




A map of 'THE SARMATIAN COMMONWEALTH' is shown at the top of the page. It features various geographical locations such as 'Dore Bay', 'San Juan', 'Verdugo', 'Frathing Bay', 'La Reina del M...', 'Sophie du L...', 'Soldano', 'Soldano River', 'Fontaine', 'Stanislawiec', 'Zapen Mts', 'Sperus', 'Memel', 'Rokosz', 'Zaplan River', 'Paupy', 'CURANIA', 'Sauls Maki', and 'Dardas'. A compass rose is integrated into the title '7TH SEA'.

7TH SEA



The main illustration depicts a man in a dark, hooded coat with red lining and a sword at his waist, holding a pistol. He stands next to a woman in an ornate, beaded crown and a red and black dress. They are in a grand, golden-hued interior with arched windows. A large red watermark 'SAMPLE FILE' is overlaid across the center.

Nations of Théah Volume 2

Probe the dark mysteries of Théah's eastern nations through foreboding lands struggling to seize their destinies!

7TH SEA

Nations of Théah
Volume 2

*What is free can never be caged.
What is caged will never know freedom.*

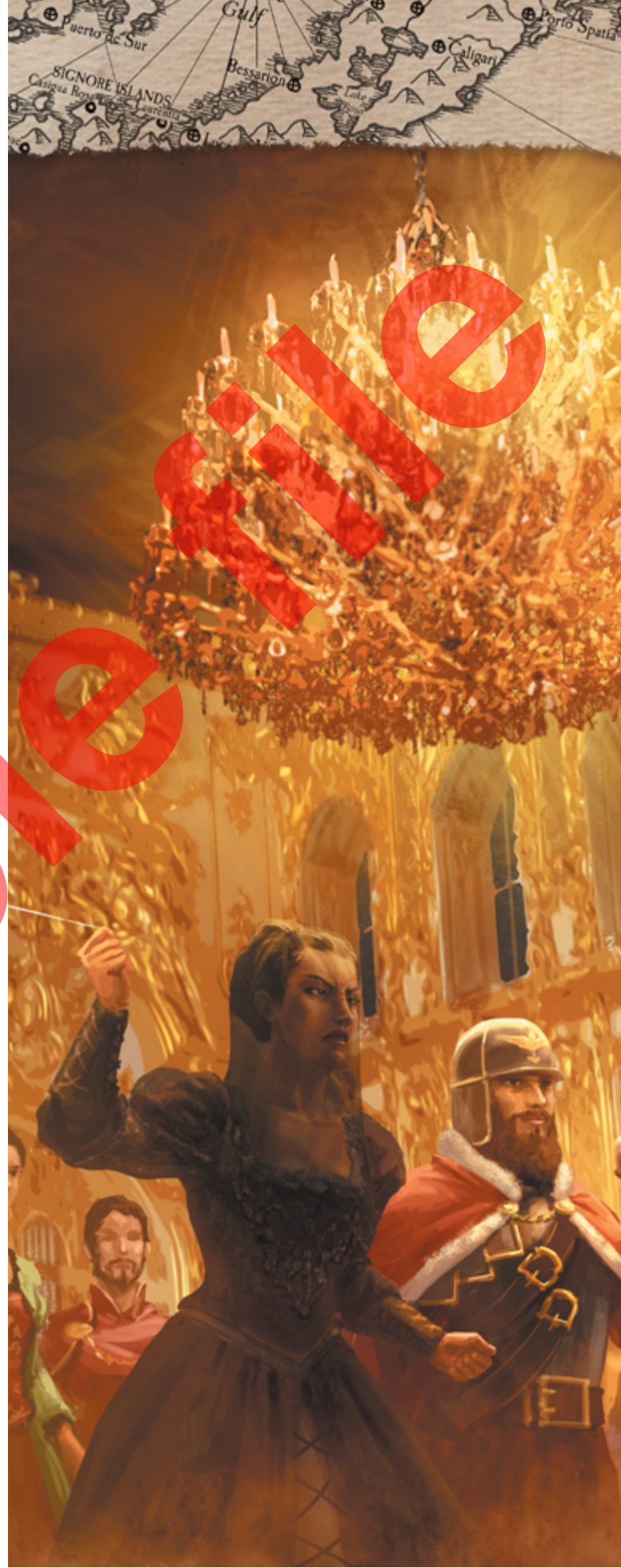
Revolution, democracy, freedom—Théah's eastern nations know these words well. As each nation struggles to find its footing in these treacherous new landscapes, unrest looms on the horizon.

This book contains material for *7th Sea: Second Edition* including new Backgrounds, Advantages, Dueling styles and new monsters. It also includes expanded setting information for Théah's four eastern nations:

- **Eisen**, including information about the Eisenfursten, the Horrors within the nation, various locations around the nation, and an expansion on Hexenwerk
- **The Sarmatian Commonwealth**, with an inside look at the new nobility and those who oppose it, information on the two halves of the country, and an in depth look at Sanderis
- **Ussura**, including a view of the two contenders for the throne, the Ussura countryside, and a look at Tură, a Leshiye as powerful as Matushka
- **Vodacce**, including the ongoings of the various cities in Vodacce, important people around the nation, and a look at what happens when Sorte is used untrained

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7TH SEA

Nations of Théah

Volume 2

JOHN WICK PRESENTS A SOURCEBOOK FOR 7TH SEA: SECOND EDITION "NATIONS OF THÉAH: VOLUME 2"

