

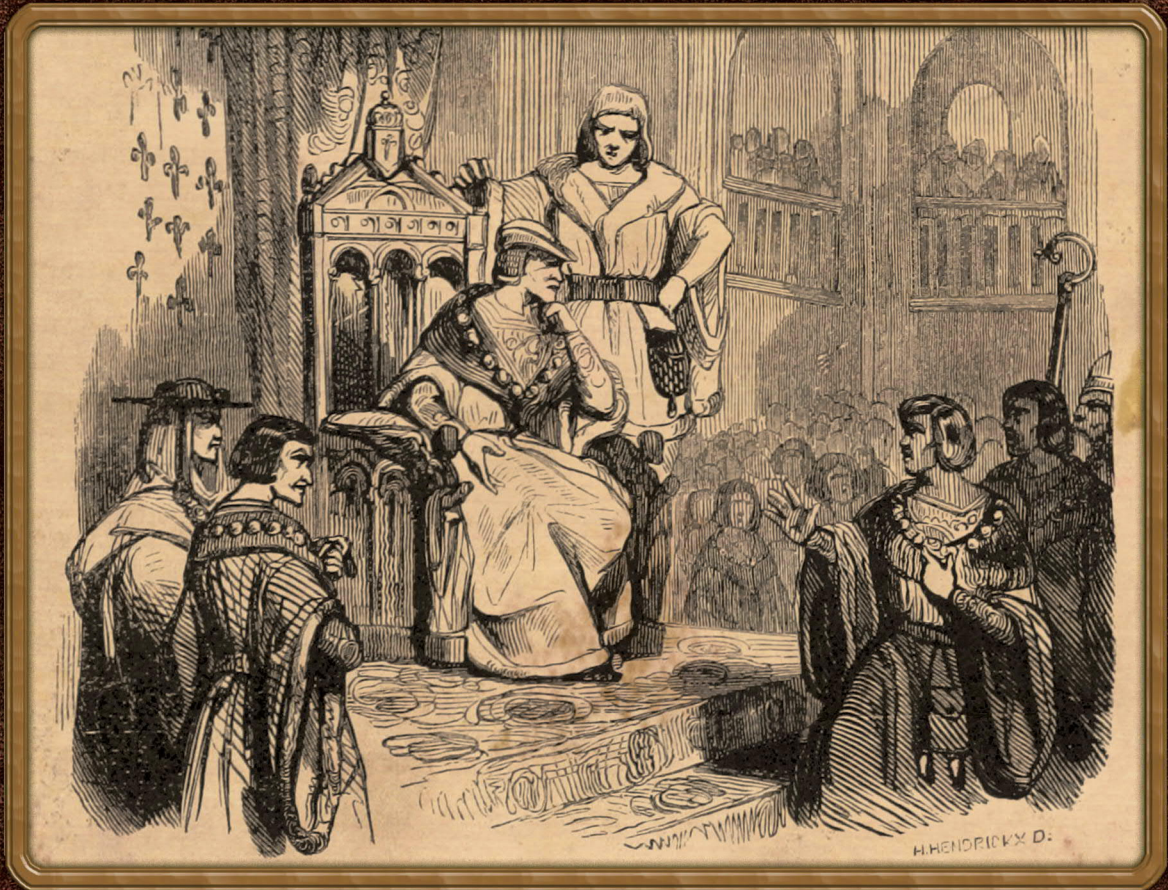
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Kingdoms of

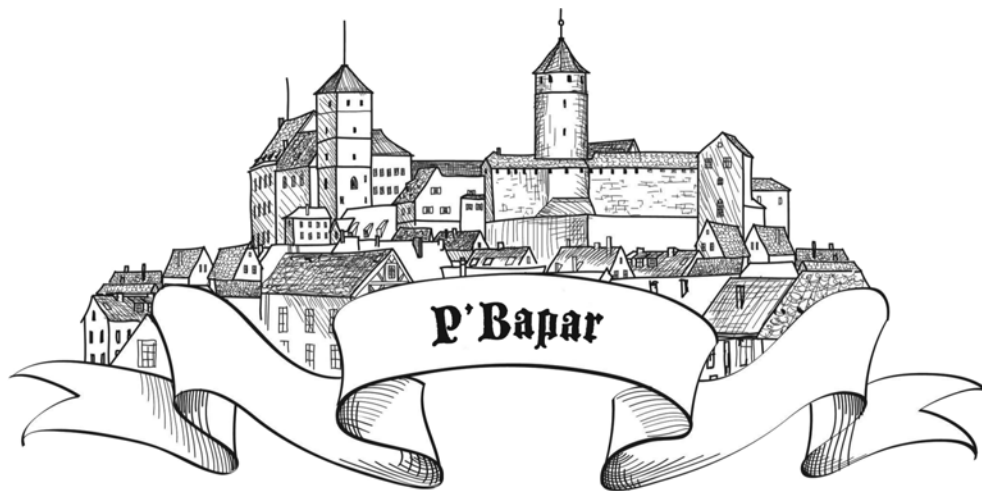
Kalamar

Fantasy Campaign Setting

P' BAPAR



PART 3: BAPARAN GOVERNMENT
AND MILITARY



Part 3: Baparan Government and Military

Since establishing independence from the Kalamaran Empire, P'Bapar has been a monarchy ruled by an Archduke. The current Archduke is E'Dos Kalanasi II, who aggressively rules his city while preventing representatives from the Golden Alliance, independent guilds, ambitious wizards, and powerful priests from outworking and outwitting him.

E'Dos favors government ruled by an elite cadre, and his administration is few in number. His advisors consist of several hand-picked representatives and a small council who double as administrators for some of the more essential functions of the city. This enables each individual to wield a great deal of authority and responsibility. The Archduke readily redistributes duties if a burden proves too great for one person.

Beneath the Archduke is a caste system of titled ladies and noblemen who possess less authority but govern various aspects of the city-state in the Archduke's name.

Archduke E'Dos Kalanasi II

Archduke E'Dos Kalanasi II is a stalwart man in his mid-fifties with graying auburn hair. Vigorous despite his years, he brings energy to every endeavor. He takes pride in his work ethic and rarely sleeps more than a few hours each night. When on task, no detail is too small for his attention.

