

OTHER MINDS

The Unofficial Role-Playing Magazine for J.R.R. Tolkien's Middle-earth and beyond

Other Minds

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Editorial: Baruk Khazâd – Khazâd ai-mênu

Finally the Dwarves have come upon you in *Other Minds* as well. Fortunately for you this time not in war-gear and with sharp axes ready to chop off heads, but in civilized essays, maps, adventures and the like. This issue of *Other Minds* is dedicated to an often under-represented theme in role-playing – the proud “Children of Aulë” and adopted children of Ilúvatar.

Since the great events reported in *The Silmarillion* and *The Lord of the Rings* are centered upon the deeds and histories of Elves and Men, Dwarves play only a minor rôle there. The only exception in Tolkien’s works where Dwarves play a central rôle is *The Hobbit*. Unfortunately, this is often seen as “only a children’s book” and consequently the Dwarves are marginalized with it too.

This lack of focus is unfortunately augmented by a lack of first-hand writings about the Naugrim. The *Lord of the Rings* (mainly the appendices), *The Hobbit*, *The Silmarillion* and the *History of Middle-earth* series all offer some guidance, but compared to the wealth of information provided about Elves, Men and Hobbits, the passages that deal with the Dwarves are quite limited in number and extent.

Nonetheless, this is our chance to stand up and develop our own interpretations. Whether closely based on Tolkien’s – few – notes or more orientated towards liberal interpretations, we have the chance to further develop the original material by Tolkien and the various RPG publications into something solid that gives the Naugrim what they deserve: a firm and broad base to stand upon for further developments!

So far, so good. But what do we have for you this time? Again, a wide mix of contributions that sheds light on many aspects of the Naugrim. First there is Neville Percy’s fine analysis about the Dwarven women. Its well-balanced mix of scholarly research and “gameable” extrapolations makes it an excellent piece of information for the scholarly-minded as well as the gamer.

Second comes a contribution by myself that deals with the history of the Dwarven man-

sions. In broad strokes it depicts their development throughout the ages. Its survey-like nature leaves ample room for further details developed by “Other Minds” to build upon.

Neville Percy’s prolific output on all things Middle-earth is astounding. He seems to be a real fan of the Naugrim – looking at the number of contributions of any kind he has to offer! Beside the above-mentioned treatise on the Dwarven women he serves us with not two but really three short and very “gameable” contributions on top of the first. The first of the three portrays a Dwarvish rune-cryptogram that may be encountered in any sizeable Dwarf-hold. It might be an interesting hint for an adventure. Then he provides us with a very useful list of names for the western Dwarves (both male and female) that might be used in your campaign. The final icing on the cake is his description of a subterranean monster, the Giant Moldewarp, that could be a real challenge to any Dwarven mining in great depths.

Tom Davies’ contribution is a true gaming piece that deals with a legendary item made in the distant past for the Dwarves and which may be introduced in a campaign. Its structure

as an adventure idea with no specific plot makes it very easy to use and/or adapt to your own needs.

Now, beside all the content-related topics, we thought that a little survey of Middle-earth-gaming related websites available out there are on the net might be helpful. Of course we are aware that there can be no complete or even representative answer to that (especially due to the rapidly changing nature of the Internet). Do note however, that we will copy this list in coming weeks to the *Other Minds* website in the “links” section, and that all registered users (it’s free, private, and safe) can contribute links as well. In the past weeks and months there have been some new sites – in addition to the established ones – that definitely deserve attention. Enjoy our findings and do not hesitate to send us any new pearls you have stumbled upon!

Oh yes - you will encounter several text boxes whose content is unrelated to the contribution it is placed within. These are several tidbits of knowledge about Tolkien’s Dwarves, that is interesting, but not big enough for a separate essay. Neville Percy, our prolific “Dwarven” writer found them and accordingly the credits go to him.

In addition to our own “categorization” logos (core, optional and house), we introduce the logos of the specific games a contribution has statistics for. These logos remain the sole copyright of the respective companies of course.

Thomas Morwinsky
July 2008



Whither MERPCon

Hail and well met!

Thank you Thomas for the great summary editorial, and all your hard work in getting everyone to follow through with their submissions. As always your efforts are invaluable to keeping this magazine rolling!

This issue has a strong tie-in with this year's MerpCon IV, especially the theme of Dwarves (as Thomas has already greatly detailed).

I thought I would quickly post some other information about MerpCon that is only 9 days away, as I write this editorial, and some other topics. Many of these points I will be covering in more detail in my opening speech at the event, but thought I would at least get a summary into this issue before it's final editing and being sent off to the presses. Forgive me if this article is a little rambling and tangential, time is short for getting both the magazine, and MerpCon ready in time.

MerpCon History, Status and Future

MerpCon (<http://www.merpcon.org>) has been held in Spokane, WA, USA on the last weekend of July each year. It has to date been a completely free, volunteer-run gathering of Tolkien scholars, enthusiasts and role-playing gamers from around the world. Though it is still a small event, it is incrementally growing as word spreads and people begin to arrange their summer schedules around attempting to attend. MerpCon IV is looking to trump MerpCon III in attendance (yay!). So far we have around 15 people firmly RSVP'd, with another dozen probables/possibles. Attendance will be anywhere from 12 to 25 people this year. See the table above for a summary of attendance for previous years.

It is great that the attendance numbers are growing. The original plan was that I would keep covering the costs and efforts for making this gathering happen annually, completely out of my own pocket for at least 5 years. If it did not grow by the end of that five years, then I would discontinue the effort. It looks promising that I will be able to continue this annually and indefinitely. Down the road we will probably have to start charging for the event to just cover costs (and register it as a non-profit), but for now I am happy to keep covering the costs and helping make it as accessible to everyone for as long as possible.



Prof Chris Seeman (and son) speaking at MerpCon III (2007)

MerpCon V. That is the kind of "problem" that would be good to have.



