.



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Religion in Angmar

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The long promised article about the religious matters in Angmar has now become reality. It is intended to supplement the article in Other Minds, Issue 7 and provide another detail for games set during the Northern wars in Eriador.



Introduction

This essay deals with the supposed religious aspects within Angmar. All references to the ICE sourcebook *Angmar* are to its 2nd ed. Version (see ‘Sources’ for bibliographic details).

As already outlined in the ‘The Angmarrim’ (*Other Minds, Issue 7*), it is justifiable to view Angmar as a multi-ethnic society¹: Various indigenous edainic people and a number of immigrating Easterling people all contributed to the roots of the later Angmarrim. Strangely though, all these people seem soon to share a common religion despite their diverse cultural roots. The matter of religion has already been addressed to in ICE's *Angmar*,² but as so often with ICE modules, the result is flawed. In short, the supposed Dark Religion with overt worship of Sauron Returned (sic!) coupled with a monastic system based on Tibetan models is rather unsuitable for the task. See *Other Hands*, Issue 12 pp.53-55 for a more detailed review of this MERP module and its religious aspects.

Please note that the present essay cannot be comprehensive on all aspects of religion within Angmar. Especially details on buildings, power structures, number of adherents, organization of orders plus their locations etc. are outside the scope of this article, but can be added in future *Other Minds* articles. One important aspect needs to be noted though: **In Angmar, all magic is exclusively religiously sanctioned**, thereby making any non-clerical user of magic automatically a criminal.

This essay strives to create a more believable overall religious structure for Angmar. The pantheon, deities and their respective churches in this article have been inspired by the old Columbia Games’ *HårnWorld* module *Gods of Hårn/Hårnmaster Religion* (1st and 2nd ed. respectively).³

Important Note: The solutions and explanations in this essay do not claim to be the only and “right” interpretation. I am open to any discussion on diverging interpretations as long as these are based on a close scrutiny of the topics involved.

Structure

The essay is divided into the following major sections:

1. Religion in ICE’s Angmar
2. Outline and premise of Angmarean Pantheon
3. The Official Pantheon of Angmar
4. The Churches in everyday life
5. Other attitudes towards the Angmarean Pantheon
6. Integration of existing NPC’s into the new religious system

Terminology

Some terms are used in this treatise which are not familiar to everyone, and for better understanding they will be explained briefly here. All of these names are of the Common Speech (Westron); a descendant of old Adúnaic and spoken by many people in the Northwest.

Lutharanda – the world of the various gods.

Here they have their home domains and strongholds. It is also the place where loyal followers of the respective gods are believed to come after their mortal death, to serve them for eternity.

Kirnâtha – the whole of creation. Encompasses both Middle-earth and Lutharanda

¹ From about T.A. 1260 to 1400.

² 2nd ed. p. 29-31; similar passages could readily be found in its predecessors *Angmar – Land of the Witch-king* (1982) and *Empire of the Witch-king* (1989).

³ Or the 2nd ed. *Hårnmaster Religion*. Those people who are interested in more details (e.g. clerical rules, ranks, internal politics of churches etc.) of the original Hårn products (and the original setting) might take a look at the aforementioned product(s) or the current developments from Kélestia Productions, the new holder of the Hårn brand.

Religion in ICE's *Angmar*

As already noted, the description of Angmarean religion that has been given in ICE's publication remains very unsatisfactory. The most obvious problems are:

- *The Cult of the Dark Lord*: It is surmised that the Angmareans worship the Necromancer of Dol Guldur as the Lord of the Dark, which is in direct contradiction of Tolkien's design that, at the time of Angmar's existence, Sauron avoided every possibility of anything suggesting his return:

c. 1100 The Wise (the Istari and the chief Eldar) discover that an evil power has made a stronghold at Dol Guldur. It is thought to be one of the Nazgûl.

LotR.Appendix B

For at last they perceived that some single power and will was directing the assault from many quarters upon the survivors of Númenor.

LotR.Appendix A

2060 The power of Dol Guldur grows. The Wise fear that it may be Sauron taking shape again.

LotR.Appendix B

Especially the last statement that even the Wise were only **beginning** to consider a return of Sauron in the 20th century of the Third Age is clear evidence that a widely-preached sauronic return centuries before this date is hardly convincing.

By openly naming the Necromancer as Sauron *Redivivus*, Angmar's priests would surely 'blow the cover' that Sauron so carefully created to avoid the attention of his still-powerful enemies while he was still relatively vulnerable. For a late-Third Age setting (i.e. post-T.A. 2850), the depiction in *Angmar* would be suitable, as by this time Sauron is known to have returned – or has already declared himself openly as Master of Middle-earth. For a mid-Third Age setting however, it is fatally flawed.

- *The presentation of religion*: One gets the impression that the whole Angmarean population is being indoctrinated by this single evil cult, gladly following its preachings. This fosters the image of a realm in which everyone down to the last farmer is a religious fanatic who sees the destruction of the Dúnedain as their only goal in life. The (rather short) description of Angmarean religion is unsatisfactory, since there is no believable development how these diverse cultures came to believe into it. And a cult that receives only lip service from its adherents does not have the power to motivate the people of a whole realm for a century-long conflict against a supposed "evil" enemy.

In my opinion a pantheon of gods that undergoes a development and shift of focus during Angmar's existence is far more suited to Sauron's and the Witch-king's needs than the stereotype of an all-powerful single evil entity and artificial evil religion presented in ICE's *Angmar*. This achieves two goals:

- First, such a polytheistic approach (without a single, all-powerful evil god) would not overly alert Sauron's ancient enemies prematurely, since such a "primitive" religious outlook is absolutely normal for the "unenlightened" men of Middle-earth who have no correct knowledge of the Valar and Eru.
- Second, it takes into consideration the diverse ethnic background of the Angmarrim by incorporating major elements of the original beliefs of the various ethnicities. In this way everyone can identify himself with part of the official pantheon. Over time these gods become the original gods of the Angmarrim.

Premise and Outline of the Pantheon

Overview

In the first half of the thirteenth century the Lord of the Nazgûl was tasked by his master to establish a realm in Eriador with the purpose of destroying the northern Dúnedain. Having studied the situation, he recognized that the inhabitants of north-eastern Eriador alone were neither numerous nor powerful enough to fulfill this task. Therefore more people were needed, with Rhovanion as the most likely source of this manpower.

When Sauron began to plan the destruction of his enemies, the successor states of Arnor were his primary targets since the northern Dúnedain were disunited and fewer in numbers than their cousins in Gondor. The prospective new realm of the Nazgûl chief (northeast of Arnor, in a relatively inhospitable area of Eriador) was not very densely populated compared to Arthedain or Cardolan. Therefore, acknowledging the necessity for immigration to fill the ranks of both the civilian population and the army, it was also recognized that all these diverse ethnicities would need a common bracket in order to better control them, avoid religious friction among them and give his realm a unifying base. A new, common set of religious beliefs was deemed a very good denominator for a people.² Eventually a plan to set the foundations for this new, unified pantheon of gods was prepared.

In the Second Age Sauron had learned much about the religious beliefs of all the men of Middle-earth, both of those within the Númenórean sphere of influence and those beyond it. As it turned out, at the core of almost all mannish religion was an image of the Valar, most often made only of partial understanding and heavily distorted.³ Many of the early 'gods' of man were servants of Morgoth who impersonated the Valar and therefore influenced their image in these mannish communities in a way supporting Morgoth's goals.

On this foundation the Nazgûl lord could build his plan. Due to the aforementioned sources of the religion among igno-

¹ GM Info: And this incorporation of several ethnic beliefs was deliberately designed into the book that formed the basis of the pantheon.

² At least in the same set of gods. Of course not all are expected to revere the same god.

³ In modern terms, such a phenomenon is called 'syncretism'.

rant men, the same gods showed similar faces, even though they were called by different names in many languages and differed in details.

Beside the immediate tactical goal of creating a unifying belief for the future realm of Angmar, both Sauron and his servant had more goals in mind.

- On the strategic level they were careful to design this religion in such a way, that outside Angmar it would not be recognized by the Wise as a tool of the Shadow, but seen only as a phenomenon of un-enlightened men.
- On the philosophical level, this tailor-made religious system also worked towards the further alienation of men from the worship of the one true god Eru by denying his existence and defining other deities as being worthy of worship. This development has of course already begun back in the First Age when Melkor deceived the newly-wakened men; causing the 'First Fall of Man' alluded to by Tolkien:

The Downfall [of Númenor] is partly the result of an inner weakness in Men – consequent, if you will, upon the first Fall (unrecorded in these tales), repented but not finally healed.
Letters, #131 (probably in 1951)

This notion of Eru being the only one worthy or worship is highlighted in the following passage:

The Eldar and the Númenóreans believed in The One, the true God, and held worship of any other person an abomination. **Letters, #183 (1956, notes to W.H. Auden's review of The Lord of the Rings)**

The – for Dúnedain and Eldar – strange concept of a multitude of planes of existence, of which Middle-earth (called 'Lutharanda') is the mortal one, is a way to explain the experience or traditions that there are things invisible to man. The 'Wraith world' as we know it from Tolkien's writings (see the article on this theme in *Other Minds, Issue 7*) is said to be a

small part of the plane of the gods that is overlapping with the mortal one and therefore not readily accessible to mortals.

Overall, the Angmarean Pantheon is carefully designed **not** to represent the Dark Religion cliché for the reasons mentioned above, but it does not ignore the existence of evil entities either, thereby giving it real credibility and a believable cover.

The first steps were of a preliminary nature. A "normal" event was necessary to introduce a new religious system into Eriador. The disaster of Cameth Brin in T. A. 1235, when Celervellon, then king of Cardolan, perished alongside most of his army and lords in a doomed attempt to decisively defeat Rhudaur was the perfect opportunity. It wreaked chaos and havoc especially in Cardolan and the troubles of the time made the establishment of such a new belief much more easy.

For the ease of reading, here follows a table of the names of the Angmarean gods, together with their closest Vala/Maia equivalents alongside comments where necessary.

Angmarean god	Respective Ainu(r)	Comments
Azîra	Sauron	Warlike, unscrupulous and aggressive God of War
Hambasi	Yavanna	Gentle, forgiving Goddess of Growth and Healing
Manwâ	Manwe/Irmo	Pleasant, "fey" God of Dreams, Patron of the non-mannish races
Mazaralda	Melkor/Morgoth	Chaotic, destructive God of Disorder. Resembles Morgoth
Nînur	Vána/Nessa	Luxurious, selfish Goddess of Opulence and Plenty
Phanurinduk	Aulë	Enigmatic and mysterious God of Creation
Sanagathiis	Tulkas/Oromë	Warlike but honest God of War
Thamba	Mandos/Sauron	Secretive, cold and unforgiving God of Death
Vâra	Varda	Honourable, chivalrous and just Goddess of War
Zaldûni	Mandos/Vairë	Introvert God of Knowledge and lore



Angarnas the Prophet

In T.A. 1213 the man who would be known to history as Angarnas the Prophet, one of the founders of Angmar, was born the heir of a lord of Cardolan, and given the name Anglór. His father's *hírdor* (barony) of Eredoriath was the north-easternmost part of the kingdom, bordering both Rhudaur and Arthedain, and was always at the forefront of every conflict in the region. When King Celervellon fell at the siege of Cameth Brin, the repercussions fell first and hardest upon Eredoriath.

Anglór's father Amranír was an able leader, but even he was doomed when Celervellon's camp was overrun and he and many of his fellow lords were killed by the orcish forces of the Misty Mountains.

It fell to the 22 year old Anglór to stabilize his barony as best as possible, but the massive loss of skilled officers and soldiers at Cameth Brin proved to be fatal. Although he proved to be an exceptional leader, he was only able to – barely – hold the most important castles and towns in

1 See ICE's *Arnor: The People*, p. 38

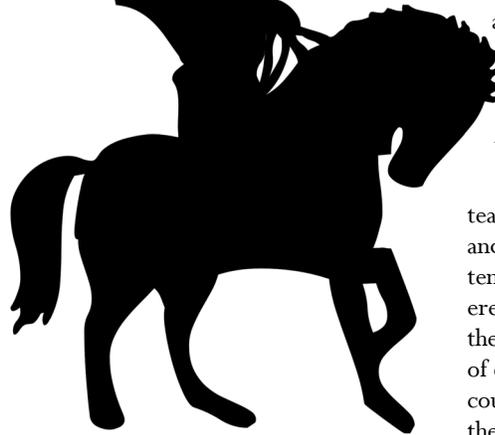
Eredoriath, while the vast majority of the countryside was scourged by several parties. First came the victorious orcs and their Rhudaurian allies and later the various factions and mercenaries which hoped to gain as much profit (or political influence) as possible. Thus for all his leadership and skill, he could only maintain a fragile semblance of normalcy in the region. Beyond the reach of his overstretched troops, unpredictable chaos reigned, sometimes in the form of marauding and leaderless soldiers, “official” incursions by Rhudaurian forces or orcish raids, or sometimes even several of these at once. It was in one of the latter occasions, that in T.A. 1239 some unscrupulous mercenaries allied themselves with orcish marauders and laid siege to Anglór in his capital. This time he was not able to prepare fully, having sent a large force out to deal with another threat. The siege was short and brutal.

Though his capital never fell, the combination of Anglór’s losses and the deprivations of the land were such that he could no longer control the territory. Rather than abandon any part of it, he led his remaining force about the greater region as an itinerant company, protecting his people wherever possible and wreaking vengeance on any raiders who did not swiftly leave.