E'Dos presents a commanding and intimidating figure. His broad shoulders and above-average height emphasize his power and position. His charismatic demeanor and gentle smile are most often used to disarm adversaries in the political arena.

A dedicated bachelor, E'Dos has committed his life to governing the city-state with as little distraction as



possible. Detractors insist he has a stable of mistresses and paramours at his beck and call, and the Archduke does little to dissuade those rumors. Despite these speculations, the line of potential suitors is long. Nary a week goes by that an offer for marriage isn't presented to him. E'Dos doesn't seem to be in a hurry to marry nor to create an heir at this time.

E'Dos takes immense pride in the effectiveness of his army and personally oversees the appointment of generals and military leaders. He's a skilled military tactician who obsesses over historical accounts of famous battles. He trains with his soldiers on a monthly basis to maintain and refine his skills with a blade. E'Dos demands a lot from his commanders, constantly striving to improve the effectiveness of his military forces.

While he's known for his military acumen, E'Dos is also a fierce negotiator. The Archduke himself oversees all important trade discussions, including large-scale mercenary contracts and trade agreements with foreign countries. E'Dos never accepts "no" for an answer on a matter about which he is passionate, and he remains steadfast when he believes he is negotiating from a position of strength.

Of particular importance to E'Dos is his desire to prevent outside organizations from gaining too strong of a foothold within his government. This delicate dance forces him to appease local guilds and temples, while at the same time resisting attempts on their part to be more involved with his administration.

Like his predecessors, E'Dos has provided a list of his successors in the event of his death. This will is held under guard by priests at the Founder's Creation. The contents of this document are shrouded in great secrecy and known only to the Archduke and the current high priest. Each year this list is reviewed and modified as necessary.

Upon an Archduke's death, the sitting high priest officially unveils the heritor's list. Each candidate, in order, is given the choice to assume or refuse the position of Archduke. Should a candidate refuse, the next name on the list is given the option of appointment, and so on and so forth. Even then, the final list of names is only revealed upon the appointment of a new Archduke.

The priests work tirelessly with the Archduke to ensure the candidates on this list are qualified and possess the required skills to rule. Traditional candidates include family members (spouses, children, and siblings being the most common), Earls, and other nobility. It is considered a great honor to be named in the heritor's list by the Archduke. Past rulers have included commoners who have made a significant impact on the city or the duchy. Appointments to the list made for non-political reasons are always listed last, making succession to the throne a virtual impossibility.

Nobility

Shortly after its secession, Baparan leaders established a caste of nobility to help differentiate itself from both the Kalamaran Empire and Brandobia. These titles have remained largely intact since their inception.

In order noble titles are ranked as:

- ▶ Archduke
- ▶ Earl (Countess)

- ▶ Baron (Baroness)
- ▶ Chamberlain
- ▶ Viscount (Viscountess)
- ▶ Marquee
- ▶ Bishop
- ▶ Knight
- ▶ Esquire
- ▶ Gentleman (Lady)

Titles are earned primarily through the grace of the Archduke; however, Earls may appoint Esquires, Knights and Bishops without permission from E'Dos. The least influential title (Gentleman or Lady) may be purchased.

When a person of importance (and with the financial means) wishes to enter the high society of P'Bapar they may opt to purchase a noble title. Upon approval, the petitioner is appointed the title of Gentleman (or Lady) and officially becomes nobility. A few minor privileges are granted with this title.

The most significant privilege is the right to own additional parcels of land and collect taxes upon that land. A reduction in taxes and the right to create and own a sigil are some of the other benefits attained by title.

Becoming a titled nobleman incurs several obligations. Most importantly is the collection and paying of taxes on the land they own or maintain. Failure to pay taxes will eventually result in forfeiture of all titles and lands. This is problematic for those that own large or uninhabited parcels of land that might not produce revenue.

Rising above the rank of Lady (or Gentleman) is a difficult task. Additional ranks are only appointed after years of service in an Earl's (or Archduke's) name. Supplementary privileges are granted with each title, as are the obligations to the crown.

The rank of Knight is often bestowed as a special honorarium for a heroic individual for services rendered to the city-state, an important noble, or E'Dos himself. Being knighted is the highest honor a peasant or commoner could ever reasonably expect to attain. Customarily, a gift is granted with the title, be it a weapon, armor, money, or a tract of land.

Viscounts and Marquees are often called upon to host foreign diplomats, parties, or even attend gatherings in the name of more important government officials. Payment for these events always falls upon the host. E'Dos never assumes responsibility for these social functions, though he has no qualms about assigning the responsibility to his nobility.

Barons, Chamberlains, and Viscounts hold even more responsibilities. Each must endeavor to uphold the Archduke's best interests. Barons (or Baronesses) control land directly owned by E'Dos (or the crown). This includes forts, castles, towns and villages, all of which are ruled in the name of the Archduke.

Barons often manage huge tracts of land and are responsible for the welfare of hundreds (if not thousands) of peasants under their care. Chamberlains and Viscounts are often appointed to govern over parcels of land or villages in the name of the Earl.

Earls are the principal administrators of the thirteen territories that constitute the Archduchy of P'Bapar. These twelve governors (Archduke E'Dos is also the nominal Earl of Kalanasi) hold a lofty and respected position, but their influence on the court is far less than their title might suggest. All are consumed with local matters and the politics of wringing greater resources from the crown than their peers.

Some titles and most land are hereditary and passed on to family upon death, no small gift to be sure. While the Archduke possesses the power to strip any nobleman of his titles and land, such drastic action is rarely considered.

Great responsibility comes with these titles, and E'Dos prefers to keep minor lords to a minimum, if possible. E'Dos would rather appoint a military leader to govern a town, fort, or village as he has more direct control over the governance, should the need arise.

Council of Lords

In order to effectively rule his city, E'Dos relies on a small council of appointed nobles who serve as advisors and managers of various aspects of day-to-day life. These men and women comprise the Council of Lords. Each Lord or Lady oversees an important city function. In reality, all of them are titled Viscount; but within P'Bapar, most are referred to simply as Lords or Ladies.

