

THE EMPIRE OF DELBRYN: 362-1355 YD

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COTHRONAS LORE

The setting in question is a world called Cothronas. It is generally based on 5th edition Dungeons & Dragons lore, and while unique, contains many elements stemmed from that system, and from other works of fantasy. Cothronas is a magical world, with mythical creatures and supernatural forces, a pantheon of deities that directly interact with the mortal world, and nonhuman races such as elves and dwarves. My attempt is to postulate how an empire may develop within such a world, by applying concepts found throughout actual history.

Using a setting like this also comes with a few difficulties, as it inherits a few things that are somewhat difficult to reconcile. For instance, certain races in D&D lore such as elves can live for several hundred years, meaning that a single ruler could be in power for centuries, and even if they were killed, they could be revived with resurrection magic. While it would be easy to ignore this by making elves only live as long as everyone else, I think that working within the constraints of the system provides an interesting and unique challenge. As such, I will attempt to theorize on how an empire might develop under these unusual conditions.

CELESTIAL DEITIES

The world of Cothronas has a unique cosmology, with two suns and one moon. These three along with Domhai make up the four celestial deities. They rarely interact with the mortal world, and have very few direct followers, but are revered by all.

SALOS, THE MOTHER

Salos is the primary sun of Cothronas, giving it the majority of its light and warmth. She rises in the morning and sets in the evening, acting much like Earth's sun. Her deities are good.

GREATER DEITIES OF COTHRONAS

Deity

Esdur, the Shepard: god of life, death and dreams

Asem, the Mythril Dragon: god of magic, storms, and dragons

Vyra, the Emissary of Lights: goddess of the suns, music, and celebration

Namis, the Giver: spirit of nature, fertility, and decay

Isnera, the Voyager: goddess of exploration, discovery, and the sky

Wen Adris, the Unseen: goddess of illusions, thievery, and luck

Araxilim, the Corruptor: god of undeath, vengeance, and survival

Somdes, the Conqueror: god of conquest, war, and weapons

Selveri, the Whisperer: goddess of knowledge and secrets

Golvrik, the Tormenter: god of souls, ruler of devils

Umlin, the Lawkeeper: god of civilization, justice, and agriculture

Ektune, the Forgemaster: goddess of craftsmanship, stories, and history

Naera, the Weaver: goddess of time, fate, and memories

VOL, THE WANDERER

Vol is the secondary sun of Cothronas, and travels through the sky over the course of the year. During the winter he is near Salos, the two even overlapping during the winter solstice. Through the spring he drifts away, until the two are completely opposite in midsummer. Vol is slightly bluish and somewhat smaller than Salos. During the part of the year when he is in the night sky, his light is comparable to that of a full moon. His deities are chaotic.

GHEA, THE SEER

Ghea is the sole moon of Cothronas. He has two phases at once, one from each sun. Salos' phases follow a 16 day cycle, Vol's being slightly offset from that as the year progresses. Salos' phase is always much more prominent, Vol's only appearing as a dim blue.

When the suns are together in the winter, the two phases will overlap, but they drift apart throughout the year; in the summer there are some nights where each half of Ghea is lit by a different sun. His deities are lawful.

DOMHAI, THE DEEP

Domhai is somewhat amorphous, representing the vast, empty space of the sky. They are commonly associated with cold and darkness: everything untouched by Salos' light. Their deities are evil.

GREATER DEITIES

Apart from the four celestial deities, there are 13 additional greater deities. These deities influence the world much more directly, and each have their own followers. Each greater deity (except for Naera) has one of the four celestials as a patron.

The alignment system is taken from D&D, and represents a very broad representation of a moral compass, spanning from Lawful-Neutral-Chaotic in one axis, and Good-Neutral-Evil in the other.

Alignment

Lawful Good (Salos)

Neutral Good (Salos)

Chaotic Good (Salos)

Chaotic Good (Vol)

Chaotic Neutral (Vol)

Chaotic Evil (Vol)

Chaotic Evil (Domhai)

Neutral Evil (Domhai)

Lawful Evil (Domhai)

Lawful Evil (Ghea)

Lawful Neutral (Ghea)

Lawful Good (Ghea)

Neutral (None)

CALENDAR



The calendar system of Cothronas has 13 months, and uses 7 day weeks. Each year is 365 days long, and follows a typical four-season cycle. Due to the fact that Vol is closer in the summer and farther in the winter, summer and winter happen at the same time for both hemispheres.

WEEKDAYS

#	Name	Equivalent
1	Saldin	Sunday
2	Voldin	Monday
3	Uskdin	Tuesday
4	Aesdin	Wednesday
5	Domdin	Thursday
6	Ghedin	Friday
7	Hasdin	Saturday

UNSETTING AND CONVERGENCE

The summer solstice occurs during the middle of Unsetting, during which Salos and Vol are exactly opposite one another. This is celebrated across the world with a week of festivities.

The winter solstice occurs on the first day of the year, during which Salos and Vol briefly overlap. This event is called Convergence, and is also widely celebrated, usually with family and loved ones.

MONTHS

#	Name	Days	Season
1	Naeril	32	Winter
2	Golus	32	Winter-Spring
3	Abhainn	19	Spring
4	Ektuery	32	Spring
5	Itmer	32	Spring-Summer
6	Durlim	32	Summer
7	Unsetting	7	Summer
8	Vyr	32	Summer
9	Nera	32	Summer-Autumn
10	Aestary	32	Autumn
11	Tür	19	Autumn
12	Vuria	32	Autumn-Winter
13	Nardant	32	Winter

YEARS

Years are noted with YD, which stands for 'Year of Dur'nar'. In the year 0 YD, the meteor Dur'nar fell in Norbeck, creating thick clouds of dust that covered the world in darkness for almost 300 years. This event is referred to as the Shadowblight. Years before 0 YD are noted with negative numbers, for example -500 YD.

