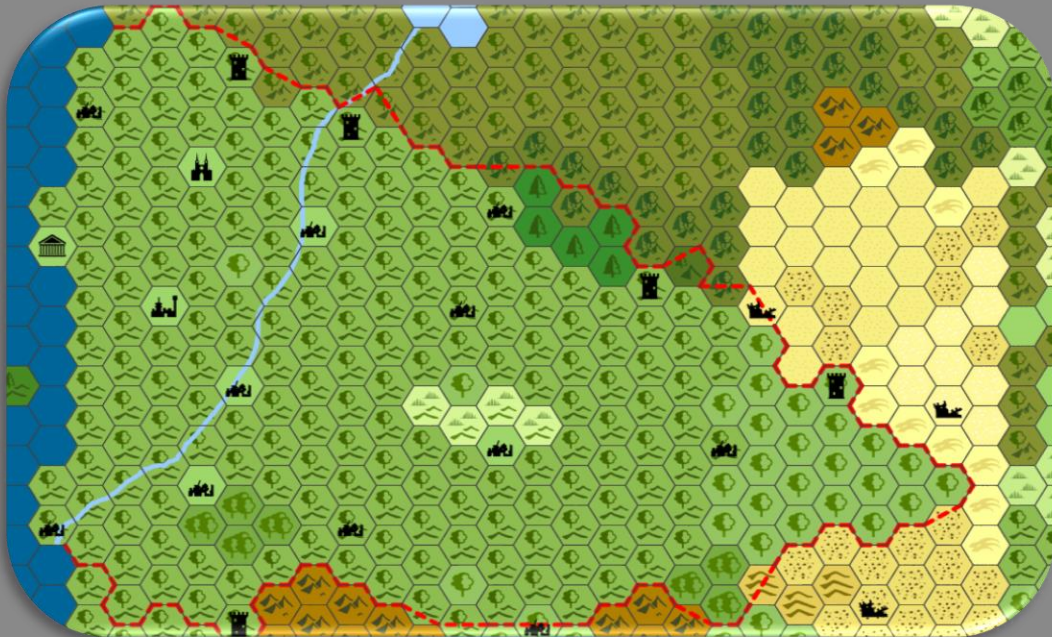


TWO

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BY FRANK SCHMIDT



WAGOVIA GAZETTEER

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Theocracy of Wagovia

In the serene vale between the Andall Peaks to the south and the mountainous Sedguard Woods of the north, lies the Theocracy of Wagovia. This land is ruled by the devout followers of Wagovia, named for the deity they worship. The government is faith based, with the leaders of the communities being ordained pastors. They answer to canons, who can be found in every major town. The canons then answer to the Council of Vicars, which is controlled by eight powerful clerics that are led by the overall leader titled Vicar Lordship (Ladyship). Over the course of the past 200 years, the land has been ruled by fourteen Vicar Lordship/Ladyship, with the current ruler of the theocracy being Vicar Ladyship Mariah Venton. She is the second of her family name to hold the position of leadership. Her great grandfather Landis Venton served eight years before his untimely demise.

The citizens follow the rules of Wagovia. These rules and laws are interpreted by the ecclesiastical authority of the Council of Vicars. Little has changed in the two centuries they have governed and peace has reigned as a result of the continuity. The culture of Wagovia is mostly agrarian, with artisans being prevalent in the towns and cities. While spell casters exist, most find mages to be untrustworthy, but tolerated. Many feel that magic should come from Wagovia and not from arcane studies. This sentiment is from past experience with the Land of Gor to the east. Gor was destroyed after the Council of Vicars took over the country. That land was ruled by mages who were non-believers in Wagovian culture and were subsequently put to the sword.

The people are simple and devout for the most part, but lately there has been a change in the climate of the country and a feeling of unease creeping into lands. While most citizens go about their simple lives, many have noticed an increase in humanoid raids. Also, whispers of a strange cult of Elementalists have been heard. A sense of change has been felt by the pastors of the small towns, especially those near the borderlands. They have attempted to assuage the fears of their flock, reminding them that Wagovia has protected them for decades and to be thankful to her.