This group meets regularly to discuss issues within the city, policy changes, and improvements to governmental services. E'Dos also consults separately with each lord when he needs their advice.

TARIFF LORD

Also *affectionately* called the "Lord Bastard" or the "Master of Coins," the Tariff Lord is responsible for the collecting and distribution of taxes throughout the city. This position, more than any other, is highly regulated by a system of checks and balances to dissuade attempts at fraud or theft. Such safeguards are in place to protect the exorbitant amount of coinage collected on a monthly basis.

The Tariff Lord oversees the gathering of taxes by his band of tax collectors and their armed escorts. The commoners refer to these men as the "Un-Kingly" for their penchant for heartlessness. Under the supervision of their brutish guards, tax collectors wander the city collecting revenue for the Archduke's coffers. Two servants haul a large wooden and iron bound chest used to collect and store coins. The guards provide protection.

It is important to note that the Master of Tariffs has no say in the establishment of taxes. While he is regularly consulted on the matter, the task of establishing the exact fees falls on the Commerce Lord. The Tariff Lord's primary duty is the collection of taxes and managing the money once accrued.

The current Tariff Lord is Nurband Viliter, a highly respected priest of the Landlord. Nurband has held the position for nearly twenty years. More a politician than a priest, Nurband walks a fine line between serving his god and the Archduke.

Nurband oversees twenty tax collectors and nearly one-hundred guards. In addition, he works closely with the Porter's Guild to secure the services of men to haul money around the city.



Interactions:

▶ Nurband's religious peers have an unfavorable opinion of the Tariff Lord. Church leaders question where his true loyalties lie, while at the same time bemoan the lack of favoritism towards their taxation. Some elders have already decided that should something unfortunate happen to Nurband, they will prop up one of their more compliant priests for the position.

▶ Some believe that Nurband serves as a spy for his temple while also skimming money from the city's coffers, but the truth is that Nurband is extremely loyal to the city, his god, and the Archduke. That hasn't prevented some of the other council members from taking an active interest in the rumors.

COMMERCE LORD

The Commerce Lord, also known as the "Trade Lord" or the "Merchant Master", is tasked with overseeing and managing trade and commerce in P'Bapar. This includes establishing tariffs on imports and exports, setting prices for crops, determining how much and what commodities the city purchases, and regulating all other matters pertaining to trade. His single most important responsibility is setting duty on items passing through the city. In short, the Master of Commerce is one of the most powerful, and influential, people in the city of P'Bapar.

Fortunes have been made and lost on the whim and favor of the Commerce Lord. E'Dos always strives to appoint a person above reproach in this office in order to avoid instances of corruption. Ambitious merchants and guilds, foreign dignitaries, and even Baparan Earls all come to him hoping to see taxes or tariffs increased or decreased on certain trade goods at various times throughout the year. Offers of bribes and favors are commonplace.

While small instances of corruption may go unnoticed, large and unusual citywide taxes on goods raises the ire of local residents. Four of the last ten Lords of Commerce were executed for their greed, corruption and inability to withstand unrelenting pressure (and exorbitant bribes) from outside influences.

In addition to his daily responsibilities, the Commerce Lord must also maintain relationships with every important guild or merchant lord in the city. Their expertise helps establish prices on commodities, judge health and expected yield of upcoming crops, and allows the Commerce Lord to keep a pulse on the demands of imports and exports within the city-state. These meetings provide an opportunity for guild leaders to privately

pursue their private agendas in a one-on-one setting.

The current Lord of Commerce is Crindan Elfor, a smooth-talking man known for his quiet and intense facial expressions and his ability to convey a clear message without the use of words. Crindan is certainly not above taking a bribe, or seven; but unlike his predecessors, he has managed to keep his scheming to a minimum.

As much as he loves money, Crindan derives more pleasure from the power he wields and the chaos he is able to generate through his position. More than anything, Crindan just wants everyone to know that he is more powerful and important than they are, or ever will be.

Adventures and Interactions:

▶ In private, many joke about the expected lifespan of the Commerce Lord. Crindan does not enjoy these jabs and has been known to react poorly to comments made in his presence.

▶ Crindan has been using his guile and influence to slowly decrease prices on wine throughout the city-state. He owns several vineyards in the east. He's hoping to run a few quality, but financially weaker vineyards out of business and purchase them below market price. It's a long-term scheme with a side benefit that allows him to appear even-handed as he is taxing his own wine business.

SANITATION LORD

Known to some as the "Sewer Lord" or the "Shit Lord", the Sanitation Lord is charged with sanitation and upkeep of the city streets, sewers, and public spaces throughout the city. The Sanitation Lord is the least respected member of the Council of Lords. Despite his unpopularity, this position remains one of the most vital to the health and operation of the city.

All city maintenance workers and several guilds report directly to the Sanitation Lord. This includes the employees of the Guild of Lamps, who light and maintain the streetlamps throughout the city. Additionally, the Sanitation Lord monitors every maintenance guild employed by the city to keep the streets and public places clean, safe, and operational.

Other responsibilities include: ensuring that the streets remain as clean as possible, maintaining unpolluted wells beneath the city, keeping the sewers relatively unobstructed and functioning, catching rats and other vermin, waste removal and disposal, and of course upkeep on all public spaces. The sheer number of laborers required to ensure that all of these tasks are performed

means that, above all, the Sanitation Lord must be well-organized and a capable administrator.

Most Baparans have little opinion of the Sanitation Lord; in fact, many would be surprised to know he even exists. Only when a problem arises, such as a plague or public epidemic, does he enter into general conversation.

Few seek the title of Sanitation Lord, but the current holder is a portly Kalamaran bureaucrat named Bari Gomanas. Bari arrived with numerous recommendations after serving in a similar capacity for a dozen years in Korem, and three in Daresido before that. He takes pride in his organizational skills, his ability to break down large tasks into manageable pieces, and his love for management. Bari disdains the political jostling and the antics of his fellow Lords and participates in council gatherings only because it is required of him.

