

INZAE

OBSERVATIONS, NOTES AND COMMENTARY OF
FODIUS THE FISHMONGER (DECEASED)
ON THE WORLD AND PEOPLE

DAVIS CHENAULT

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My Dear Maester

I hope, as ever, this missive finds you well. It is with some sadness I write for I have ill tidings to relate. As you may know, my travels over the years have taken me far and wide from the Tallerstat. I have seen many wondrous and fearful things, but it seems those days of searching may at last be coming to an end for I have found Fodius.

In an unlikely twist of fate, I became marooned in Bergholt for several days as a storm wreaked havoc on the Interzae. While there, I put about with my regular inquiries and was directed to a particular Aufseren who lived nearby. That nearby proved to be the outskirts of Kreutzmark a hundred leagues away or more. This Aufseren knew of whom I spoke and had, in fact, traveled with him in the past season.

It is with regret that I must inform you that Fodius was slain. The Aufseren, Fodius and others had made their way into the fringes of the Urutenlaan and it was there, in some dismal swamp, that Fodius was killed by a great war-boar. Although it took significant monetary reward, the Aufseren took me on a quite perilous journey to the place of Fodius' death. We found little there excepting bones. However, the Fates smiled upon us for, buried beneath a log lay Fodius' old pack with odds and ends in it as well as a sheaf of notes. I have included those for your perusal. which I have included for your perusal.

Who could have known Fodius would turn a word to histories and geography. It seems he must have traveled further afield than I imagined or, at least, knew more people than I have and gleaned what he could from them. After having read the notes Fodius made, I am only left to wonder what more he would have written given the time and resources. But alas, we shall never know.

We immolated his remains so that he can finally leave this world and, with the blessings of the Firsman, gather in their Haller.

I do have some grave news. This message is sent by courier and, the Firsman willing, reach you long before I do. It appears I am in perilous straights. I am being followed. I do not know by whom or why, but I fear the worst. So, I shall take a long journey home and hopefully, disappear completely from those who follow me.

Your Ever Faithful

Otto vin Besmeer



THE NOTES OF FODIUS, THE FISHMONGER

THE MAKING OF THE WORLD

Before aught, the Dragon Inzaa existed. In the vast emptiness, Inzaa grew restless and wroth and began to spin upon herself. Such a violent thrashing and churning did this become that The Dragon ripped a shred from the fabric of nothingness and from this hole all manner of energy and matter spilt into the universe in a savage, churning vortex; the Maelstrum. Inzaa twirled about the Maelstrum for ages untold as time and space and matter and energy were cast off into the universe.

From this primordial material The Dragon tried to make something in her own image or other things of her imagining. But she could imagine nothing complete or whole or lasting and all her creations came to naught. Then she spied in the emptiness that what was being cast off from the Maelstrom was being shaped, seemingly, of its own volition. She wondered long at this and went to gaze upon the creations. Inzaa spied a light in the darkness and from which all things were being born. The Dragon marveled at the creations of this light. She named the light Fyensigg and spoke with him. Much was exchanged but the most important was Fyensigg teaching Inzaa his language and she, her language.

With the use of Fyensigg's words, Inzaa created copies of what she had seen and those of her own imagining and thus created Inzae, the world. But it would prove to be an imperfect world, bound to her language and her speaking for, ever is The Dragon a power of decay and loss and one with the chaos of the Maelstrum.

Inzaa first brought the Insilmin into the world to help shape it and make of it the shapes she desired, and to hold these things in place for Inzaa's creations were imperfect and lacked symmetry and fell back into the chaos. Many other creatures were created, destroyed, cast out or hid in the crannies and crevices of the world to avoid The Dragon's ire. Inzaa came to rely ever more on the Insilmin to create and hold together what she desired and so taught them her language and what she could of Fyensigg's.

Though nearly the greatest of her creations, the Insilmin, being the manifestations of Inzaa and speaking her language, carried with them the seeds of the Maelstrum and much they attempted was imperfect and often came to ruin. So once again, Inzaa stole across the vast emptiness and spoke with Fyensigg. The two managed a trade of beings; the essences of one another were given over to the other. Of all The Dragon's creations, the Veerms are here greatest. There were one hundred of them, each a reflection of The Dragon. And of these, the first-born Veerm was the most magnificent and most like her mother. She gave Fyensigg her first born and in exchange was given The Tree.

Inzae, the world, benefitted greatly from The Tree. With The Tree there came the giants to carry it and plant it and the Inzal to tend to its needs. There also came the Waters of the World so The Tree could drink and the Light of the World so that The Tree could flourish.



But the light was a sword with edges and it cut both ways. The Insilmin could see their creations now and the world unfolding but they could also see the yoke of their slavery to Inzaa and sought to break the chains. In this effort they had many children, the Firstenmin, and spread them throughout the world. They were powerful and strong and capable of acts both wonderful and horrible but most importantly were given the yearning for freedom and the desire to create their own imaginings. The Firstenmin long labored under the shroud of Inzaa until many grew wroth at her commandments and being able to see a world without her, rebelled.

Then the world truly fell into chaos as The Dragon tore into the Firstenmin and laid waste amongst them. A war raged for a millennia. Some of the Firstenmin chose to fight alongside Inzaa, others remained aloof or worked with whomever provided them the greatest benefit while the others openly defied and fought against The Dragon.

In time, those who rebelled cast Inzaa into the world with such force that she split it asunder and the waters of the world came pouring in to the huge gaping hole she left in the center of the world. Inzaa, The Dragon, The Mother of the World, would lie, as if dead, buried beneath rock and stone and water from that time until her return at the end of time. Those who won the war chased the minions of Inzaa and those Firstenmin who followed her into the far corners of the world or deep beneath its mountains. Those who survived rejoiced in their victory.

They then sought to make the world in their image and to fit their desires. Though they had great power and could affect many things they did not have the powers to pull from the firmament and create from nothing. They found they could only amend what already existed. As such, many wondrous palaces were built, halls of stone and wood such that even the Insilmin marveled at the will of their children. But it was all for naught, for the pall of The Dragon hung over the land and their hearts. After a time they learned that all things wither and die, that the

light would dim and the water cease to flow. They had witnessed that the fate of all had been woven into a great tapestry and that an end would come and Inzaa would return to devour the world and spit it back into the Maelstrum from whence it came.