Dr. Thomas Morwinsky post-Q&A session at MerpCon III (2007)

Virtual Attendance

For those who can not make it to this year's

Convention	Year	Total Attendees			Guest Speakers
		All 3 days	"Physical" Peak	"Virtual"	
MerpCon I	2005	7	13	0	1 – Prof. Chris Seeman
MerpCon II	2006	5	7	0	1 – Michael Martinez
MerpCon III	2007	12	15	8	1 – Dr. Thomas Morwinsky 2 – Prof Chris Seeman 3 – Michael Martinez 4 – Joe Mandala 5 – Cason Snow
MerpCon IV	2008	12-15	15-24	?	1 – John D. Rateliff 2 – Michael Martinez

MerpCon, we will be doing as we did last year. There will be live streaming audio and video of the event, with a live interactive chatroom where "virtual attendees" can post questions to the guest speakers and the speakers can respond in real time during the Q&A sessions. For those in time zones that make even this virtual live attendance problematic (there are many), we will make the audio and video archives available on the MerpCon website (<http://www.merpcon.org>) shortly after the event is over. I will even be trying an experiment with "stream ripping" to try to make the audio portion available almost immediately for download (albeit unedited), so that those who maybe just miss the session by a few minutes or hours, will not have to wait days (or weeks or months) to listen to the guest speakers.

There will be at least 2 web cams running during the entire event, giving an overview of the event. This year's location is a bit more "cozy" than last year, but just large enough to make it work.

If the growth pattern continues, I will definitely have to look into a larger venue for

MerpCon IV Guest Speakers

This year we have two guest speakers at MerpCon. We welcome the return of the prolific Tolkien essayist Michael Martinez, as well as the debut at MerpCon of John D. Rateliff, author of the The History of the Hobbit release just last year. Below are some short biographies of each.

John D. Rateliff



John D. Rateliff, Ph.D.

John D. Rateliff discovered gaming in February 1980 and the work of J. R. R. Tolkien in September 1973. This gaming interest led him to work at TSR, Wizards of the Coast, and Hasbro, as well as freelancing for companies like Decipher, Green Ronin, White Wolf, Guardians of Order, and Chaosium. Among the projects he's edited are *The Complete Book of Gnomes & Halflings*, *Night Below*, *Return to the Tomb of Horrors*, and the third edition *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide* (which established the core d20 rules); he also contributed to *Decipher's Lord of the Rings* core rulebook and the d20 *Call of Cthulhu* project, along with dozens of other titles over the years. His favorite role-playing games are *Dungeons & Dragons* (particularly 1st edition AD&D), *Call of Cthulhu*, and *Pen-dragon*. In addition to being a longtime gamer, John is also a Tolkien scholar, who has helped organize several Tolkien conferences and symposiums. He spent many hours working with the Tolkien manuscripts at Marquette, where he got his Ph.D. His major contribution to Tolkien studies is probably his edition of the original manuscripts of *The Hobbit*, with extensive commentary, in a two volume set published last year by Harper-Collins: *The History of The Hobbit* (Vol. I: Mr. Baggins; Vol. II: Return to Bag-End). He is currently engaged in a piece on Tolkien's writer's block but having a hard time finishing it . . .



Volunteers creating Characters in preparation for MerpCon III

Michael M. Martinez



"Recognized around the world as one of the leading authorities on the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, Michael Martinez has shared his knowledge and insights

on Middle-earth with other fans in the online world for many years. His books and essays have been translated into Polish, Spanish, Italian, Hungarian, Greek, Hebrew, Portuguese, and Finnish. But though he is best known for

his research into Tolkien's chief literary creation, this versatile author has garnered respect and acknowledgement in more than one field." (From Mr. Martinez's website at www.michael-martinez.com).

Michael Martinez is the author of:

- *Visualizing Middle-earth*
- *Parma Endorion: Essays on Middle-earth*
- *Understanding Middle-earth*, published by Vivisphere in 2003.

Most of Michael's early professional career was devoted to the family of Business Basic programming languages which were developed for mini-computers in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and then ported to UNIX and PC operating systems in the 1980s. A former employee of Basis International, one of the leading vendors of Business Basic, Michael has written numerous technical papers and articles on programming techniques and methodologies. He has worked as a consultant, IT manager, programmer, and teacher for many companies.

You can view a list of his works and contributions related to J.R.R. Tolkien and/or role-playing gaming in his setting at <http://www.michael-martinez.com/articles-and-essays.html> "

Demographics

We have a nice range of age demographics this year at MerpCon. Ranging from 8 years old to 16 at the "Youth Table" and from 17 to the 40's range at the other tables. And there are actually (gasp) some female participants at each table as well, strangely rare (but welcome) in role-playing gaming circles these days. We don't appear to have anyone from outside of the USA attending this year as we did last year (Thomas Morwinsky from Germany), but attendees are from various parts of the country, and we hope to have a number from other countries "attending virtually" via the web. Hopefully more will budget time and resources to make the journey out here in coming years to keep this a truly international event.

Attendees range widely in profession and other demographics. This just illustrates the universality of both Tolkien and role-playing gaming. Which leads me to the next topic: The RPG Research Project.

RPG Research Project

Many thanks to CAR-PGa (Committee for the Advancement of Role-Playing Games) for last year sending Cason Snow as a guest speaker encouraging RPGers to get RPG content accepted at local libraries. This year, unfortunately we were unable to get a representative from this group, but it is already planned that the founder for this organization will be attending next year.

Something that has been mentioned in passing at previous MerpCons and in some articles in this magazine, is related to the slowly developing RPG Research Project (<http://www.rpgresearch.com>).

The purpose of this project is twofold.

1. To develop a body of scientific work detailing the *causal* ramifications of role-playing gaming.
2. To develop a clear therapeutic modality using role-playing gaming.

This project is expected to span at least 10 years, and potentially longer. There have been approximately 70-80 *correlative* studies done on the impact of role-playing gaming in various circumstances (see *Other Minds Magazine Issue 1 "The Battle Over Role-playing Gaming"* for some examples), but very few *causal* studies, perhaps around 3-4 very small scale, short term, and very narrow population focus with sometimes contradictory and inconclusive results.

The hope of the RPG Research project is to test many different variables across a longitudinal study with a diverse population and determine the causal effects of role playing gaming.

This study will eventually hopefully span more than 10 years, with over 1,000 test subjects (thus the need for significant grant/foundation funding), with various control groups, across age demographics spanning 10 years old on up, and be *triple blind* so as to increase the acceptance of the veracity of the data by the scientific community. Hopefully this project will build a body of work to counter the decades long negative press (part of the legacy of B.A.D.D. - Bothered About Dungeons & Dragons), with irrefutable scientific data (and hopefully the positive press to go with it).