LEAD DEVELOPER DANIELLE LAUZON CREATIVE DIRECTOR LEONARD BALSERA SYSTEM LEAD MICHAEL CURRY

WRITING BY ADRIAN ARROYO FABIEN BADILLA CHRISTINE BEARD JEREMY ELDER MEGHAN FITZGERALD

JAMES MENDEZ HODES BETSY ISSACSON SHOSHANA KESSOCK FELIPE REAL ERICKA SKIRPAN BRETT ZEILER TARA ZUBER

ADDITIONAL WRITING BY EICHLOS DANIELLE LAUZON ANDRÉ LA ROCHE DAN WASZKIEWICZ NICOLE WINCHESTER

"KEEP CLOSE TO THE ROAD" BY JENNIFER MAHR SENIOR ART DIRECTION BY MARISSA KELLY ART DIRECTION BY ANDRÉ LA ROCHE

ART BY ZULKARNAEN HASAN BASRI CHARLOTTE CREBER SHEN FEI YONG YI LI DIEGO RODRIGUEZ

LANGUAGE SUPPORT BY CARLO FEDERICONI MONIKA HORTNAGL ADAM "ADEXO" MALINOWSKI JEANENE THOMPSON

GEOGRAPHY DESIGN AND MAP BY MARK RICHARDSON GRAPHIC DESIGN AND LAYOUT BY THOMAS DEENY

EDITED BY MONTE LIN PROOFING BY SHELLEY HARLAN STAFF SUPPORT BY J. DERRICK KAPCHINSKY MARK DIAZ TRUMAN

7TH SEA: SECOND EDITION DEVELOPED BY MICHAEL CURRY ROB JUSTICE MARK DIAZ TRUMAN JOHN WICK

BASED ON 7TH SEA: FIRST EDITION BY JOHN WICK JENNIFER MAHR

A note from John...

When we began redesigning Théah for the second edition, the Nations that underwent the biggest changes were the Eastern Nations. Ussura needed an overhaul and I wanted Eisen to be terrifying. Vodacce escaped relatively unscathed, but the differences are there if you know how to look. And then there was adding the Sarmatian Commonwealth, a promise I made on my first visit to Poland to a friend who is no longer with us. I named one of its primary villains after him—a fact his friends and loved ones told me he would have enjoyed beyond measure. Goodbye, Magic. I miss you.

While the Western Nations of Montaigne, Castille and Avalon have much in common, the Eastern Nations stand alone. They are so very different from each other in more than just language and costume. Also, they are our link to lands even further East, giving us hints of what is to come. If you stand on a tall hill in the Commonwealth or in the eastern part of Ussura, and you squint, you can almost see the Crescent Empire...

Soon, my friends. Soon.

—John Wick

Special Thanks

In *Nations of Théah: Volume 1*, I started a story about working on the Nations of Theah project. Here is how I joined the JWP team. I had just decided to start working part-time at the day job and wanted to expand myself as a writer and developer. I saw an all-call come across my desk for full-time writers for **7TH SEA: SECOND EDITION**. Of course, I had backed the book, this was my favorite game of all time. When Mark and John contacted me for an interview, we chatted about larp and development. After the meeting, I knew for sure I wasn't going to be a full-time writer. I thought maybe I'd be a freelancer, but I certainly wasn't expecting an offer to become a staff developer. I'm pretty sure I made noises that might only be interpreted by dolphins.

Mostly, I want to thank Mark for encouraging me to apply to JWP in the first place. Without your vote of confidence, I might have hesitated and missed this chance. Thank you to John for letting me take your baby and expand upon it. Thank you to the writers for really knocking this book out of the park. These nations are probably the hardest to represent correctly, and I'm overjoyed with how well you took what I was thinking and put it to page. Getting a book from a concept to a final print is a herculean task and takes a team, no matter how big or small, of dedicated people. I'm happy to say I've worked with one of the best teams ever in developing the *Nations of Théah* books.

And as always, I reserve a very special thanks to my husband, Weston Harper.

—Danielle Lauzon

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Keep Close to the Road

by Jennifer Mahr

The traveling party wasn't large—the Vesten merchant and his niece, his bookkeeper, two guards and a swordsman for defense, plus a sturdy pair of squires to tend their horses and belongings. They'd been on the road for more than three months, following business interests in Montaigne, Castille, and most recently Vodacce. In all those places they'd garnered little notice in the busy cities and sparkling capitals. That changed sharply when they reached the tiny port of Memel on the south coast of Sarmatia.

They disembarked their chartered sailing vessel to the open curiosity of the locals. Fishermen, packs of children, women at the market all stopped to watch them unload their things and make their way to the largest inn, which was still pressed to find space for them all.

The people they met in Memel were friendly, if a bit provincial. The serving girls at the inn were eager to speak to the merchant's niece about her clothes, which were grander and of a different style from their own. The local men shared local drinks, and compared blades with the guards—proudly showing off their own szabla, the curved swords favored in the region.



Their eventual destination was the Ussuran capital where the merchant had business interests and trade partners who would give them a warm welcome. But Ussura lacked warm-water seaports of her own, depending on her eastern neighbor for access to trade ships, and the merchant wanted to see first-hand the routes his goods would be traveling. In the brisk chill of early morning they left Memel and set off on the road north.

As the sun began to wane on their third night, they looked for a place to make camp. The road had brought them to the outskirts of a forest where the trees were tall and their thick canopies brought the darkness on that much earlier.

"I think we've got a good spot just up ahead," called one of the guards, who'd ridden ahead as a scout. "There's enough of a clearing that we can get up a pair of tents, and a brook not too far off."