Many grew disheartened and withdrew from the world and remained aloof from its happenings. Others disappeared entirely. Still others railed against this fate claiming to fight it unto the bitter end and perhaps stay it. The wars never abated, The Firstenmin fought each other until they were ragged and but few remained and then they sought to continue their wars through their children and their children's children until the end and a ceaseless battle has raged across the Inzae from its very beginning.

During this time, man, the children of the Firstenmin, came into Inzae and their thirteen tribes spread through much of the known world. They founded many kingdoms and settled many lands. As with the Forstenmin, they warred amongst each other and against others they found in the world. The goblins, other children of the Forstenmin also came into the world and warred amongst each other. They founded many kingdoms and settled many lands as well, though were driven to inhospitable places and dark caverns beneath the earth.

Other peoples of the world came and went. The giants who carried The Tree, the Trottigen, spread throughout the world and built many wondrous palaces. The Inzal, who came to tend The Tree retreated to the far north as their number dwindled. There are the Jazrim who dwell in the frozen wastes of the north and the arid steppes of the east. Also, there are the Goblins who spread far and wide in the forests of the south. There are many others besides and are too numerous to name here.

FIRSTENMIN

Of the Firstenmin, there are many who walk in the world while others reside in the firmament. The following is a classification of the Firstenmin followed by a list of several of them. The Firstenmin take many shapes. Heimdel appears as a man, while Toda and Virda are wolves and Inez is but a wind.

THE FIRSTENMIN: These are the first and foremost, those who came first of the world and into the word and were enthralled to Inzaa. They served her for many ages and saw the building of the Endless Palace and the placement of the Heart of the World. Before the coming of the Waters of the World and the Sundering of the Rings of Brass, many of the Firstenmin rose up and cast Inzaa down. Some sided with Inzaa and other remained aloof from the war.

THE FIRSMIN: These are the Firstenmin who rose in revolt against Inzaa. They roam the wide world but their ancestral hall and palace is in Insalla. Great in power, the Firsmin are worshipped as gods.

THE DORSTMIN: The Dorstmin are the Firstenmin who sided with Inzaa in the revolt and fought against the Firsmin. They scattered to the four winds and hid themselves far and wide after Inzaa was cast down.

THE IRSLEMIN: These are the Firstenmin who remained aloof from the revolt against Inzaa. They neither sided with the Firsmin nor against them. Some of the IRSLEMIN are worshipped as gods. Their ancestral hall and palace is on Mount Nistor.

THE NINZANE: Inzaa's clutch of eggs produced 100 spawn called Veerm. The first was given over so that only the 99 remained. They served Inzaa and insured her thralls obeyed her commands. During the revolt against Inzaa, many were slain and the rest scattered to the remote corners of the world awaiting their mother's return but are known to guard their realms jealously.

ANE: Ane is an IRSLEMIN who dwells in the world upon a throne fashioned from the bones of those he has slain. Ever given to sowing discord and fighting, Ane fomented revolt amongst Firstenmin and fought with them, or against them as was his desire. Many give offering to Ane before fighting in hopes of gaining his aid.

KLEEDJ: Kleedj is a Dorstmin who fought alongside Inzae when the Firsmin rose in revolt. Kleedj hides in the fetid stench of the world gathering to his fore the Jazrim and others of similar bent to make war upon man and all others who opposed Inzae.

HEIMDEL: Heimdel is a Firsmin who's blow cast down The Dragon. He fights upon the Long Bridge against The Dragon's return. Heimdel calls to him all the essence of the greatest warriors to aid in his eternal struggle.

MORTZVA: Mortzva is an IRSLEMIN who resides most of the time in Mount Nistor serving the Nanes. He is worshipped by the Szotek and others of that ilk who withdrew from the world and involve themselves in it only as is their fate.

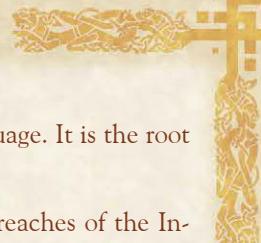
NANES: The Nanes are the five fates that reside in the bowels of Mount Nistor. They are blind and without emotion and were a parting curse to the world from Inzae. They weave the Tapestry of Fate.

TODA AND VIRDA: Toda and Virda were created when Tovdir, a Firsmin, was cast onto the world and split in twain. They appear as twin wolves and are protectors of the tribes of man and are worshipped together in Todavia, where they reside.

SHTROOMSH: This beastly lord, a Dorstmin, sits upon a mound of gore and blood and calls all who eat of the blood of the Firsmin his kin.

TODEN: Toden, the Lord of the Dead or the Tearful One, resides in the world and gathers the essence of all man whom Heimdel does not call. These are deposited in the Pools of Fate and Woe beneath Mount Nistor. He is called by fire and flame throughout the world.

INEZ: The Lord of Waters of the World is a Firsmin who reside in winds above the Interzae. Inez is a tumultuous lord whose anger and pain is often loosed upon those who sail the Interzae.



THE ORDERING OF TIME

Inzae sits still in the void and looking up into the night sky it is said one can glimpse The Maelstrum spinning odd into space and its showers of fire appear as millions upon millions of dim lights. A massive ball of fire is pulled across the face of Inzae every day dimming the light of the Maelstrum and bringing the world into view. When it passes the glow of Terrivial and Fenumian can be seen and they mark the passage of days with their shape.

A year is called a Fenuma, and a calendar, the Fenumia, is common to all lands of man. They describe 400 days in a year. This is divided into ten months (Maats) of 40 days each. Each is divided into four weeks (Woken) of ten days (wilken). The last four days of the last week of each month is called a Nacht. The latter is only important for religious and ceremonial observances or purposes.