Adventures and Interactions:

► Bari Gomanas's real name is actually Kaggar Morthra. Kaggar murdered Bari fifteen years ago in Korem and assumed his identity on the eve of taking an administration position. Despite the selfish act of self-preservation, Kaggar possessed the organizational skills to make him competent at Bari's promised job. He's since

settled into a comfortable life but constantly worries someone will uncover his secret and blackmail him or come seeking revenge.

AMBASSADOR LORD

The most assiduous member among the Council of Lords is the Ambassador Lord, also called the "Greeting Lord" or "Lord Emissary". The Ambassador Lord works in conjunction with E'Dos and his staff to create and implement foreign policies, greet and house foreign guests, and ensure that the needs of important non-native Baparans are met. Additionally, the Ambassador Lord is charged with handling political negotiations with foreign cities and countries.

The Ambassador Lord acts as a political advisor to E'Dos and is expected to be knowledgeable about important foreign events. The position is taxing, requiring a high-energy individual that can serve as an advisor, take instruction, and possesses the social skills to be trusted with foreign diplomats when the Archduke is not present.

The current Ambassador Lord is actually an Ambassador Lady. Dorata Kalas was appointed to the



Sanitation Lord Bari Gomanas (né Kaggar Morthra)



Ambassador Lady Dorata Kalas

position just two years ago, following the death of her father, the former Ambassador Lord. Dorata fought tooth and nail to secure the position, besting over twenty other qualified candidates.

The young woman is extremely charming and a smooth negotiator. She impressed E'Dos on several occasions with her tact, guile, politeness, strong will, and follow through. When her father died, E'Dos promised to give her a fair opportunity to win the position, and she did just that.

Dorata is just under thirty years of age with long, sandy-blond hair and shimmering green eyes. More importantly, she is also an extremely tough and strong-willed negotiator with an excess of self-confidence. She speaks a dozen languages.

Dorata frequently spars with offensive or overly aggressive men desiring her or her job. Detractors and rivals have found that Dorata is well-connected and very prepared for underhanded tactics, political sabotage, or public smear campaigns against her. Men seeking her bed find that she is as elusive as any woman in the city. Some believe she prefers the company of women, though these rumors are unsubstantiated.



Constable Lord Plomdrel Blesguld

CONSTABLE LORD

The most inscrutable member of the council, the Constable Lord is charged with policing the city in order to protect the residents of P'Bapar. The Constable Lord, also called "The Guard Lord" or the "Lord Protector", creates and enforces laws throughout P'Bapar. In order to prevent any abuse of his power, all laws and policies must be formally approved by E'Dos prior to officially becoming law.

His duties include the hiring, and firing, of city watchmen and palace guards as well as negotiating contracts with several mercenary guilds to bolster the ranks of the watch.

The Constable Lord's other duties are largely bureaucratic in nature. Limited by the borders of the city of P'Bapar, he is only responsible for commanding watchmen and holds no authority within the army. Serving directly beneath the Constable Lord as his second in command is the High Marshal. The Marshal's daily responsibilities include serving as the de-facto leader of the watch when the Constable Lord isn't present.

The Constable Lord is also charged with the protection of the Archduke's family, the citadel, and serving as the leader of the Feathers, a secret organization of spies and informants.

Plomdrel Blesguld is the current Constable Lord. He has served in this capacity for nearly a decade. A childhood friend of the Archduke, Plomdrel spent his early years as an adventurer and mercenary. A bear of a man, Plomdrel is an aggressive and intelligent tactician who smartly allocates his time and resources.

The Law

P'Bapar is policed by watchmen hired from the general populace and bolstered by several bands of mercenaries. A small portion of the city watch is comprised of former soldiers, but the vast majority are young men trained specifically for the task.

Baparans refer to city watchmen as "Talons". The nickname is derived from the dark red tabard they wear depicting a black hippogriff talon, silhouetted on a circle of white. Talons enforce the local laws, settle domestic disputes and provide a measure of protection for the city residents. Mercenary companies hired by the Constable Lord wear the same tabard and abide by the rules of regular watchmen.

Watchmen in each district of the city are commanded by a sheriff. Sergeants report directly to the sheriff, and

they in turn report to the High Marshal. Sheriffs routinely patrol their districts alone astride a horse or in the company of their men. Sheriffs are promoted from within or recruited from the ranks of soldiers in the Baparan army.

Talons patrol the city in groups of six men armed with billy clubs, leather armor and small shields. One group in every six will additionally have two men armed with crossbows and short swords accompanied by a sergeant in ringmail and a medium shield armed with a longsword.

Sergeants rotate among patrols as needed throughout the day. Double patrols are common, most often occurring when two roving groups of guards encounter one another in the city. They typically group up, for to up to an hour at a time, while on patrol to help ease the boredom.

When necessary, Talons administer physical force while

imposing law and order. In fact, violence is the preferred course of action when dealing with unknown situations. Members of the watch are instructed to “arrest first and ask questions later” when encountering criminal activity. Non-violent domestic conflicts are resolved to the best of the guards’ ability, though they have little patience for these affairs.

Mercenaries are hired to fill the gaps when the ranks of the watch dwindle and recruitment for new watch members proves ineffective. Mercenaries are far more costly, and the Constable Lord dislikes hiring them unless absolutely necessary.

Mercenaries (individual or groups) are required to follow the established command structure and all watchmen protocols. They typically arm themselves with their own (generally superior) weapons and armor. They



serve in the same capacity as a typical watchman.

Talon (typical): LN Baparan human men-at-arms; HP 30; Init +4; Spd 10 (club); Rch 2½'; Atk +1; Dmg d6p+d4p+1; Def +3; DR 2; ToP 9/7

Notable Skills: current affairs 24, glean information 28, intimidation 23, language (Baparan 65), observation 26, resist persuasion 22

Equipment: leather armor, small shield, club

Talon Mercenary (typical): non-chaotic human Ftr 1; HP 30; Init +3; Spd 9 (longsword); Rch 3½'; Atk +3; Dmg 2d8p+3; Def +5; DR 3; ToP 9/7

Notable Skills: current affairs 10, glean information 10, intimidation 12, language (varies but Baparan ≥40), observation 10, resist persuasion 10

Equipment: studded leather armor, medium shield, longsword

Crime and Punishment

Like all major cities, crime is a concern in P'Bapar. Those disrupting the social order are dealt the harshest punishment possible, mostly as a portent to others. This deterrent is effective for the most part, but there will always be those preferring to live off the labors of the more fortunate. These outlaws test the ability of the Talons on a daily basis.