This company of veteran warriors came to be known as the ‘*Anglórions*’ and was among the most feared in Eriador for its ferocity and skill in combat.

His upbringing as a pragmatic lord in a land where the Dúnedain were few, coupled with the experience of the chaotic years after the Cameth Brin disaster, led the young man to some views quite uncommon for the Faithful. He concluded that the traditional Dúnadan organization of society with a clear distinction based on ethnicity (Dúnadan vs. non-Dúnadan) and the rather abstract religious-philosophical teachings about a God outside of the world and even whose powerful servants were remote from Middle-earth were not helpful for the desperate situation in which Cardolan now found itself. He began to think of a way in which all men might be united by a single set of beliefs that made no distinctions based on birth, but only on a person’s own abilities and moral standards.

One of Anglór’s lieutenants named Gudrath was a man of ambition, which had brought him to the attention of a stranger who introduced him to powerful knowledge and easily swayed his loyalties. He knew about plans to establish a powerful realm in the north of Eriador and the



prospect of gaining a powerful position there easily silenced any scruples he might have concerning his loyalty to his lord Anglór. After he heard of his lord’s thoughts of introducing new beliefs, he saw a chance to further his new lord’s goals. He arranged for Anglór to uncover some hints about an already existing ancient tome of lore that dealt with exactly this theme. Immediately Anglór prepared a party to retrieve this tome from its resting place in Rhovanion. He tasked Gudrath with the leadership of the *Anglórions* while he himself was absent on the quest for the tome. The quest to retrieve this treasure started in T.A. 1241 and after many perils Anglór returned safely with the tome in the following year. Unbeknownst to Anglór, this tome was no collection of genuine beliefs, but a compilation carefully set-up by Sauron and the Lord of the Nazgûl in line with their own designs.

This tome, the ‘*Book of the Pantheon*’, strengthened Anglór’s conviction that a universal belief for all men was possible. He began to preach its contents in Cardolan, thus becoming a kind of self-proclaimed prophet as well as an able military commander respected – especially in war-torn eastern Cardolan – as a benefactor in a time when almost all leaders thought only of personal profit. Many people had lost their faith in the Dúnadan

teaching of the Valar and Eru, and quite a lot found new hope in the preachings of Anglór.

The other *hiri* of Cardolan, embattled on their borders and vying for power amongst themselves, paid little heed to their neighbour’s ‘lunatic preaching hobby’. Such times of upheaval and disaster saw many prophets and strange people appear (and vanish again), and Anglór spoke most often for Vâra and Ham-basi, which could easily be seen as mere eccentric misinterpretations of the *valier*, Varda and Yavanna.

This lack of concern changed when his teachings earned him a larger following and increased his military and political potential. In just two years Eredoriath recovered considerably, and it seemed that with the spread of the new belief, the incursions of evil creatures gradually lessened. Of course this was intentionally directed by the (future) Witch-king to support his slowly ripening plans. In any case, the development alarmed the other lords as Anglór seemed to grow ever more powerful and soon might endanger their positions.

Thus both his political and military success and the new belief brought him into serious conflict with the more traditional Cardolani *hiri* as well as Arthedain that saw all such ideas as a breach of the Faithful philosophy and the first step towards worship of false gods (like the Dark Religion of old). Slowly they began to align themselves against his new system, believing this to be in their common interest – despite their other differences.

Finally, in T.A. 1249 Anglór’s enemies united in a campaign against his heartland of the old Híraith Eredoriath and neighbouring parts of Faerdor to rid themselves of him once and for all. Most only saw him as a dangerous political rival, but a few participated out of a genuine conviction that he had fallen from grace. Having foreseen this development, Anglór had already made contacts in the North to have a possible area to retreat to. In northern Rhudaur and southern (soon to be) Angmar, he found local people and lords willing to hear to his teachings – especially because it meant opposition and possible revenge on the despised Dúnedain. When the attack came, Anglór delayed the advance of his enemies for a long time with

masterful generalship while ordering the evacuation of his people into the prepared retreats in the North. When this was complete, he and the remnants of his forces withdrew as well. The other Dúnedain were content with the removal of a strong rival from Cardolan. After the election of Tarcil as the new King of Cardolan at the Council of Metraith in T.A. 1255, and the stabilization of the realm that followed, the episode in Eredoriath was soon forgotten by most.

Utterly appalled that his fellow Dúnedain could be so ruled by political envy that they would exterminate a region recovering from a decade of trauma, Anglór made a vow forsaking his ties to them and took the name Angarnas in the Common Speech from that day on.

The following ten years saw Angarnas organizing the establishment of the new settlements of his people as well as studying the ancient lore he had further uncovered in his quest for the 'Book of the Pantheon'. The Bórians of the future Angmar had accepted his teachings as well and made him one of the lords of their region. His studies had now made him an accomplished sorcerer, commanding many arts unknown to most men. Still, he was driven by thought of the welfare of his people, and from ca. T.A. 1260 he came in disguise into Cardolan, preaching his new belief. Due to his gift of persuasion, he still had success. This time he concentrated particularly on converting skilled and well-educated men in order to strengthen his people in the North.

The years from ca. 1265 onward saw a continual shift in his outlook. Angarnas grew harder, more impatient and increasingly domineering.

When the dwarven citadels of Gundabad and Carn Dûm fell to the invading Nazgûl-lord's forces in T.A. 1267 and 1274 respectively, Angarnas foretold that this would herald the coming of the promised realm of the new faith. Angarnas recognized the Witch-king as his master, unconditionally offering him his service. Angarnas explained to the men that the new king had used orcs in his conquests, but

dismissed them with but a wink and gave the new-won lands to the local inhabitants and the settlers from the south. Thus Angarnas' prophecies came true at last and his followers were overjoyed. He sent messengers to other lands with news of the new religion and the successes of its followers and in the following years more settlers came from beyond the Misty Mountains, many of them already adherents of Angarnas' teachings.

In the year 1287 of the Third Age a great meeting of the religious leaders of all the new people was held at Carn Dûm. Angarnas chaired the conclave and after months of debating, all agreed that the pantheon preached by Angarnas indeed represented all their various beliefs. It was formally agreed that the description was but a means for men to recognize the truth and that the varying names were changeable as long as the core of the belief was preserved. A great ceremony was held and the Angmarean pantheon was officially founded. Angarnas declared his work fulfilled and in that hour vanished from the public. The people believed him to have been removed from the mortal sphere by the gods for his great service to them. In reality, he secretly entered the power hierarchy of Angmar and became the Witch-king's first Angûlion – the anonymous chancellor of the realm responsible for the running the state and overseeing the churches. It was he who developed all the power structures that gave the Angûlion almost total power over Angmar – as long as he followed the Witch-king's wishes. It was also he who established the tradition of the Angûlion as an office independent of its holder. For all outsiders it seems as if the Angûlion is an immortal being running the state, while in truth it is an office continued by a new holder the moment the previous one passes away. The insignia of office is a plain golden ring.¹ Angarnas remained in that office until his death in T.A. 1344.

The great temples in Carn Dûm all have a niche in the memory of Angarnas – regardless of their official belief. The prophet is a figure all of them honour to a certain degree.

Within a few decades of T.A. 1280 the pantheon established itself and formed a strong bond for the whole population, helping to disguise the machinations of the Witch-king and his minions by making Angmar look much more "normal".

The official Pantheon of Angmar

The following chapter describes the various gods as they are seen by their mortal followers, i.e. the official descriptions of the gods that are preached by the priests and learned laymen.

Note: This is in no way intended as a correct representation of Endorian spiritual reality as described by J.R.R. Tolkien in his various works. It is merely the belief and (false) theological base of Angmar's inhabitants.

Book of the Pantheon

Around T.A. 1100, the basic concepts of the pantheon of gods were written down, and these were collected into a single tome called the "Book of the Pantheon" by Barnátha of Litash. He based his efforts on earlier works and lore, few of which seem to have survived. It seems reasonable probable, though, that he had access to works dealing with Múlkherism in Númenor in addition to Dúnadan teachings about the Valar. This work was lost for over a century until Angarnas the Prophet regained it and began to proselytize its contents. Although extant before the churches themselves existed, the Book was approved as 'correct' by all Angmarean churches after their founding as the foundation basis of their respective doctrines.

GM Info: Barnátha did indeed write the book, but it occurred not as popularly believed in Litash and based on various older tomes, but on the direct orders of the Nazgûl-lord in Dol Guldur. The book was from the beginning intended to serve as a tool for the establishment of Angmar. It was also not written in 1100 as believed, but by about 1235 when it was clear that Anglór Eredoriath would be the target and future tool of the Witch-king.

¹ This is a Lesser Elven Ring. Its main power is to preserve the youth and vigour of a mortal wearer far beyond its natural time. Please keep in mind that it does **not extend a mortal's lifespan** in any way! When this approaches, however, he ages rapidly at the rate of about 5 years per hour until he reaches his real age and dies in almost unbearable agony. In time, the Witch-king would groom potential successors and when possible kill and replace an Angûlion before any minion might witness even this brief end.

The First Wars

According to the Book, at first there was universal chaos; time and space had no meaning, reality was not fixed. From this arose the First Gods, who were the only beings able to stand against the chaos from which they were born. These entities were principles of power rather than conventional gods. They made war upon each other, and their wars threatened to destroy all existence. One result of the wars was the creation of Secondary Gods to serve the First Gods and do battle on their behalf. The survivors amongst these are the identifiable Gods who are worshipped in the Pantheon.

Finally, after many clashes of powers immeasurable by mortals only one of the First Gods remained, and there was peace. According to the tome, he was the **only** First God ever to exist, denying any others. However, tired by the preceding conflicts, he retreated from taking active part in such events. This peace resulted in Middle-earth taking more or less its present form. Peace was not yet achieved, however, for the Closer Gods, released from service, began to battle one another.

Note: In this text that represents the views of the churches, ‘God(s)’, ‘Him/Her’ etc. are capitalized – in contrast to Tolkien’s careful avoidance of it with respect to supernatural entities other than the One (Eru). In Tolkien logic, this emphasizes their inferior nature as not being ‘Gods’ in the traditional sense (e.g. Greek myth). The capitalization is then to be seen as an intentional breach of God’s privilege by Sauron and his followers to remove men from this true insight.

The Great Agreement

The First God watched, knowing that Middle-earth could only be changed, not destroyed by the War of the Closer Gods. These Gods were able to reproduce themselves, but they were not invulnerable and could slay one another. After many had been destroyed, the survivors entered into the Great Agreement. The Agreement created laws to govern the ways in which the gods could intervene in the affairs of mortals, and to govern the ways in which the gods could compete for supremacy. The

complexity of these laws is believed to be the main reason that the ways of gods are often inexplicable to men. When a deity intercedes to aid an impious scoundrel after denying the pleas of a loyal saint, observers may well shrug their shoulders and say, “it is the Agreement and not the will of the god”.

During these early conflicts between the Closer Gods, many new races and creatures, the sapient mortals among them, had been created. The precise origins of the creatures of the mortal world are far from certain.

These lesser races had been allowed free access to knowledge (the ultimate power) but had also been placed under various compulsions to serve the gods. Mortal Man lacked the wisdom to control his knowledge. The gods concluded that the greatest danger they faced was the spread of knowledge among those who lacked restraint. The gods chose Zaldûni to maintain the Râphabras (the Book of Knowledge), and all knowledge was locked away in it. Much lore and wisdom was thus hidden from Mortal Man.



The nature of the Gods

Naturally, the motives of the gods differ; sometimes significantly sometimes barely recognizably. The kind of existence desired by Mazaralda, the Master of Disorder, is different from that wanted by Hambasi, the gentle patron of healing. Their primary problem is that they cannot annihilate each other without risking mutual destruction. Atîra (the mortal world) and Lutharanda (the world of the gods), in

which they seem to be trapped, are not great enough for all of them. Hence, the Agreement limits the actions that may be taken.

Manwâ has withdrawn to the ‘Blessed Realm’ (terminology of his church) or ‘Land of Introspected Selfishness’ (terminology of all other churches) and Zaldûni has established his neutrality. Hambasi is effectively a non-combatant. Vâra stands, essentially alone, against Mazaralda and Azîra. Despite their often similar goals, these two evil deities have not formed an alliance, and are almost as likely to act against each other. Nonetheless, it is Vâra’s work that they most often try to corrupt. These conflicts are far from being simple conflicts of interest or even philosophical outlook. The war between Vâra and her two evil antagonists – sometimes open, sometimes covert – is deeper than a simple myth. Especially Mazaralda represents a breaking down of order that would greatly change the worlds. In contrast, Azîra is more representative of some kind of ‘Evil Vâra’: bent on order, but with quite an evil outlook in the order of things. In any case, to prevent total chaos, and to enforce the Agreement, the other gods are often inclined to support Vâra, but ultimately they are looking for their own agenda as well.

Lutharanda is the primary battlefield. Here we see armies of dead retainers of the various deities clash with each other. As already explained, the forces of Vâra, Azîra and Mazaralda are the most likely to be seen in this kind of action. From time to time the forces of Sanagathis, Nînur and Thamba take part, but these gods tend to switch sides at short notice; their primary objective is to maintain a balance of power with the intent of furthering their own goals. This is the situation that has been maintained since the Agreement.