Below: Cothronas as of 1363 YD.



THE EMPIRE OF DELBRYN

EARLY HISTORY (BEFORE 362 YD)

- By the year -800 YD, early elves could be found in Western Feviri.
- The city of Odria was founded in -372 YD.
- In 0 YD, a large meteor known as Dur'nar landed in Norbeck. The common calendar system is based around this, YD being short for "Year of Dur'nar". The event caused vast amounts of soot and dust to kick up into the atmosphere, plunging the entire planet into darkness for almost 300 years. This period is known as the Shadowblight.
- The Shadowblight ended in 287 YD.
- The Kingdom of Rahn was founded in 336 YD by human settlers from Norbeck.

THE ODRIAN EMPIRE (362-690 YD)

THE ESPICH WAR

The Espich War was a conflict fought between the city-state of Espesh and the Odrian-Getrian Alliance which lasted from 376 to 395 YD.

Twelve years earlier in 362 YD, Espesh had invaded and conquered the nearby city-state of Deshal, incorporating it into their territory. The neighboring city-states of Odria and Getria responded by allying with each other to discourage any further expansion from Deshal. In 376 YD, a surviving Deshic official assassinated an Espich general, framing the crime on the Odrian-Getrian Alliance. Soon afterwards, Espesh declared war.

The ensuing conflict dragged on for 19 years. The Alliance adopted a more defensive strategy, interspersed with large-scale raids during which they would raze farmlands and outer villages, slowly weakening Espesh by removing their resources. Eventually, the Alliance launched a vast offensive, ultimately sieging the city of Espesh.

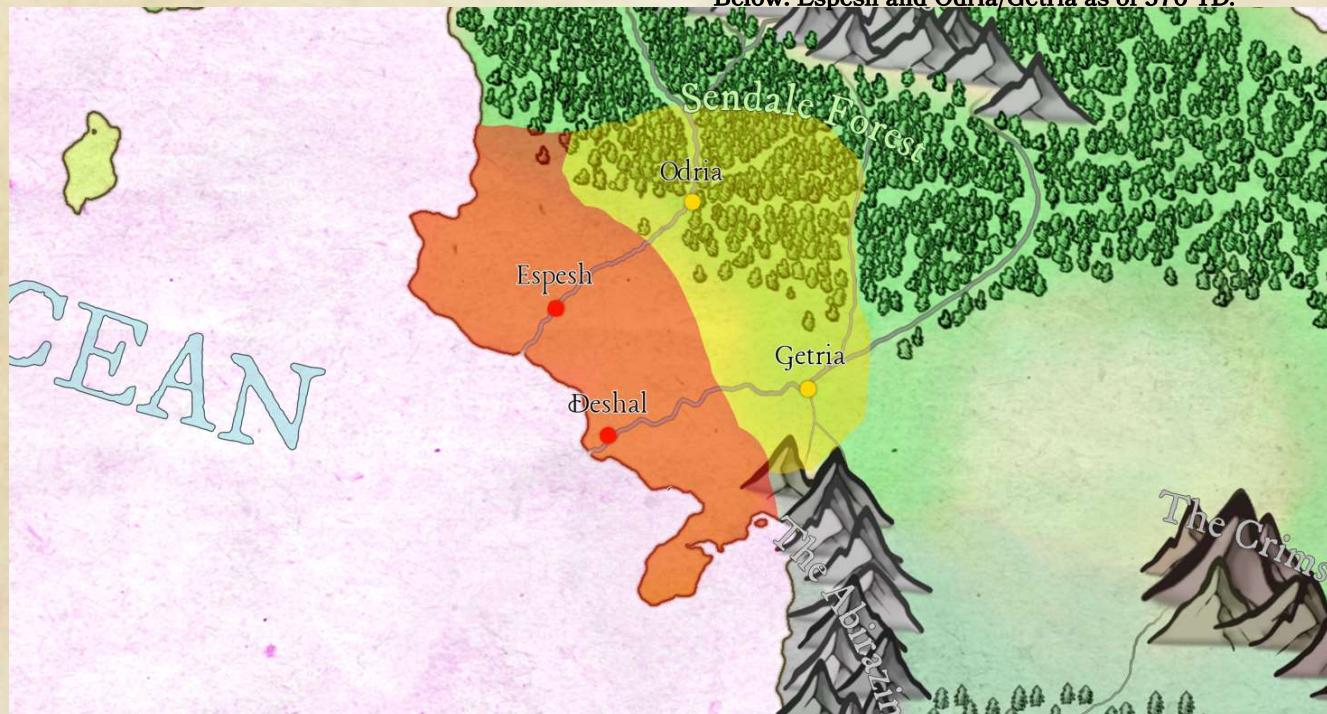
Rapidly losing control, they were forced to surrender.

In the aftermath of the Espich War, the cities of Espesh and Deshal were incorporated into the Odria-Getria Alliance. Three years later in 398 YD, the Alliance formally declared themselves as The Odrian Empire.

The **Espich War** is particularly inspired by the Second Peloponnesian War (431-404 BC), fought between Sparta and Athens. The wars are not exactly equivalent, given that the Espich War does not include a naval element, but I still found it to be a useful analogue for a conflict at this scale. The Alliance's tactics are directly lifted from Sparta, who participated in annual raids into Athenian lands.

https://www.worldhistory.org/Peloponnesian_War/

Below: Espesh and Odria/Getria as of 376 YD.



ODRIAN EXPANSION

For a time, the Odrian Empire was able to exist in relative peace, but as their size continued to increase, they required additional resources to continue prospering. Starting roughly 405 YD, Odria continued its expansion eastward into the region now known as Talemar. Somewhat avoiding the relatively barren lands of the Talemar Steppe, they mainly expanded into the northern Sendale Forest, establishing the city of Namisgrove by 424 YD.