Those arrested are hauled off to one of eighteen

detainment centers located throughout the city. Typically, these cells and dungeons are located inside various guard towers, magistrate buildings, the Courts of Justice, or any other structure that houses members of the watch.

Eventually, the accused are brought before a magistrate who listens to their case and passes judgment. In general, magistrates are stringent and believe innocence (not guilt) needs to be proven. Even if the accused didn't commit the crime in question, the act of punishment serves as a warning to all others involved. Instances of witnesses coming forth to plead the innocence of an individual are rare and end in varying degrees of success.

Those accused of treason and espionage are brought to the attention of the Constable Lord and the Archduke. These crimes are rare; but when judgment is passed down, the sentence is always death.

For various reasons, prisoners are often transported through the city. In such cases, they are shackled to a barred wagon and escorted by a dozen soldiers. Transporting criminals always draws an interested crowd of onlookers. Citizens, bolstered by the helplessness of the prisoner, have been known to hurl rotten vegetables, feces, and garbage at prisoners. The guards attempt to dissuade this as they are as likely to be struck as their charge. High-risk prisoners (such as those charged with capital crimes) are never transported in this manner, but



instead moved by more discreet methods.

Escape attempts are rare, and freeing a criminal from either prison or a wagon transport is both a dangerous and complicated endeavor. Despite this fact, at least once a year a brazen comrade will attempt to aid in the escape of a captured friend or associate. These escape attempts always turn bloody. Few succeed.

Punishment for crimes is dependent on the criminal act committed, any witnesses who come forth, and additional facts brought to the magistrate's attention. Typically, first time offenders who have committed a minor offense are fined, flogged, or placed in the stocks for an interval of time ranging from hours to days.

When property is damaged or stolen, the courts often issue edicts requiring re-payment to the party at a loss in addition to the punishment. Repeat offenders might be jailed or given a sentence to work the Archduke's mines.

More serious crimes evoke jail time, labor camps, branding, mutilation or slavery as punishment. Smugglers are always publicly flogged. In addition, anyone caught smuggling is branded on the back of the hand to further broadcast their crimes. Repeat offenders are flogged and will have a hand or foot removed before being banished from the city. Death or government mandated slavery awaits three-time offenders that have circumvented their banishment to continue smuggling or are implicated in

facilitating such crimes from afar via paid agents.

Punishment varies slightly from magistrate to magistrate. As a result, criminals can only speculate how badly they will be treated in the event of their capture. Some magistrates are harsh, rendering brutal judgments for even the most meager of crimes, whereas others are more lenient.

Slavery as punishment is reserved for only the worst types of criminals. Repeat smugglers, murderers, rapists and other hardened offenders become property of the Archduke and are compelled to perform hard labor (typically working the mines) for the balance of their lives.

These types of slaves are indentured for life and never sold for profit. Few survive longer than five years in the mines. Working conditions are dangerous, and the soldiers assigned to monitor these slaves have little tolerance for unruly prisoners.

When crime rates spike, a rise in the harshness of punishment often follows. On past occasions, E'Dos has issued an edict declaring hangings if a particular type of crime flourishes. Ten years ago petty theft became such a problem that E'Dos publically hanged twenty pickpockets and burglars thus inducing a drop in the crime rate.

Prison sentences are rare. Prisoners are costly and require supervision, food, and lodging. It is far easier (and



cheaper) to mutilate, hang, or physically punish convicts with floggings and the stocks.

However, P'Bapar has two prisons where special criminals are detained. The first is located in the dungeons of the palace itself. Political or high-risk prisoners are housed here. This facility is also sometimes used a temporary holding area for prisoners who might later move to another facility or the mines.

The second prison is located six miles outside the city walls in the heart of a mountain. The caverns that house these prisoners were once home to a small clan of dwarves that were nearly exterminated by marauding goblins. In exchange for aid, the dwarves donated their mountain tunnels to the Archduke, who had them rebuilt into a prison. This prison, called the Dungeon, is a place no criminal wishes to see and one from where no prisoner has ever escaped. Conditions are poor during the best of times, and most inmates die from malnourishment or abuse.

The Dungeon is reserved for prisoners that have committed crimes that aren't severe enough to require execution. Repeat offenders caught for smuggling, burglary, theft, or property crimes are often transported here. Some especially cruel magistrates prefer to sentence prisoners to the Dungeon over hanging them.

Only a select few know the secret location of the Dungeon. Guards blindfold the prisoners and lead them into the mountains. There they are transferred into the possession of the clan of dwarves that once lived in the caverns, whom the Archduke pays to manage and operate the prison. The dwarves seal the prisoners in the Dungeon where they will serve out the remainder of their years hacking at the stone walls in search of silver, gold, copper, or gemstones.

Economy

P'Bapar is economically strong. The wide variety of wealth provided by the dwarven and gnome clans in the Legasa Peaks in the west more than make up for the scarcity of rich farmlands along the eastern slopes of the mountains. The Elenons hold a great supply of gold, emeralds, topaz, amethyst and tourmaline. The farmlands and ranches east of the Banader River produce durable wool, vellum and flocks of Paka birds living near the northern edge of DuKem's Swamp.

Most of this wealth flows down the Banader River to sell at Daresido, Korem, Bet Kasel, and Baneta, or up the tributary Renador River north to Kalaleta and the

numerous small villages along the shore. By the time merchants reach the Elos Bay, they have made their money and prefer returning home to braving the pirates and belligerent Kalamaran vessels in these waters.

However, it is the taxes on trade goods that provide stability to the coffers. It is said that the entirety of the city-state could survive on the revenue generated by trade through the Coniper Gap, an exaggeration no doubt, but one rooted in much truth.