Every 400 years is referred to as a Krissle. This is considered the end of an epoch and usually brings with it calamitous events. Every 400 Krissles is a Grosskrissle and denotes the end of an epoch and the beginning of a new one. The last Grosskrissle ended with the casting down of the Great Dragon. It is believed the next Grosskrissle will witness the return of the Great Dragon.

THE MONTHS

- Trugenmaat:** Early winter, the Festival of Death (Klasternacht)
- Oonsmaat:** Mid winter, the Festival of the Ending (the Effennacht)
- Faalenmaat:** Late winter, Festival of the Casting Down of Inzaa (Hemdelnacht)
- Ennenmaat:** Low spring, Festival of Fate (Nanenacht)
- Railzmaat:** High spring, Festival of Rising up against Inzaa (Indelnacht)
- Graadsmaat:** Low summer, Festival of Pain (Arzemnacht)
- Runemaat:** High summer, Festival of Loss (Vodennacht)
- Haranenmaat:** Early fall, Festival of Struggle (Anennacht)
- Kladlesmaat:** Mid fall, Festival of the Redemption (Todennacht)
- Magersmaat:** Late fall, Festival of Hope (Hoffnacht)

LANGUAGES

There are two main language groups for men; Inzayan and Todavian. The two languages are completely independent of one another. Inzayan has around 30 letters, is written left to right and generally the letters are phonetic. Todavian is symbolic with hundreds of common symbols and thousands of unique symbols, written right to left and top down. There are phonetic elements but the written language is primarily symbolic.

The major language groups are described below. However, many creatures have their own language and remote colonies of man have derivative languages that are poorly known – if at all.

Inzayan: This is the language taught to the sons and daughters of the Thirteen Maidens by Nifnir. Proper Inzayan is spoken

only by a few and is considered a High Language. It is the root language of Jutt, Trokian and Gravian.

Jutt: This is the language of the southern reaches of the Interzae. Its root language is Inzayan. It is very closely related to Trokian and Gravian and influenced by Ordlian.

Gravian: This is the language spoken on the southern shores of the Interzae and spoken throughout the Gravia. Its root language is Inzayan. It is very closely related to Trokian and Jutt.

Trokian: This is the language spoken in the Troke and the northeastern and eastern shores of the Interzae. Its root language is Inzayan. It is very closely related to Gravian and Jutt with significant Todavian influences.

Todavian: This is the language taught to the sons and daughters of the Thirteen Maidens by Toda and Virda. It is spoken primarily in Todavia. The proper language is difficult to learn and master and is spoken primarily by the ecclesiastical and political elites as well as scholars.

Novian: This is a derivative of Todavian. It is considered a vulgar language and is spoken primarily by the lower classes and merchants. It is easy to learn with a written equivalent. Novian is spoken extensively throughout Todavia and beyond. Note that it is spoken as far east as Hillia and in the south as far as the Zundenzaa

There are other languages that should be noted as well.

Ordlian: This is the language of the dwarves. There are two aspects to this language. Proper Ordlian is spoken almost exclusively by dwarves to dwarves and its secrets are closely guarded and related to few if any. There is a trade language with which many who have dealings with the dwarves are familiar. It has a written equivalent as well and is, it seems, derived more from Inzayan than from Ordlian.

Illian: This is a scholarly language spoken by only a few well-learned sages the world over. The language was given over by Letario to those deserving few sons and daughters of the Thirteen Maidens and has been guarded ever since.

Inzallian: This is spoken by the Inzal of the north. It is a very complex and melancholy tongue with no written equivalent. It is spoken almost exclusively by the Inzal.

Jazrim: This guttural tongue is spoken in the east by the Jazrim and their brethren in the north. It is easy to learn but difficult to speak.

Griznadian: This language is spoken by those goblins that reside in the Furthingvold. It has many variants, as many as there are tribe of goblins it seems. However, they are all commonly rooted. One finds Griznadian spoken throughout much of the Graffenvold as the people there are in close contact with the goblins of the Furthingvold.

THE ORDERING OF THE LANDS

Inzae consists of a single continent surrounded by a body of water. The central portion of the continent is a vast lake out of which water flows to the sea. In general, mountain ranges ring the northern, western and southern portion of the continent and the interior lands are thickly forested. The eastern end of the continent tends to be somewhat more arid and is peppered with several mountain chains and ranges of hill lands. The further north one travels the colder it becomes while the further south one travels the warmer it becomes.

Seasonally, in the west, the spring and early fall experience great deals of rainfall. In the east summer is the wettest part of the year. Winter is long and harsh throughout Inzae with snow blanketing nearly the entirety of the lands surrounding the Interzae. In the east, there is less snow and none at all in the south though frigid, dry winds and very low temperatures make for long hard winters.

The following is a list and description of the major geographic regions.

(1) KRAGENMORES

These are the tallest mountains in the world. The range is located on the far west end of the Inzae and stretches from the far north to the far south before swinging east. The upper reaches of the mountains are capped in snow and glaciers year round. Volcanoes crackle all along the central ridge of the chain. It is known for its deep broad valleys and steep cliff faces.

The central portion is home to dwarves and giants and is considered their homeland. The southern stretches of the mountain house those great ogres, troll and uruk who sided with The Dragon. They make constant war with the dwarves to the north and the peoples of Gravia.

But it is beneath the mountains and in the deep crevices that true dangers lie. It is there, in the remnants the Great Palace, that many of the most fearsome creatures dwell, hidden away, awaiting the time when The Dragon returns to come once more beneath the sun and moon.

(2) UNTENMORES

The Untenmores are a distinct spur of mountains and hills dropping out of the Kragenmores and dipping into the Interzae. This mountain chain is characterized by its gentle peaks, broad valleys and gradual slopes. It is also rife with caverns great and small. Where the Untenmores drop into the sea are a million small islands.

The Untenmores are home to many of the remaining Trottigen Giants. They dwell here and act as a wall stopping the uruk of the north from spilling over into the Gravia. But they are few in number and time has dwindled their kind such that many rare and strange creatures have moved into its valleys and dales not the least of which are the trolls of the north.