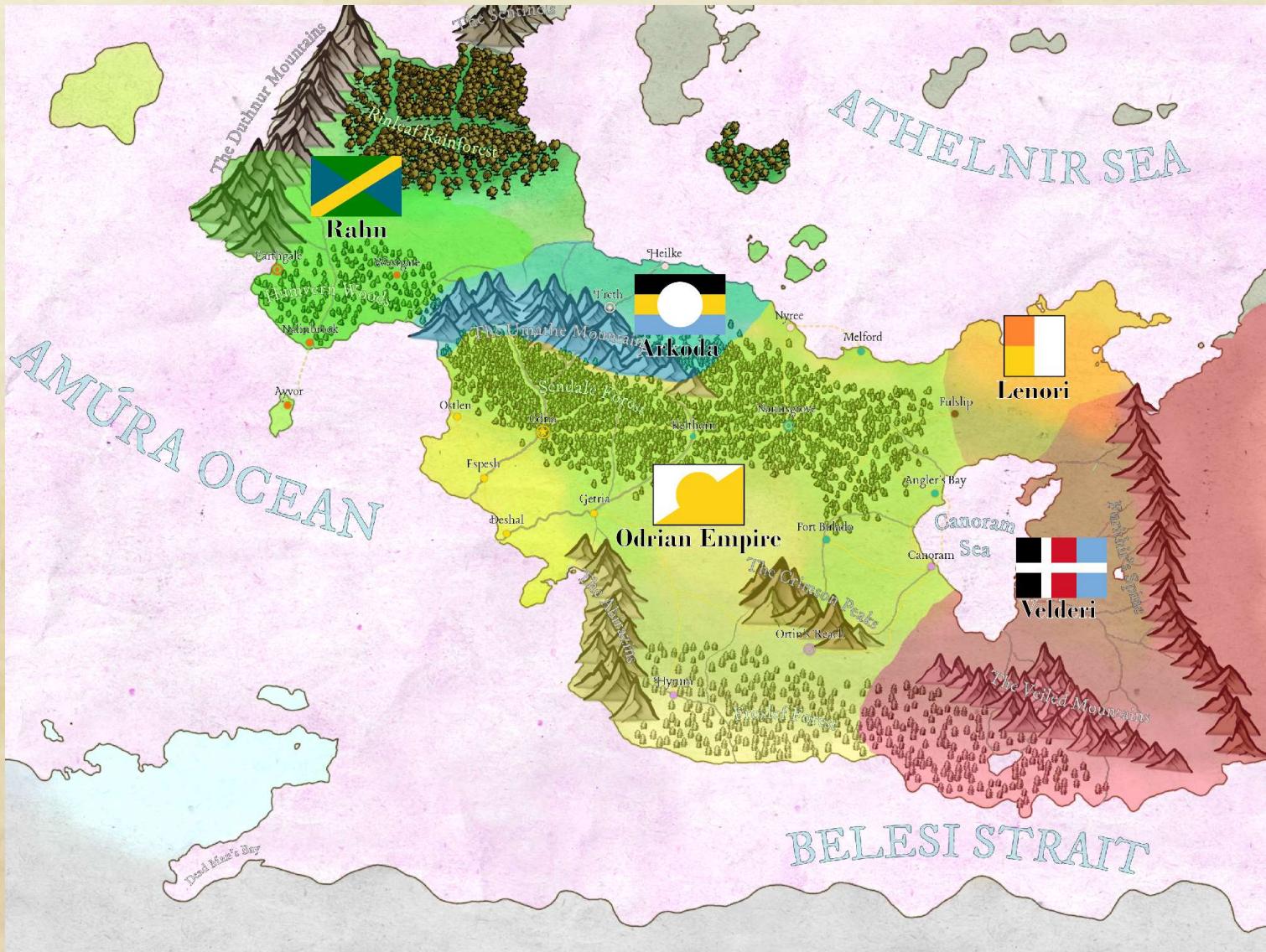
Around the same time, dwarven settlers from the distant northern nation of Ekaron arrived in Arkoda, establishing the stronghold of Treth in 412 YD. They interacted peacefully with Odria, and became valuable trade partners for their skill in blacksmithing and gemcutting.

To the northwest, the Kingdom of Rahn continued to enhance its navy. While not necessarily hostile towards Odria, the two were not allies, and apart from occasional trade rarely interacted with each other.

Further eastward, the nomadic tribes of Lenori continued to expand through the area, at times coming into conflict with clans from the neighboring Velderri region. The group also came into contact with Odria around 465 YD, and the two established the trading post of Fulship on the edge of Lenori lands.

In the year 532 YD, the Odrian general Ortin Stonebeard, a dwarven man, led a series of incursions into the untamed southern lands of Cloanav. The region contained dangerous wildlife, more severe weather, and a few scattered people groups. The colony of Hyrum was established in 535 YD.

Below: Western Feviri as of 593 YD.



PEASANT UPRISING OF 653 YD

In 653 YD, Queen Anira oversees the construction of a massive citadel in Odria, expanding on the previous castle. It is lavish and elegant, but built on the backs of the lower class, including slaves from the southern regions. Meanwhile, the rest of the city lives in poverty and ruin. Enraged, the people storm the still incomplete citadel, sabotaging construction. They are able to successfully occupy the site for a few hours before being completely and ruthlessly wiped out by the military. News of event inspired similar revolts throughout the empire, to the point of threatening a complete civil war. Queen Anira dismissed most of this, letting the military work it out themselves, until another revolt in Odria led to the assassination of the queen. She was soon resurrected, after which point she felt it necessary to punish the rebels for their insolence, instructing the military to show no mercy as they quelled the rebellion. The peasants didn't stand a chance, but morale among citizens became lower than ever before.

UNIFICATION OF LENORI (651-679 YD)

As this was happening in Odria, the Leonin warrior Delbrynn Eversun was growing up in Lenori. The region was ruled by nomadic tribes, constantly conflicting with each other. More recently, Velderri had been expanding ever further into Lenori, threatening to conquer it for themselves.