Legends of the Closer Gods

A large body of myth is shared by the beliefs of Angmar. The following are extracts of some of the most interesting and fundamental. Different churches regard these tales with varying attitudes. To many, the form and message of a myth is most important. Some, however, believe each word is the revelation of the gods, literal and unquestionable truth beyond

question. However true they may be, the legends cannot be substantiated by normal means. Many occurred long before there were any records kept by mortals, some before such races existed. The order of events is often confused. Most priests regard such details as irrelevant, although fundamentalists occasionally try to construct formalised sequences of events.

The Wars of Creation

When last of the First Gods had withdrawn from active participation in the affairs of the mortal and immortal worlds, the younger gods still battled, knowing no other way. This was the time of the war of the closer gods, before the Agreement. The battle for supremacy was fought openly and with little thought of mercy; Gods fell, were imprisoned and even slain. There were acts of great heroism and cowardice in this epic and tragic time. Gradually their numbers dwindled, and they were able to make peace. This was an age of great tales.

The Eldest God

First of the Closer Gods, it is said, was Manwâ. Of them, the Lord of Dreams grew first from the turmoils created by the First Gods. While other gods waged war in the “worlds between the worlds”, Manwâ travelled far and wide, thereby discovering the mortal world. It was here that he became aware of the peril of the Nimir and Hazid. Manwâ did not create them, but he granted them their special powers and thus made them what they are still today. These gifts cost them their original innocence, but also gave them the chance to survive in a hostile world. Though the Nimir and Hazid always remained his favourites, he grew fond of the third of the lesser races as well: Mortal Man.

While the countless battles between the other Closer Gods waged on, Manwâ prepared places for the lesser races. Perceiving that most of Kirnâtha (all of creation) would be for men, he set aside the Blessed Realm for the Nimir and Hazid, and made it his own kingdom, an “ideal” place for his chosen people, a world which he could shield against the majority of the evils of the worlds. Then he went to his chosen people, bidding them to re-locate to the Blessed Realm. Thus he led a great migration of the Nimir and Hazid to his realm. Not all of the two kindreds would

follow him for various reasons. Some had grown fond of Lutharanda or Middle-earth while others got lost on the way or straggled behind and lost contact with the others. Manwâ did not forget these and still lent them aid when possible, but his influence and power was greatest in the Blessed Realm. In addition he left gates between the worlds, through which those of the elder people could reach the Blessed Realm, should they wish to go there eventually.

Mazaralda and Bakannîn

The origin and nature of the “Jewels that are darker than darkness” are lost to the time when the First Gods were still at war with each other. Bakannîn is a black nothingness, said to be a ‘gate’ (for want of a better word) to the world where the essence of the last First God dwells. To be precise though, Bakannîn is not a single item, but indeed three dark jewels of unsurpassed craftsmanship and fascination. Any one of the jewels alone is an item of immense power, dangerous even to the Gods. Assembling two of them multiplies their perils as well powers, while having all three in conjunction is an almost incalculable danger to the sanity of its user. Why the Primary Gods left such artifacts is unknown. Perhaps it is a window through which he can perceive the other worlds and the doings of gods and the lesser races. Perhaps, as is often held, Bakannîn is actually one of the Primary Gods, the “Mad God”, partitioned and imprisoned within the jewels to save all of Kirnâtha. Whatever its true nature, for ages the lesser gods were aware of Bakannîn, never fully understanding its nature. There were times, however, when one of them held one or even two of the jewels and used Bakannîn’s powers to overpower his enemies. These were times when an alliance of many other Closer Gods formed, bent on defeating the holder of such power. This they did not for the good of creation alone, but mostly out of self-interest, to avoid being defeated or even slain by a too powerful rival. There has never been a time when any being has held all three parts of Bakannîn.

There was a time when Mazaralda, who was not then as he is now (but, unknown to his enemies, already possessed one piece of Bakannîn), was besieged

within his fortress by three gods and their armies. It seemed certain that his realm would fall and that he would perish. Mazaralda spent the greatest part of his strength in using his part of Bakannîn in a mighty surprise attack on one of the three. To his own surprise, on overpowering his victim, he found that this one had also secretly held a part of Bakannîn. Using the combined power of the two parts, he was able to defeat his remaining enemies. The survivors fled, but soon returned with an immense host. Other gods had heard of the events and feared that Mazaralda might become too powerful. On the approach of the surviving two of his original enemies, plus five more gods with their armies, Mazaralda – confident in his newfound powers – met them on the battlefield. A long and fierce struggle ensued, but eventually he was defeated, narrowly escaping with the help of his Bakannîn fragments. He fled through shadow, and finally came to the “Last World”, the lifeless world on which the long lost last part of Bakannîn lay. There he seized the third jewel.

By the power of the complete Bakannîn, Mazaralda was able to utterly destroy his foes, but he paid a high price. Gazing within the three jewels, he was forever changed. Manwâ, the oldest and wisest of the closer gods, cautioned him, saying, “Restore the dark trio and I shall grant thee forgetfulness, for he that takes them for his own shall know no peace. Even though he may be a master of souls, his own shall be forfeit”.

But Mazaralda spurned the advice, turning his back on Manwâ to study the full Bakannîn and learn its secrets. Manwâ said to the other gods, “Now is foretold the end, for as he grows, shall grow the shadow and all the strength of man and beast and god may not avail”.

Soon after, Manwâ retreated to the Blessed Realm, calling most of his folk to follow. The other gods made no attempt to recover Bakannîn since Zaldûni warned that the time was not right. Since the seizure, Mazaralda has gained some knowledge of the jewels’ workings, but he has grown ever more erratic, and has even violated the Agreement from time to time.

Azîra and Vâra

In the ages before the Agreement, the greatest rivalry was between the goddess Vâra and Azîra, the Lord of Fire. Vâra valued light, and the freedom and joys of mortal kind and Azîra treasured power and control of others above all else. The armies of Azîra, led by fiery demons, pillaged the worlds and fought often with the knights of the goddess. Demons, demigods and mortals were slain as worlds were laid waste.

The Battle of Ramarâph

After a long impasse, Azîra evolved his own plan to throw down his arch-enemy. He arranged that Vâra went with only a small retinue to a place called Ramarâph, presumably for negotiations with him. He had promised to come with only a small following as well, but even though Vâra came with more knights than was agreed upon, Azîra brought even more demons and in the ensuing fight he gained the upper hand. At last, both Vâra and Azîra alone were left standing. Exhausted, but not wounded yet, a mighty duel began between the two gods. Confident in his superior skill in arms he taunted her “Now breathe thy last, sister, for I am become death, the bane of worlds”. The battle lasted long, but eventually Azîra smote Vâra and nearly slew her. But Hambasi, whose power lay in all the earth, had witnessed the fight. Sensing the Shieldmaiden’s defeat and unwilling to allow this for her sympathy of Vâra, she called forth her powers and restored her sister. Now the Shieldmaiden recovered, taking up the combat again. Fresh from Hambasi’s assistance, she went on fighting and slowly gained the upper hand. Her anger was great and, with Agmantar her great sword, she swung at Azîra, wounding him seven times. Each time he let out a great cry. Weakened by his wounds, Azîra went down and Vâra was about to slay him. Here Hambasi interceded saying, “By the life I saved thee, stand back”. Vâra deferred to her saviour and even went so far as to offer Azîra her hand, but Azîra denied her saying, “Shall I take thy hand, as trophy of my victory. For that will come. Though the worlds expire, and stagnant peace prevail a thousand million ages shall I remember.” Hambasi offered to heal his wounds, but Azîra mocked her: “And how better

may I recall this day than to carry always the remainder of your betrayal?”.

The Flesh of Gods

As Azîra stood brooding at Ramarâph after the departure of the two goddesses, the god Phanurinduk came and spoke to him.

“A bargain shall I make my brother. Look upon you: seven times you have been wounded. With my cunning, if thou desirest, shall I make thee seven sons out of your defeated servants – one from each wound, even more loyal to do thy will than before.”

Azîra had never had allies in whom he could safely trust, but he was suspicious.

“How shall I know that this is no assassin’s plot, craven one, for who shall love the mightiest of the gods?”

To this Phanurinduk answered, “Trust whomever thou will. Have thou the craft to bring forth such as I describe? For my part, I have need of thy flesh, I do this not for love of thee. Thou may fear what thou will. I have offered thee true. Decide.”

After brief reflection, the bargain was made. Phanurinduk used his craft upon the blood and by dropping Azîra’s blood upon seven of his defeated servants the Baragul were created. The seven original fiery demons of his host were greatly enhanced and likened to Azîra’s image, as loyal as sons. Azîra ordered his demons to slay Phanurinduk, but they would not. Phanurinduk explained.

“Am I then so foolish? Thy sons shall be as slaves in all but this: Never shall they harm their maker, and as I command, shall they perish. Now keep or break thy bargain.”

Azîra gazed upon his newborn children, and although they had only finite loyalty, he admired them. Reluctantly he surrendered the remaining shed blood of his flesh.¹

Phanurinduk and His Children

From the earliest times, the craft of Phanurinduk was great. Of all the gods, he had the greatest knowledge of the mortal races, except only for the folk of Manwâ, the elder peoples: the Nimir and Hazid. Others would come to him, saying, “Make for me an army of thy craft”, or “build a

creature that can walk in shadow and do my bidding”. Always he demanded the same payment of the gods: “give to me a portion of thy godly flesh as price, and what thou desirest is thine”. As time passed, Phanurinduk amassed varieties of divine flesh, and from these he made his own creatures. The gods were little concerned about Phanurinduk’s strange life-forms, for they seemed nothing more than harmless curiosities.

Phanurinduk had long coveted a part of Azîra to complete a treasured recipe. When he acquired his flesh, his plans were made. After the Agreement, he journeyed to Bruldugamba, located “on two worlds”, and there he made his home. He made a myriad of strange creatures, some to serve him, some to teach him the enigmatic meaning of life itself (a still-elusive concept) and some simply to glorify his art. In this, Phanurinduk has mostly withdrawn from the affairs of the gods, and seems to have diminished somewhat. At Bruldugamba, he broods over his obscure purposes, the god that abides. Only rarely does he act, but his creatures range far and wide, a tribute to Phanurinduk’s unique art, but still lesser than the life of the sentient creatures that existed before.

The Gods

In this section the theological teachings of Angmar are presented. All represent the belief of the people or the respective church. The only “outside” point of view is given in the section that deals with the particular deities’ statuses in Angmar. This is GM background information and normally unknown to the inhabitants of the realm.

¹ That part which was left over after the creation of the Baragul.

☩ *Azîra* ☩

Aka: Master of the Baragul; Immortal Warlord of Bantûca; Breeder of Plague, Squalor and Decay; The Reasonless Reaper; Tyrant of the Foul Chamber; He Who Knows the Ten Thousand Ways

Description: The attitudes of the evil war god are difficult to understand. Azîra is the breeder of war for its own sake, the deity of those who enjoy rapine, pillage, cruelty and destruction. Azîra's element is fire; this is what his adherents serve; this is what he commands.

Azîra is most commonly portrayed as a mighty humanoid figure shrouded in crimson flame with razor sharp claws. Azîra will never forget the indignity of an ancient defeat by the goddess Vâra. Only the terms of the Agreement deter him from seeking revenge. Some believe that he will eventually attempt to assassinate the goddess regardless of the consequences. The enmity carries over to the mortal followers of both deities.

There is little other record of active hostility between Azîra and other members of the Pantheon. Only the followers of Vâra are singled out for special attention. Otherwise Azîrans loot, pillage, ravage and torture without discrimination.

Azîra is one of the greatest warriors of the gods, although he is known for his unchivalrous methods. His favourite weapons are Ragul the "Emperor of Flame", his flaming mace capable of inflicting "the myriad echoes of the slain", and Adûtha, a great whip with which he strikes the ground with the sound of thunder.

Major Divine Servants

Atûca the Furious: Also called The Lady of Hîma-Ban, Atûca is Azîra's greatest servant and most loyal follower. She is the Lady of Fearful Faces and sorcery that blinds and confuses her enemies before delivering them for eternal torture at her pleasure. Though not the greatest in combat, her dedication to Azîra's cause and her cunning in overcoming every enemy is feared by everyone. It is said that at times even Azîra is frightened by her brutality and zeal.

Razarnîn: Razarnîn the Everhungry is Azîra's second most important underling. He is the lord of frenzy and excess, and his appetite for blood is unrivalled. He is commonly portrayed as an ordinary human in lacquered black armour, bearing his broadsword and his shield. The Razarnî Games are named in his honor.¹

The Baragul: The best known of the semi-major Divine Servants of Azîra are the "Seven Demons", known as the Baragul. Sometimes called the sons of Azîra, the Baragul are said to have sprung from seven drops of blood that fell when Vâra wounded Azîra and mingled with – at the time – lesser servants of Azîra. In appearance the Baragul are much like Azîra, although smaller and less powerful.

Location

Azîra dwells in his great fortress of Bantûca among his attendant Baragul. Somewhere within the castle is Hîma-Ban, the dreaded chamber of tortures.

Azîranism in Angmar

Many soldiers and nobles are adherents of Azîra, and the aggressive attitude of its followers against the supposed adherents of Vâra in the Dúnadan realms spurs their fervor in warring against the Dúnedain. Second only to self-preservation in obeying the direct orders of their own cruel leaders, Azîran belief is the chief motivator for the Angmareans to battle the Dúnadan realms.

The church of Azîra has several religious orders who each sponsor their own military orders that possess land and supply knights with their military following. Some of the orders are devoted to more internal affairs (e.g. the Order of the Demon Razarnîn), but others hold estates along the frontier with the Dúnadan realms and provide a core of fanatical knights who are always willing to fight against the Dúne-

dain. The table on the bottom of the page gives an overview about the orders.