6 CASTLES AND CRUSADES



(3) HOORDS

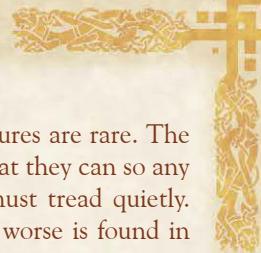
This is a scrubland bordered on the west by the Kragenmores, the east by the Interzae and the south by the Untenmores. The Hoords is a mixture of upper arid grasslands and low wooded valleys. The soil is poor and produces smaller stunted trees and scrub growth. The largest river flowing out of the Kragenmores is named the Oordigen.

The Hoords is home to many trolls and it is rumored their king resides here. It is a dangerous place but many make their way here in an effort to pull the gold from its rivers and caverns.

(4) INTERZAE

This large freshwater sea dominates the interior of the Inzae. The waters of the western Interzae are very deep and its shores are marked by steep drop-offs. The eastern stretches of the Interzae are shallow, eventually forming swamps and great estuaries. A spur of the Interzae in the east is called the Osterzaa. The shoreline of this shallow body of water changes dramatically from season to season depending on rainfall.

The southeast and southwest supply much food for the Gravia and the Troke and fishermen ply these waters year round. The interior of the Interzae is also fished, though less so for the waters are turgid and dangerous with violent storms appearing rapidly and with little warning. The waters are also plied by many a pirate and privateer in search of booty from the many merchant ships moving between the east and west.



It is said The Dragon rests at the bottom of the Interzae and that many horrible monsters creep up from the deeps at her behest and that the waters are poisoned in places. Such dangers also bring great reward for those fishermen who are able to bring in the flesh of these monsters.

(5) GRAFFENVOLD

The Graffenvold is a forest stretching along the south side of the Interzae. Its tall fir trees are densely packed in this dark forest and nestle tightly around miasmal swamps and meandering rivers coming off southern uplands. It gives way in the south to the Furthinvold and in the east to the Virdenlaans.

Much of the western Graffenvold falls under the rule of men of the Medelaan. But its southern ranges have many goblins roaming them as well as many a fell and terrifying beast. The eastern stretches are nearly completely abandoned with only a few ruins to be found along the remnants of the Kambrian Way inhabited by bandits or foul creatures.

(6) FURTHINVOLD

This is a forest mixed with evergreens and deciduous trees. The dense forest covers much of the southern world stretching in the west and south up to the foothills of the Kragenmores and in the east it abuts the Virdenlaans. The woods are mixed dominated by evergreens in the south and north with the central region dominated by massive hardwoods. Many rivers flow into the region as it sits nearly in a bowl. The mighty Golden River flows out of the Furthinvold and into the Interzae.

Most of the Furthingvold is empty of anything but wild creatures. However, it is beneath the eaves of this land that one finds the many storied kingdoms of the goblins. These are great in number though spread far and wide. It is a danger to travel these lands and most especially in the east where the goblins make eternal war upon the men who have deemed it wise to cross over into their lands.

(7) INZEVOLD

North of the Interzae, as the lands become more frigid and the snow falls deep five months out of the year, lies the Inzevold. The region is dominated by dark fir trees and some few massive hardwoods. This dark forest harbors many small peaks and narrow valleys and deep lakes.

This land is home to many strange and wonderful creatures. Some are cruel and viscous, others, it is said, are as kind as a light in the night. Though it is a little-traveled land as the dangers from trolls and ogres and other creatures of ill bent make this land, ultimately, a horrible place.

(8) HURTFELDEN

This is an arid subarctic plain dominated by glacial valleys, tills, large cold rivers and scrubby pine and cedar forests. The Hurtenfelden is blanketed in snows almost year round with short summers producing prodigious undergrowth.

Sustaining oneself here is difficult, and creatures are rare. The beasts here are eager to consume anything that they can so any who make their way to the Hurtenfelden must tread quietly. There are also cities of ogres and trolls and worse is found in this frozen waste.

(9) AAVENFELDEN

The vast frozen wasteland in the far north of the world is named the Aavenfelden. A spur of the Kragenmores it stretches nearly the entire length of the north of the world. These mountains are covered in glaciers and deep snows year round. Some woody growth is found on the southern slopes of the mountain range but none on the northern end. The northern portion drops onto a great ice sheet that stretches many hundreds of miles into the sea.

Little lives in this land. It is a waste and what and little can be gathered except from the sea. It is said this land is home to the great bears and sloths of gigantic size, giants who were bent and twisted to anger and hatred and other fell creatures driven here after the fall of The Dragon.

(10) NUVENFELDEN

This is a large stretch of arid, grassy uplands extending east from the Interzae to the oceans thousands of miles away. In the north the plains give way to the Exxenvold and to the south the Gatzenenmores and Durkenvold. The plains grow tall grasses in the spring and early summer before drying out in the late summer and into fall. Light snows periodically fall in the area during winter. Two large rivers flow into the Interzae to the west; the Urigin and Voldenigin.

The plains of the Nuvenfelden, though arid, are prodigious with life. Great herds of wild beasts roam the land, majestic cats prey on the weak, flocks of birds the size of clouds fly overhead. It is, despite it all, a land teeming with life. It is also criss-crossed with tribes of man and Jazrim who enjoy nothing less than warfare.

(11) EXXENVOLD

The Exxenvold consists of a small, low mountain chain falling into the sea. The region is riven with volcanoes, deep valleys, fjords and islands. The cedar and fir forests grow deep and lush. Ice sheets pour like rivers off many of the taller peaks before dropping into the sea or melting into vast glacial lakes.

This beautiful land is warmed by many volcanoes and springs of hot water. It is home to strange beasts and goblins and men and all manner of unique creatures. Though beautiful, danger lurks underneath the calm winds and the violent intent of many is felt quickly to those who do not tread well traveled roads.

(12) GATZENENMORES

This mountainous region spreads along the east edge of Inzae and encloses a vast coastal plain. The well watered and temperate hardwood forests grow healthy and strong in this region extending far up into the mountains. On the less well watered western slopes the forests are thin and sparse.

Here, their wander many a majestic beast unique to this part of the world; sleek black cats and deep throated bulls and a myriad of other creatures besides. Here one also finds some few trolls in the mountains and other creature who tried to hide after the fall of The Dragon.