The edges of the country are guarded by a series of watchtowers. These act as protection from intruders. The warriors that guard the towers are also the militant arm of the clergy and are responsible for carrying out punishment, as ordered by the pious rulers. Each of these towers house a contingent of fighters (men and women)

numbering 50-75 people at each. These are cavalry troops, as the need to cover a lot of ground is present and speed can be of the essence. At any given time, 2/3 of the troops will be out on patrol and commanders are in charge of each tower. The military command staff is located in Borderville to the southeast, where all new recruits are trained. This city is home to most of the military commanders and has the largest garrison. After the destruction of Gor, the largest source of unrest is located in the Andall Peaks, which makes this a necessary site for another garrison. The military is trained in horsemanship, long swords, spears, and crossbows. They wear chain mail and silvered acorn-style helmets. The symbol of Wagovia, an aggressive ram, is embroidered on their tunics. The herald of Wagovia is a red shield, with a yellow cross emblazoned on it. In the upper left corner of the Herald is the ram. The worship of Wagovia is led by the clergy, which is open to both men and women equally. Most of the land is dominated by humans, with a very small population of Demi-Humans. Wagovia is known as the Goddess of Destruction and of Rewards. It is largely preached that the conflict with Gor was going poorly, until Wagovia made herself known in battle to aid the people. Whereupon, the country adopted the deity as their own and named their country in her honor. While there have been a few prophets in the two centuries past, the religion mostly stems around the goddess. Worship involves group mediation in temples led by the pastors or canons.

Every month there is a holiday listed, with most centering on the new moons and harvests. Statues of the goddess are prevalent throughout homes and businesses, with temples having multiple representations of Wagovia. While marriage is encouraged in the religion, one of the major taboos is physical contact, especially in public. Procreation is supposed to be the sole reason for sexuality and brothels are outlawed in the land. Gambling is permitted in Wagovia, but frowned upon if done openly. The Goddess accepts penance for transgressions, but kindness, charity, and tolerance are the accepted practice of the religion.

The religion also has a coming of age ritual that occurs when a child turns seventeen. This ritual is usually tied to charity work, but can include any act of faith. Everyone in Wagovia is expected to make a pilgrimage to the Shrine of Wagovia on the coast once in their life. This rite allows the citizens to understand the greatness of the goddess and allow them to give thanks in her honor. This shrine was built on a legendary site, where clerics of the order were able to turn back pirate raiders in the infant stage of the country.

Death in Wagovia is celebrated as the continuation of life. Deceased are usually buried with some of their possessions and, in the case of warriors, their weapons and armor. The ceremony is usually short, but poignant, as the deceased leaves this world and

joins Wagovia in the afterlife. On a few occasions, it is said that special deaths are honored by Wagovia. These individuals are resurrected and hold a place of special reverence. These individuals are given the title of "prophet" and then studied deeply with the hope that much can be learned from their piety.

Clerics of the order wear dark red cloaks, with black brocade adorning the clothing. Members of the Council of Vicars wear red cloaks, with gold embroidery showing an elevated place in the order. The common people wear simple clothing and lead simple lives, making sure that their harvests are tithed for religious purposes. No taxes are collected, in lieu of the religious tithes which is expected to be 10-15%. Gold and silver pieces are the coins of the realm. Gemstones are frequent, especially in the southern reaches, as the Andall Peaks are rich in mineral deposits, for those brave enough to face the humanoids. The people of Wagovia are not wealthy for the most part, but they do have enough to help them through life no matter what station they may be in.

Magic is generally mistrusted because of the Gor Conflict; however, magical items do exist. Most of these items are quite old and are "trophies" from Gor, when that land was conquered and destroyed. These items range from weaponry to miscellaneous magical items. Alchemy is a growing science and as such, "magical" potions do exist and can be purchased by purveyors of the science.

Despite having 200 years of peace, the uneasy feeling being noticed now is well founded. A cult of Elementalists has been slowly growing in Wagovia and is becoming increasingly popular. This cult uses a four pointed crest and often disguise themselves with masks to hide their identities. This group is seeking to undermine the Council of Vicars, as they consider the faith in Wagovia as misplaced. This small militant group is believed to have been started by an elemental wizard, but at this time that is an unconfirmed rumor.

Travelling through the hilly landscape of Wagovia can normally be done on well-worn trails cutting through the wilderness. The highways are infrequently populated with peasants, travelers, artisans, adventurers, and highway men seeking to relieve all of the previous of their wealth. A random caravan of pilgrims headed to the shrine will also be encountered and these are accompanied by military personnel guarding them. Random monsters can also be encountered on the roadways, but tend to avoid these paths for their own safety. Going off the road will always result in a random encounter, be it hostile humanoids to lost children.