The early stages are already underway. I have consulted with the heads of various doctors and the heads of various psychology departments at universities in helping develop the thesis documents and taking the necessary preparations in submitting grant proposals.

Some pre-core-project tasks are underway, one that was mentioned last year, and is getting closer to fruition, is a demographics survey of existing role playing gamers. Currently more than 100 people have agreed to participate, and hopefully these numbers will increase as the functionality and promotion comes online. Expect to see updates in coming issues of this magazine. The project will likely be using Tolkien-based RPGing as one of the testing mechanisms.

There are also some efforts at introducing role-playing gaming in ASL (American Sign Language) locally to include the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in these efforts. I have been studying ASL for over two years now, and running a weekly study group to keep improving both the skills, and the connection with the approximately 900 members of the Deaf community in the greater Spokane, WA and Couer d'Alene, ID area.

Other details will be posted on the RPG Research website.

The overarching goal of all this, is of course to try to turn around the negative, or completely blank response, that people have on the topic of role-playing gaming, and introduce a whole new generation to the joys of this wonderfully rewarding, social, non-competitive recreational activity.

Thanks and Other Notes

Many thanks to the Middle-earth Radio people (<http://www.middle-earthradio.com>) for helping provide the audio streaming for MerpCon IV.

Many thanks to the Kung Fu For Life people for freely providing the facilities to run MerpCon IV

(<http://www.spokanekungfu.com>).

The Merp.com Chat Room is back up and running according to an announcement just released this week. See the advertisement in a separate insert in this issue for more details.

Though unable to attend this year, be sure to check out the ever developing Role playing gaming systems focused on J.R.R. Tolkien's setting. Hopefully the creators, or their minions, will be able to host a table with their system(s) next year. There are currently three systems being actively developed:

- Ambarquenta (see advertisement in this magazine issue) <http://www.ambarquenta.com/>
- Hither-lands <http://www.hither-lands.com/>

- Eä RPG (currently Eä d20 is furthest along, but the Eä RPGS is progressing) <http://earpg.com/>

MerpCon III adventure modules will soon be released in portions on the Númenor Project website: <http://www.numenorproject.com>. My apologies for all the delays in getting the previous modules tied to this zine available as well. Hopefully by the time this issue is released the more complete versions will already be available for download.

On another note. There is currently a project underway to put together an "online university" of sorts, focused on Tolkien scholarship. Expect far more details in the next issue, and watch the various Tolkien email lists and website for announcements on this exciting development.

Game Systems.

Last year we ran with 4 different Game Masters using different systems for different sessions at two tables simultaneously (until the final session when the two groups were merged for the "finale"). These systems included ICE MERP 2nd Edition, Rolemaster / MERP hybrid, ICE HARP adapted to Middle-earth, D&D 3.5 (Eä d20). No one actually wanted to use the Decipher Lord of the Rings Role Playing Game System even though we had prepared to use it.

For MerpCon IV, it is panning out that we will be running 3 simultaneous tables with 4 different GMs (including John Rateliff) using the following systems:

- Ea d20 (D&D 3.5 adapted to Middle-earth)
- Rolemaster (MERP-ified)
- Decipher LotR RPG

Contributions and Future of the Magazine

We would REALLY like to get some more adventure submissions from everyone. Of course we want all kinds of content submissions of any kind. Issue 5 of *Other Minds Magazine* will not be themed, but will likely be a mix of responses to previous issues as well as other content. So please do start sending in your submissions as soon as able. Even if it's just a "pet idea", let us know. Send an email to submissions@omzine.org with your ideas and/or drafts.

This magazine is now officially on a quarterly release cycle, so we expect the next issues to be available on October 1st and then Febru-

ary 1st. We look forward with great excitement and anticipation to everyone's future contributions.

Artwork

We desperately need more artwork. So please, if you have any artwork you think would be relevant to any future issues of OM, please submit it as well, it really helps to have the community artwork to liven up the pages.

Many thanks to the vast array of people helping support all these efforts, it is the community that is not only keeping alive the joy of role-playing in J.R.R. Tolkien's universe, but actually helping it to grow.

The Future of MerpCon

Some possible ideas for next year's MerpCon V that we will be endeavoring to make happen.

Live music by a Tolkien-music related group. The list is long (see Chris Seeman's Tolkien Music list at <http://tolkien-music.com/>) of possible candidates. Announcements will be made on the MerpCon website as we arrange for who can actually attend.

Additionally, we hope that either (or both!) the Ambarquenta or Hither-lands RPG developers will be able to host a table here next year.

We do not yet have any specific guest speakers besides the representative from CARPGa lined up for next year, but are open to suggestions from anyone. We would love to have previous speakers attend again as well, so if you have been, or would like to be a guest speaker, or know someone who you think would be interested, please email us as soon as you can so we can make preparations. Keep in mind we can't afford to actually pay anyone to attend, but we can help alleviate some of the costs of room, board, or in some instances even travel.

Meanwhile, many thanks to everyone for supporting this magazine, MerpCon, and the many other community efforts out there encouraging the development and enjoyment of Tolkien-based scholarship and role-playing gaming.

Namárië,

Hawke Robinson
July 2008

The Problem of Dwarf-women

by Neville Percy © 2008

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"It's the beards" ...?

GIMLI: *It's true you don't see many dwarf women. And in fact, they are so alike in voice and appearance, that they are often mistaken for dwarf men.*

ARAGORN: *[whispering] It's the beards.*

GIMLI: *And this in turn has given rise to the belief that there are no dwarf women, and that dwarves just spring out of holes in the ground!*