The swordsman stretched. "A tent would be good, but I'll settle for a fire. The warmth's gone with the sun." There was a mumble of general agreement from the rest of the group. It was still early autumn, but they'd learned quickly that the weather here was harsher than in the other countries they'd travelled in. They were grateful to have avoided rain so far, but the clouds stayed densely gathered through most of the days.

It didn't take long to raise the camp. With the horses brushed and secure they gathered around the warmth of a cheerful fire and the large pot of fragrant stew simmering there.

They all startled when the guardsman keeping watch called out, "Who's that? Hold where you are and give a name!" There was a faint rustling further out in the forest, and the swordsman and the other guard both had their blades drawn, when the reply came, too muffled to hear in the camp. Then a stranger came into view at the edge of the firelight.

He was tall, and probably big, though it was hard to tell under the thick clothes and heavy furs he wore. He didn't carry a sword, but a blade too thick and long to be called a knife hung from his belt. He looked weathered and his long hair was coarse, the bulk of it pulled back, but braids of it dangled forward, woven with bright bits of fabric, incongruous with his otherwise grim appearance. Between the gray-purple of twilight and shadows from the

dancing flames, it was impossible to tell his age.

"My name's Jurgis," he repeated for the group gathered there, voice a low rumble. "But perhaps I should be the one asking all of you who you are since you're here in my forest."

"Your forest?" asked the swordsman with skepticism.

"Mine as much as anyone's," agreed the newcomer. "More so than most since I live here."

"You live here?" asked the merchant's niece, surprise and interest in her voice. She'd come along to see more of the world, and this was something new.

"I do," he answered with a hint of amusement.

"Do you have a house in the forest?"

"I do, of a sort. But it's nowhere near here," he answered. "What brings you all out so late at night? This isn't a road that sees many travelers."

"We're headed north, to the Ussura border," the merchant answered, puffing himself up a bit. "Why does this road get so little use? It seems the most direct way, but the locals we've met say that most people use the route west of here, even though it looks further on the map."

"You took this road because you were in a hurry?" asked Jurgis.

"We're looking for the best road to use to move goods," explained the merchant. "I expect to send shipments through regularly, and I wanted to see the way they'd be traveling."

"Ah. Well then you're on the wrong road," Jurgis said with certainty. "You should have taken the westerly one."

"Why?" asked the merchant, growing frustrated. "This way is faster."

"This way goes through the forest."

"Yes certainly, but a few trees can be cleared to widen the way," said the merchant confidently. He was always confident where commerce was concerned.

"You can't clear trees here," said the newcomer firmly. "Not here. This is Sandaras forest."

"Yes, I've seen the map." The merchant spoke with exaggerated patience, but the other man seemed not to mind. He just smiled faintly.

"You've seen the map. You don't know the forest. Next time you find someone from here, you ask



them about the forest. Then ask the person you meet after that. And the one after them." He looked around. "I should be going. You all should keep close to the road."

"Wait!" said the girl as he started to go. She tugged her uncle's sleeve, speaking to him urgently until he sighed and nodded.

"Jurgis, would you like to join us for dinner?" he asked. "We're about to eat, and you're welcome to share our fire and our food."

"I wouldn't feel right taking your hospitality for nothing," he said, looking hesitant for the first time since he arrived. "And I doubt I have anything to pay you with that you'd value."

"A story!" The girl looked around with bright eyes. "You could trade us a story about this place." Her uncle gave her a look of indulgent amusement.

"All right," agreed the stranger with a chuckle. "That seems a fair offer."

With the guards still looking faintly uneasy, he joined them at the fire. One of the squires lifted the lid on the stew pot to stir, the savory aroma filling the air. Abruptly the man still on watch gave another cry, this one startled and inarticulate.

"What is it?" called the other guard, leaping up.

"In Theus's name, I don't know," shouted the other. "Something moved out there. It was huge."

"No need to worry," assured Jurgis. "Just my hound."

All eyes turned to him. "It was enormous," insisted the guard from where he still stood deeper in the tree line.

"Yes, but she won't give you any trouble," Jurgis told him. "So long as you leave her be."

Now the rest of the group was staring out into the trees as well. The light of the fire made the shadows further out even darker, but they could see, now and again, something moving in the trees. The girl gave a gasp. It was large, but unexpectedly graceful, moving fluidly at the edge of the light. Her eye caught Jurgis's and he smiled reassuringly. "I still don't know your name, lady," he said.

She blushed. "Asny. Asny Thranddatter. And this is my uncle Ketil Haak."

Jurgis inclined his head to her. "Very good to make your acquaintance, Asny Thranddatter. And now, here is your story."

The winters in Curonia are harsh, no question. But about once in every score of years comes a winter that whips the limbs from trees, hurls snow like stones, and scours the earth with its frost. My story comes just at the end of one of those.

In a village an old man died from age and sickness, and maybe the cold. He left a grandson who was alone in the world—parents long under the earth, and no other kin. No one else in the village was in a position to feed another mouth, and the boy knew he couldn't keep the little house they'd shared on his own, so he packed up his meager things and set off into the woods to find his fortune.

He was a smart boy, and he'd grown up learning to trap and hunt, and at another time, he'd have been able to take care of himself without much trouble. But at the tail of a winter like the one they'd had, the first in his eleven years, he found himself hard pressed to find food. Shelter he had to share or fight for with bears and badgers. He knew if he walked long enough he'd come to the road. And from the road he could travel to anywhere and do anything. It was as good a plan as any for a boy his age who'd been nowhere and seen nothing.