Life is good in the Theocracy of Wagovia, for most people and with the tenants of the faith, it is incumbent on people to watch out for each other. Opportunities abound to those willing to work hard and do their best in this country and that includes those who

have chosen to take a path towards adventure. While most fighters come from the military and clerics from the hallowed halls of the abbeys dedicated to Wagovia, other classes are looked at differently. Mages are suspect in this country, with old skeptical opinions, as the former country of Gor to the east was filled with evil wizards. Thieves and barbarians are looked down upon because of their lack of discipline, while bards are looked at as pure entertainment.

Wagovia is depicted as a four armed goddess in all statues and paintings. The four arms usually hold four different items; although, at times they are open handed. The four items are a blade of some kind which represents the might of the religion. A book, scroll or lamp (for insight) shows that learning is important is opposite the blade. A bundle of wheat for prosperity and farming is next to the blade. The final hand holds another disembodied hand which represents service to others. Depending on location, some of these items may be missing or changed depending on certain beliefs held by the area. An example of this are the agrarian temples, which usually prefer to have a second bundle of wheat in place of the sword, as their lives are more dependent on crops as opposed to fighting. The reverse would be found in the tower temples where the warriors pray. Wagovia statues can often be found with the goddess standing upon her enemies that are at her mercy.

There are three main threats to the Theocracy of Wagovia at this time and each is growing stronger. The humanoid population has always been a constant threat in the countryside and with most of the troops on the borders, this problem is continuing to grow. Most humanoids have come from outside the countryside, but some have lived in the land a very long time, but have remained passive towards the communities as long as their lands are not encroached upon.

The second internal threat to the country is the rise in the Cult of Elementalists. This group of growing believers have left the teachings of Wagovia and believe that the four elements of the world control people and not the four armed deity. These cultists believe that the only reason Wagovia is shown with four arms is the hidden meaning of the four elements. As the country is ruled by the religion, these Elementalists have had to remain hidden, as those preaching other religions are put to flame or sword. The Elementalists can be identified from their four pointed star tattoos.

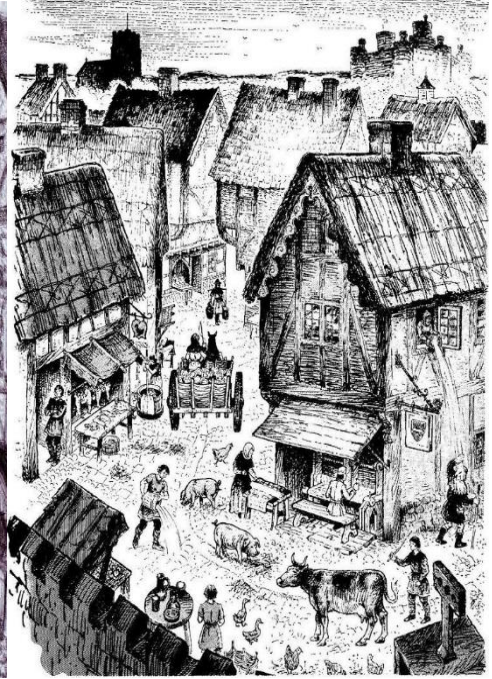
The third threat to the theocracy is the Gorian Syndicate. This group of outlanders are the only remaining descendants of the people of Gor to the east. At the conclusion of the Great War, the warriors of Wagovia put the conquered people of Gor to the sword or to the flame in an effort to eradicate the "rebels". The Gor people had been in conflict with Wagovia for many years and it was decided they could no longer be

trusted. The Council of Vicars decided there would be no mercy for the non-believers. Despite their best efforts, the daunting task of killing every member of the Gor could not be accomplished and many escaped. With the lands burned and salted, the Gor Kingdom was finished. Descendants of the conquered people have slowly begun to infiltrate back into Wagovia and armed with magical powers have started an offensive against the Wagovian border guards. The syndicate is few but powerful and have been recruiting unhappy Wagovian citizens into their cause and this threat is growing considerably each year. The aim of the Gorian Syndicate is simple – the fall of the Theocracy of Wagovia. They tend to wear hoods or have the 'All seeing Eye' tattooed on their bodies.