(13) DURKENVOLD

This vast region covers the area from the Virdenlaans in the west to the Gatzemores in the east. This shallow bowl has a mixture of hardwoods and pines covering nearly its entire length. The forests are sparse on the fringes yet become thick and dark toward the interior. Many rivers flow south through this region and spill into the Adnenvold. The greatest of these is the Frayen.

This is an uninhabited region except by the beasts of the world that remain unbothered by the cities of men, dwarf, jazrim or others. Some few come here to hunt those rare creatures once found in other parts of the world. But these beasts are dangerous and the great wolves that roam its forests are deadly nearly beyond compare.

(14) VIRDENLAANS

This vast and fertile plain stretches from the southeastern Interzae in the north to the Edenzae in the south. The region is dominated by a single vast river that flows from the Interzae south to the Zundinzaa. This river is fed by many tributaries flowing in from the east and west across all its length until it becomes a veritable flood of water in the south. This is the Virden River. The plains surrounding it are generally grassy with many small hardwood forests dotting the landscape. Seasonal flooding keeps the land fertile.

The Heart of the World, the Virdenlaans, were not peopled by men but is home to vast herds of animals and many wild creatures. It is a land teaming with life from one end to the other. It is also teaming with danger. Great cats, wolves and bears find man easy prey. Many are the beasts that have since given up hiding in deep holes and have begun to come into the world again and find the Virdenlaans a place of easy prey.

(15) THE ADNENVOLD

This region receives all the run-off from the Durkenvold, though here it spreads out into a vast low plain that stretches very gently into the seas. The region is one vast swamp interspersed with localized uplands. The forests grow thick with cypress, cedar, tall pines excepting in the deeper swamps and fetid regions where a morass of mushy vegetated islands and swamp grasses grow in profusion.

The Adnenvold is dangerous nearly beyond compare. The murky waters here hide many a wild creature capable of swallowing a horse or man whole. The trees hang with snakes whose poisons kill in seconds and even its islands and upper-lands are home to many a beast quick to kill. It is also home to many of those who fled after the fall of The Dragon or those who seek nothing more than to be left alone and unknown.

8 CASTLES AND CRUSADES

(16) TONENFELDEN

The Tonenfelden is a hot dry sandy region. There is a small mountain chain ringing this area such that no water flows from the north and rains from the sea only come once a year, in the early spring. During this time, most of the rain fall in the mountain region flows south, turning the few riverbeds into flourishing oasis – but this lasts but a short time. Large sandy dunes and dry rocky wastes dominate the lands between the rivers.

Little lives in this region. There are snakes and small lizards that creep along the riverbanks and in the dry rocky escarpments. But even these spend most of their time hiding in holes away from the blazing sun and nearer to the cool of the ground underneath the earth.

(17) ZUNDINZAA

The Zundinzaa is a large bay. This is where the Virden River empties into the ocean in a broad water soaked plain. The bay is bordered to the north by the southern spur of the Kragenmores and is dotted with many thousands of islands, some small and others large. The southern end of the bay consists of a broad flatland arcing out into the sea.

Called the bay at the end of the world, the water here teams with life, so much so that the fishing supplies the needs of a whole kingdom. But the waters also contain dangers as well for the unwary fisherman. Great sea beasts that can pull a ship underneath the waves and smaller creatures that can consume a man in a few short bites. The islands are innumerable and still many are unexplored. Upon these dwell creatures that would rather not be found or find man weak and easy prey.

(18) EDENZAA

The Edenzaa is the ocean that surrounds the world. It is a tumultuous sea in the west and north while the southern and eastern reaches tend to be calmer. The oceans eventually flow to the edges of the world and the waters dump out into the Maelstrom.

The great sea is host to so many creatures that they are without number or classification. Here dwell those beasts closest to the Maelstrom and traveling its deeps are more than dangerous and foolhardy. The greatest foe of all though is the edge of the world. For, if one travels too close, its eddy simply pulls one over and thence dumps them into the Maelstrom.

POLITICAL REGIONS

KAMBRIA

The Kambria refers to the ancestral home of the dwarves. High in the mountains of the Kragenmores are the Seven Spires from which each of the great families of dwarves descended. The spires are home to many thousands of dwarves and each is considered a kingdom unto itself, though all are combined as one and under the leadership of a single council, one representative from each of the seven families.

The dwarven kingdom stretches far to the north and south along the central ridge and eastern slopes of the Kragenmores. It is a powerful realm and uncontested in the central and western portions. Here, the dwarves have built many cities and carved entire mountains into complexes and palaces. They have also delved deep into the earth and have underground roads leading to and from each of the seven cities.

The dwarves have few conflicts with men in this day and age and those mostly are small and involve personal or trading feuds rather than territorial or political causes. However, the dwarves have delved so deep as to open the halls of the Endless Palace and hordes of beasts from deep within the earth have spilled forth and warfare beneath the earth has been raging for thousands of years and the dwarves are finally being taxed in the battles. To their north the Jazrim of the Barlang and ranging deeper into their homelands and in the south the trolls of the southern Kragtenmores are ascending from their deep holes to lay claim to the mountains they consider their home.

HOORD

This region is ruled by the trottigen giants, or what few remain of them. There is no king nor any large cities here for the giants live in small clans inside large fortresses or halls made of wood and stone. This is their ancestral home and it is said they first came over into the world through a Ring of Brass found somewhere in the many caverns that underlay the hills and mountains of the area.

The giants call no one king or lord but rule themselves of their own free will and make paths of their own choosing. They do, however, come together to fight interlopers or those they deem a threat. Amongst them are great sages and learned one's who are much respected and whose wisdom and leadership the giants turn to when needed. These dwell in some of the most sacred of places found in the Hoord.

The trottigen do guard their kingdom from the Jazrim, trolls and ogres to the north but feel no need for conflict with the dwarves, whom they consider kin. They are generally on peaceful terms with the humans of the south, though this is an individual choice.