Of special interest are two orders. The Order of the Unfathomed Den sponsors the Razarnî Games, a bloody gladiatorial event in which all kinds of creatures and intelligent races (mostly prisoners of war – taken for only this sole purpose – or other unfortunates who fall into the Azîrans' hands) are pitted against each other. The games were introduced after the First Northern War in T.A. 1357 and the first to be slaughtered in these events were captured Dúnadan prisoners.

The games are now very popular and the arenas in Angmar are nearly always well attended. The great arena in Carn Dûm is the site of the most bloody and elaborate 'games'. Orcs caught in territories of Angmar forbidden to them are a common sight in the arenas and are favorites in those games where the victims are slaughtered in a very gory way.

The second order of special interest is the Order of Atûca. This is unusual because it is composed entirely of women. These are without exception accomplished sorcerers who use their powers without hesitation toward their goal of bringing down their enemies. As the Dúnedain are viewed as followers of Manwâ or – even worse – VâraVâra, they are singled out as their preferred and most loathed enemies. The retainers of Atûca are among the primary reasons why the Númenóreans perceive the realm as one of "Witches" and correspondingly its ultimate master as "Witch-king", even if they do not fully understand the intricacies and finer details of Angmar's power structure.

Clerical Order	Sponsored Fighting Order
Order of the Seven Demons	Order of the Ragul Companies
Order of the Fiery Portal	Company of the Red Sickle
Order of Rinanas	Order of the Bloody Shadows
Order of the Atûca	Order of the Crimson Fury
Order of the Mózeg The Lord of Swords	Order of the Warriors of Mózeg
Order of the Unfathomed Den	Order of the Demon Razarnîn the Everhungry
Order of the Burning Spire	Order of the Neverresting Company

¹ An extremely violent and popular gladiatorial event in Angmar and Mistrand

☞ **Hambasi** ☜

Aka: The Restorer; Bringer of the Life Renewed; Maker of Balms; Lady of the Truth; the Everliving Daughter of White Virtue; Guardian of the Meek; Lady of the Ripe Harvest; Confidant of Lovers

Description:

Hambasi is the kindest and most gentle of the gods. She will accept any with an honest heart into her fold. She loves the scholarly who use their knowledge in service to others, the poor, the meek, the innocent and the powerless, the hard working and those who love with true love. She is patron goddess of healing and agriculture, and is closely associated with the turning of the seasons. She demands that her followers be gentle and kind, but is forgiving of those who transgress.

Hambasi is most often represented as a young girl with hands worn red from her labours, and is symbolized by spring flowers or by the fruits of agriculture. It is said that she prefers white flowers and that the daisy is her favourite. Often she is given the aspect of the earth mother, a nursing mother of indeterminate age, or a woman about to nurture a variety of creatures.

Major Divine Servants

Belsirasin (The Weeper): Belsirasin is often portrayed as a weeping young warrior without weapons. He is said to shed tears for every lie or deceit told by mortal man. Belsirasin is the lord of virtue and truth, perhaps the sternest and least forgiving of Hambasi's servants.

Limban (Lord of Labour): Limban is the lord of honest labour and diligent effort. He is usually portrayed as a massive bronze ox of great tenacity, one who will labour, often without thought or reward, out of duty to family. When his work is disturbed or wrecked he starts again without anger. His is the patience of the earth; he is symbolic of the ability of common folk to triumph in their simple day to day endeavours.

Tiana (Handmaiden of Renewal): Tiana is also called the Foremost of Healers. She is the patron of physicians, many of whom maintain icons or household shrines in her honour. She usually appears as a slim young woman with tired, drawn features. In her right hand

she bears a surgeon's knife and in her left she carries a small urn. These are the symbols of the guild of Physicians which can be found displayed outside the premises of many of its members.

Ambunnas (The Trothmaker): Ambunnas is the mistress of honourable love, particularly between persons of simple birth. She smoothes difficulties so that lovers may marry, and those whose love is unrequited often visit her shrines seeking guidance. Newlyweds pray to her for the blessing of children. She is commonly portrayed as a heavy set woman of middle years, usually carrying a basket, or sometimes as a kindly crone or suckling babe. She is very good humoured.

Location

Hambasi dwells in the enchanted meadows of Pharalda where it is forever spring. Pharalda is an impossibly verdant field of flowers, rich in delicious nectar, able to regenerate themselves overnight. This is the heaven of Hambasi's worshippers. Here, in humble but pleasant cottages dwell those who have laboured hard in life.

Hambasism in Angmar

The church of Hambasi is not proscribed in Angmar, but has no great temples either, especially after ca. T.A. 1450. Several of her shrines or smaller temples dot the landscape. The lords of Angmar deliberately tolerate belief in Hambasi, since her peaceful adherents pose no danger to the ruling lords and the gentle belief and ideals keeps them from other, more dangerous ideas. Hambasism is a handy tool with which the Witch-king controls the less fanatical peasant masses of his realm. Most of Hambasi's original adherents came from Eriador and the northern Anduin vales. Now it is the most prominent religion among the peasantry of Angmar.



☞ **Manwâ** ☜

Aka: Master of the Lords of Dream; Bringer of Meritorious Dreams and Blessed Forgetfulness; Lord of the Starlit and Thrice-blessed Realm; King of the Uttermost West; Lord of the Sundered Ones in Exile

Description: The Lord of the Starlit Realm most often appears as a tall elven lord garbed in a mantle of flowing blue and silver, a wreath of stars upon his head. His face and body bear no clue of age, but his eyes shine with wisdom, and his aura projects confused feelings of strength and longing. Manwâ is surrounded by an air of sadness, of "otherwhereness"; in this, he is much like his special folk, the Nimir.

The King of the Uttermost West is the eldest of the lesser gods Closer Gods, and probably the wisest. He has the greatest power to perceive the future, and his is the closest affinity with time itself. Manwâ is patient above all others, one who is prepared to wait. It is said that Manwâ was first offered, but refused, the guardianship of the Râphabras (The Book of Knowledge), nominating Zaldûni in his stead.

To most, Manwâ is known for his sending of pleasant and oracular dreams and for the gift of forgetfulness, the salve of unpleasant memories. His actions are subtle, but in the long run effective, more apt to confuse than harm.

Major Divine Servants

Sinnîra (The Prince of Stars): Also known as "The Twilight Scribe", Sinnîra intercedes with his master on behalf of the Nimir. The demigod is credited with the cursive script used by the Nimir, as well as teaching the Nimir the arts of music and poetry. Sinnîra's realm is the stars and the moon. Some believe that Sinnîra lights the stars each night, and bears oracular dreams.

Sôval (The Judge of Stones): The "Half-Lord" is the semi-autonomous demigod who intercedes on behalf of the Hazid at the court of Manwâ. Sôval is most often portrayed as a slim, fine-featured man of average height. His left hand is made of fine iron, with which he judges the Hazid who have passed away; the spirit of the departed is crushed in his hand. If the spirit withstands, it is judged worthy of the Blessed Realm; if the

spirit becomes dust, it is blown by the winds back to the mountain roots of the mortal world, from where it may be (ultimately) reborn. Sôval is credited with gifting the Hazid with the arts for which they are well known, such as stone- and gem-craft.

Sôval's sphere is the "roots of the worlds". It is he who molds the inner tracts, twisting the rock of mountains and carving the caverns of the underworld. His refuges are beneath the world; this is where he goes to weep for the sorrows of the Hazid, for the evil in the world. His tears are of silver and gold.

Riani: The Riani are ethereal beings of varying, but usually minor power. Once they were mere components of matter, but then Manwâ touched those to whom he spoke, and gave them self-awareness, making their spirits know themselves and able to speak to those who could hear. Manwâ did not bind the Riani to serve him, he only helped them to fulfill themselves. Some were grateful and swore loyalty to the Lord of Dreams, but others were small and mean.

Location

The King of the Uttermost West resides in the Blessed Realm, a world of "golden terraces, ruby moons and shrines of ivory". This is the heaven of the Nimir, but it is also a place that may be reached before death and returned from. Human adherents believe that this may be their own ultimate destination. Manwâ sits upon a throne of silver and jade at the top of Mount Siluran, and where he is attended by Sinnîra, Sôval and the lesser lords of dream.

Manwâism in Angmar

There are no official adherents of Manwâ in Angmar any more. The religion is banned like Vaaranism after ca. TA 1700. But even before that, Manwâ has a steady following and strong position only until the First Northern War. After that his worship declines and after the Second Northern War it becomes almost meaningless. There are no temples or shrines to Manwâ in the Iron Land in TA 1400.

✧ *Mazaralda* ✧

Aka: Tormentor of the Unlamented Dead; Master of the Principle of Evil; Wielder of the Shadow of Incarnate Evil; Wrecker of Chaos

Description: Mazaralda is the master of chaos and evil. Of all the Gods, Mazaralda is the quickest to anger and the most prone to violence and insanity. He is a lord of retribution, but cares nothing for justice, and is said to have an abiding hatred for all things fair and noble. When Mazaralda appears to men, it is usually in some ethereal form, since his true shape is unendurable to mortals. He is never portrayed directly, but is symbolized by the Cil-lurâpha, a black circle on a triangular field of silver, often surrounded by an irregular dark red border. Mazaralda is best known to non-adherents as the master of the undead Ganucin.

It is impossible for a mortal to understand the attitudes of the Lord of Chaos. Many of his followers are content simply to fear, respect and appease him; few could be said to love or admire the god. Mortals generally deal with the Lord of Chaos through his semi-divine underlings.

Major Divine Servants

Kâph the Necromancer: The greatest of Mazaralda's demonic servants is Kâph the Necromancer, Lord of the Ganucin, Befouler of the Dead. Kâph is said to govern Mangurâpha in his master's absence, although he often walks among mortal men. When he does, he usually takes the form of an emaciated man in black robes; his face is unnaturally pale, but rarely seen past the cowl that keeps it ever in shadow. His hands appear to be withered, almost skeletal. Some attribute him with an odour of decay.

Kâph's purpose in visiting the mortal world is difficult to determine, but is possibly to recruit souls for the Tormentor. It is said that meeting his eyes or feeling his touch will destroy the will of mortals and eventually result in "the fate which no flight escapes". The most commonly told legend regarding Kâph involves a servant who encountered the Necromancer in a marketplace. Telling his master that Kâph had made a threatening gesture at him, the servant begged the loan of a horse and fled for a distant town to escape the

Befouler. The master, curiosity overcoming trepidation, went to the market to see the truth of the servant's story. Seeing the figure of the demonic lord, he summoned his courage and asked Kâph why he had threatened his servant. The apocryphal reply was: "I threatened him not. My gesture was surprise at seeing him, for tonight I am to meet him in a far off place."

When he is not incognito, Kâph carries Kûb, a staff of bone carved with thirteen skulls and thirteen orbs. Kûb also bears, in ancient runes, Kâph's oath of fealty to the Dark One. The staff's powers and purposes are obscure.

Location

The location of Mangurâpha, the "Black Pole" is ambiguous. The meaning is plain enough though. All evil is said to emanate from the Mazaraldaian hell, to corrupt men's souls and draw them into the endless death. Mangurâpha is said to be an endless maze of tunnels, populated by the unlamented dead, horrific entities subject to the indifference or torment of Mazaralda. Most non-adherents believe (or hope) that only the worst sinners are sent there; some Mazaraldaians hold that Mangurâpha is the destination of all mortals.

In a chamber at Mangurâpha's dark and musty heart lies Bakannîn, the "Jewels that are darker than darkness", three jewels of black nothingness. Bakannîn is said to be a gate to the world where the First Gods dwell. This chamber, more than any other place, is where Mazaralda can be found, brooding over Bakannîn. Some believe that Bakannîn is actually one of the Eternal Ones, but because of its evil emanations and the indifference of the First Gods, most scholars discount this idea.

The Shadow of Bakannîn

One of the most esoteric phenomena associated with Mazaralda and his vassals is the Shadow of Bakannîn, a force exuded by some Mazaraldaian entities and artifacts. Whether the Shadow actually emanates from Bakannîn, or whether it is a part of Mazaralda's aura, and therefore a clue to its presence, is a matter of theological debate. All that is really known is that the Shadow of Bakannîn sometimes manifests in the presence of the god's minions and holy relics.

Mazaraldanism in Angmar

It may be a bit surprising that the evil religion which is in many ways reminiscent of the Great Enemy is of only minor impact in Angmar. Firstly, Mazaralda is not an especially attractive religion for most people, and so the church remains relative small. Secondly, the Witch-king does not wish any to suspect that any religion in his realm are Morgoth-related.

The church does fulfill a useful role for the Witch-king though, because the terror it presents is a valuable tool to discipline recalcitrant subjects. Additionally, occasional (minor) pogroms against the church help to keep the ruse of Angmar as a primary non-morgothic realm.

Its great hour came when the Witch-king sought to weaken the Dúnadan spirit. The Mazaraldaians were tasked with implementing the infestation of the Barrow-downs with Wights. This was done with great success, after which the church of Mazaralda receives increased respect and influence in Angmar.

Finally, it is useful to deflect rumours of necromancy and undead manifestations onto an outwardly non-morgothic source.