Delbrynn Eversun had experienced his share of conflict as a child, being thrust into the front lines of combat with other tribes. He quickly proved himself a skilled warrior, gaining respect and notoriety from both allies and enemies. By the age of 24, he found himself in an opportune position: the Eversun clan had recently conquered a rival clan, the two merging into one. Furthermore, his father, the leader of the clan, was mortally wounded in battle, making Delbrynn the ruler of one of the most powerful clans in Lenori. As he reconciled the consequences of newfound leadership, he developed a vision for the future of his clan, and of his people. He sought to free his people from the encroaching Velderri forces, and furthermore to liberate the people of Odria from their oppressors. He saw the conquest of Feviri as his birthright, and the opportunity quickly approached.

From 675-679 YD, Delbrynn Eversun made his way across Lenori, uniting the clans through both combat and diplomacy. His newfound military was able to push Velderri out of Lenori lands, after which point he shifted his focus towards the west.

THE CONQUEST OF ODRIA (679-690 YD)

The first city to be taken was the trading post of Fulslip. The battle was brief, Eversun's forces taking over quickly. This momentum carried for several more encounters as he progressed around the coast of the Canoram Sea. While some areas showed resistance, others willingly joined Eversun, still dissatisfied with the state of the empire following the revolts two decades earlier. This was more prevalent in the outer regions, where the capital's control was much less direct.

The first major complication arrived as the armies pressed into the Sendale Forest. The terrain granted the defending Odrians an advantage, as they were well acquainted with how to use the natural defenses of the area to full effect. Eversun was able to press as far as Namisgrove, but attempts to siege the city were unsuccessful. This forced him to move his forces southward, but doing so would greatly weaken the northern flank, and he lacked the numbers to maintain both. In an attempt to rectify this, Eversun sent an ambassador to Arkoda in 682 YD, requesting assistance. In exchange, they were offered additional lands, resources, and protection from Eversun's new empire. Arkoda accepted, sending additional troops to help defend the northern front. After this, Eversun pushed further south along the coast of the Canoram Sea.

The southern lands were also receptive to Eversun's cause, many joining voluntarily. The size of his army was increasing, but the capital was still far out of reach. He was left with three options: attempt to push through the Sendale Forest, a tactic previously unsuccessful, push through the barren and inhospitable Talemar Steppe, or bypass it by going around the south, running the risk of once again overextending the army. Eversun chose the second option, beginning to press forward into the Steppe in 684 YD.

In the following years, the Talemar Steppe would be renamed to the Bloodsteppe. This name is considered appropriate, considering the bloodiest conflicts of Eversun's conquest took place here. For three years, the two forces remained in a stalemate, slowly wearing down the others' forces. They also blocked trade routes to the southern colonies, and this form of coercion, along with the general unrest already present, caused several southern cities to pledge allegiance to Eversun. Finally, fortune struck as a particularly dry summer caused wildfires to spread throughout the Sendale Forest. Arkoda used the opportunity to capture Namisgrove, succeeding where Eversun failed. After this, Eversun quickly turned his forces back northward, abandoning the Steppe and launching a second offensive within the Sendale Forest. This one was far more successful, catching the defenders on the retreat. The army captured Kelthorn, then set their sights directly for Odria.

The city of Odria was well defended, and difficult to siege. After pushing to the city walls, Eversun ordered his troops to occupy the surrounding roads, preventing supplies from reaching the city. Then, they held their position for months, repelling attacks from both within the city and from the surrounding region. The ensuing famine resulted in more death, and more revolts from the lower class. Then in 688 YD, Eversun's army breached and overtook the city of Odria.

While the capital city was captured, the queen was able to escape southward to the port city of Sygril. The following two years consisted of Eversun's army capturing the remaining cities of Asthave before pressing forwards towards Sygril. Although the terrain surrounding the city made it easy to defend, it was not able to stop Eversun's army. Queen Anira was slain for a second time, and this would be her last, as her body was ordered to be completely incinerated. With the queen slain, Eversun returned to Odria and crowned himself king, naming his new empire after himself.

THE REIGN OF KING EVERSON (690-937 YD)