Notable Points in the Theocracy of Wagovia

- 1.** Port City of Shoreline – A trading center and fishing harbor. This is a large town.
- 2.** Shrine of Wagovia – A pilgrimage is required at least once in a citizen's life.
- 3.** Capri – Much like Shoreline but also a wealthy spot with farms held by the Council of Vicars.
- 4.** Grand Cathedral of Wagovia – The largest church in the land where Vicar Ladyship Mariah Venton holds sway.
- 5.** Rotopolis – The capital and largest city in Wagovia. Seat of the Council of Vicars.
- 6.** Riverton – This town is known for its textile trade and is a major supplier of clothing
- 7.** Badel – This large town sits in a valley known for grape and fruit production. Several vintners have set up shop here.
- 8.** Quendon – A large town that is a purveyor of limestone. Three quarries operate in this area and use the Fortel River to ship their stone.
- 9.** Fenate - A small town, it is important for being attacked frequently by humanoid incursions.
- 10.** Lumberian – This large town is known for the lumber production from the border forest. The light weight wood harvested here is very strong and durable.
- 11.** Middletown – This large city is known for its large repository of knowledge that is second only to the library in Rotopolis.
- 12.** This large city is the hub for the western provinces and has roads leading to every major city and town in the theocracy. The lush lands are conducive to every form of agriculture especially cattle.
- 13.** Borderville – Is the military capital in the land. Because of the large humanoid problems a very large garrison is kept here that is responsible for the entire southern border.
- 14.** Torim – This small city was formerly a large city when the Gor issue was unresolved. Torim served as the staging point for multiple invasions into the east. This city has numerous large and crumbling buildings that have gone unused since.
- 15.** Ruins of Gor-Dale – Once a border town for the Gor, the ruins here are said to contain numerous hideous monsters that prey on children. Legend also has it that magical items were once created in Dale.
- 16.** Ruins of Gor Mandrake – The former capital city of Gor this town was burned to the ground and the ground salted to make sure nothing ever grew here again. It is a stronghold for the Gorian Syndicate.
- 17.** Ruins of Gor Phillus – This area was once filled with lush farms and was the breadbasket of the Gor. When the war ended the land was salted down and the farmers impaled upon their own implements.

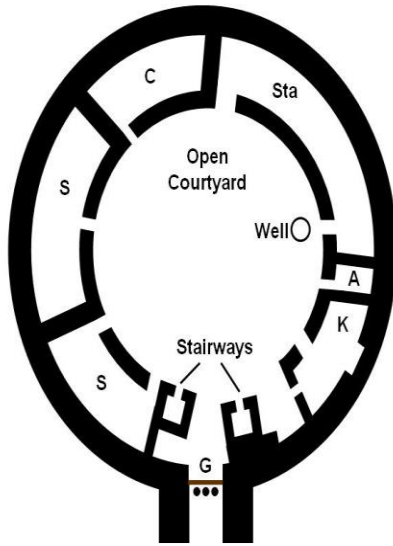


(Clockwise) Standard home/business in towns, the tight confines of Rotopolis, Downtown Riverton, Borderville citizens and animals

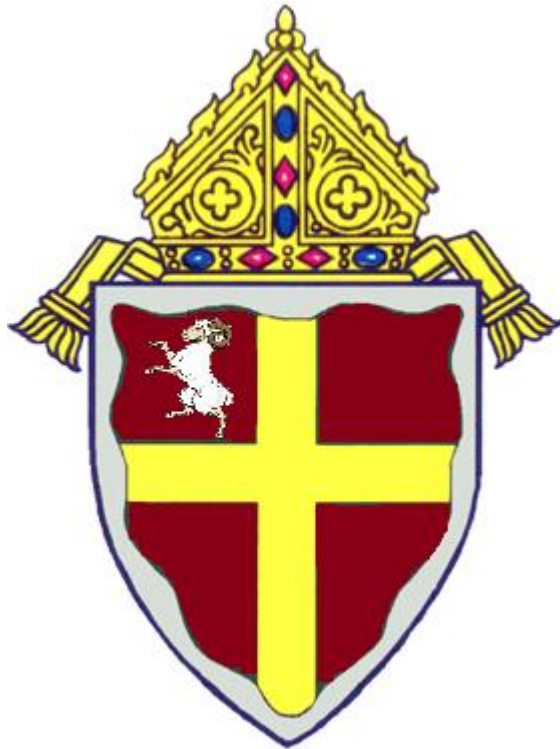


Standard homes in the rural areas

Ground Floor



S: stores
C: chapel
Sta: stables
A: armoury
K: kitchen
G: Gate



(Clockwise) The standard build of the frontier watchtowers, an assortment of currency used, the symbol of Wagovia, the main statue of Wagovia in Rotopolis



Images of the Gorian Syndicate <left> and Cult of the Elementarists <right>



View from the Shrine of Wagovia, the country's interior, Fortel River (3/4 of a mile across) and the view of Andall Peaks