— Æ *Nînur* —

Aka: The Queen of Pleasures and Self-gratification; the Maker of Bargains; the Golden Temptress; Guardian of the Treasure Hoards of Heaven; Enslaver of Hearts and Loins; Mistress of the Stolen Moment Forever Lost; Unchaste Lady of the Ten Forgotten Acts and the Ten Times Ten Secret Arts

Description: The Queen of Pleasures is commonly portrayed as a perfectly proportioned, sensuously lithesome, human female. Her true form is so beautiful as to drive men mad with passion.

Nînur has many aspects, among them the innocent and helpless “maiden”, the worldly sophisticate, and the canny usurer. But she is more than a symbol for sensuality, although she is often perceived as little more than this by ignorant outsiders. Non-adherents have a tendency to perceive Nînur as a goddess of little wisdom, and her church as a shallow and spiritually bankrupt institution, but the goddess is the shrewdest of schemers, one who sometimes hides behind a facade of naivety.

Nînur is deemed an easy deity to worship, for she demands no conventional morality of her adherents and is willing to bargain for her favours. The highest ethic for a Nînurn is fealty to the goddess. Traditional concepts of social evil, right or wrong, have little bearing.

Major Divine Servants

The Golden Temptress is directly served by her seven handmaidens. They are not worshipped for Nînur brooks no rivals, but they are given a great measure of respect.

Caralda (Princess of Harmonic Cascade): Caralda is a patron of music and sultry words. She keeps a famed collection of songs and words to inspire love and lust in mortals.

Tandûni (Princess of Enterprise): Tandûni is the patron of commerce, stimulated by the “game” of business, and is often invoked to witness and seal contracts. She is the patron of many usurers and traders.

Zinin (Princess of Feast): Zinin is sometimes called the glutton of heaven, but this is unfair. She is the patron of pleasant repast, of the joys of gourmet dining, pleasant food and wine.

Maura (Princess of Golden Wrath): Sometimes called the “Left Hand of Bargains”, Maura is the messenger dispatched by Nînur when terms are not lived up to. Maura punishes with her “subtle stings” those who betray the goddess. Vengeance fits the original bargain; those who fail the contract find themselves worse off than before it was struck.

Randa (Princess of Abundance): The lust for wealth is embodied in Randa. It is she who vigilantly guards Nînur’s unsurpassed treasure hoards. Randa also tempts mortal men with material things. Like her mistress, she is willing to bargain her favours, but her demands are less extreme.

Taupha (Princess of Brief Ecstasy): Taupha is the one of the seven who moves among mortals most often. As the demigoddess of sex and passion, she often takes the form of a beautiful young courtesan. She indulges in sex with either gender, and often leaves her partners worn to the point of exhaustion. She can, however, be quite jealous, and deals wrathfully with those who ‘steal’ her mortal lovers.

Phâr (Princess of Fortune): A whimsical and capricious entity who delights in the vagaries of chance, over which she has some control. She is often called upon by gamblers (even those who are not followers of Nînur). Hence the saying “catch, recast” often used by dice players, exhorting Phâr to influence the outcome of the throw.

The Sûbanin

Once, the legend runs, there was a race of immortal and beautiful women called the Sûbanin, who were chosen by Nînur as her special people. To them was given the privilege of closeness to the goddess. They built and administered shrines and prospered. As time passed, however, men came to worship the women instead of the goddess. The Sûbanin took to wearing prudish robes and practised aloof virginity to foster the illusion of their divinity. Nînur was jealous, and undertook an elaborate revenge.

Nînur smote the shrines of the Sûbanin and cast the females into the wilderness, pronouncing an elaborate curse that doomed them to be sexually attracted only

☞ *Phanurinduk* ☜

to males of other species. When they consummated their desire they suffered a painful pregnancy and gave birth to ugly, squat, horned, hairy and rapaciously lustful males, which are sometimes called satyrs.

It is said that the Sûbanin continually petition Nînur for alleviation of their plight. Occasionally she shows mercy, and grants surcease to one or more of them, allowing them to dwell with her. Most remain unforgiven, however, and they feature in many folktales, as do their bestial offspring. It is commonly believed that both can be encountered in the wilderness, and no few deformed or illegitimate human babies are blamed on the lustful satyrs.

Some tales have it that the Sûbanin often behave in the manner of dryads, luring mortal men with their unearthly wiles, and losing them in a nine month delirium of coupling during which she quickens with child. The dream becomes a nightmare during the nymph's labour as she gives birth to an ugly, brutish, satyr. This is enough to shock the mortal male back to reality. Few speak of their experiences and the memories soon fade, although there may be residual unease about beautiful women, forests and children.

Location

Nînur resides in the elaborately decorated and bejeweled palace of Camarâph. Within its crystalline walls are seven levels. The first five are occupied by devout worshippers of Nînur, who have been admitted to Camarâph after death. Their mortal bodies, restored and perfected, spend eternity in the "orgy without end", an endless festival of erotic, gastronomic and artistic pleasures. The sixth level contains the treasure vault of the gods. The fabled Crimson Chamber occupies the top-most floor. It is here that Nînur, her handmaidens, and her innumerable companions of both genders chosen from the lower levels, pursue unending pleasure. Those who share Nînur's bed are driven (at least temporarily) insane by her passion. She returns such unfortunates, as well as the lovers she tires of, to the lower floors of Camarâph to recover.

Camarâph has been described in various ways: "a many-chambered keep, of crystal walls and silk-swathed halls a'froth with crimson colour, where soft and luxu-

rious pools effervesce with lusty perfumes and hidden secrets among the splashing of wine; golden passion awaits the soul who rises to the Lady's eyes."

Nînurism in Angmar

Nînur is mostly worshipped among the middle class and by some nobles. Many courtesans number among her followers and merchants are also among her favorite adherents. As many of her promises are useful in collecting information, many in the Witch-king's intelligence network are followers of Nînur.

The shallowness of Nînurism is at least partly a ruse; some of her adherents are among the most skilled and subtle spies possible. The promises of Nînur have loosened quite a tongue to unearth its secrets. From the very beginning Nînur's clergy was in the forefront of espionage for the Lord of the Nazgûl as well as securing the worldly needs of the realm by striking favorable deals and establishing lasting economic relations with neighbouring regions to secure and strengthen the realm. After the Second Northern War the clandestine aspects of Nînurism began to be more clearly perceived outside Angmar, and since about the mid-16th century the sorcerous arts of the – mostly female – priests contributed greatly to the Dúnadan perception of Angmar as a "Witch-realm".

Aka: Master of Bruldugamba; Brooder in the Blasted Plains; The Serpent that Dwells Below; Accursed Lord of the Barren Cycle; Prince of the Fatherless Multitude; Craven Lord of Sterile Lands

Description: Phanurinduk is often considered a relatively minor deity; some deny his godhead and call him a demigod or demon. The fact that he resides so close to his mortal adherents – at least partially on Atîra – compensates for his lack of strength, but he is still one of the least commonly worshipped deities. The Breeder's powers are, however, beyond mortal comprehension.

Phanurinduk is a shapechanger, taking whatever form suits him at the moment. Hence, his adherents tend to represent him by symbols. His favourite shape is said to be that of the Serpent, a great gelatinous worm able to exude appendages or create organs at will. Serpentine forms figure prominently in Phanurindukan religious art.

Phanurinduk is a relatively peaceable and introspective god. He rarely interferes with the activities of the other deities or those of their adherents, and seems satisfied with the experiments on life-forms for which he is best known. Phanurinduk does not demand any particular morality from his adherents; his ethical code seems to be centered on self-preservation. His worshippers range from good to evil.

The religion of Phanurinduk is shrouded in so much mysticism that many claim even its clerics have no idea what is going on. When the deity or his followers exert themselves in human society, they do so in as subtle and indirect a manner as possible.



Major Divine Servants

Besides the deity there are few other recurring figures in the Phanurindukan myth. The function of the servants is obscure. Phanurinduk seems to need little aid in his experiments and exercises little control over his semi-divine underlings, most of which seem to do as they please. Those who serve particularly well are elevated to the ranks of demigods or demons.

Location

Phanurindukan theology is dominated by the fact that Phanurinduk is the only deity believed to dwell physically on Atîra. He seldom ventures from his home at Bruldugamba (a place far to the East of Angmar), although it is believed that at least the upper reaches of Bruldugamba exist simultaneously in a desert (the Blasted Plains) on Lutharanda, where the Breeder is constantly besieged by various demi-divine armies.

Phanurindukanism in Angmar

Phanurindukanism is very rare in Angmar. Some aspects of Hillmen religious beliefs (ancestor worship, nature worship) are included in Phanurinduk's religion, so this minority addresses the incorporation of such enigmatic beliefs in the Angmarean pantheon.



☩ *Sanagathis* ☩

Aka: King of the Wind; Lord of the Perilous Quest and Wielder of the Blooded Spear; Master of Horses; the White Rider

Description: Sanagathis is the god of battle-lust, requiring fearlessness and bravado of his adherents. He loves the "sport" of war, and takes great pleasure in watching, and even participating in, large battles. The only virtue universally admired by adherents of Sanagathis is courage.

Beside his interest in war for the sport of it, Sanagathis is a great rider and fearless hunter who loves the wind in his face. He is the lord of the wide plains who rides there with his host to entertain himself.

Sanagathis is usually portrayed as a giant, yellow- or brown-haired, bearded warrior clad in furs and leather, who rides across the country on his great steed, Tral, and bears his great spear Attanin. He also carries Nazan, his great double-bladed axe, which is able to split a mountain or cause storms or earthquakes.

Major Divine Servants

Othringad (Lord of Bears): Othringad, the great bear, has the strength of twenty bears. Of all creatures, only Othringad can defeat Sanagathis in fair, unarmed combat. Despite his huge size, Othringad is gentle. He has a profound empathy for helpless creatures and loathes spoilers of the forest.

Nalas (Lord of Horses): Nalas is a great horse, who spends most of his time on the plains of Lutharanda. His neigh is like the thunder and his hooves are like hammers. He can cause terrible mayhem but is also fond of worthy travelers whom he will guide (or carry) to safety.

Hamac (The Carrion Lord): Hamac is the lupine master of several dozen huge grey wolves that guard Kalabatti. When Sanagathis summons someone, he often dispatches Hamac to fetch them. The wolf lord swallows them whole and regurgitates them at the god's feet in perfect health.

Location

Sanagathis dwells in Kalabatti, his castle in Lutharanda. The souls of his adherents who die in battle are taken there where they spend all eternity in manly contests of

prowess in war and sports. To a Sanagathisian, this is paradise. Near Kalabatti stands Hlotho, the tree of the blood of the slain, which bears a hundred crimson apples at all times. It is said that mortals who eat one of these fruit are healed of all wounds and gifted with immortality and youth.

Sanagathism in Angmar

Sanagathis is very popular among the Northman and some Easterling elements in Angmarean society. New settlers from these cultures in particular identify their former gods with Sanagathis and his Major Divine Servants. Accordingly the church is very loosely organized – a stark contrast to the formalized churches of Azîra or Nîmur for example. There are no great temples or tightly structured priesthood for Sanagathis, but holy houses, places and (itinerant) priests.

Sanagathis is officially recognized by the Witch-king and his worship may be freely practised. He is the primary Angmarean deity to meet the religious feelings and needs of many crusading warriors from Rhovanion who revere the more traditional deities of their home regions. It is taught that the Rhovanian plains god Kerkassk¹ is the same as Sanagathis, only under another name. Thus this church is the primary identifier for those Rhovanic people who have strong ties towards their home beliefs. Incorporating the ancient Plains God into the Angmarean pantheon (albeit a bit modified to meet the needs of his integration into the set of churches) is extremely useful for keeping the crusaders in line and inciting some to permanently settle in the Iron Land.

¹ See *The Inland Sea* module for the nature of Kerkassk in his home region.

☩ *Thamba* ☩

Aka: Lord of the Pitch Shadows; Master of Deceit and Evil Dreams; Lord of the Last Illusion; The Merchant of Death; The Unseen Lifter of Lives; Wealth's Worry

Description: Thamba is certainly the most merciless of all the gods. Although some claim this "honour" for Azîra or Mazaralda, Thamba seems to be ruled by cold and remorseless intelligence rather than by violent insanity. More than any other, he is the god of darkness and is often worshipped by thieves and assassins. He is sometimes called the Thief of Heaven, and is deemed a doer of the impossible and a master of lies and deception.

Best known as the bringer of nightmares, Thamba is often called the Lifter of Lives because he is associated with untimely and inexplicable death. The motives of Thamba are impossible for mortals to understand, and sometimes seem contradictory.

Major Divine Servants

The Gulothrân are the invisible demonic servants and minions of Thamba. It is said that they were not created by the god, but that he found them in the "deepest reaches of the void, of which they are but part". The Gulothrân are at their weakest in daylight hours, and their various powers are most effective at night or in shadow. They are not worshipped, but are treated with the fear and respect befitting their unearthly powers. There are three principal Gulothrân. Each is in turn served by the various minor entities known as the Lesser Gulothrân.

Gilaspuc: Gilaspuc is sometimes called "The Hands of Despair". It is he that Thamba most often sends to settle accounts with those who have broken faith with him. It is said that Gilaspuc dispatches such unfortunates with his talon-like hands, reaching inside the body and stilling the heart forever. In the case of those who have most seriously offended Thamba, Gilaspuc may "possess" the body, dominating and tormenting the resident soul before slaying it.

Kastûni: Kastûni is the "Hunter of Sleep", the Gulothrân charged by Thamba with

delivering horrific nightmares. Kastûni alone of the Gulothrân is able to take visible shape. He commonly appears as a small child with one eye of palest blue and the other of deepest black.