JZORНИA

This is a land ruled by those horrible goblins, the Jazrim. Theirs is a desolate land of dwarfed forests, sparse grasses, cold rivers and empty fields. By need, the Jazrim have carved themselves a kingdom in this place. Their cities and villages are gathered around rivers, which run warm from a hot earth or nearby the many ever-flowing volcanoes. The cities here are few but large and stretch in long winding lengths along rices or around steaming pits. They dig deep beneath the earth as well and have massive underground fortresses and halls kept warm by the fires of the earth.

It is a violent kingdom with a warrior caste that rules the land. From amongst the cast a leader is chosen or fights his way to the lordship and remains their until killed or, on rare occasions, another ruler is chosen. They war amongst themselves only rarely but strife between individuals or small groups is frequent.



The Jzornia plunder who they can and make war to the south as pirates and reavers in the Interzae. They also move in great war-bands deep into the Kragenmores or the Hoords seeking to break the trottigen giants or displace the dwarves from their mountain strongholds.

BARLANG

The Barlang is a horrible region. It is covered in ice and snow much of the year. Yet here, gathered around hot springs and volcanic remnants are found legions of ogres and trolls and goblins and the jazrim. They have built foul nations amongst this wasteland but forever find their lands wanting. As such they war amongst each other brutally and ever seek to expand south and east.

Their numbers are greatest in the south along the shores of the Interzae, where they gather much of their sustenance. Here are also some of their greatest cities, cities that rival those of Gravia in size. It is from the cities that huge numbers make their way to the Interzae and raid and plunder as far as the shores of the Troke. In the east, they make their way in small numbers or, on rare occasion, great armies into Inzalia to plunder, loot and kill.

There is always a Lord of the North in the capitol of Barlang. But unlike all others in the world, this warlord encourages his people to fight amongst themselves, often fomenting war and destruc-

tion on a vast scale only to unite the survivors in long wars against those of the Gravia or lead them to destruction in Inzalia.

INZALIA

This is the land of the Inzal, that forlorn and wasting people who were brought over to tend to The Tree and forests. The Inzal rule this northern forest as it is their homeland and the place where The Tree was planted. Theirs is a kingdom as ancient as is the world, but is falling into ruin as their time is passing. Despite this, the Inzal protect and maintain their high towers and remote fortresses with a zeal unsurpassed by any and their might is still such that most fear to even tread their lands but under the banner of arms.

There is a lord who sits upon a simple throne and has done so for a thousand or more years. All the Inzal look to him as their leader and do the bidding of tradition and laws laid down long ago. The Inzal have few cities but live a semi-nomadic life moving from fortress to fortress or place to place as fits their whim.

It is only their ancestral enemies who make their way into Inzalia. There are the Jazrim of the east who enjoy their wars and find great pleasure in despoiling the forests of the Inzenvold. Then there are the ogres and troll who pour in from the west in search of warmer climbs and easy prey, driven as much by starvation as hatred. The Inzal give war to them all, knowing full well that eventually they will lose.

GRAVIA

The Gravia is a large region comprised of innumerable and, by and large, malleable, city states, baronies and provinces. Some of these are very large while others are small to tiny. Between them there is a very complex arrangement of alliances, treaties, family ties, lineages, marriages and sundry agreements and traditions that binds the whole region together.

At the center, there is a King who ostensibly rules the entire region and to whom all, ultimately, pay their loyalty. However, this unity is but an illusion and serves more to dampen warfare than prevent it. As each family, lord, guild, council or individual attempts to maneuver themselves closer to the center of power, they tend to war with one another. Each lay claim to territory or rights or positions and fight battles openly or secretly to keep those privileges. The result is a low level of constant warfare and intrigue.

In recent years, a new king has been crowned, but he is a boy of little accomplishment and reviled as weak by many of the nobles throughout Gravia. His position on the throne is tenuous and he is kept in his seat only by the power of the extensive army at his command and the reluctance of its general to give up his position in the capitol.

MEDELAAN

Though many consider the Medelaan a part of Gravia, it is quite distinct in its culture and language from those to the east. The Medelaan comprises a region stretching along a thousand

miles of the southern coast of the Interzae and located mostly within the Graffenvold. The major cities here are mostly coastal though there are several large interior cities as well. The region was originally settled by dwarves from the Kambria as they built the Kambrian Way. Only much later did the people of Gravia and the Troke move here. In time, man came to dominate the region and fewer and fewer dwarves came to reside here.

There are several large cities in the Medelaan. Each has control over its own territory though all pay homage to a throne that has not been occupied for several hundred years. At that time, the Medelaan was unified, but the last king died suddenly and left no heirs. A short war for control of the throne occurred which had a massive impact on the economy as the trade from east to west slowed and the wealth of the land was quickly drained. No clear victor emerged from the war and the merchant guilds, seeing financial ruin on the horizon, encouraged the families who fielded any significant armies to come to agreements over territory.

Currently, the region is controlled by several large city states, which are, in turn, controlled by powerful merchant guilds or the remaining royal families. These in turn are constantly squabbling with each other over small bits of territory as loyalties change and monies and power shift from location to location.

URURTENLAAN

This is a vast forested region populated by disparate groups of goblins. After the fall of The Dragon, the goblins, which chose not side in the war, hid themselves in the forests of the Furthingvold. Here they established many kingdoms and warred amongst themselves and all others that found their way into the Furthinvold.

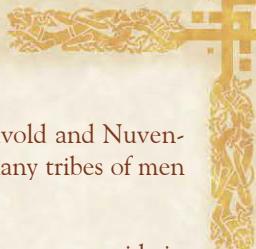
The many kingdoms of the Ururtenlaan are generally broken up into the great tribes and each guard their territory selfishly. The numbers of these tribes range from the tens of thousands to the hundreds of thousands. The largest and most well-established are found in the eastern areas while those of the west tend to be more fluid and smaller in number.

The goblin kingdoms in the west are under pressure from the peoples of the Gravia who are moving into the Furthingvold in ever greater numbers and warfare between the two is increasing in tempo and violence. Those on the northern periphery are either at peace with the people of the Medelaan or have even expanded up to the shores of the Interzae. The goblin kingdoms in the east are a different matter altogether. The goblins have been expanding east for many ages and have, for the past thousand years or more, butted up against the Todavian Empire. The wars here, though short, are fierce and brutal.