– Peter Jackson's cinematic interpretation of *The Two Towers.*

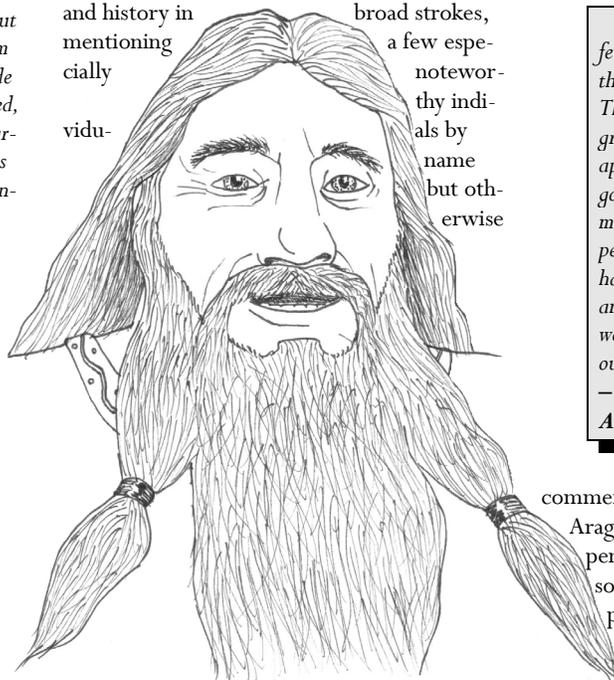
This light-hearted interlude is used by the filmmakers of The Two Towers to touch for just a few seconds on the knotty problem of what female dwarves are like. If this is more than Tolkien ever offered us in the main text of LOTR, that is at least in part because he actually failed to establish to his own satisfaction what they were like and why they seem to be unknown to members of any other race. We have no definitive statement on the matter. But gamers, if they ever want their stories to take them into the further deeps of a dwarf-hold, must decide whether dwarf-women are bearded or smooth-faced, the equals of dwarf-men engaging in the same pursuits or so cherished and protected as to be kept as virtual prisoners in their own halls, all but unmentioned in dwarven history.

Origins

The historical and mythological tradition in which Tolkien's inspiration takes root has dwarfs (the rare OE *dweorgas*; the more common ON *dvergjar*) as wizened bearded figures associated with mining the wealth of the earth and with crafting wondrous artefacts. The lack of female dwarfs may have been because these professions were seen as typically male, or just because the whole tradition of the early mediæval period was so male-dominated. Whatever the reason, when Tolkien included the dwarves in his own mythology, he too was 'blind on his distaff side': his dwarves were bearded and for decades exclusively male.

The dwarves of Tolkien's legendarium are not beings of the spirit-world or creatures born from and returning to the element of stone. The dwarves were made by Aulë as inspired by his glimpses of the elves and men in the Vision of Eru, and his making of them was ratified by Ilúvatar, who added the spark of soul and free will. Like elves and men, dwarves reproduce by the physical union of biological male and female, but the male bias is there right from the tale of their creation in The Silmarillion: it mentions only "the Seven Fathers of the Dwarves"!

Dwarf-women are not mentioned at all in The Silmarillion, which mostly depicts warfare and history in broad strokes, mentioning a few especially noteworthy individuals by name but otherwise



telling of "the dwarves" as a people. The only individuals to receive significant attention are the petty-dwarves, Mím and his two sons. These three are the last survivors of a community of 'fallen' dwarves, exiled from the true dwarf-holds, and finally set to die out when there were no dwarf-women left amongst them.

Nor are dwarf-women mentioned anywhere in The Hobbit. Thorin and the twelve relatives, advisors and supporters who follow him upon the Quest of Erebor receive close attention but the female component of the genealogies linking them are not mentioned beyond the reference to Fili and Kili being Thorin's "sister-sons".

Dwarf-women are still not mentioned when Glóin returns in The Lord of the Rings, accompanied by his son Gimli (mother unmentioned), nor at any point in Gimli's conversations with the others of the Fellowship.

Tolkien finally acknowledges the matter of dwarf-women only in the Appendix to LOTR that discusses the dwarves as a race. At this point it is apparent (if it had not already been so since the tale of Mím) that he was well aware of the significant omission of any reference to dwarf-women. It was this passage in Appendix A that was paraphrased by the filmmakers:

It was said by Gimli that there are few dwarf-women, probably no more than a third of the whole people. They seldom walk abroad except at great need. They are in voice and appearance, and in garb if they must go on a journey, so like to the dwarf-men that the eyes and ears of other peoples cannot tell them apart. This has given rise to the foolish opinion among Men that there are no dwarf-women, and that the Dwarves 'grow out of stone'.
– 'Durin's Folk', LotR Appendix A III, p. 1053

The more definite "It's the beards" comment given to the mischievous filmmaker Aragon is not present in Tolkien's appendix. The "in voice and appearance ... so like to the dwarf-men that ... other peoples cannot tell them apart," that we do have what would seem to imply that

- ICE's MERP had dwarf-men taller and heftier than dwarf-women, and suggested that the hoods of the dwarves' travelling garb included flaps or a mask to draw across the face, with the implication that no one could then tell whether a small dwarf was a bearded male or beardless female; Liz Danforth's illustration of Dis presented her wearing something like a highwayman's kerchief across her lower face.
- Decipher's LOTR RPG said "their men grow thick, luxuriant beards in which they take great pride," (emphasis mine) implying that their women did not, without making a statement on the matter one way or the other.
- Most generic fantasy books, games, miniatures and illustrations depict female dwarves without beards.
- Turbine took the radical approach of having male and female dwarves indistinguishable, to the extent that the game of Lord of the Rings Online does not assign dwarves a gender at all.

the appearance of dwarf-women includes beards no different from those of their men-folk. The implication is that half the reason no one's ever seen a female dwarf is that they've simply never realised it even when they did see one.

But bearded ladies have always been the object of ridicule and prurient spectacle, and it is understandable that people should be reluctant to put anything close to that idea at the centre of a role-playing game. Game companies' interpretations have differed.

But the published version of *The Lord of the Rings*, which is all the game companies were allowed to use under the copyright license, is not the only record of Tolkien's thoughts on the matter. Christopher Tolkien presents and analyses more of his father's original notes in 'The Later Quenta Silmarillion' in *The War of the Jewels* and 'The Making of Appendix A' in *The Peoples of Middle earth*.

§5 [...] no Man nor Elf has ever seen a beardless Dwarf [...] For the Naugrim have beards from the beginning of their lives, male and female alike; nor indeed can their womenkind be discerned by those of other race, be it in feature or in gait or in voice...

– 'Concerning The Dwarves' (1951), *HoMe 11* (1994) p 205

The first draft of the key passage in Appendix A mostly survived into the final version

... except for the statements that they are never forced to wed against their will (which 'would of course be impossible'), and that they have beards.