THE DELBRYN REFORMATION

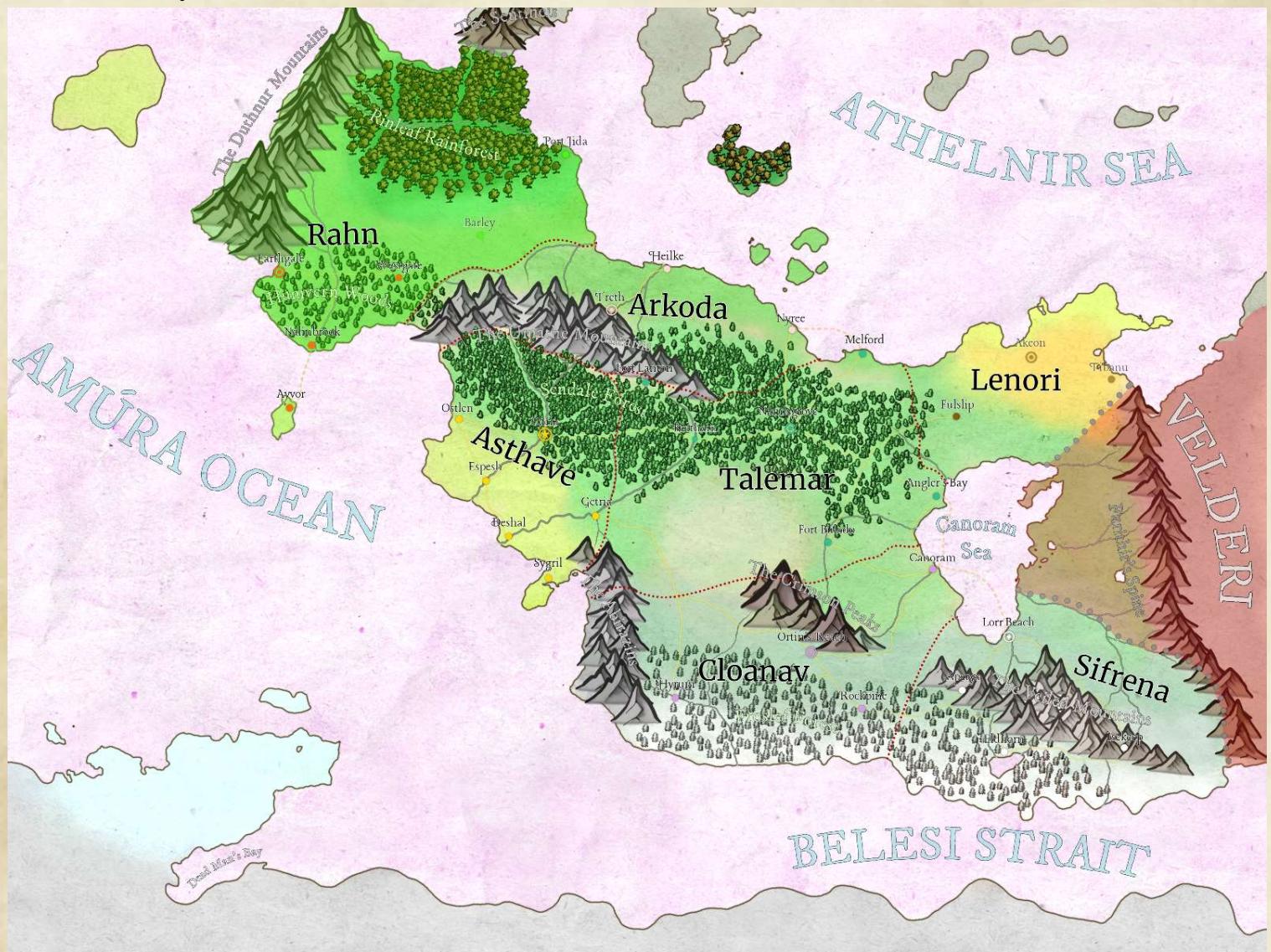
King Eversun ruled from the city of Odria, keeping it as the capital of the empire. He installed his most trusted diplomats and military leaders into positions of power within the government, and allowed a few officials from the previous empire to maintain their status. Much of the existing governmental structure of the Odrian Empire was maintained, simply being adapted or added onto. As part of this effort, King Eversun decided to divide the empire into several semi-autonomous states, which would handle domestic matters while still remaining subservient to the crown. The former Odrian Empire was divided into three provinces: Asthave, Talemar, and Cloanav. Additionally, Arkoda and Lenori were both willingly incorporated into the empire, allowing them to reap the benefits thereof while still maintaining a measure of independence.

THE SIFRENAN WAR (706-721 YD)

In 706 YD, Delbryn declared war on Velderri, attempting to push them back towards the mountains. The war lasted for 15 years before the two formed a treaty which granted Delbryn the southeast region while Velderri maintained control of the area east of the Canoram Sea. This new southeastern province was named Sifrena.

King Eversun is inspired by a few important figures from history, specifically Alexander the Great and Ghengis Khan. Like both of those great conquerors, he was able to lead an army to overtake a vast area of land. The main difference here is that he was able to maintain it. Eversun's quest for immortality is directly inspired by Ghengis Khan, who sought the same thing. But in a world of magic, it's actually achievable.

Below: Delbryn as of 721 YD.



EVERSUN'S QUEST FOR IMMORTALITY

King Eversun was a Leonin, who typically lived for around 100 years. He was 70 years old by the absorption of Sifrena, and knew that he was beginning to run out of time. To combat this, he commissioned powerful wizards and arcanists to develop a means of achieving immortality. The effort was challenging and expensive, but 17 years later they succeeded, and in 738 YD, King Eversun became immortal. In this state he wasn't completely invincible, but he was immune to the effects of old age, and his access to powerful healers made him effectively immune to disease as well.

COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE DELBRYN EMPIRE

Artificers from Velderri first invented devices called Sending Stones in 699 YD. They come in pairs of smooth handheld rocks imbued with magical energy. Once each day, a Sending Stone could be used to instantly send a brief message (25 words or less) to its paired stone, regardless of how far apart the two are. That is to say, two people on opposite sides of the world could instantly transmit short messages to each other as long as they both had linked Sending Stones. Although these devices were expensive and had limited bandwidth, the speed and range of communication was far superior to any traditional means.

Sending Stones began to see widespread use within the Odrian Empire in 743 YD, when King Eversun developed a network of relay stations throughout the empire. Through a chain of Sending Stones, information could be transmitted between cities within minutes. This helped to allow the capital city of Odria to maintain its grasp on its increasingly distant cities.



Above: A Sending Stone. (Art by Willow Bohlen)

Sending Stones are a staple of Dungeons and Dragons, being one of the better known magical items within the game. As I was designing Delbryn, I considered how they might be used on larger scales. In my research I learned that communication is one of the most important aspects of maintaining an empire with a large land mass. To implement Sending Stones as a communication device, I took inspiration from the Mongol Empire's communication system, known as the Yam. It was a set of relay stations that horsemen rode between to quickly transfer messages. Since Sending Stones aren't limited by distance, what if a similar relay system was used to form a network, which could then also connect the cities with each other?

<https://www.historyonthenet.com/mongol-empire-special-features>

In addition to the introduction of the Sending Stone network, infrastructure was generally improved throughout the 8th century YD, as roads and ports were constructed all across the empire. In this time King Eversun began to turn into somewhat of a figurehead, most matters being delegated to other officials. But as a king he was well-liked by his people, and generally improved the prosperity of the common folk.