NORVENIA

Norvenia is a coastal region on the west side of the Kragenmores. This land was settled by people of the Ven who left the Fuldinlaan. These are a contentious and warlike people who have braved the deeps of the Edenzee and the oceans around the world. Their land has little to offer excepting hardship and

10 CASTLES AND CRUSADES



toil. They call no man king and live lives in small towns and villages hugging the coast.

The loyalties of those of Novenia tend to extend only to family and village seeing all others as foes or potential foes in the fight for scarce resources. When the seas are at their calmest, leaders are chosen amongst the villages and either as small groups or sometimes larger flotillas, they gather together and raid the southern shores of Inzae. They bring home the gold and riches that they can, but most prized of all are their captives.

FULDINLAAN

As the tribes of men spread throughout the world, the Ven came to the Zundinzaa and found the waters here bountiful and settled these lands. As their numbers grew, they moved out to the Islands of the bay and founded many cities and villages. Over many thousands of years and innumerable wars, the region was united into one kingdom. Ostensibly ruled by one lord from a majestic hall on the island of Oltenmore, in reality the spread of islands makes central rule nearly impossible and the disputes amongst the nobility are common.

Unlike much the rest of the world though, the people of the Fuldinlaan prefer their wars fought by heroes and men of great renown. This has resulted in a military caste of warriors that, though small in number, are supremely capable and are, many believe, the true powers in the land. The Fuldinlaan can call upon a large naval force but only needs do so seasonally when raiding parties from Norvenia make their way to their shores.

INTERZAE

Since the waning of the Kambrian Way, trade between the East and West has moved almost exclusively along the southern shore of the Interzae. The Interzae, a vast inland sea ruled by no one but is criss-crossed with maritime and naval powers from the Troke, Gravia and Jzornia as well as many pirates and privateers.

The southern regions of the Interzae see the most activity as the trading vessels and merchant ships hug close to the shores for safety, both from pirates, raiders from Jzornia and the safety from the tumultuous waters of the interior. These trading vessels are often escorted by warships, forming large fleets. There is little harbor for them from the Troke to Gravia making that stretch of the trip the most dangerous.

In the northwest, the Jzornia dominates the seas and do so with little contest from others. In the northeast, the Inzal sail their magnificent vessels allowing only a select few to enter what they consider theirs. The interior of the Interzae is braved by only the hardiest of seamen and fishermen, for here there is great wealth but also great danger from the turgid waters.

TROKE

The Troke refers more to a region rather than a single political entity. The Troke is located on the northern plains of the Virdenlaans and stretches into the Graffenvold and Furthingvold in

the west and to the east as far as the Durkenvold and Nuvenfelden. The Troke was settled by peoples of many tribes of men and the dwarves of Kambria.

As the tribes of men left Mount Nistor, many came to reside in these lands rather than travel onward with the main body of their peoples. In time, these peoples turned the verdant lands into productive fields and many towns and cities flourished, each independent of the other. The dwarves of the Kambria learned of this and sought trade over the many leagues with these peoples and the peoples further south. The dwarves built a road stretching from their kingdom to the Troke and named it the Kambrian Way. This road ends in the Troke and the region became the center of trade between the eastern and western halves of the world.

The cities of the Troke never united and remained independent of one another. Many would become famous trading communities and the wealth of the world flowed through them. This allowed great armies to emerge with wealthy leaders commanding them. They fought often amongst themselves, as they continue to do, but none were ever so powerful to unite more than a few cities at a time. Such that now there are hundreds of independent cities, burgs and towns and each is proudly and fiercely independent of one another.

The only time these armies and cities unite is in the face of an outside threat such as from Todavia or the Jazrim of the Zotentalaan. Recently the cities united and faced an army from Todavia. They managed to defeat the Todavian military but only with the aid of a mercenary troop of Jazrim. The use of Jazrim in this war proved a long term disaster as the eastern portion of the Troke is now embroiled in a massive war with those selfsame Jazrim.

TODAVIA

Todavia, also known as The Eternal Kingdom and The Heart of the World, is the oldest kingdom of men and its rule can be traced back ten thousand or more years. The kingdom was founded by five tribes of men when the leaders of each gathered upon the spire upon which the Tovdir, a Firsim, had been split in twain and arose as Toda and Virda. These two promised to protect the tribes if they would follow their teachings and obey their laws.

Under the guidance of Toda and Virda, the tribes flourished and they built their capitol around that spire and named it Todavia. The tribes flourished and spread north, south, east and west to lay claim to most all of the Videnlaans. The lands proved bountiful and the length of the Golden River sprouted cities and communities like forests.

The leadership of Todavia has always been a council of five, one from each tribe of the men who settled here. In time, disagreements arose and warfare between the tribes plunged Todavia into civil war and were it not for the intercession of Toda and Virda, the kingdom would have split. But they came back together and the tribes melded such that over time one could not distinguish between them and a new council arose, comprised of five powerful members, each representing a facet of Toda-



vian society. Even so, Todavia was riven by conflict again and again over the ages between powerful lords and factions but always, the Kingdom and its peoples would return to Toda and Virda and look to Todavia and they had become stronger for it. All enemies, but one, fell before the might of the Todavian Empire. These were the people of the Troke to the north.

Currently, Todavia is in the midst of a brewing civil war. After a war with the Troke ended in defeat and witnessed the destruction of the flower of the Todavian army, various factions and provinces rose in revolt or decided to break away from the Empire. The Council still sits but can do little to reign in the various factions and provinces until the military is rebuilt.

ZOTENLAAN

The Zotenlaan is less a kingdom than a region. This area has no proper boundaries as the inhabitants of the region are nomadic. The region is dominated in the north and west by large tribes of Jazrim and in the east and south by several large tribes of men. There are a few large cities and towns found near fertile areas in the south, which are controlled by men. Though far fewer, the cities in the east, dominated by the Jazrim, are much larger.