He got by for a few days, scraping along, but he was hungry and tired, and thinner than when he'd started. One day he heard shuffling sounds nearby, smaller than a bear, but bigger than a rabbit, and he thought maybe his luck had turned very good and he'd come across a deer. He readied his slingshot, and started for the noise. There were no tracks to follow with the snow mostly melted but the ground still frozen, so he had to use his ears and his wits. In a small clearing he found the source of the rustling, but it wasn't a deer. It was a girl.

She was thinner and hungrier than he was, and she had a feral look about her. He guessed she was about his age. Her clothes were rags, and whatever hue they'd started, they were the color of mud now. Her hair was pale under the dirt and tangled like a briar patch. And her eyes were the blue-purple of the sky before the last light goes.



Jurgis paused in his story. He looked as though he was seeing something further away and more real than the camp in that moment. Then he shook his head. "I think your stew might be done," he said with a nod at the pot, which was beginning to bubble over.

With a start, the steward who'd been tending it hurried to lift the pot from the fire, and set about ladling food into wooden bowls. The rest of the party shifted in their seats, settling down with their food. They'd all been intent on Jurgis's story. When they were back in their places, and everyone had their dinner, Asny spoke. "Will you go on?" she asked.

"Of course," Jurgis agreed, tasting his stew. "This is very good." Letting his gaze drift again, he continued.

The boy did his best to talk to the girl, but if she had words, she didn't use them. He thought she might be dumb, but not deaf. He learned quickly that her hearing was much better than his own. They traveled together from then on, and she was always quick to lay a hand on his arm, or tug at his sleeve and point out a squirrel or a bird that might become their supper. She was clever too, and found them places to sleep that he'd have missed on his own—little shelters and cubbies that kept off the wind.

He tried to convince her to talk, because the silence was lonely, and she picked up a few of his words, finding the meanings quickly. They fell into a routine where he would talk to himself as they went, and she would listen, and at the end of each day she knew a few more words than the day before. It was still hard going, though. Food was scarce, especially split between the two of them. The boy had been walking in the woods for more than a week, and he had no idea how long the girl had been out there, but it was certainly longer. So when they came upon a hunter's snare with three fat rabbits in it, he didn't think twice about taking two of them.

That night they found a small cave, made a tidy fire, and ate cooked rabbit. He sang songs he'd learned from his grandfather, and the girl hummed wordlessly but beautifully along.

A little before dawn they learned their mistake. They woke to angry shouts and the sound of something beating the tree branches. It was the hunter they'd stolen from, and he was looking for them. They stayed in their cave, listening to his bellows and threats, and for the first time, the boy was glad of the cold ground that made it hard to track.

When the hunter was further off, they snuck from their cave and headed away. They couldn't keep going in the direction of the road, because their pursuer was between them and it, so they turned back deeper into the forest. They tried to keep a course parallel to the one they'd had, so they could circle back in the direction of the road. The boy guessed it was only a couple of days off by then, but the hunter didn't give up his pursuit, and they had to turn further and further into the trees.

After two more days, they'd come to a place where the trees were taller, and the forest was darker than the boy had ever seen. All the stories his grandfather had told him about the heart of the forest, and the things that lived there—neither man nor beast—played through his thoughts. He heard sounds of things moving more often now, but he didn't dare hunt them. The things that moved in the trees here were bigger and harder to identify, and he wasn't confident his slingshot and stones would bring them down. And however deep they went, the hunter was never far behind them.

The only good thing was that the harshest cold had spared this place, and his companion seemed more familiar here. She found them berries and plants to eat, and the deeper they went the more certainly she moved.

They spent a night in a thicket where the branches reached out and around so that they made a little cove, out of sight and out of the wind. The boy argued that they should keep walking, to get as much distance as they could between them and the hunter. Nature said the man had to sleep, but he seemed to edge closer to them all the time. But the girl took his arm and tugged him into the hollow. They were both tired enough to be stumbling.



The place was dry, and even without a fire it quickly warmed with the heat of their bodies. He drifted off in a bed of dried leaves even while he was straining to listen for any sounds of pursuit. Maybe he slept for hours. Maybe it was minutes. He heard rustling which turned into whispers, then the whispers turned into a song—quiet like the sound you get if you cup your hand over your ear.

He opened his eyes and he could see shadows moving outside the shelter, shifting on the other side of the branches as though they were dancing to that song he could almost hear. Some of them went on four legs, some on two, but try as he might he couldn't see what cast the shadows.

Dimly amazed at his own lack of alarm, he watched as some of the shapes scuttled, small and close against the ground, but moving together like they were one larger creature. Others slipped in and out amongst the trees and each other as fine as flowers on long stems shifting on a spring breeze. Still others moved with awkward grace, long limbs bending at unexpected angles like men made of sticks joined carelessly together. One rose up taller than the others and he thought that it lifted its arms toward the sky; then he thought those weren't arms but horns that reached upward as it lifted its head.

The whispering song picked up a deeper sound underneath it, like a moan that made his bones vibrate even while his ears still strained to make it out, as though maybe it wasn't a real sound at all, just something inside of him, except that the shadows still danced to it. He was dreaming. He knew that. He looked to his companion to see if it was a dream she shared, but he was alone in the shelter.

Sometime after that he fell properly asleep and in the morning woke to the clearer and familiar song of birds overhead. His companion was where she'd gone to sleep the night before.