– 'The Making of Appendix A', *HoMe 12* (1996) p. 285

Tolkien also gave considerable thought to the origins of the dwarf-women. Christopher describes him in *HoMe 11* as being "much exercised about the details of the making of the first Dwarves". He presents no fewer than five tentative and roughly-written draft notes, the most informative being this:

But it is said that to each Dwarf Ilúvatar added a mate of female kind, yet because he would not amend the work of Aulë, and Aulë had yet made only things of male form, therefore the women of the Dwarves resemble their men more than all other [? speaking] (sic) races.

– 'Concerning the Dwarves' (1951), *HoMe 11*, p 211

Far from having the Seven Fathers of the Dwarves be joined by corresponding Mothers of the race, the Fathers are each given "a mate of female kind" – even the phrase itself is painfully circumspect. Three of the five draft notes have the dwarf-women made by Aulë and only the one quoted attributes them to Ilúvatar, although one of those does say he made them at Ilúvatar's bidding. All have the males made first with the females as additions, and in all of them it was Aulë himself who made all his first dwarves male.

If Aulë's design of the Dwarven form, beard and all, honoured by even Ilúvatar himself not wishing to amend it, then it becomes almost a matter of religious observance. Statues and sculptures of bearded dwarves might be more than decorative, but actually be statements of reverence for the form chosen by Aulë, Mahal the Maker.

The danger of using material in the *HoMe* books as a source is that its unpublished status points to Tolkien's own reservations about it. The beard references do not appear in Appendix A, and were probably kept out of it quite deliberately. The final wise words on the matter go to his son Christopher:

In the final text, as printed in The Silmarillion, my father evidently abandoned the question of the origin of the female Dwarves, finding it intractable and the solutions unsatisfactory.

– 'Concerning the Dwarves', *HoMe 11*, p 212

So Tolkien may not have found a satisfactory solution, but he had the luxury of being able to simply avoid discussing the domestic existence

of the Dwarves. Any gamer wishing to engage closely with Dwarven characters or culture is likely to need to make a decision in such matters.

The influence of Peter Jackson's film and the assumption in the majority of Tolkien's own notes, despite his reservations about publishing them, suggest that most people will favour the interpretation that dwarf-women of Middle-earth are bearded.

The Role of Women in Dwarvish Society

Dis was the daughter of Thráin II. She is the only dwarf-woman named in these histories.

– *Durin's Folk*, Appendix A III, p. 1053

If Tolkien intended dwarf-women's beards to be a reason why no one outside the dwarven race had knowingly seen a female Dwarf, he did not make it the only explanation. The key passage in Appendix A also says that they are few in number, and that they do not willingly leave the safety of the fortified dwarf-holds. It says that dwarf-women dress similarly to dwarf-men only when they must go on a journey. Within the dwarf-hold, therefore, dwarf-women presumably do dress differently from dwarf-men, but are still not seen by guests or visitors.

An alternative statement in *WotJ* puts it:

[...] nor indeed can their womenkind be discerned [...] in any wise save this: that they go not to war, and seldom save at direct need issue from their deep bowers and halls.

– 'Concerning the Dwarves' (1951), *HoMe 11*, p 205

It seems likely that Dwarf-holds have distinct 'married quarters' areas where the Dwarf-women live and the Dwarf-children are raised, in the deeper reaches of the mountain (where, incidentally, *Khuzdûl* may be spoken freely and inner names used) rather than in the trading town areas in which guests are welcome (where every dwarf must go by an outer name). Note that "Dis" is a female Norse name following the Longbeards' tradition of

using outer names derived from the speech of the Northmen of the Second Age. Whilst Dís was forced to travel abroad in Middle-earth, dwarf-women who did not leave their holds might not have had outer names at all; if so, this would reinforce the tendency for them not to be named in histories or genealogies.

Reading further in the passages quoted above, we learn:

It is because of the fewness of women among them that the kind of the Dwarves increases slowly, and is in peril when they have no secure dwellings. For Dwarves take only one wife or husband each in their lives, and are jealous, as in all matters of their rights. The number of dwarf-men that marry is actually less than one-third. For not all the women take husbands: some desire none, some desire one that they cannot get, and so will have no other. As for the men, very many also do not desire marriage, being engrossed of their crafts.

– *Durin's Folk, Appendix A III, p. 1053*

Whilst “very many” dwarf-men are too engrossed of their crafts to be interested in marriage, Dwarf-women are not included in this statement. So even unmarried Dwarf-women still do not pursue the traditional Dwarven professions of mining, crafting etc.

Despite how few mentions of dwarf-women there are, the conclusive statements are still mostly negative ones about what they did not do. The only conclusive positive statements are concerned with the importance of dwarf-women to the demographics of the race.

The broad sweep of Tolkien's alternate history sees the Elves fade into Faerie and Hobbits disappear, but the Dwarves' holds fall and their numbers dwindle. He may have conceived this as far back as the tale of Mím the petty-dwarf. In the Appendices to *The Lord of the Rings* he certainly projected the start of the Dwarves' dwindling back into the latter half of the Second Age:

... the halls of Khazad-dûm were too deep and strong and filled with a people too numerous and valiant for Sauron forto conquer from without. Thus its wealth remained long unruined, though its people began to dwindle.

– *Durin's Folk, Appendix A III, p. 1046*

Their slow population growth is a factor again in the late Third Age (preceding TH), when it was explicitly linked with the fewness of women amongst that contingent.

... at last they made a home in exile in the east of the Ered Luin beyond the Lune. ... but they prospered after a fashion, and their numbers slowly increased.²

² *They had very few women-folk. Dís Thráin's daughter was there. She was the mother of Fili and Kili, who were born in the Ered Luin. Thorin had no wife.*

– *Durin's Folk, Appendix A III, p. 1050*

It is said, also, that their womenkind are few, and that save their kings and chieftains few Dwarves ever wed; wherefore their race multiplied slowly, and now is dwindling.

– *'Concerning the Dwarves' (1951), HoMe 11, p 205*

For the race to multiply at all, however long-lived its individuals might be, more than just the kings and chieftains must marry! But this statement still suggests a trend for prosperous ‘upper class’ dwarves to be more likely to marry and raise children than the crafting- and working classes. This in turn suggests that in dwarvish society a suitor has to pay a hefty bride-price (rather than fathers paying dowries for their daughters), or that child-care and apprenticeship fees are particularly expensive.