COINS AND COMMERCE

Like many nations on Tellene, P'Bapar mints its own coins for use in the buying and selling of goods. Smiths mint coins from base metals (platinum, gold, silver, and copper) and stamp them with an imprint of the city on one side, and the Archduke's visage on the other. The side bearing the Archduke contains a phrase indicating the coin's monetary unit. For example, each silver coin is stamped with "1 Silver Guard".

City dwellers refer to coins by various names throughout the realm, but the most common, and official, names of the coins are: the copper Foriba, the silver Guard and the gold Tower. A platinum Lanam is also in limited circulation, but it's extremely rare to see and is generally not accepted by most merchants.. Trade coins, given in exchange for copper coins (10 trade coins per copper) are pressed and laminated pieces of wood stamped with a rendering of a hippogriff. These are referred to as Wooden Squares, or Squares.

For extremely large transactions, silver or gold trade bars, the aforementioned platinum Lanam or gems are exchanged. Trade bars vary in size but typically are sold by weight equivalent to fifty or one-hundred coins of the same type. Larger (and more expensive) bars do exist, though they are extremely rare. Like coins, bars are stamped with the official seal of the city-state, the Archduke and the amount of the bar. Gems are also used for expensive transactions, but disagreements on the estimated value are commonplace.

Larger monetary transactions employ promissory notes. These legal documents must be approved, stamped and sealed by the office of the Tariff Lord, the Archduke himself, or a witnessing priest of the Landlord. Merchants and nobles send promissory notes when exchanging vast sums of money. Once issued, promissory notes can be exchanged at the Temple of the Landlord for currency.

The lower classes typically barter or trade in exchange for goods and services. Bartering tends to favor the less

desperate party and usually involves giving up a fairly expensive (or useful) item for something that is immediately needed, such as a mercenary surrendering his armor for lodging and food when starving.

Trading involves exchanging one type of good (or a service) for another. Unlike bartering, trade involves swapping items for a pre-determined price or those of roughly equal value. The volatility of prices sometimes makes trading difficult. Selling livestock and several bags of grain for an equivalent price in goods in return is an example of trade. In most cases, trading between parties is fairly even, with small fluctuations in inflations being the norm.

LAND OWNERSHIP

By default, all land in the archduchy is owned by the Archduke, the Earls, or another member of nobility. Free men and women can purchase and own land, but few do. The cost of land is often so detrimental that in many places only the wealthiest own it.

Inside the city, land is divided by into plots and sold off to various merchant lords throughout P'Bapar. Many merchants and craftsmen within the city generate enough revenue to own their own land and buildings, but the majority rent, or lease the spaces in which they live and work.

Noblemen own large parcels of land, particularly in outlying regions. They charge farmers and craftsmen to work the land for a percentage of yield or income earned from that land.

TAXES

P'Bapar collects taxes and tariffs on a wide variety of goods and services. Once collected, these funds are redistributed throughout the city for public works projects or to fund military or governmental endeavors. Taxes come in a variety of forms but include: property taxes, tariffs on trade goods, gate taxes, and taxes and fees on specialized services.

Property taxes are paid on a monthly basis. Land owners pay a flat fee based on the size of the plot they own established by the district in which they live. Businesses pay an additional 25% tax rate on the income generated from their property. Bookkeeping is a necessity to avoid the "guesswork" of the tax collectors. Taxes can be paid for in coins or goods.

Taxes are collected on a random day of the month,

based on the whim of the collector. A resident may be taxed on the last day of one month and then again on the following (first) day of the next month. Failure to pay, results in a one-time, one month long extension (and a 25% fine).

After a second failure, tax collectors confiscate furniture, goods, or anything of value to satisfy the debt from the land owner. When such confiscated belongings cannot sufficiently cover the debt, collection authorities may (and generally do) evict the offender. Renters are allowed to keep their personal property, assuming they can persuade the tax collectors they actually own it. The property is then forfeited to the Tariff Lord to resell on behalf of the crown.

Property owners also have the option of paying their taxes by indenturing themselves in service to the Archduke. The cost is typically one month's service for each month of taxes owed. Of course, this does nothing to alleviate the problem if the owner has no way to continue to generate revenue while he is away. Sons, brothers and other male relatives can enter into service to cover the taxes of their kin, though they must do so willingly.

Merchants also pay tariffs on all trade goods imported into, or passing through P'Bapar. Tax rates fluctuate depending on the type of good imported, the time of the year, shortages and surpluses, and the whim of the Tariff Lord. Fees on goods entering the city are collected at the city gates by tax collectors and soldiers trained to root out smugglers and less-than-honest merchants attempting to conceal contraband.

Goods sold from individual market stalls are also taxed on a daily basis throughout the city. To ease the financial burden, merchants and grocers band together jointly operating stalls and businesses to save on costs. To eschew these costs, some particularly brave merchants traverse the city attempting to sell goods from the back of a mule, a small cart, or a wagon.

While this is entirely legal, it is generally frowned upon, and often dangerous. Wayfaring merchants setting-up shop near established businesses may find their tax paying rivals taking umbrage at the intrusion. Vandalizing property, frightening beasts of burden, or spreading false rumors about the quality of goods are common practices. Less principled merchants have been known to hire armed thugs to intimidate and drive off competitors.

In recent years, E'Dos has considered enacting a "sword tax" on travelers entering the city armed with weapons. The numerous mercenary bands working and passing

through P'Bapar have resisted this initiative, fearing it would do more harm than good. Nurband hasn't pressed the matter either, but several other members of the Council of Lords are in favor of it.

A roving band of men in the employ of the Tariff Lord collects taxes. Most Baparans refer to this lot as the "Un-kingly", though never to the tax collectors' faces. A band of four to six Talons accompany the collectors, offering protection and armed motivation for residents unwilling to pay their dues.

Most of the Un-Kingly wear some sort of facial concealment in order to prevent against unwanted reprisals when they're off-duty. Masks are sometimes individually decorated. Hoods, cloaks and scarves are among the other implements used to conceal the features of the Un-Kingly.