As they prepared to leave he remembered his dream and the tracker in him had to stop and examine the forest floor. The leaves were unbroken, the earth undisturbed. There was no trace of the shapes he'd seen in the night, no hint of a grand dance of shadows. As he followed the girl into the thicker woods he looked back at the cove of

branches where they'd taken shelter, and there was no sign of that either.

There came a day when they were running, the hunter close enough that they could hear him breaking through branches behind them and hear the vivid descriptions of what he'd do when he found them. Listening to him rant, the boy knew just how long a pot of soup made from two children would last, and how quickly the hunter could hang them up and strip them and smoke them into jerky. If he'd been less concerned with what was just behind them, the boy might have paid more attention to what was in front.

They came up against a wall of rock so suddenly there was no warning. The trees were so dense, the boy hadn't seen it coming, and now he scrambled to find a way up or around. The trees here were so thick, four big men standing close together still wouldn't match their girth, and they were tight enough that they made a kind of corridor that the children were caught in now. Thinking quick as he could, the boy hustled the girl into a space between the trees and the rock, and tried his best to explain that she needed to stay there and be very still. He readied his slingshot and tucked his little knife in his belt, close at hand, and he walked into the middle of that corridor to meet the hunter.

I don't suppose he really expected to win that fight. But there were few enough options, and he thought about those blue-purple eyes, and he thought, if he could hurt the hunter, the girl could still get away. In a few minutes the man chasing him came into view. He slowed down and took his time when he saw the boy. He had a bow on his back, and a great long knife, but it was an axe he took from a sling at his side, big and sharp enough to cut through a tree. No doubt it'd go through bone easy as you please. He was large and rangy, and he looked to be about half man and half madness, and he grinned with a dark kind of joy as he stalked closer.

The boy knew that even if he made his best shot with his slingshot, he'd have no better chance stopping the man coming for him than he would a rampaging bear. Some things are so angry and hungry they're too far gone to know when they've been hit, but he got ready anyhow. He raised his



slingshot and the hunter raised his axe, and then there was a growl like if a mountain ground itself against another mountain, and something pale and lean and full of sharp teeth leapt from the trees and hurled into the hunter.

It hit him so hard he lost his axe. Then his hand. Then his throat.

The boy stood with his slingshot still drawn back, his legs frozen, his feet rooted where they stood. What looked back at him was no animal he'd ever seen. It had four legs, a long body that moved like muscle in silk, teeth—so many teeth—sharp and bloody, and blue-purple eyes.

Jurgis's voice trailed off, his gaze still far away.

"Did he shoot it?" asked one of the squires, his voice a bit breathless.

"He did not," answered Jurgis, taking a sip from a canteen by his side.

"Did he get away?" asked Asny, leaning forward, eyes shining.

"He didn't do that either," Jurgis replied with a shake of his head.

"So then..." the swordsman hesitated. He'd been studiously trying to look bored all along, but he'd given it up. "What did happen?"

Jurgis raised his bowl to his lips and drained the last of his stew. "The boy stayed in the forest," he said. "He found the road eventually. More than once. But he never took it."

"And the girl?" asked Asny.

"Oh, she stayed too," he said with a fond smile.

"They had some harsh winters after that, but the worst weather never reached all the way into the heart of the forest. Even storms know better than to go there." He set his bowl down and stood up. "And now I think I'd better be on my way. I thank you for your hospitality." The others all stood as well, the merchant looking uncertain.

"That was a very fine story," he said courteously. "A bit of local folklore?"

"Something like that," Jurgis said with a nod.

"Is it meant to be a particular forest? The one in your story?"

"Oh yes. It's this one of course, the Sandaras. The heart of the forest is very, very old you see. But sometimes, the things that live in it wander further afield. Which is why you won't find anyone from these parts who will help you cut down trees here. Or travel with your caravans." He shifted his heavy cloak, adjusting the great axe that hung across his back on a leather strap. "Take my word for it," he said. "Use the west-erly road."

With a nod to the group and a deeper one for Asny, he turned and headed back into the woods, now shrouded in full dark. As he went he gave a low whistle, and something much too large to be a dog bounded through the trees and to his side, giving a low rumble that made the horses whinny nervously. The two of them walked into the dark together.





Introduction

This book is the second of a two-volume set detailing the Nations of Théah. For the purposes of these books, we have split the nations into west and east, with Eisen, the Sarmatian Commonwealth, Ussura and Vodacce as our eastern ones. Within these pages, you will find an inside look at each of these lands.

The State of Things

The eastern countries have gone past the flux the western countries currently suffer under and have come out the other side. In a few places, this means the Nation is battered—but not quite broken—and in others, a person's entire way of life has been upended.

A common citizen in the eastern nations in a better place than those in her neighboring countries. While class systems often still remain in place, she has more to hope for and more room for innovation. Many of the eastern nations teeter just at the brink of change, or have changed in recent history. That change has the potential to bring greatness, or tragedy, to each Nation. While war may be on the horizon for many of the Nations, the people are hopeful instead of downtrodden. The nobility and commoners alike work in tandem to solve the problems of the nation, instead of being divided wholly along class lines.

The resounding theme among all the Nations is hope in the face of turmoil. Even in places with little to hope for, the people grow and adapt into their new environments. Eisen slowly rebuilds after the ravages of the War of the Cross, and now they seek a new Emperor to guide them. Ussura stands at a precipice of a new Czar (or Czarina), or a savage civil war. The Sarmatian Commonwealth grows into a new democracy, yet the future of its leadership is uncertain. Vodacce sits at the brink of revolution as Princes maneuver, and those who oppose their unjust rule gain strength.