But the fact that Dwarven populations grow only slowly at best and are often prone to dwindling does not mean that they are obsessed with breeding and treat their womenkind like brood mares. On the contrary, they seem to have this problem precisely because child-rearing is not a high priority for them. We have already seen that the males are often too busy crafting, that widows do not remarry and that not all Dwarf-women marry at all. Further to that, when they do marry they do so relatively late in life and have relatively small families despite the long years of vigour they still have.

It is then said that the Dwarves marry late, seldom before they are 90 or more,¹⁸ that they have few children (so many as four being rare). They are devoted to their children, often rather fiercely: that is, they may treat them with apparent harshness (especially in the desire to ensure that they grow up tough, hardy, unyielding), but they defend them with all their power, and resent injuries to them even more than to themselves. [...]

Finally there is a note on the absence of record concerning the women of the Dwarves: They are seldom named in genealogies. They join their husbands' families. But if a son is seen 110 or so years younger than his father, this usually indicates an elder daughter. Thorin's sister Dís is named simply because of the gallant death of her sons Fili and Kili in defence of Thorin II.

¹⁸ *In the genealogical table all the 'kings of Durin's Folk' from Náin I to Thorin Oakenshield were born either 101 or 102 (in one case 100) years after their fathers.*

– *The Making of Appendix A, HoMe 12 p. 285*

The Holy Dwarven Family

Durin was indeed held by the Dwarves to be the Deathless that had returned; for they have many strange tales and beliefs concerning themselves and their fate in the world.

– *Durin's Folk, Appendix A III, p. 1046*

The Dwarves are unique amongst the Free Peoples in having been made directly by the Vala Aulë. When the Seven Fathers of the Dwarves (and in fact the six mothers!) were accepted as ‘adopted Children of Eru’ and each given the divine spark of a soul with its own free will, this was only a last addition to the work of Aulë. Even before they received these souls like those of the other Free Peoples, they were animated by a portion of the soul of Aulë himself.

Also unlike any of the other Free Peoples they were directly taught by Aulë before they were placed in Middle-earth. He designed their form, making them fittingly tough to resist the forces of Morgoth, then dominant in the world, and gave them the language, Khuzdûl, which they have maintained unchanged ever since as an article of religious de-

votion. What further wisdom he gave them, they share with none of other race.

One possibility is that the Dwarves believe they each bear a tiny part of the soul of Aulë. The elves have drawn unflattering parallels between the dwarves and the trolls and dragons of Morgoth, both being creations of a Vala rather than of Ilúvatar. If there is any truth in the parallel, then that portion of the soul of Aulë may persist in the race of the Dwarves. Even if the soul is diluted down the generations, it is refreshed at those points when Durin is reborn to the Dwarves (and quite possibly the same for the other Fathers).

For an injury to a father a Dwarf may spend a life-time in achieving revenge. Since the 'kings' or heads of lines are regarded as 'parents' of the whole group, it will be understood how it was that the whole of Durin's Race gathered and marshalled itself to avenge Thrór.

– *The Making of Appendix A, HoMe 12 p. 285*

It is plausible that the dwarves do not talk of 'Fathers of the Dwarves' or regard their 'kings' as 'parents' simply as a poetic turn of language. It more probably reflects a genuine sense of family that joins the entire race in general, and particularly the dwarves within each of the Seven Houses. Bifur, Bofur and Bombur differ from the other dwarves in the company as being descended from Moria dwarves, but not of Durin's line. This suggests that the Seven Houses retained their separate identities and did not interbreed even in the thousands of years in which the Broadbeams and Firebeards cohabited with the Longbeards in Khazad-dûm.

Where they have a king (or more cautiously 'king', in inverted commas, in the above), these kings are never despots or tyrants of their people. Even the lifelong possession of one of the Seven only makes them mildly possessive in their last years. Similarly, the Dwarves are not described as having a society of feudal ranks like dukes or barons who might place their own interests before those of society in general; the king's closest relatives tend to serve as advisors, ambassadors and companions.

To a dwarvish couple, having and raising dwarf-children, bearers of a portion of the soul of Aulë, could therefore be seen as an almost religious duty – not something to be undertaken lightly. In contrast to the elves who simply choose not to have children in times of doubt or strife, the Dwarves trust in the security of their fortified mansions, but never take

The crucial statement that the eyes and ears of other races cannot tell them male and female Dwarves apart indicates that sexual dimorphism – the differences in physical form (and, incidentally, vocal quality) between male and female – is minimal.

Whilst other Dwarves are not necessarily fooled, Dwarvish 'male impersonators' or 'female impersonators' would presumably still have better chances of success than their Mannish, Elvish or Hobbitish counterparts.

Given the rigidity of Dwarvish society, it might be thought that spirited dwarf-women might be strongly tempted to try and pass themselves off as dwarf-men and travel beyond the hold of their birth, pursue quests or even go to war. But the attentive upbringing of the parents and the whole strength of dwarvish tradition would indoctrinate them against such behaviour, and the same rigid society would impose particularly stern penalties for transgression.

the children (or women) on journeys away from them.

There may further be a particular significance to the protection of the dwarf-hold that dictates against leaving it. On one hand the women and children never leave the hold, and dwarf-men may risk journeying abroad whilst always maintaining their ties. On the other hand we have the example of the petty-dwarves of *The Silmarillion*.

...Dwarves that were banished in ancient days from the great Dwarf-cities of the east [...] they became diminished in stature and in smith-craft, and they took to lives of stealth, walking with bowed shoulders and furtive steps.

– *Of Turin Turambar, The Silmarillion ch. 21, p. 245*

The great Dwarves despised the Petty-dwarves, who were (it is said) the descendants of Dwarves who had left or been driven out from the Communities, being deformed or undersized, or slothful and rebellious. But they still acknowledged their kinship and resented any injuries done to them.

– *Elvish names for the Dwarves, HoMe 11, p. 389*

These passages confirm that even those whom the Dwarves have cast out are still seen as being of the Dwarven family, and also suggest that being exiled from the 'Communities' or 'Dwarf-cities' caused the loss of stature, lore and moral fibre. It is almost as though the Dwarf-hold, under the protection and rightful authority of a king, is like a hallowed place to the Dwarves. Perhaps we should not see Dwarf-women as unusual in not travelling forth from their holds, but see all Dwarves as remaining in their holds unless high deeds such as war or the winning of gold require it.