Phunakil: Phunakil is "The Mouth of Falsehood", who spreads deceit and confusion among mortals. It is sometimes believed that every lie told by men strengthens Phunakil, and that every unpleasant truth that is faced by mortals wounds him.

Location

Thamba dwells in the bleak city of Karalas, "whose ebon streets are silent, and where Night Eternal reigns". Besides the deity, Karalas is inhabited by the Gulothrân and the souls of the most disciplined and devout of Thamba's mortal adherents. These mortal shades exist in a paradise (to a Thamban) of eternal obedience to the god. It is believed that Thamba can gift the most loyal of these with some of the powers of the Gulothrân.

Thambanism in Angmar

Though the church is neither the most powerful nor outwardly influential in Angmar, the Thamban hand is felt throughout the land and believed to stretch far beyond it. The temples are mostly plain, but well designed and in good repair. Thamba is feared and not many dare to openly defy him. Those that do usually disappear soon afterwards.

The Witch-king has many uses for the Thambans and their talents. This church's covert existence and operations make it easier for the Angmarean lords to feed the Dúnedain's fears of an omnipotent force of fanatical assassins from Angmar.

☩ *Vâra* ☩

Aka: Shieldmaiden of the Worthy Cause; Guardian of Minas Aglar; Protector of the Brave; the Unwilling Warrior

Description: Vâra is the benevolent goddess of chivalry and battle, the reluctant warrior who fights only for a good and noble cause and with a strict code of chivalry and honor.

Her followers claim she is the greatest of the trinity of the war gods, but she is more constrained by honour and conscience than either Azîra or Sanagathis. This is a weakness, since Vâra will not strike without warning nor without cause. It is also a strength since Vâranians do not forget whose side they are on.

Vâra appears most often as a tall maiden clad in a white gown with red trim. About her waist and head are circlets of silver; she is fair of face, and strong, although she may not show her power. This is the aspect of the Lady of Knights, whom it is an honour to serve and protect, the guardian of knightly virtue, the warrior's lady, the ultimate object of chaste and courtly love. The Lady of Knights is symbolic of more than feudal womanhood, she epitomizes the worthwhile aspects of feudalism, duty to one's superiors and inferiors, striving to attain the unattainable, worthy goal, the quest to excel.

When Vâra loses patience with her enemies or lapsed adherents, she assumes the aspect of the "Terrible Lady of the Flowing Red", and is ready to do battle. No longer is she the protected; she becomes the Protector and does battle on her own behalf. As the Lady of Red, she wears Angcaradina, her blood-red mail. She also bears Anglas, her red and white checkered shield, and Agmantar, the Sword that Strikes True, which is also called "Oathbinder" and "Herald of the End of Life".

There is considerable enmity between Vâra and Azîra, the evil god of war. Vâra once wounded Azîra in battle, causing seven wounds whose pain never subsided. Some theologians believe that Azîra will eventually attempt to murder Vâra regardless of the consequences. This hostility is reflected in the mortal churches of both deities.

Major Divine Servants

Deril: Deril is the greatest of VâraVâra's Major Divine Servants, her chamberlain and the constable of Minas Aglar. Most often he has the form of a great, crimson Giant Eagle. When in human or humanoid form, he bears a lance with a checkered pennant, and a shield (also checkered). When the goddess leaves her kingdom to walk among her mortal adherents, it is Deril who governs in her stead. When a great battle is fought on the borders of her realm, Deril is her standard-bearer. Occasionally, the Eagle is dispatched to the mortal plane, most often in mortal guise.

Arathor: Arathor is a little known member of VâraVâra's household. He takes the form of a slim young man in snow white robes, on the hem of which is a small bloodstain. He is sometimes called "the Frowner" since his face is always thoughtful. He smiles, it is said, only when give some special favour by the goddess. Some hold that Arathor is actually a son of Hambasi, sent to Tiradh (see below) to remind Vâra of, "that which might be forgotten". Legend has it than Arathor once slew a demon in defence of the fields of Pharalda, hence the stain on his garment. His mother thought it best that he dwell elsewhere. Arathor is a sad figure, too aggressive for Pharalda and too passive for Minas Aglar. Were it not for Arathor, Vâra might more often assume the aspect of the Terrible Lady; he calms her when she becomes wrathful, and counsels her in moderation. Arathor often bears messages between the two goddesses, but visits the mortal plane only rarely.

Location

Vâra dwells in Tiradh, which may be translated as the "Guarded Realm". Tiradh is constantly at war with the realms of Azîra and the other evil deities. Tiradh is organized as a feudal state; Vâra is the Queen; her barons are demigods, her knights are slain heroes. The fertile countryside divided into many manors and worked by yeomen and a virtuous peasantry. Tiradh is the ultimate feudal ideal.

The heart of Tiradh is the legendary castle of Minas Aglar (S. "Tower of Brill-

liance"), seat of the goddess and haven of her followers. It is said to be the fairest structure in two worlds, and the strongest fastness, although followers of Azîra claim the latter distinction for Bantûca. Minas Aglar stands atop a hill and from its parapets the goddess may view the whole kingdom and marshal her forces for its defence.

Vâranism in Angmar

The worship of Vâra is proscribed in Angmar after ca. T.A. 1700. Since many names in Vâranism are rendered in Sindarin with little or no change (e.g. "Minas Aglar"), the connection of this goddess with the Dûnedain is all the more believable and a constant excuse for the Azîrans to make war on them. Vâra's principles are mostly met by the Númenórean standards and behaviour (e.g. idealistic feudalism, chivalry etc.) and accordingly it's not difficult for Angmar's Azîrans to portray the Dûnedain as Vâranians who just use other names for the goddess.

The official Vâran church in Angmar is wiped out in a coup by the then ascending Azîrans in T.A. 1697/98. Some secret followers escaped though, to bide their time until the revenge of Vâra came.

**Ꞇ Zaldûni Ꞇ**

Aka: Lord of the Puzzles, and Mazes; Sage of the Gods; Mixer of Potions, Knower of Many Things; The Lost Guide

Description: Zaldûni is most commonly depicted as the Lost Guide, an aged sage bearing the lamp Laspuc and is symbolic of the interminable nature of the quest for knowledge and the futility of the search for absolute truth. His other aspects include Nâtha, the whimsical and sometimes musical jester and Basi, the beggar who seeks enlightenment but receives only common alms.

Adherents of the church have no particular moral bent beyond loyalty to the church and its objectives. However, belief in an ordered society seems to preclude evil or chaotic behaviour, and the occasional need to take ruthless action is repugnant to selfless persons.

Major Divine Servants

Zaldûni's chief servants are the Arâtha – the Nine Judges of the High Archive.

Anâtha (The Truthsayer): Anâtha is the only entity other than Zaldûni himself who is able to use Laspuc, and is charged with its custody when the god is not carrying it himself. It purportedly "sheds light that can be seen by no mortal man", that is symbolic of hidden knowledge. When the unseen light of Laspuc is shed by Anâtha or the deity, all secrets are exposed.

Arâpha (The High Riddler): The Lord of Enigmas, Arâpha is the most intelligent of the Arâtha, a creator and solver of riddles. Arâpha fetches interesting puzzles from the mortal plane for his master's amusement. He also creates puzzles, and answers difficult questions for the other Arâtha. Arâpha is believed to have fathered a number of semi-divine children on earth and elsewhere.

Bastarâpha (The Lord of Lies): Known also as the Taleweaver, Bastarâpha has charge of fiction and legends. His repertoire of stories is said to be limitless, and his style of telling hypnotic. He is commonly portrayed as a young, dashing wanderer with a lute slung over his shoulder. He is the minstrel of the Archival Court. He also has the more serious function of hiding or confusing

dangerous knowledge, hence his name the Lord of Lies. It is said of Bastarâpha that he "never speaks true where a lie would do".

Buram, Buratti, and Bandûta (The Searchers):

These three are dedicated to the gathering of knowledge in all its forms. Their search carries them through all worlds as they seek out knowledge to be recorded in the Râphabras and upon the walls of Zaran-Phân. Portrayed as women of gentle bearing and soft beauty, the trio come often into contact with mortal folk and are the subject of several tales and songs. Adventurous adherents may attempt to emulate the three by undertaking quests for knowledge in the mortal world.

Tharâph (Herald of Zaran-Phân): Tharâph sits in a high throne atop Zaran-Phân watching in all directions. It is his task to deal with visitors. It is said that he knows every living thing by sight. Those of importance are announced to the deity or to one of the other Arâtha. Lesser beings may be permitted to enter and peruse the upper levels if they can answer a riddle which may be posed by Tharâph, by Arâpha or by one of the Scribes of the High Archive.

Cûnur and Zîra (The Teachers): A male-female team, these two Arâtha are the patrons of the performing arts. Portrayed either as jesters or thespians, Cûnur and Zîra are the quintessential performers. Dramatists often murmur quick invocations of them to help ensure a flawless performance. Their function beyond this is obscure. Most believe that they are responsible for non-intellectual knowledge, the gathering of emotion.

Location

The legendary residence of Zaldûni is called Zaran-Phân, an immeasurable complex maze-like building commonly believed to lie on neutral ground on Lutharanda. Zaran-Phân is a massive and complex structure of chambers and hallways whose every wall is inscribed with knowledge; every script and language used by mortals and immortals alike is represented, and all the knowledge of man and beast is present.

Zaldûnism in Angmar

Although not proscribed, Zaldûni's church has little influence in Angmar. Only a few shrines exist where its few adherents show their devotion. The officials in Angmar do not like the spread of knowledge, since knowledge in the wrong hands might endanger the rule and stability of the established order.

On the other hand, since knowledge is useful to a ruler, Zaldûnism is allowed to exist and develop, but it is discreetly monitored to prevent any developments not intended by the Lords of Angmar.

The Churches in everyday life

In Angmar, all priests (or at least the more capable ones) are practitioners of magic. They claim to possess these powers by the grace of their respective gods. They believe in this themselves since the way they are taught magic is very cleverly wrapped in religious ceremonies, prayer, etc. Only a **very** few select know that all this an extremely clever sham to make the people believe in god-given priestly powers. Usually these are individuals very high in the Witch-king's confidence and therefore with a vested interest in maintaining the charade.

When the priests work their magic, they and their adherents believe it to be miracles from the respective god or goddess. **There are no secular magic-users allowed in Angmar** – in fact it is prohibited to claim that magic is secular and not granted by the gods. The practice – or claim – of secular magic is treated as a breach of temple privileges and prosecuted accordingly (normally by death). The fact that only priests do use magic in Angmar makes it easier for the Witch-king's servants to portray the Dúnedain as faithless, since these deny any godly given powers and in turn proscribe the "godly" magic of Angmar's priests as "sorcery".

The Role of the Deities

The various deities worshipped in this pantheon serve several roles. The first is to fulfill the Witch-king's need for a sense of a supernatural bond among his subjects.

This was achieved as described above in the overview section of the Premises of the Religion. Secondly, belief in them serves to deceive the Dúnedain and Eldar about the true nature and purpose of Angmar. For a more detailed discussion on the Dúnedain's views on the Angmarean Pantheon, see the corresponding section on page 57.

Development and influence of the churches over time

During approximately the first century of the Angmarean Pantheon, the 'good' or 'neutral' gods such as Sanagathis, Hambasi, Nînur, Phanurinduk and Zaldûni were more prominent and the evil trio (Azîra, Mazaralda and Thamba) were intentionally given only minor roles. Behind the scenes, the Witch-king manipulated all developments and allowed even the representatives of his master's enemies (Vâra/Varda and Manwâ/Manwe) some say in religious matters, to lull Dúnedain suspicions before he had secured his hold over the new kingdom. Because the "good" gods Vâra and Manwâ held influence, this new set of beliefs gave the Dúnedain no great reason for concern. The First Northern War in T.A. 1352-59 saw a beginning shift of influence in the clerical scene, as Azîra's Orders began to take a leading role. Their successes enhanced their influence and reputation despite the eventual setbacks on the battlefield.

The worship of the 'good' deities shrank, and until the prelude of the Second Northern War in T.A. 1409 the worship of Manwâ and Vâra was greatly diminished. The church of Azîra certainly had the leading role now and its several fighting orders¹ became the nucleus of the continued war against the Dúnedain. Hambasi was unmolested due to her peaceful nature and usefulness to prevent the simple folk from developing more "uncomfortable" ideas. Nînur's worship also was very useful to satisfy the worldly needs of many people. The promises of Nînur's gifts gained many an informant for the benefit of Angmar as a whole. Phanurinduk's following was never numerous and its adherents considered largely harmless. Zaldûni's church shrank but did not disappear. The Witch-king considered too much knowledge in the

¹ Comparable to the real world Christian Orders like the Templars, Hospitallers or Teutonic Knights

Year (Third Age)	Church of ...									
	Azîra	Hambasi	Manwâ	Mazaralda	Nînur	Phanurinduk	Sanagathis	Thamba	Vâra	Zaldûni
1250	±	++	++	±	±	±	+	±	++	±
1300	+	++	+	±	±	±	+	±	+	±
1350	+	+	+	±	+	±	+	±	±	±
1400	++	±	±	±	+	±	+	±	±	±
1450	++	±	±	±	±	±	+	±	±	±
1500	++	±	±	±	±	±	+	±	±	±
1550	++	±	±	±	±	±	+	±	±	±
1600	++	±	±	±	±	±	+	±	±	±
1650	++	±	±	+	±	±	±	±	±	±
1700	++	±	-	+	±	±	±	±	-	±
1750	++	±	-	+	±	±	±	±	-	±
1800	++	±	-	+	±	±	±	+	-	±
1850	++	±	-	++	±	±	±	+	-	±
1900	+	±	-	++	±	±	±	+	-	±
1950	+	±	-	++	±	±	±	+	-	±

++ denotes considerable influence in Angmar and its politics
 + denotes moderate influence in Angmar and its politics
 ± denotes minimal influence in Angmar and its politics
 - denotes prohibition

hands of people not wholly devoted to him dangerous for his rule. Sanagathis stayed very popular especially among people of Northman and Easterling descent, though the informal nature of its church made it a minor factor in state politics. Mazaralda's worship stayed minor and secretive too, because the Witch-king deemed too much influence from a cult who worshipped a person resembling the Great Enemy extremely detrimental to his master's wishes. Thamba's church also gained great popularity among many important people and it served as an excellent tool of subterfuge and terror against both internal and external enemies. This state of affairs concerning the relative influence of the various churches remained so from ca. T.A. 1400 to 1900.