Unlike in the west, where each Nation's problems influence the others, in the east, each Nation's successes influence their neighbors. Ussura finds strength in Eisen innovation. The Commonwealth finds duty in the strong leadership of Ussura. Vodacce finds honor in the new nobility of the Commonwealth. And Eisen finds hope in the faces of all her neighbors.

Eisen

Eisen struggles in a near shambles after the War of the Cross. Even after twenty years have passed, the Nation's population remains small. The chief reason for this is the Horrors that cover the landscape. Travel in Eisen is a dangerous prospect, and travel at night is a suicide mission.

Despite those truths, the people have bonded together in a stronger national identity than ever before. The people of Eisen help their brothers and sisters, regardless of Vaticine or Objectionist beliefs, all in the name of turning back the Horrors.

The Eisenfürsten rally the people, and the thought of a unified Nation under one rule brings hope. The young are motivated to enact change and are made strong by surviving the Horrors of the land. The old still remember the War and strive to make Eisen a better home than it was before. Through all this, the people prosper, despite the odds, and the Nation is on its way to a strong comeback in the greater politics of Théah.

The Sarmatian Commonwealth

The Sarmatian Commonwealth has just recently gained the status of true democracy. Every person has a vote in the Sejm, regardless of birth or wealth. Though this does little to change a peasant's day-to-day life, he exercises that right while learning that the will of the people can be more powerful than the will of the nobles. A common person is in a position to make real changes in her Nation, if she can simply organize with others. A noble finds himself beholden to the commoners in a way he never was before.

The Sarmatian people identify strongly as one Nation, but age-old grudges between the Rzeplitan and Curonian peoples still color interactions. Beyond that, the people finally have a choice in who their next Monarch could be. Many support the King's son, Aleksy Nowak, and already call him Stanisław II. Yet, anything could change, and not a few other contenders to the throne have made themselves known, forcing a conflict in loyalties and an uptick in politics amongst the common people.



Ussura

Ussura stands at the brink of something great, with no one true path to guide it. The government is in a state of arrest as two valid rulers vie for the title of Czar: Czarina Ketheryna, wife of the former Czar, and Prince Ilya, the Czar's disowned son. The people, the government and even the Nation's capital city remain split between the two. Each attempts to prove their worthiness, making it even harder for people to decide.

A citizen of Ussura leads a simple life and follows simple rules set by the spirits of the land, the Leshiye. She often seeks guidance from these sources, yet her Nation's patron, Matushka, has not spoken on the subject of her leader.

Now, the people must decide on their own, but in the meantime, little moves forward. In the absence of a true government, a military might has arisen and threatens to bring Ussura to the brink of war. Of course, if neither Ketheryna nor Ilya can solidify their right to rule, the Nation may simply fall to civil war.

Vodacce

Vodacce, the most traditional of all the eastern nations, has no single ruler. Instead, seven Princes in seven districts rule and scheme against each other and their own people. Of the seven Princes, three families have enough power to make a move towards taking over the Nation and declaring themselves Emperor. The very power that each holds, though, is what keeps the others at bay.

It wouldn't take much to upset that balance, sending Vodacce into a civil war of its own or a neat and clean coup leading to a single ruling family. Despite the lines that divide the Nation, people from Vodacce are fiercely national.

The people chomp at the bit against the rule of the Princes. The women seek a way to break free of their bonds, and the peasantry simply seeks a way to make a living. In Vodacce, rules are made to be broken. The rules and laws that govern the lives of the nobles and the commoners alike are ready to break, and that may end in a revolution rather than a war between Princes.

What's Inside

Inside this book, you will find four chapters, one for each of the eastern nations. The chapters are broken down into setting information and new Hero mechanics for Heroes originating in the nation.

Chapter One: Eisen

The Eisen chapter contains detailed information on the Eisenfürsten of Eisen as well as the military might of the Iron Guard and the Drachenblut Söldners. We take a look at major players across the Nation, as well as give some examples of common people with big destinies.

We examine each of the Secret Societies, and how they operate in Eisen, as well as introduce the Kinder von Morgen, a highly organized group of Rilasciare who seek democracy for Eisen. Hexenwerk is expanded to include a group of Monster hunters who seek out creatures other than Horrors and use their parts to make different Unguents.

We examine dueling in Eisen, and how Duelists serve as de facto judges, as well as introduce the Verzweiflung Duelist Style. Finally, we take an in-depth look at the various Horrors found in Eisen.

Chapter Two: The Sarmatian Commonwealth

The Sarmatian Commonwealth chapter contains information on the royal family and the major political players in the Nation now that it is a democracy.

We examine each of the Secret Societies, and how they operate in the Commonwealth, as well as introduce the Most Noble and Honorable Order of Post, a faction of the Knights of the Rose & Cross concerned with reviving chivalry in the Nation. We expand on the concepts of Sanderis and detail the various factions among the *losejai* and the *Ratas*, as well as expand upon the Seventh Deal.

We examine dueling in the Sarmatian Commonwealth and the advent of various different Chivalric Orders, as well as introduce the Szybować Duelist Style. The legends of the Sarmatian Commonwealth include the famous *dievai*, the hanging tree, knights in silver armor and a weeklong celebration of the *rusalka*.



Chapter Three: Ussura

In Ussura we offer detailed write-ups of both Ilya and Ketheryna, our contenders to the throne, as well as the various other important members of the Ussuran government.

We examine each of the Secret Societies, and how they operate in Ussura, as well as introduce the Ushkuiniks, the river-faring branch of the Brotherhood of the Coast. The chapter contains information on Turã, the spirit of storms who offers his blessing to people in the guise of Chernobog.