THE PLAGUE OF ARBENOX

In 830 YD came the Plague of Arbenox, a plague created by a draconic necromancer from the western island of Orstael as a sort of biological weapon. It quickly spread across the world, Delbryn being no exception. Dragonborn, a race of people with draconic heritage, were seemingly immune to the disease, which led to widespread resentment of their kind. In Delbryn specifically, dragonborn clans became somewhat subjugated, and in a few cases tensions rose to the point of military involvement. The plague ended within a decade, though the hatred of dragonborn persisted for many years after.

THE AKTU-MAL

The Aktu-Mal are an Orcish faction originating from Norbeck. The group is very adaptable, and during the Shadowblight they were able to use that to their advantage to survive and even prosper during the calamity, even going as far as to assist others within the region. The name "Aktu-Mal" translates to "Ash-Death", as a reminder of their triumph over the Shadowblight.

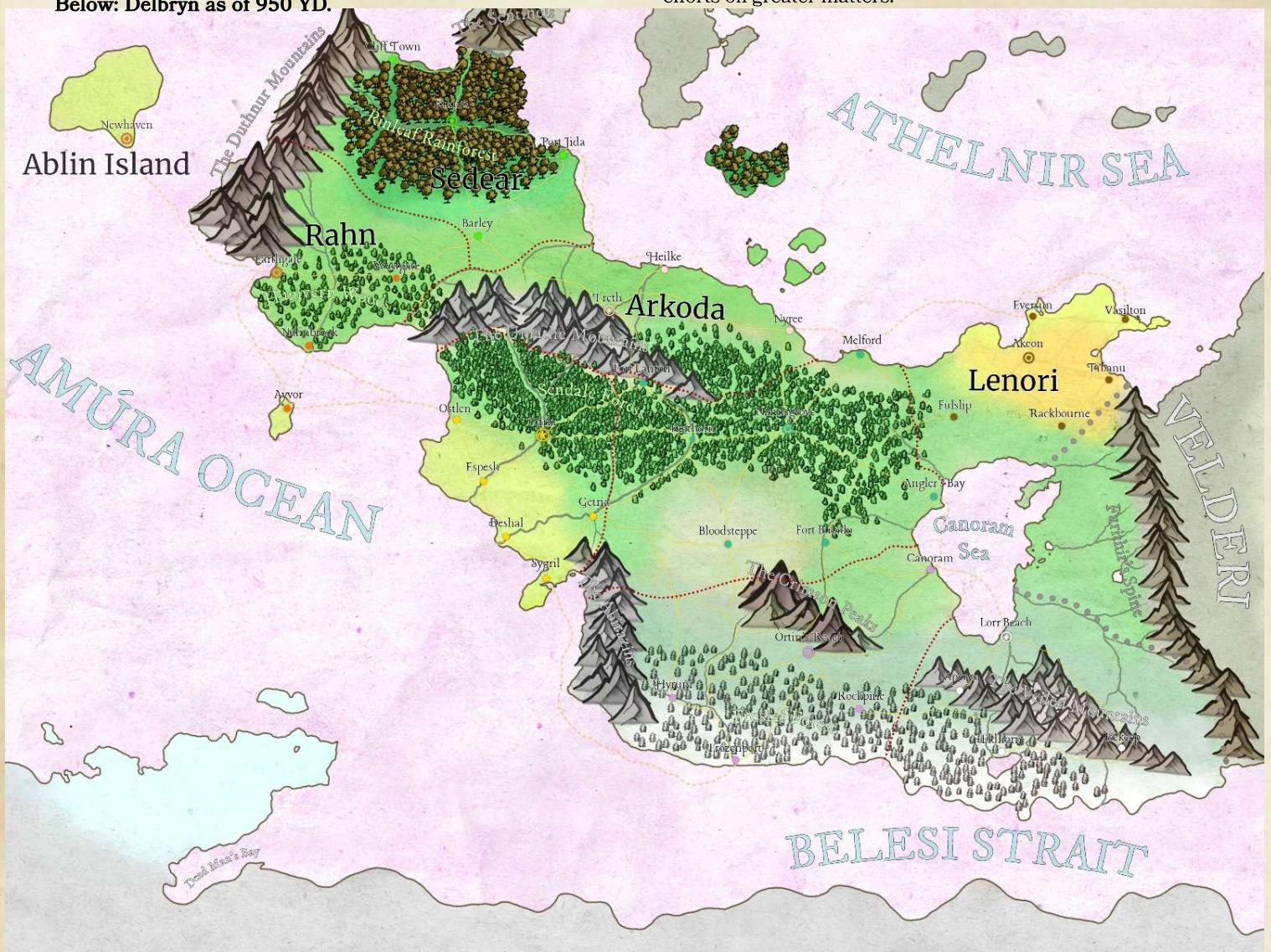
As the faction fell on difficult times in the late 800s, their neighbors in Norbeck and Ekaron scorned them, not returning the kindness they were once given. In retaliation, the Aktu-Mal began a massive campaign of conquest, engulfing the entire region of Norbeck, and expanding somewhat beyond. In 922 YD they attacked the Kingdom of Rahn, rapidly overwhelming its defenses as they pressed further southward. Soon after, Delbryn deployed its military to assist their northern neighbors.

THE REIGN OF KING NARITUK I (941-1157 YD)

THE DEATH OF KING EVERSON, AND ABSORPTION OF RAHN

In the war against the Aktu-Mal, King Eversun himself led the charge as they pushed them back northward. While Delbrynn's army was strong enough to beat them back, it ultimately cost the life of its leader, who was felled in combat in 937 YD. His healers were unable to resurrect him, as Golvrik, the god of souls, would not relinquish his soul on account of him cheating death once before when he sought immortality. Without a legitimate heir, the resulting power vacuum caused turmoil in the capital, until the elven official Narituk was able to rise to the throne in 941 YD. He oversaw the defeat of the Aktu-Mal, and in the conclusion of the war he offered Rahn an ultimatum: be absorbed into Delbrynn, or be taken with force. Rahn ultimately accepted this, joining the empire in 946 YD. The kingdom was separated into three provinces: Rahn, Sedear, and the newer colony of Albin Island.