At the beginning of the 20th century Mazaralda's church gained much more influence and the belief of the population became more polarized.¹ Azîra remained extremely popular especially among the nobility. Sanagathis' influence waned as the 'sportive' spirit of war declined in Angmar. Even Nînur's worship declined in favor of the more aggressive 'evil' gods who preached that the end of their ancient "Vâranian" enemies in Arthedain was drawing near. Especially the Thambans saw their dreams fulfilled. Omens were observed that were seen to speak of the final defeat of their enemies in Arthedain. Ham-

basi still was very popular with the common folk, but only local shrines were tolerated, and there was no more a central temple. The open worship of Vâra and Manwâ had become proscribed since ca. TA 1700.

The final war in T.A. 1974/75 first achieved glorious victories, but then brought total disaster. Most of the greater church leaders died on the battlefields of Arthedain. Some Azîran orders were completely annihilated and the remainder were crippled. Many Mazaraldan priests had been left behind in Angmar to keep the peasants in line. When news of the defeat reached the realm, the priests tried to erect a regime of religious terror and total Mazaraldan supremacy. Though they won the brutal and costly civil war that ensued, their rule was short-lived. The orcish survivors of Angmar also began to turn upon their erstwhile mannish allies² once the iron hand of the Witch-king was removed. The famine of the winter 1974/75 added to the precarious situation. In this desperate strait some families who had secretly preserved the worship of Vâra assembled the few faithful and led them on the dreaded "Women's March" southward into the former Rhudaur. The few Vârans led Hambasians and a handful of Manwâ worshippers. Many of them perished, but those that survived had learned to hate the rule of the former masters of Angmar and were

glad to be allowed to settle in this eastern part of Eriador. Disillusioned with the Angmarean lords, they recognized their failure of following the Pantheon of Angmar. They spoke to the Dúnedain of their folly and learnt the truth of the Dúnanan teachings. They slowly overcame the suspicion of the surviving Dúnedain in part through the intercession of the wizard Mithrandir. They served as true and unwaveringly loyal supporters of the remaining Dúnedain through the Third Age and into the Fourth. These people who had lived in Angmar and stayed true to their good ideals had a noble spirit, comparable to that of the Dúnedain (even if of other lineage).

When the armies of the Dúnedain and the Elves of Lindon arrived in the realm of Angmar in the spring of T.A. 1975, the remaining loyalists of the Witch-king were no match for the avenging armies of the West, and Carn Dûm and all of Angmar's cities were made short work of by the victors. So perished the realm of Angmar and so too, within a few generations, the pantheon founded by Angarnas fell into oblivion, after nearly 700 years in service of the Witch-king's cause against the northern Dúnedain. Some survivors may have fled east and taken with them the lore of their religion. What became of them is not recorded in this tale.

As has already been noted, the relative strength and influence on Angmarean poli-

1 Please keep in mind that all such developments take place because the Witch-king wants it/them this way

2 And one another of course

Elda and Dúnadan views on the Angmarean Pantheon

Angmarean god	Corresponding Ainu(r)	Comments
Azira	Sauron	The “organized evil” of this cult is reminiscent of Sauron’s reign of terror as the Dark Lord in the Black Years of the Second Age.
Hambasi	Yavanna	The peaceful and nature-orientated Hambasi is seen as a quite close view of Yavanna.
Manwâ	Manwë/Irmo	The close association of this god with Manwë is already seen in the similar name. His role as the eldest god and patron of the Elves underlines this. His function as the Lord of Dreams shows a certain mixing with the Vala Irmo though.
Mazaralda	Melkor/Morgoth	This one is quite obvious. Mazaralda’s characterization as being almost insane and of chaotic temper; intent on destroying existence is reminiscent of the nihilistic tendency of Melkor in his later morgothic stages.
Nînur	Vána/Nessa	The worldly attitude of Nînur as patron of luxury, decadence and hedonism has little correspondence with any Vala. Vána and Nessa with their focus on joy and youthfulness are as close as a Vala (or Valie) gets. Therefore the Númenóreans believe that the image of Nînur has strong roots in the East where Númenórean teachings had little influence.
Phanurinduk	Aulë	Phanurinduk is another example of a god who has only weak roots in Númenórean teachings. His enigmatic and often aloof manner has no real correspondence among the known Ainur. His interest in making, building and creation in general shows a certain similarity to the Smith of the Valar though.
Sanagathis	Tulkas/Oromë	This very physical and energetic god bears a good resemblance to a blending of the primary traits of Tulkas and Oromë. His interests in the wilds as well as his pleasure in war as a “sport” resembles strong influences of the common image of Tulkas.
Thamba	Mandos/Sauron	This reclusive and deadly god seems to be a mixture of various sources. His role as the god of death is reminiscent of the Vala Námo Mandos who serves as the Valar’s Keeper of the Dead. His evil associations as an lord of assassins and his cold and merciless demeanour is more similar to the cruel and hard reign of Sauron in the Second Age – both in Middle-earth and as “counselor” of the King in Númenor.
Vâra	Varda	As for Manwë, Varda’s counterpart in the Angmarean theology is quite close in behaviour and outlook to her place in Númenórean lore. Being the most determined enemy of darkness and evil is reflected in Vâra’s similar role in Angmarean theological teachings. The Dúnedain are unsurprised that Angmarean culture would represent her in overly martial terms.
Zaldûni	Mandos/Vairë	Zaldûni as the loremaster of the gods is a figure that has no very close counterpart among the Valar. He is probably derived in part from Mandos’ function as the keeper of memory and records (remember his spouse’s Vairë’s tapestries that keep the history of Arda “written”). And he shares Mandos’ inclination towards statements of portent.

tics of the various churches varied wildly during Angmar’s existence. The table on the previous page gives a short overview for all the churches (in alphabetical order), cross-referenced against time in 50-year intervals. If you need a finer graining, just interpolate between the provided dates. The count of years begins before the founding of Angmar, since many of its core belief elements began even before that.

Other attitudes to the Angmarean Pantheon

The Eldar

The Eldar are not deceived by the claims of the Angmareans concerning their gods and their presumed powers. Since they do not meddle in the affairs of Men, this is also of little concern to the majority of the Elves. After all, they see the majority of the Secondborn as having been cut off from the truth in the Dark Days of which they do not speak,¹ even where they are ethical and have notions of gods that

are accurate represent the Valar. Of course the Wise like Elrond or Círdan do care about Angmar and watch its development. The outright siege of Rivendell by Angmarean forces in the 14th century T.A. was testimony enough for the importance of the matter. Due to the clever and careful implementation of the whole Angmarean clerical system, whilst they interpret it as the warped view of un-enlightened men who are further misled by malicious and greedy lords, they do not recognize its darker ulterior motives. Overall, their views of the Angmarean Pantheon are the same as those of the Dúnedain’s.

The Dúnedain

The Dúnedain have a special perspective on the Angmarean Pantheon. Though not many of them are aware of its beginnings, the tale of Angarnas is known to the loremasters and is seen as an example of how man can fall – and all the more tragic if the intentions were good.

In general, the Dúnedain see the gods of Angmar as distorted interpretations of their own teachings about the Valar and

their roles in the world. The table above summarizes these views, together with the correlations and differences between the Valar and the Angmarean gods. The fact that not all the Valar are represented is also seen as a sign of the corrupted view that the Angmarean Pantheon takes of the Powers.

Overall, the Dúnedain recognize that the Pantheon is used for the political purpose of uniting the diverse Angmareans in a single overarching religious system. They also perceive the declining role of the “good” gods and the gradual takeover of power by the clergy of the more evil-inclined ones. They see this as sign that some forces hostile to the Dúnedain are at work. This is quite true of course, but they lack the insight to discern the whole depth of all this. Especially in its beginning, they fail to recognize the signs that something more than the usual mannish greed and mind is behind it all.

With the passage of years they become increasingly worried about the development in the religious structure in Angmar and by the mid-17th century begin to sus-

¹ See the Athrabêth in HoMe 10.

pect that something more than a clever mannish charade is behind the title of the “Witch-king” of the realm. It is only in the 20th century when Mazaralda rises to prominence even in the ‘official’ Angmar, that the Dúnedain begin to suspect that a powerful servant of Sauron might be at work. This is strengthened by intelligence gathered that many of the inner circle in Angmar call one god not Mazaralda but Múlkher – the ancient name of the Great Enemy that Sauron used in Númenor when he corrupted the people and caused the island’s Downfall. On receiving news of the attacks on Gondor they begin to suspect a connection between the evil in the north of Eriador, the shadow over southern Mirkwood and the attacks upon the southern Dúnedain.

The Common Folk of Eriador

The commoners of Eriador are not primarily interested in delicate philosophical debates about the nature of such supernatural beings – be they called Valar or Gods. The strong influence of the Dúnedain has created a – mostly – firm bond with the Númenóreans’ set of beliefs as well, and so most people are content with it. Beside that, there are also folk traditions that represent the Valar in a way the Dúnedain deem unproblematic.

Other Neighbours

Dwarves

Both the Longbeard and Broadbeam Dwarves¹ were deeply affected by Angmar through the losses of Gundabad and Barazbizar (Carn Dûm) respectively. These forcible evictions earned Angmar the continued hatred of Naugrim, so that the religious views of these mannish people became secondary in any case. Nonetheless, the Pantheon with its various deities, which quickly showed a certain bias for the more ‘evil’ deities, reaffirmed the Dwarves in their opinion that the axe would be the only suitable tool of diplomacy with the masters of that realm. Due to the general waning of dwarven fortunes and power, they had to prioritize their goals and therefore were unable and unwilling to give much attention to the matter.

As a bottom line, the Dwarves of the region retain a healthy dislike for all things Angmarean, and the nature of the Pantheon contributes to this general assessment. Usually they will try to kill anyone showing some kind of ‘official’ position within the Angmarean churches.

Men of the Middle Anduin Vales

The men of the Anduin vales remain relatively aloof from ideological conflicts of the Dúnedain and their allies over the Angmarean pantheon. They never really suffered badly from the Witch-king’s subjects, and therefore had no immediate reason to be biased against it. On the contrary, as outlined in *The Angmarrim* in *Other Minds, Issue 7*, the Witch-king was interested in keeping good relations with these people in order to secure his southern flank east of the Hithaeglin and get supplies of all kind running relatively unhindered in his realm. Of course there have been numerous Arthadan and Cardolani embassies, urging the Northrons into action against Angmar, but the Men here prefer to retain a neutral position.

Since Sanagathis resembles Araw (the Northron term for Oromë) so closely, Angmar’s emissaries do not get weary stressing that Araw is only another name for Sanagathis. This serves as a useful way for the Witch-king to thwart his enemies’ plans of getting these Northrons in their refusal of Angmar and his religion.

Men of the Upper Anduin Vales

These men (the Estaravi) are firmly integrated into Angmar itself, and accordingly into its religious system. Naturally, for most of the time of Angmar, they favor Sanagathis/Araw.

Integration of existing NPC’s into the new religious system

ICE presented a number of NPC’s in the *Angmar* module, some of whose depictions incorporated ICE’s religious ideas. Most of them can be re-used within this new religious system. The following section contains information how these characters can be re-worked to fit better into the new religious order for Angmar. As with all of ICE’s NPC’s, they are primarily

geared for a TA 1640 setting, but with minimal works, you can transplant them into other times as well.

The Angûlion

This character is not a near-immortal mannish sorcerer as in ICE’s *Angmar*, but rather an office. It was begun with Angarnas, whose efforts and ideas institutionalized the office as an integral part of the realm. The actual person posing as the “Angûlion” changes regularly when one office holder dies, falls out of favor or retires (seldom). In this way the charade of the “immortal” Angûlion is maintained, intimidating people with his perceived power and keeping an air of mystery. This transition of office is always done without any unwanted witnesses in order to keep the illusion. The Angûlion keeps the office of chancellor of the Witch-king and *de facto* ruler of the realm on his behalf. The Lord of Nazgûl issues his orders and wishes in the inner power circle, but it is the Angûlion who implements them.

The Angûlion acts also as chairman in the council where all the religious leaders of the various churches meet. It is through this body that the Angûlion announces the Witch-king’s wishes and by skillful diplomacy, intrigue, well-placed favors and veiled threats directs the influence of the various churches within the Witch-king’s realm.

His position as chairman in the clerical council of Angmar makes a somewhat neutral figure, but he can (and will) show certain churches his sympathies, either due to genuine affection or the Witch-king.