We examine dueling in Ussura, where grappling and bare-fisted fighting is the order of the day, as well as introduce the Kulachniy Boy Duelist Style. The legends of Ussura include enchanted flowers, Leshiye, domovoi, rusalki, vodyanoi and upir.

Chapter Four: Vodacce

The Vodacce chapter describes major players across all of Vodacce, from the Princes to important courtesans and Heroes who try to make their way in a land of Villainy.

We examine each of the Secret Societies and how they operate in Vodacce, as well as introduce the Philosophi Sanguinis, a group of Invisible College members devoted to experimentation with occult resources. We discuss Sorte, how new *Streghe* receive training and what happens when a Fate Witch manifests her powers without proper tutelage.

We examine dueling in Vodacce, and how Vodacce Duelists rarely fight legally, as well as introduce the Le Strade Duelist Style. The legends of Vodacce include creatures who seek to punish the bad and reward the good, and various Monsters who haunt the Vodacce landscape.

Appendix

Here we introduce new Advantages available to any character, and new Backgrounds for each of the four Nations presented in this book.

How to Use This Book

This book is supplemental to the 7TH SEA CORE RULEBOOK. As such, you need access to that book to make the most of NATIONS OF THÉAH, VOLUME TWO. The information presented here is supposed to help both players and Game Masters better understand the game world. Each Nation offers setting information to help ensure rich character backgrounds and stories. The people of the Nations are approachable, and a Game Master can use these people as presented in her game or tweak them to fit her story.

This information in this book provides an insider's view of the Nation, though anyone could know what is in these pages. Each chapter contains secrets about the people and locations therein, and the Game Master should decide how much of that information is widely known outside the Nation, and within.

The new mechanics presented in each chapter are meant to give additional choices to Heroes and are completely optional to use in your game. The Game Master is the final arbiter on which options are allowed.







Chapter 1

Eisen

Sample file



EISEN

“We were once a land of drachen and Heroes riding shining steeds to fight monsters. We were once prosperous and full of promise. We were once a lot of things. Now we are this. But I will tell you one thing. We are still proud. And there are still monsters to fight.”

—Unknown veteran of the War of the Cross, Freiburg

Mention the name Eisen anywhere across Théah and people tell tales of horrifying beasts, mountains where drachen once roamed and stretches of land soaked deep with the blood of armies long since gone.

Nearly twenty years ago, the War of the Cross ravaged an entire generation of Théans, killing and traumatizing the Eisen people and marring the countryside. The nation collapsed, its monarchy destroyed and all industry driven to a halt. In its place, monsters roam with impunity and former soldiers fight to keep people alive against nightmares other Théans could only imagine.

Eisen struggles to unify and rebuild in an ever-modernizing world. A new generation has come into

adulthood since the War, and an Eisen youth chafes under the constant reminders of a war she never fought. The respect she has for her elders mixes with frustration over the country’s focus on its past when the future seems so uncertain. The Nation looks to the seven Eisenfürsten to lead them to a better tomorrow. Too bad none of them can agree on what that tomorrow should look like, or who should rule.

And then, there are the Horrors. From every corner of Eisen, the darkest shadows give up terrifying beasts, ready to savage, corrupt and destroy. To be a child of Eisen means being born to fight, to survive the Horrors and to keep the people safe, one day at a time.



Rebuilding a Nation

It has been a full twenty years since the War of the Cross, and Eisen still struggles to find its feet. The largest hindrance to rebuilding the Nation may be the Horrors, which ravage the countryside, but the lack of a single ruler doesn't help. On top of that, the population of Eisen is markedly decreased, leaving land untilled and work undone. Emigration is a huge problem as the Horrors send people fleeing to safer nations, and few newcomers stay for very long.

The one thing Eisen does not lack is funding. Even the poorest Bauern has more wealth than the peasants in many other nations. The Adel have riches untold, with little to spend it on. Labor is a hard commodity to come by, though a worker who serves an Adel to maintain her lands can expect a handsome payment. Many Eisenfürsten do all they can to entice people to come live under their protection, often offering great rewards just to till a small plot of Horror ridden land.

Other Théans recognize the potential of Eisen's people and land, and try to help as best they can. The Vendel League hopes to give support to the people, but only a few Eisenfürsten bother to deal with them, making it hard for their help to make much of an impact.

Most of Eisen remains Objectionist with a few Vaticine holdouts remaining in pockets here and there. Mostly, the people of Eisen are so exhausted of religion that many of them have forsaken Theus all together.

The people who remain in Eisen are fiercely loyal to their Nation and strive to make it a safe place again, or at least to carve out islands of security for the people to live. Each and every person living in Eisen trains as a warrior by necessity. Few native-born Eisen die to Horrors after the age of ten, as by then they are fully versed in how to most efficiently kill the creatures. Their dedication and prowess could be enough to beat back the Horrors, if only they organized.

Recognizing this truth, several factions have sprung up throughout Eisen, each proposing a new Emperor to lead them to stability and safety. Unfortunately, no one can agree on the best options, and some of the candidates want nothing to do with the position.

Additionally, some Eisenfürsten are happy to continue ruling with little oversight or laws. These do all they can to prevent a new Emperor from rising, or possibly seek to take the position for themselves.