Notes

¹ <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

AMBAR AQUENTA

TALES OF FATE IN MIDDLE-EARTH

Ambarquenta is a role-playing game specifically designed for J.R.R. Tolkien's legendary land of Middle-earth. In this effort, it is our goal to produce a game system that is all at once enjoyable, flexible, balanced, and playable, but we also strive to remain true to Tolkien's shining literary examples. *Ambarquenta* (meaning 'Tale of Fate' in Quenya or High-elvish) aims at experienced role-players who desire a complex, yet intuitively comprehensible set of rules which provides hooks for the Turambar (i.e., the Gamemaster) to develop his stories, instead of distracting from them.

At the time being, **preview release 5.0** is available for download from our website, located at www.ambarquenta.com.

It comes as a 214-page PDF-document, containing all chapters on character creation. To open and print this eBook and future preview releases, you'll need to type the password, 'ambarmeldor' (meaning 'Friends of Fate' in Quenya).

The current preview version of *Ambarquenta* features a brief Introduction to the game's mechanics, and chapters on Your Character's Tale (1), Attributes (2), Races and Cultures (3), Skills (4), Abilities and Flaws (5), Weapons and Gear (6), Finishing Touches (7), Character Improvement (8) and Adventuring (9). In addition, Appendix A introduces you to the optional concept of everyday Occupations.

With a little creativity to fill in the gaps and the convenient Microsoft-Excel-based character sheet (also available for download from www.ambarquenta.com), an experienced group of gamers should well be able to start a game of *Ambarquenta*; in any case you'll get an excellent impression of the game's mechanics and features from the preview. Expect detailed chapters dealing with Combat (10), Magic (11), prominent (NPC) Lords of Middle-earth (12), a Bestiary (13), and appendices on various topics such as herbs and poisons and creature design in future versions of *Ambarquenta*.

We'd greatly appreciate to learn what you think about the published material, and, of course, about your ideas for improving the game's existing chapters and completing its missing chapters. The best way to get in touch with us and our friends who are involved in the design process of *Ambarquenta* is to discuss your ideas and suggestions in the Heren Turambarion's forum, located at <http://ambarquenta.tt.cx>.

Design Principles

While downloading the rulebook, you might be interested to learn a little more about our design principles: First, *Ambarquenta* is a fairly 'realistic' game. Of course there will be magic spells (as well as other forms of magic) and everything else a fair Middle-earth RPG requires, but certain conditions of real world physics are still represented by the system. Hence, it isn't the kind of game in which you can create ridiculously overpowered starting characters, or ever hope to become a cinematic superhero.

The second principle is **playability**, and this frequently overrules realism. The most accurate combat system isn't worth a penny if it makes a simple encounter last for hours, or (and this was even more important to us when we decided to write an RPG ourselves) if the Turambar has to keep too many details in mind. Thus, realism governs the character creation and improvement process, while playability dominates the actual game play. So prepare for fast-moving play-rules that are far more realistic and satisfying than those you may know from many other major role-playing games.

Another important element is **flexibility**. A character has the opportunity to learn or practise almost any skill or ability, without the usual limitations by abstract concepts such as levels, character classes, or character points. Nevertheless, by the system's inherent mechanics, your character will show a unique pattern from the beginning on, a personal aptitude towards being whatever you want him to be...

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A Brief History of the Dwarven Mansions

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This essay is an attempt to present a concise anal-



ysis of the Dwarven mansions and the most likely distribution of their locations across Middle-earth. It is based on a textual analysis of what Tolkien wrote on the matter (unfortunately not much). Using this as a starting-point, further investigations can establish a sound basis for further developments in this area. While the houses of the Ered Luin and Durin's house are documented reasonably well by Tolkien, the eastern houses are not and it is especially here where there is room for further development of the placement of cities and their demography. In light of the latter, I hope to give a usable demographic framework that can be used for further work.

I constrain myself to outlining the broad details of the mansions and their histories. Smaller settlements used only for mining or exploration cannot be covered here. You may notice a distinct neglect of mannish names or communities with whom the Dwarves likely had relations. This is intentional to avoid collision with later and more in-depth essays on the matter.

I hope to give food for thought and inspiration for anyone working out the Dwarven communities and histories in more detail.

A note on naming

All of the names used below are either Khuzdûl (mostly the mansions) or the mannish northern style language we are acquainted with through the convention in Durin's folk of using northern names. Since the Naugrim take 'outer names' in the languages of the people around them (generally men), these original 'outer names' are specific to the region in which the house in question resides. Thus we would expect the 'outer names' of the Dwarves beyond the Northwest of Middle-earth to have different origins than those of Durin's tribe.

Owing to the way in which they have been reported in the West, however, the 'outer names' of all the Naugrim are given according to the "Durinic" adoption of names in the language of the Second-Age-Northmen. Although this does not authentically represent the Dwarves' outer names near their homelands, it shows those names under which these Dwarves are known in the West (if they come there). These may be either names that Durin's house uses when addressing their eastern relatives in conversation with men (or elves) from the West, or names taken by individuals from the eastern houses when they dwell in the Northwest of Middle-earth.

The sources

This essay strives to provide useful gaming material that is as close as possible to what Tolkien has written about the Dwarves and especially their mansions and their wanderings.

On the other hand, we have several gaming

publications (both commercial and fan-made) that deal with the Naugrim. In the section on sources at the end of this essay I list all of them and where to find them on the net (if available).

The *Lord of the Rings* provides us with some useful passages about the Dwarves of Durin's Folk. *HoMe 12* contains further desperately needed information about the early history of the Dwarves. In addition, *The Silmarillion* is a good source for all the events of Beleriand, all while it has to be checked with the original sources (e.g. the *HoMe 11*) for greater accuracy.

The *HoMe 12* with its important essay *Of Dwarves and Men* is one of the most important sources for many aspects of Dwarven history. It gives descriptive names for all seven tribes, for instance. In the table below this information is combined with relevant parts of the RPG sources mentioned above.