Each collector is assigned a specific district or neighborhood of the city to work, and they visit the same people over and over. During their daily excursions, collectors travel from home to home, or business to business in their assigned district, collecting the month's taxes. They place the collected coinage in a secured, iron-bound wooden chest carried by the Talons.

Over the years, both the Parish of the Prolific Coin and the Founder's Creation have attempted to become involved with the process of tax collection, to no avail. E'Dos prefers to keep the city funds a private matter and fears the secret agendas either temple may pursue.

Because of this, it was with some surprise when Nurband Vilter was appointed to the position of Tariff Lord. Unfortunately for the Parish of the Prolific Coin, this wasn't quite the coup they envisioned, as Nurband has been particularly dedicated to his service while inadvertently fostering a fair amount of distrust from church elders.

Adventures and Interactions:

▶ Taxpayers will quickly discover that the Un-Kingly are quite knowledgeable about business practices, often showing up at the leanest times of the month to collect the required dues.

▶ Tax collectors plan their routes to routinely stop and regularly deposit their collections. Not only does this alleviate the likelihood and indeed potential loss in case of robbery, it also lessens the weight of the chests that carried around the city.

▶ Several tax collectors willingly accept bribes from merchants ensuring they collect taxes at the most opportune time of the month. At least one tax collector is skimming money from the coffers. Nurband is aware of

the skimming but thus far has not rooted out which collector is cheating him.

Military

E'Dos commands a standing army of just fewer than 2,000 soldiers. Most of the city's 700 mounted troops are housed east of P'Bapar, where the mountainous terrain doesn't hinder the horses. Another 500 footmen assiduously wander the hills, especially the area around Fopasido, hoping to bring that disputed area entirely under P'Bapar's rule. A second group of 500 soldiers serve near P'Bapar and patrol the immediate farms, roads, and ranches around the city. Lastly there are an undisclosed number of additional troops, rumored to be less than 300 in number, that perform specialized duties for the Constable Lord and the Archduke. These men include the Mountaineers, the Snow Riders and the Feathers.

The army is additionally bolstered by an ancient law called "The Rite of Apprenticeship" which states that any able bodied male who reaches age 16 without being apprenticed or gainfully employed are consigned to the military for three seasons. This law is rarely invoked and fewer than two-dozen men a year are consigned in this manner, mostly parents using this to rid themselves of lazy sons.

Residents liable to be enrolled in the army on account of age and lacking a proper apprenticeship have another option available to them called scutage. Scutage, or shield money, involves paying a fee to avoid mandatory military duty. Wealthy merchants and noblemen are the most common payers. The poor are not so fortunate, preferring to flee the city to avoid being drafted.



The majority of the army is comprised of infantry. Footmen are fairly well equipped, clad in leather armor, sword and shield, pole-arm or bow. They are trained to fight in ranks or in small skirmish units. Their biggest threat comes from brigands and bandits that are drawn to the rich trade center, though on occasion soldiers will beat back humanoid incursions or other monsters encountered in the mountain passes and valleys.

Cavalry work the eastern portions of the city-state, patrolling the roads and rivers, protecting trade routes, ranches, farms and shepherds from bandits, brigands and humanoids in the region. Horsemen are equipped with leather armor, shields, sabres and short bows. 200 horsemen are trained as lancers and enter battle in splint mail, medium shields and lances.

In the event of emergency, the Archduke has the power to summon an additional 8,000 militia soldiers within three weeks' time. These soldiers are volunteers capable of equipping themselves with at least spears or clubs and leather armor. No less than 500 of them are volunteers with combat experience.

Mercenary bands are another fixture in P'Bapar. Anyone can hire a single guard or a company at a local guild within an hour. Despite the ease of finding protection for caravans, one caravan in twelve never makes it through the pass. Mercenary bands vary in effectiveness and tactics, and many are detailed later on.

Former soldiers often become mercenaries, caravan

guards, or join the Talons. Other more disreputable soldiers are less selective in their employment once they leave the army, accepting work as hired muscle, thugs, or even turning to banditry.

Baparan Soldier (typical): LN Baparan human men-at-arms; HP 29; Init +4; Spd 14 (halberd); Rch 7'; Atk +1; Dmg 2d10p+4; Def -2; DR 2; ToP 9/ 7

Notable Skills/Proficiencies: hiking/roadmarching, laborer, phalanx fighting, language (Baparan 65), observation 11, survival 18

Equipment: leather armor, halberd, field gear

MOUNTAINEERS

Fewer than 100 soldiers have the privilege of calling themselves Mountaineers. These men range to the far borders of the city-state and back again. Their job is to serve as advanced scouts and messengers while gathering information and breaking trails throughout the mountains.

Mountaineers are well trained and function with a fair amount of impunity, sometimes ranging alone or in tandem for weeks or months at a time. During times of war, mountaineers continue to serve in this capacity but also form small skirmish units to harass enemy supply lines and capture key objectives.

Mountaineers visit P'Bapar on occasion, though most prefer to take respite in the small towns and villages along



the frontier. There is much conjecture and hearsay about Mountaineers, and a certain mystique surrounds them. Despite their aura of mystery, they are more approachable (and appreciated) than soldiers in the more remote areas of P'Bapar.

Mountaineers are specially trained, and only those indicating a desire for an extended military career are trained as such. They are generally better armed and armored than regular soldiers. They typically carry long bows and long swords and wear studded leather armor.

Mountaineer (typical): LG-NG Baparan human Rgr 3; HP 41; Init +1; Spd 9 (longsword), RoF 10 (longbow); Rch 3½'; Atk +5; Dmg 2d8p+2; Def +2; DR 3; ToP 15/ 7

Notable Skills: animal mimicry 23, botany 31, cartography 38, climbing/rappelling 40, fire-building 24, first aid 28, hiding 56, hunting 22, language (Baparan 72), listening 49, observation 37, sneaking 43, survival 65, tracking 35

Equipment: studded leather armor, longsword, longbow, dagger, field gear

SNOW RIDERS

Twenty years ago, Plomdrel's Mountaineers captured a clutch of hippogriff eggs. He hoped to raise the creatures in captivity and train them to serve as mounts. Much to everyone's surprise, the plan was successful, and several years later, the first hippogriff riders took flight at a private viewing in the mountain vistas high above the city.