Below: Delbrynn as of 950 YD.



THE ATRIVEL

In the year 987 YD, a group of cultists calling themselves the Cult of the Light rose in Delbrynn, spreading themselves and wreaking havoc around the region. The military proved unsuccessful in quelling the domestic threat, until a small group of elite warriors was brought together, subsequently putting an end to the cult.

After this event, the Atrivel were formed in 1013 YD as a subset of the military comprised of highly skilled warriors. It is built on the Odrian tradition of Bladesinging, a combat style that is equal parts magic, swordplay, and performance. Atrivel recruits are typically taken in from a young age, and are trained in combat, magic, and diplomacy as they grow up. It is rigorous training, but highly prestigious, and it is considered an honor to have a child taken in by the Atrivel. Members of the Atrivel are tasked with protecting the interests of the empire, and tend to operate independently or in small, specialized teams. They also include powerful mages who work away from the front lines, focusing their efforts on greater matters.

The Atrivel are heavily inspired by the samurai of feudal Japan. Beyond their prominence in pop culture, the actual historical group was somewhat fascinating. Each samurai was highly trained in multiple disciplines, and they were considered to be highly prestigious within Japanese society. They were essentially a noble class, serving under one of the many often-warring clans.

Source: *Japan: Memoirs of a Secret Empire*. Directed by Deborah DeSnoo, Lyn Goldfarb. PBS, 2004.

THE SOUTHERN REVOLT, AND THE FAMINE OF 1102 YD

Declining conditions within the empire reached a boiling point in 1073 YD, where the southern provinces of Cloanav and Sifrena briefly attempted to secede from the empire. It was widespread but short-lived, the military and the Atrivel quickly stepping in and ruthlessly stopping the rebellion. Local officials in both areas were replaced with loyalists, who maintained a strict grasp over their respective regions following the revolt.

As the population grew, the strain on the empire's resources continued to increase to the point of being almost unsustainable. After a drought which lasted a few years, food became scarce, and the resulting famine cost many lives throughout the empire. This was amplified by poor leadership from the capital, which resulted in widespread suffering among the peasant class.

THE REIGN OF KING NARITUK II (1157-1355 YD)

KING NARITUK II's ASCENSION

In the year 1157 YD, King Narituk I retired, allowing his son to take the throne. He continued to live for another 59 years, acting as an advisor to his son during that time.

THE OCJI CANAL

In conjunction with Norbeck, the Ocgi Canal was constructed in 1182 YD, stretching across the isthmus between the two regions. This connected the Athelnir Sea in the east with the Amura Ocean in the west, facilitating trade between the two halves of the world on a much larger scale, along with the transport of supplies to the eastern half of Delbryn.

THE DISCOVERY OF UTOOTH

Using funds inherited from her parents' noble status, half-elven explorer Leir Gallant led an expedition from Frozenport in 1218 YD, travelling with the western winds. She eventually found the frigid land of Utotth, a peninsula jutting off of the southern ice cap of Isitob. The more habitable northern lands were later colonized, and intrepid explorers began expeditions deeper into the ice.

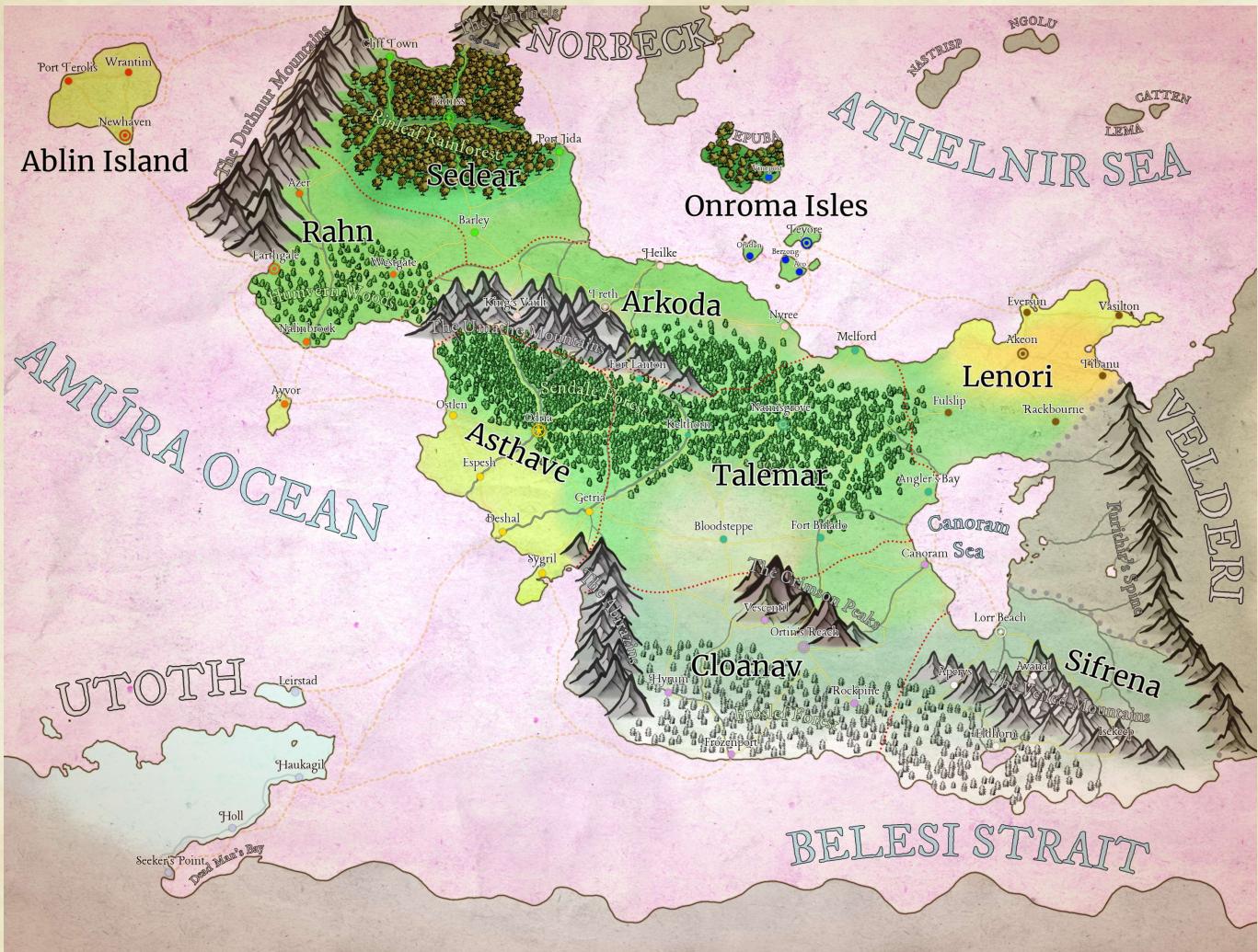
The region of Isitob is generally inhospitable for a few reasons: first, the frigid temperatures and near-constant snowstorms make freezing to death a very real risk. Second, magic is very unstable in the areas surrounding both ice caps, causing 'arcane storms' with often chaotic and devastating effects. And third, the creatures that do inhabit Isitob are well equipped to handle these things, and are thusly very powerful and very dangerous. Colonizing the region would not be wise, if it weren't for the discovery of Gelidite.