Important People in Eisen

The Eisenfürsten

Before the War of the Cross, Eisen had a ruler whose blood went back countless generations. When Emperor Riefenstahl died, he left a power vacuum which politicians have struggled to fill for the last twenty years. Devoid of a ruler, the country split into seven königreiche, ruled by the former barons of the land. These new Eisenfürsten have since solidified their territories, and rule their portion of the country as they see fit. With the people looking for more stable leadership, each Eisenfürst presents a possible new leader.

The Eisenfürsten set the tone for their königreiche, from their political views to the way they manage the land. The people of Eisen are fiercely dedicated and stand behind their leaders, despite any qualms they may have with them. The Eisenfürsten also maintain a court of advisors around them, each with their own needs for their business and the people they represent.

A person seeking aid, information or trade of favors finds the courts of the Iron Princes the place to get what she needs. Heroes can find the Eisenfürsten embroiled in their political plays and always looking for new allies, hirelings or even enemies to push along their own agendas.

Niklas Träge

The most enigmatic of the Eisenfürsten is also perhaps the most popular. Niklas Träge did not begin life as a baron, but the discovery of a hidden cache of dracheneisen deep in a mountain cave during the War allowed the former commoner to buy his way to a title under the Emperor. Everyone forgets to mention that Träge only found the weapons and armor after he lost his unit on the battlefield and went wandering, but the power of money and prestige can bury any dishonor in the public eye. Träge, however, never forgave himself for the loss and carries the scars of his time at war to this day.

Once the War ended, the other Eisenfürsten and the people expected Träge to care for the königreich under his domain. Instead, he spent over a decade slogging through the desecrated battlefields fighting Horrors and trying to forget his mistakes during the War. He eventually ran out of funds and returned to the wreck of a königreich to pick up the pieces. The result is Freiburg, the “Free City.” All within Träge’s territory live with no centralized law in his grand social experiment, which he watches from the top of



his Watchtower with a bottle of wine and his memories to keep him company.

Träge, a solitary man, remains haunted by his feelings of unworthiness and the tragedies he witnessed during the War. Of all the Eisenfürsten, Träge has no interest in higher political aspirations, instead focusing his time on maintaining Freiburg for its people and keeping the other Eisenfürsten from poaching resources or power. While Träge is aware many see him as a great candidate for chancellor or perhaps even a crowned leader, almost nothing on all of Terra could move him to take the position.

The management of Freiburg is about as much responsibility as Träge wants and he relies heavily on his right-hand woman, Wilma Probst, to keep the barely controlled “Free City” and the rest of the königreich from burning to the ground. A lover of poetry and learning, Träge surrounds himself with books in a library. His most prized possession is the gauntlet of the Emperor, a reminder of their great leader, tragically lost.

Roswitha von Wirsche

Roswitha von Wirsche was a young baron's wife when the War began, and her husband Reinhard rode off to war with her sons Edgar, Frederick and Siegrud. A beauty with Vestenmennavenjar blood, Roswitha's world shattered when her husband and sons died in battle. Roswitha went into seclusion and many believed her husband's brother would take over the barony. But it was Roswitha who arrived for the first meeting of the Eisenfürsten. Her husband's brother was incidentally never heard from again. And Roswitha emerged from seclusion a different woman. Her beauty and strength returned, after the War she took up management of her lands with vigor.

In the twenty years that followed, Countess Roswitha worked tirelessly to rebuild her territory until the land once more bloomed. Wirsche became a success story for all of Eisen to see, a land protected by a division of the Iron Guard desperately loyal to their Countess. Wirsche's success helps the rest of Eisen ignore the rumors about servants and travelers going missing at Roswitha's manor in Siegburg, rumors that point to Roswitha as the cause.

The few bodies that do turn up are mysteriously short on blood. Moreover, many have begun to notice

the Countess has not aged a day in twenty years. And anyone who knows about the monsters of Eisen whispers only one possibility in hushed tones: *blood drinker*. Still, without clear evidence, pointing a finger at one of the most powerful women in Eisen would be impossible, so even her growing group of detractors remains silent. Meanwhile, Roswitha keeps Wirsche growing through a healthy application of carrot and stick, offering incentives to those who work hard and threatening those who fall behind on her standard of productivity with visits by her Iron Guard.

To the world, the Countess is a ruthless, efficient ruler, dedicated to the prosperous growth of her königreich. With her territory's growth, she leads as a frontrunner to take control of the country, a position supported by Heinrich Dray, leader of the Iron Guard in Wirsche and her passionate lover. Dray publicly issued a challenge to Niklas Träge of Freiburg: hand over the gauntlet of the Emperor so that Roswitha might wear it and rule. Whether the message came from the Countess herself, no one knows. One thing is for sure: Roswitha has been annexing territory slowly from other königreiche around her with the help of her Iron Guard, and no one seems prepared to stop her.

Elsa Pösen

Set against the northern sea, the territory of Pösen survived the War mostly unscathed, leaving the young baroness in charge of one of the last intact homes of Eisen's pre-War culture. The sense of peace did not stop the brave Elsa from marching south with her father's best warriors to lend the Pösen armies to the war effort. Elsa distinguished herself as a great leader and heroic fighter, and once her father died, she was the obvious choice to take up leadership of her königreich. Then the real troubles began.

Once the War ended, Horrors besieged Pösen, climbing up out of the swamps that dot the landscape. Warriors returning from war found themselves without respite, driven into a pitched battle to rescue family and home from all manner of monsters. Elsa set to work immediately bringing her Iron Guard to order and recruiting ex-soldiers to patrol her borders. A brilliant tactician, Elsa turned the rise of the Horrors into an opportunity, organizing military bands to sell their services to traveling merchants for