If a GM leads a campaign, in which his players might encounter the Angûlion over a vast stretch of time (e.g. over 100 or 150 years), he may devise separate stats for all holders of the office. Otherwise, the ICE stats may be used for whatever timeframe a GM may need it.

Ullrac

Ullrac is one of the most powerful nobles of Angmar, holding the strategic castle of Morkai. He is the Master of the Order of the Bloody Shadows, the Azîran fighting order that most aggressively seeks war with the Dúnedain.

¹ Durin’s and Linmar’s Folk respectively

Ulduim

ICE made this NPC half orc and half dog, which I deem too awkward an inclusion of “High Fantasy” for Middle-earth. Perhaps it might be best to re-interpret his partly “bestial” outlook as the result of his high position in the Mazaraldic church. This dog-like visage is then a ceremonial mask to hide his real face.

In any case, he should be a man rather than such a weird cross-breed.

Ulgarin

Originally another evil (Half-) Elf in the service of Sauron,¹ Ulgarin should be changed to a mannish servant and chief priestess of Nínur’s church. As a special grace this office might carry a Lesser Ring of Power. This item would **not** artificially lengthen the life² of the Nínurn High-priestess but preserve her vigour and beauty until her natural end. Of course it has a dangerous influence and side-effects but since she is already deep in the service of evil, it does not matter.

Camthalion

This guy was yet another evil Elf (see above) in the Witch-king’s service. With respect to the special biography given to him, it might be advisable to make him a lesser Maia in Sauron’s service, performing

the duties of the Thamban High Priest. He might be nicely replaced with the character of Gaurhîr from ICE’s *Gates of Mordor* with his skills, abilities and magical powers raised to 20th or 25th level (in MERP or RM terms).

Bavabbêth

Bavabbêth, a ‘Master of Gathering’, is a very interesting Angmarean NPC presented in *Other Hands 15/16*, amongst several others that (for various reasons) did not make it into the 2nd ed. *Angmar* book.

In the original scenario he is said to be limited to the position of ‘Master of Gathering’ due to his limited fanaticism for the official religious doctrine. Unfortunately this ‘Master of Gathering’ position is not detailed, but it seems to be a mid-level rank in the priestly hierarchy.

The main problem with this otherwise highly interesting character is the unfortunate fact that he is presented as a mortal man who has – through unspeakable crimes and dark rituals – found a way to prolong his mortal life more or less indefinitely. This ‘add-on’ character continues the unfortunate ICE tradition of more or less openly ignoring Tolkien’s statements on the matter – presumably for a bigger “High Fantasy” factor: In traditional fantasy RPGs, such a thing would be a standard

element for a powerful wicked mannish sorcerer. In Middle-earth it seems all the more out of place though. We should note, however, that he was not incorporated into the finished official 2nd ed. *Angmar* book by ICE.

My solution would be to make him a normal renegade southern Dúnadan (with the associated lifespan). He might stem from the direct line of the royal family of Gondor to make his background more interesting and allow him to out-live many of his northern cousins and then act incognito in Eriador and the Northlands for a limited time (until his end comes as well). A birth-date of about 80 years before the specific campaign date would be sufficient to make him both powerful and cunning and grant him a big remaining lifespan as well. Since the Northern and Southern realm are supposed to have had little official communication in this time, it is highly unlikely that he would be personally known to many (if any at all) under his birthname and rank in the North, largely negating the necessity to outlive his enemies.

His mid-rank position might best be in the church of Zaldûni, as appropriate to his interest in lore, and his unscrupulousness in using it for the benefit of Angmar.

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1 ICE used the “unique evil elf” stereotype quite extensively.

2 As ICE has done mostly with lesser rings.

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Appendix A: Dúnadan lifespans in the Fourth Age as used in “The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age”

Listed to the right are the average ages that Dúnedain of certain different ancestries might attain over the course of the Fourth Age. This is individually variable and should be seen as a rule of thumb rather than a strict law. Of course there may be Arnorian Dúnedain with Gondorian ancestry (e.g. through re-location within the kingdom) and vice versa. There may also be individuals of mixed descent. In such cases you can use the “pure” lines below as a framework for extrapolating more appropriate life expectancies.

Year of Birth	ordinary Dúnedain (Gondor)	ordinary Dúnedain (Arnor)	direct royal descent
1	101	113	218
50	101	112	217
100	100	112	216
150	100	111	215
200	99	110	214
250	99	110	212
300	98	109	210
350	98	108	208
400	97	107	206
450	97	107	204
500	96	106	201
550	96	105	198
600	95	105	195
650	95	104	192
700	94	103	189
750	94	103	186
800	93	102	183
850	93	101	179
900	92	100	176
950	92	100	172
1000	91	99	169
1050	91	98	165
1100	90	98	161
1150	90	97	158
1200	89	96	154
1250	89	96	150
1300	88	95	146
1350	88	94	143
1400	87	93	139
1450	87	93	136
1500	86	92	132
1550	86	91	129
1600	85	91	125
1650	85	90	122
1700	84	89	119
1750	84	89	116
1800	83	88	113
1850	83	87	110
1900	82	86	107
1950	82	86	105
2000	81	85	102
2050	81	84	100
2100	80	84	98
2150		83	96
2200		82	95
2250		82	93
2300		81	92
2350		80	91
2400			91
2450			91
2500			91
2550			91
2600			91

Appendix B: Alternative ending for “The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age”

This is the course of events for the more conventional setting, without the introduction of the biblical Deluge as a closing event for the Fourth Age. Until the 49th king, Eärendur II, the events are identical, with some differences afterwards. Here the final outcome of the conflict between the Sakalzâin/Rochoth alliance and Adûzâyan is left open and to be decided in the Fifth Age.

Table of Kings

50 Tarondor II (Telatan)	born 2525	lived 88 years	† slain 2613
In his days the long-awaited storm came. The king’s sons perished and Minas Tirith was wrecked. Rebellion of Belfalas and end of Gondor.			
1 Batarkil (We. “Man of half-Númenórean descent”)	born 2594		
He came from both the royal lines of the Reunited Kingdom and Rohan. With him began a new Age of the World.			

Year Event

- 2583-** The Third Rochoth Invasion. Defeat of the forces of the West on Dagorlad. Minas Tirith wrecked by earthquake.
- 2586** Lord Imrazôr of Dol Amroth overthrows Gondor. Tarondor II flees to Rohan. Arnor remains loyal.
- 2591** With help from Arnorian and Rohirric forces, Tarondor II tries to recapture Gondor.
- 2593** Defeat of Tarondor II and death of his sons. He flees to Arnor.
- 2613** Fourth and final Rochoth Invasion. Telatan (Tarondor II) is killed in battle. End of the Fourth Age.
- 2620-** Several attacks are repulsed at the 80 Isen Wall until they subside
- 2693** Treaty between Adûzâyan and the Rochoth seals the recognition of Adûzâyan as an independent realm and Sakalzâin as a Rochoth ally. End of the Fourth Age

The Fourth Age

Most of the events of the late Fourth Age can be used here again. It diverges from the ‘main’ version when the rebels and their Rochoth allies are defeated by the Isen defense.

Later events concerning the descendants of the Telcontari

All this happened at the dawn of the Fifth Age, and little did the Lords or the Wise know then that not long after events would fuse all these remnants of the Edainic descendants into a powerful new people. The merging of the Rohirric and Dúnadan royal lines and the creation of a new realm of the Edain as the successor to Gondor and Rohan heralded a new era and similar events in the future. But of these times nothing is reported in the Annals of the Reunited Kingdom that end with King Telatan. It is told that in the six decades following Telatan’s death saw several attempts to conquer Adûzâyan by force. Due to the strength of its people, all these are repulsed. A final mutual recognition between Adûzâyan, Sakalzâin and the Rochoth is achieved and the Fourth Age ends. The new age brought many new things, and the Telcontari’s heirs carried on the Edainic legacy into this new time.

Table of Contents

Other Minds Magazine, Issues 1-9

What you see before you is a comprehensive table of content for all Issues of *Other Minds* published so far. It will be regularly updated as new Issues become available. If you need a more flexible tool, please visit our website at <http://othermindsmagazine.com/>. There you can find a simple spreadsheet with an option to filter for several criteria.

The Issue listing below should be largely self-explanatory. The “page” column lists the beginning page of the contribution in question.

Issue 1, July 2007 (49 pages)

Title	Author	Page	Game System
Editorial: Here we are!	Thomas Morwinsky, Hawke Robinson	2	any
Opinion – The Acroteriasm of Other Hands	W.A. Hawke Robinson	3	any
The Battle Over Role Playing Gaming	W.A. Hawke Robinson	6	any
Mapping Arda	Thomas Morwinsky, Stéphane Hoerlé, Gabriele Quaglia, Oliver Schick, Christian Schröder	9	any
Of Barrow-wights – Part One	Neville Percy	21	any
Magic in Middle-earth	Chris Seeman	28	any
Thoughts on Imladris – Part One	Thomas Morwinsky	31	any

Issue 2, January 2008 (75 pages) – Focus theme: Númenor

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Ready for Round Two!	Thomas Morwinsky, Hawke Robinson	2	any	
Other Minds Conventions	Thomas Morwinsky	3	any	
J.R.R. Tolkien’s love of Trees and the Environment	W.A. Hawke Robinson	6	any	Core
Númenóreans in Endor	Gabriele Quaglia, Stéphane Hoerlé, Thomas Morwinsky	10	any	Optional
Númenórean Maritime Technology	Thomas Morwinsky	26	any	Optional, House
A Response to ‘Mapping Arda’	Eric Dubourg	37	any	Optional, House
Mapping Arda - Reloaded	Thomas Morwinsky, Stéphane Hoerlé, Gabriele Quaglia, Oliver Schick, Christian Schröder	41	any	Optional

Issue 3, May 2008 (45 pages)

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Third time is a charm	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Of Barrow-wights – Part Two	Neville Percy	5	any	Core
J.R.R. Tolkien, Words, Phrases & Passages in The Lord of the Rings – A Game Designer’s Guide to Parma Eldalamberon 17	Chris Seeman	9	any	Core
The Rings of Power – History and Abilities	Thomas Morwinsky	15	any	Core, Optional
The Palantíri	Chris Seeman	31	LotR RPG	House
The Venturers and the colonies of Númenor	Eric Dubourg	34	any	House

Issue 4, July 2008 (49 pages) – Focus theme: Dwarves

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Baruk Khazâd – Khazâd ai-mênu	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Whither MerpCon	Hawke Robinson	3	any	
The Problem of Dwarven Women	Neville Percy	6	any	Optional
A Brief History of the Dwarven Mansions	Thomas Morwinsky	11	any	Optional
A Dwarven Runic Cryptogram	Neville Percy	22	any	House
Swept Off By Your Feet...	Thomas Morwinsky	24	any	House
Outer Names for the Western Dwarves	Neville Percy	25	any	House
The Giant Armoured Moldewarp	Neville Percy	28	MERP	House
The Sword of Aulë	Tom Davie	30	MERP	House

Issue 5, March 2009 (35 pages)

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Back for good	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Tolkien and Transformational Thought	Michael Martinez	3	any	Core
Tolkien's Impact on Beowulf	W.A. Hawke Robinson	6	any	Core
Thoughts on Imladris - Part Two	Thomas Morwinsky	9	any	House
Minas Ithil Name Glossary	Chris Seeman, David Salo	13	any	Optional
Mithril and MERP	Chris Seeman	18	any	House
Amending "A Brief History of the Dwarven Mansions"	Thomas Morwinsky	25	any	Optional

Issue 6, May 2009 (77 pages)

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Back on track!	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Clad in Mail	Oliver Hauss	4	any	Core
White Hand Rising	Lev Lafayette	8	any	House
Númenórean longevity	Thomas Morwinsky	10	any	Optional
The Eöldrim	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	23	any	House
Tharbad Map Name Changes	Chris Seeman, David Salo	28	any	Optional
Banks of the Northern Anduin	Johannes Lomborg	30	MERP	House
Born of Hope – An Overview	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	58	any	House
Book Review – "Isildur"	Thomas Morwinsky	60	any	Core

Issue 7, July 2009 (42 pages)

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: A Magical Number	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Inside Information	Thomas Morwinsky	3	any	
The Angmarrim	Thomas Morwinsky	4	any	Optional
The Other Side	José Enrique Vacas de la Rosa	10	any	Optional
MERP Supplementary Rules	Thomas Morwinsky	16	MERP	House
The Ebbs and Flows of Númenórean Technology	António Simões	26	any	House

Issue 8, November 2009 (39 pages) – Focus Theme: Magic

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: Surprise!	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
A Sense of Magic	Neville Percy	4	any	Core
Sense of Magic	Neville Percy	6	MERP	House
Between Canon and Dogma	Daniel Vacaflores	8	any	Core
A Journey in the Dark	Daniel Vacaflores	15	any	Core
The Ways of Magic	Daniel Vacaflores	19	any	Optional
The Nine Nazgûl	António Simões	24	any	House
The Age of Sauron – Preview	Padraig Timmins	32	any	House

Issue 9, February 2010 (65 pages) – Focus Theme: The Fourth Age

Title	Author	Page	Game System	Category
Editorial: The Dominion of Man	Thomas Morwinsky	2	any	
Inside Information	Thomas Morwinsky	4	any	
The Age of Sauron	Padraig Timmins	5	any	House
The Heirs of Elessar and the Fourth Age	Thomas Morwinsky	14	any	House
A Fourth Age Chronology	Tom Davie	29	any	House
Religion in Angmar	Thomas Morwinsky	39	any	House