GELIDITE

In subsequent expeditions deeper into Utotth, a form of magically charged ice later known as Gelidite was discovered. Pockets of Gelidite are formed in areas with high concentrations of magical energy. Over the course of centuries, the ice may begin to absorb this latent energy, turning it into a sort of magical energy source. For this reason, it is highly valuable in the creation of magical items and devices. However, it is also an incredibly volatile substance, and must be handled with extreme caution.

When beneath freezing temperatures, Gelidite is rendered inert, making it safe to handle, but also unusable for magical applications. When above freezing, the magic prevents the ice from melting, but chipping or cracking it will cause all of the magical energy to release at once in a large explosion. Furthermore, magical means of transportation such as teleportation will result in the same effect, meaning that all Gelidite must be transported in specialized ships with refrigerated compartments.





Above: Delbrynn as of the year 1355 YD.

THE RIOTS OF 1278 YD

While the empire seemed at its peak during this time, the conditions were truly rather dismal for the majority of the population. Most of the resources were directed towards the military and infrastructure, and the lower working class was forced to live in poor circumstances. This additionally created some tension with Velderri, who denounced the poor treatment of Delbrynn's citizens.

Riots eventually broke around all across the empire in 1278 YD, though they generally remained under control until the Deshal Explosion a year later.

THE DESHAL EXPLOSION

In 1279 YD, a group of insurgents in Deshal hijacked a shipment of Gelidite as it was arriving into the port. They disabled the cooling systems within the cargo hold, and intentionally shattered the Gelidite, the resulting chain reaction causing a massive explosion. The entire ship was destroyed, along with a sizeable portion of the surrounding dock. In total, there were 23 casualties as a result of the explosion, and several dozen others severely injured. As news of this spread, riots throughout the empire started to become more violent, the nation almost reaching the brink of civil war before the uprisings were quelled.

THE DELBRYN-VELDERI WAR

In the year 1355 YD, King Narituk II was assassinated by a Velderri operative, and his soul magically captured to prevent resurrection. After this, his wife, Queen Liani, took control of the empire. She quickly declared war on Velderri, seeking revenge for the assassination. Of the two, Delbrynn has a more prominent military, but Velderri has a sizable technological superiority. However, while at war they have a much smaller supply of Gelidite, a critical material for their war machines.

REFLECTION

The process of working through this project has been quite a large undertaking, as you may expect. I've written out approximately 1000 years of Delbryn's history to some level of detail, including important figures and events from that time. Even so, it was a really fun project to work on, and I'm glad that I was able to use what I had already created for my setting as a baseline to build off of. For reference, the first two pages of this document (the pantheon and calendar) were already created, and the rest was made as part of the project.

I would like to think that through working on this project, I've learned a lot about how empires function and operate as a whole. Doing this has allowed me to take the front seat in creating an empire- both the good aspects and bad. I didn't want to make an empire that did everything right, because that simply isn't realistic, but I wanted to make something that had its strengths and its weaknesses throughout its history. In order to do that, I took bits and pieces from actual history, and essentially made a conglomerate of half a dozen existing empires, then developed that further with original elements.

In addition to being educational as a historian, this project was also a challenging exercise as a writer, and forced me to think about things in a way I may not be inclined to otherwise. It was fun to come up with interesting answers to my mental questions. For instance, I knew I wanted the Utot region to be inhabited, but I needed to come up with a good reason for someone to want to live in those frozen wastes. In my research I learned that one of the motivators for colonization can be the presence of precious resources, so I came up with Gelidite, a substance powerful enough to warrant colonization. From that idea I was able to build others, such as the Deshal Explosion, or the idea that Velder, a more technologically advanced nation, would be reliant on the substance to continue their development. Overall, there were many cases like this where one idea was dependent on another. This is of course true within the grand scheme of history, but attempting to approach it all as a single writer was an interesting challenge. For me at least, it starts with a single cool idea, then I go from there.

Overall, I am very satisfied with how this project turned out, and enjoyed working on it. I am still considering building a website based off of this information, but I know the main purpose of this project was always the worldbuilding aspect more than the presentation. I may still toy around with the idea over the summer, though.