Thus was born the Snow Riders, a band of soldiers who train and fly hippogriffs. Snow Riders live in a secret camp high in the mountains training hippogriffs for the army. They are career soldiers, and only the most loyal and brave are chosen to "work the peaks". Surprisingly, the secret of the Snow Riders has yet to be fully revealed.

The Snow Riders primary purpose is to scour the Elenon Mountains and the Coniper Gap for enemy activity. Snow Riders fill the role of messengers for important diplomatic missives or correspondence sent to far off countries. Thus far, they have been withheld from military conflicts because they are small in number and expensive to train.

Currently there are 32 trained Snow Riders and 24 hippogriffs. All of the hippogriffs have been raised from birth by men and trained to serve as mounts, knowing no other way of life. They are (mostly) loyal to their handlers, though they can be extremely moody when hungry or angered, making them unpredictable and intimidating. Since their inception, two snow riders have been killed and eaten by their mounts, while a third was

wounded.

Snow Riders don white tabards adorned with the symbol of a dark red hippogriff head. They arm themselves with lances, long swords and medium shields and wear scale mail armor under thick, white colored, fur lined cloaks that provide protection from the elements. Soldiers paint their shields white to further amplify their namesake.

Their base camp is located high in the mountains, above the city in an undisclosed location. It is rumored the camp can only be accessed via the use of a lift or by climbing a treacherously sheer cliff face. The camp's location is a closely guarded secret. The site is rumored to contain man-made nesting areas and cages for the breeding and care of young hippogriffs, as well as housing for the guards and soldiers who maintain the camp. A cook, stable boys, and several animal handlers, carpenters and blacksmiths live and work on site.

Snow Rider (typical): LN Baparan human Ftr 5; HP 46; Init +3; Spd 12 (lance); Rch 10'; Atk +7; Dmg 2d8p+4; Def +4; DR 5; ToP 19/ 7; Hon 64

Notable Skills: cartography 30, intimidation 32, language (Baparan 70), resist persuasion 31, Riding (hippogriff) 66

Equipment: scale mail, medium shield, lance, longsword, dagger, field gear

Hippogriff Mount (typical): HP 42; Init -1; Spd 3; Rch 2'; Atk +9; Dmg 2d6p (claws) 2d10p (bite); Def +2; DR 3; ToP 17/ 7; Fly 40'/2, Jog 10'/s

THE FEATHERS

The Feathers are a group of spies and information gatherers in service to the Archduke and the Constable Lord. Their mission is to know everything of importance that happens within the city and, to a lesser extent, the city-state and Tellene. They are rumored to have infiltrated several churches and powerful guilds, but their main purpose consists of eliminating threats to the city by gathering information and subterfuge, and in some rare cases, assassination.

Members of this organization work closely with several guilds, merchants, and city officials, both openly and in secret, to gather information about smuggling, banditry, and matters of greater importance in P'Bapar. When necessary, this information is passed along to the city watch, the army, the Constable Lord, or the Archduke, as needed.

A subset of the feathers form a secretive group with a secondary objective bent on seeking out and eliminating

slave trade in the Archduchy.

Privately this group calls themselves the Red Feathers, and they are constantly pursuing rumors of slaving activity in the city-state. It should come as no surprise that followers of the Guardian are often recruited to become members of this secretive sub-organization. When they need to communicate with one another, Red Feathers wear a piece of red cloth (such an armband, headband, scarf or other accessory) in order to separate themselves from the others with whom they work.

Technically, the Feathers operate as an independent branch of the military, and most of their recruits are pulled from neophyte soldiers displaying the requisite skills required for subtlety and subterfuge. Some are recruited from outside of the army, but all Feathers are given a soldier's rank and paid from the same coffers as the regular army. Feathers take direction from the head of their order, the Lord Guard, Norel Vrasten.

Norel has been in charge of the Feathers for a dozen years. A priest of the Guardian, Norel constantly dances between serving the needs of the Archduke and Constable Lord and his ever-present desire to hunt down and eliminate slavery. It is a fine balance ensuring his Feathers are performing both duties.

At times, Norel misappropriates his resources, focusing needless attention on slaving activities in the far reaches of the city-state (and even in other countries). This puts Norel in a poor position, shorting his efforts with no way to explain the absence of his men to his superiors. Twice, Norel has narrowly avoided the discovery of his secret group. His grasp on the Feathers is a tenuous one, to say the least.

There are 54 feathers working for Norel, many of them unaware of the existence of others. Both Norel and the Constable Lord know the identity of every Feather in the organization. Four Feathers are actually secret double-agents working in service to the Constable Lord, reporting directly to him from inside the organization about the activities of the group (and Norel in particular). These men are fully aware that Norel engages in secretive schemes and plots, but they have yet to discover his secondary group of anti-slavery agents.

Norel Vrasten: CG Baparan human Clr 10; HP 52; Init +2; Spd 9 (longsword); Rch 3½'; Atk +7; Dmg 2d8p+7; Def +7; DR 6; ToP 21/ 5; Hon 94

Notable Abilities/Skills: Freedom of Action, divine lore 36, first aid 25, language (Baparan 67, Brandobian 76), religion (the Guardian 60, the Overlord 41), resist persuasion 28

Typical Spells: (1) purify water (2) cure trivial wound, innocuousness (3) cure minor wound (4) command, influence (5) cure light wound (6) hold in place (7) sanctify weaponry (8) transmute (9) levitation (10) dismiss enchantment

Equipment: chainmail +1, medium shield +2, longsword +2, divine icon, field gear

CREDITS

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Feather (typical): Baparan human Rogue 3; HP 30; Init -1 (one die better); Spd 7 (dagger); Rch 1'; Atk +4; Dmg 2d4p+1; Def +6; DR 0; ToP 10/ 5

Notable Skills: diplomacy 40, glean information 54, language (Baparan 76), listening 34, resist persuasion 43, seduction 28

Equipment: dagger, traveling gear