The tribes of men go by several names and they tend to see themselves as kingdoms rather than, as others see them, as large tribes. They tend to travel in family or local groups numbering several dozen to several hundred, though a thousand and more are not unknown. Their use of horse is unrivaled in the known world and it is said that a true man of these tribes lives their entire life on horseback. They do gather for religious occasions and for warfare. In these cases the numbers can reach the tens of thousands.

The Jazim are a tribe of greater goblins who roam the plains astride great war boars and mammoths and other creature they have domesticated. They war as fiercely amongst themselves as they do with others. It is believed that if the Jazrim were to quit fighting amongst each other, they would find much the rest of the world an easy conquest. The Jazrim do raid outside their own and have been known to break through into the Troke and even Todavia.

PRADEK

The people of Pradek live in two worlds. Here, two tribes of man came to reside. The people of Ninev chose the arid and sandy lands near to the ocean. For here they found solace and a peace in the sun far from the cold of the north. They basked here for ages, left alone to build their towns and villages by the sea.



The people of Minden settled to the east in the swampy morass of the Adnenvold. Ever bent to the worship of the Dorstmin, they were cast far and wide from all other tribes of men and for ages hunted and killed until they found safety in the deep of the swamps. Here they built there large temples and worshiped as they chose, seeking to hasten the end times.

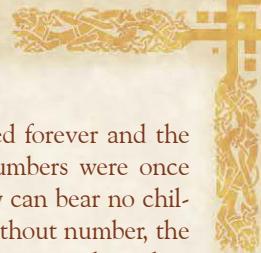
The people of Minden grew powerful and of the Lords of that land, one grew to great might; Irviness the Bloody. He established a kingdom in the region whose might could not be rivaled and with his armies began the assimilation of his people into one kingdom. Over many generations, his line and those who supplanted them, united all the peoples of Minden.

These armies then spilled into the sandy wastes where the people of Ninev did reside. This war was quick and pitiless. The people of Ninev were driven deep into the wastes, high into the mountains or enslaved.

To this day the kingdom of Pradek rules most of the Adnenvold and the habitable portions of the Tonenefelden. Their cities can be found throughout the Adnenvold connected by causeways rising high above the swampy waters. Their cities are dominated by a myriad of temple complexes and ecclesiastic structures. Those cities in the Tonenefelden are connected by causeways of similar make and the cities mirror in many designs of those found in the Adnenvold.

Pradek is ruled by Minitok of the Turayapan. He has claimed the city of Olmiac as his capitol. However, as has always been the case, the ruling elites of Pradek constantly vie for power and the seat of leadership changes often such that murder, assassination, kidnapping and all manner of vile deeds are undertaken to attain power in this kingdom.





Currently, Pradek is on the verge of another civil war as the aged Minitok has lost sway with many of the elite and his brethren were always small in number. Armies are gathering in the east, north and south in expectation of another long civil war with no clear leader on the horizon. Despite or because of the warring amongst the elites, it is the vast priesthood which holds ultimate sway over Predek and maintains a semblance of order in the kingdom.

EXXENLAAN

The Exxenlaan is a kingdom of men in the far northeastern corner of the World. Here, in the high mountain peaks and deep lush valleys dwell a people far removed from the rest of the world. This kingdom is made of many small cities and towns nestled along the coast and in the valleys of the mountains along the coast. There are also remote places high in the mountains where gather those who seek to bring the Firsmin back to the world.

This is a highly segregated society with a ruling bureaucracy and separate ecclesiastic order. A king is chosen by a group of functionaries in the palace and his sole purpose is to act as an administrator of the rules designed by bureaucracy. The bureaucracy exists to serve the ecclesiastic order. In the main, it is a peaceful land but most men are considered slaves or servants to the orders who run the land. When war comes, and it does on occasion, those from the monasteries descend with a fury and vengeance to lay waste to all who come to raid or waylay their people.

THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

OF MAN

Man was born of the Thirteen Sisters atop Mount Nain. Thirteen tribes descended from here; the Peoples of the Lines of Gravia, Minden, Ninev, Vard, Orto, Hurfen, Grimdell, Ven, Urik, Eimdl, Arthut, Mamut and Shin. They spread into the world and settled its many kingdoms. The only gift given to men was a desire to free themselves of their fate and make their way in the world as is their want. As sons and daughters of the Firsmin, they carry with them all the spirit of freedom and of creation. They are a great people though their days are short.

OF INZAL

The Inzal were brought over into the world to tend to The Tree. Yet, Inzaa grew wroth and destroyed The Tree leaving the Inzal

with little purpose. Their way back was barred forever and the Inzal became a melancholy people. Their numbers were once great but they have dwindled with time. They can bear no children and, though the days of each Install is without number, the Inzal shall eventually wither as a people and disappear altogether.

OF TROTTIGEN

The Trottigen were those that carried over The Tree and planted it. Great in size and strength, they were given the task to build a palace as The Dragon imagined. They undertook this knowing that one day they could return. Yet, when The Dragon fell, the world sundered and The Rings of Brass were closed and the Trottigen would remain here forever.

OF DWARVES

The dwarves are of Inzae and embody its strengths and its weaknesses. They are a small people but strong in body and mind and not unlike the stone they so ever love. Their days are long, but not eternal and only their names and deeds and creations shall survive them and thus, they seek to command their time like no other.

OF TROLLS

The trolls are the offspring of the Dorstmin and carry with them the will and desire of those who seek to bring The Dragon back to the world. They ever seek to break the children of the Firsmin and in particular find man their most hated foe and grow great in their consumption of them.

OF GOBLINS

The goblins are the offspring of the Irselmin. They are great in number and shape and size and will and desire. They are found the world over but find they must hide and as is their want, remain aloof from the world as much as they can.

OF JAZRIM

The Jazrim are of Inzae and embody its worst aspects. This is a creature of violence and decay, rot and pestilence, conflict and war. The jazrim see nothing in the world to create but only things that must be destroyed or bent to their will. They find the dwarves abhorrent and man a pestilence. Their numbers are great and their days long.



THE WORLD OF INZAE