Past RPG developments

The Dwarves, their history and mansions have – naturally – attracted the imagination of many writers. Both RPG companies that have published information on the Dwarves. While the output of DEC has been quite limited, ICE produced more; the most comprehensive being *Lords of Middle-earth, Vol. 3 – Hobbits, Dwarves, Ents, Orcs & Trolls (LoMe III)*. Here the authors give us some information on their vision of these matters. The material on the Dwarves however, is somewhat problematic, since it is often fragmentary and incoherent. Even worse, its internal structure is quite dis-

Tribe #	Number of Awakening Place	Name of father/founder according to			Descriptive name by Tolkien	region
		Tolkien	ICE*	Decipher*		
1	1	Durin	Durin	Durin	Longbeards	Northwest
2	2	unknown	Dwalin	Uri	Firebeards	Northwest
3	2	unknown	Thrár	Linnar	Broadbeards	Northwest
4	3	unknown	Thelór	Sindri	Ironfists	East
5	3	unknown	Bávör	Thulin	Stiffbeards	East
6	4	unknown	Drúin	Var	Blacklocks	East
7	4	unknown	Barin	Vigdi	Stonefoots	East

* The correspondence of the ICE tribes to Decipher tribes is somewhat problematic. The Decipher version accords better to Tolkien descriptions but it is not easy, and sometimes arbitrary, to assign the ICE tribes to them. Therefore, the table should not be seen as more authoritative than other interpretations.

organised and the information scattered randomly throughout the ages of Middle-earth and with little or no internal context.

With respect to the theme of this essay – the Dwarven mansions – the value of *LoMe III* is also limited since it is in my opinion mostly incompatible with the *HoMe 12*. The blame for this cannot be placed with the authors, since *LoMe III* was published in 1989, well before the *HoMe 12* (1996). It is important to note, however, that in ICE's version, the mansions of the Dwarves were scattered all over Middle-earth. This was done without doubt to give each region its Dwarven tribe, in order to serve the 'classic' RPG clichés in every corner of the continent. Again, while suitable for the time, with the current knowledge and textual situation, a critical review of this interpretation is necessary.

In *The Silmarillion*, there is the following passage that deals with the Places of Awakening (see below):

Then Aulë took the Seven Fathers of the Dwarves, and laid them to rest in far-sundered places; and he returned to Valinor, and waited while the long years lengthened.
– *The Silmarillion. Of Aulë and Yavanna*

ICE could have considered this. Instead, they chose to base all tribes at Khazad-dûm, whereas there was evidence, even at this time (1989), in favour of separating the places of awakening.

Places of Awakening

Lots of discussions have taken place about the places of the Dwarven awakenings. Since they are pivotal for the further placement of mansions and the locations of Dwarven territories in later times, this is an important matter indeed. The central quote about it can be found in the *HoMe 12*:

In the Dwarvish traditions of the Third Age the names of the places where each of the Seven Ancestors had 'awakened' were remembered; but only two of them were known to Elves and Men of the West: the most westerly, the awakening place of the ancestors of the Firebeards and the Broadbeams; and that of the ancestor of the Longbeards, (24) the eldest in making and awakening. The first had been in the north of the Ered Lindon, the great eastern wall of Beleriand, of which the Blue Mountains of the Second and later ages were the

remnant; the second had been Mount Gundabad (in origin a Khuzdul name), ... The other two places were eastward, at distances as great or greater than that between the Blue Mountains and Gundabad: the arising of the Ironfists and Stiffbeards, and that of the Blacklocks and Stonefoots. Though these four points were far sundered the Dwarves of different kindreds were in communication, and in the early ages often held assemblies of delegates at Mount Gundabad. In times of great need even the most distant would send help to any of their people; as was the case in the great War against the Orks (Third Age 2793 to 2799).
– *HoMe 12. Of Dwarves and Men (my emphasis)*

This quote is of course important and points the way, but it also lacks precise locations. In my opinion its most important piece of information is the inference that the Places of Awakening were not randomly distributed among the mountain ranges of Middle-earth, but deliberately placed in the north of the continent. Here I take the phrase "...were eastward [of the known ones] ..." as the central point. It is not said that they were "south-eastward", "south" or anything else but eastward. Of course this leaves some room for interpretation, and the passage does not indicate a perfect correspondence in latitude. It does mean, however that the principal direction is indeed eastward, and deviations to the north or south are very likely considerably smaller than the distance eastward.

We might also want to consider that the Dwarves were from the beginning designed as resilient:

Since they were to come in the days of the power of Melkor, Aulë made the Dwarves strong to endure.
– *The Silmarillion. Of Aulë and Yavanna*

One might imagine that the Dwarves were deliberately placed in some kind of "picket line" in the northern part of Middle-earth. Aulë was well aware that the Utter North had been Melkor's domain in the days of Utumno. This is indirectly supported by the following quote:

But as the third age of the captivity of Melkor drew on, the Dwarves became troubled, and they spoke to King Thingol, saying that the Válar had not rooted out utterly

the evils of the North, and now the remnant, having long multiplied in the dark, were coming forth once more and roaming far and wide.
'There are fell beasts,' they said, 'in the land east of the mountains, and your ancient kindred that dwell there are flying from the plains to the hills.'
– *The Silmarillion. Of the Sindar (my emphasis)*

Both these hints, the toughness of the dwarves and their placement close to the old domain of Melkor, can be seen as an indicator of a special purpose: That they might form a first line of defence for the northern part of Middle-earth denying Melkor's evils easy access to good strongholds from which to assail the more southerly and lower lying parts of Middle-earth. It must be borne in mind though, that this is far from a close and fortified border (e.g. like the Roman *limes* or the Great Wall of China). It would be more of a buffer and a hindrance for an overly easy access. If we follow this reasoning, Aulë might have chosen the sites of Awakening also strategically to deny the best mountain locations to Melkor's evil creatures.

The following paragraphs contain what is known in more detail about the specific tribes as well as some reasonable further inferences that can be used for the purpose of this essay.

The Ered Luin tribes

The mansions of the western tribes are naturally the easiest to locate. From *The Silmarillion*, we know the great cities of Nogrod and Belegost in the Ered Luin. The above quote from the *HoMe 12* implies (as noted there by Christopher Tolkien), that the Firebeards and Broadbeams are to be identified with the twin cities of Nogrod and Belegost. These two tribes had a lot of dealings with the Eldar of Beleriand and their impact on the history of the First Age is not to be underestimated. The main quote above shows us that these mansions were not the places of their birth. Probably some time after the awakening, they traveled southward and founded Nogrod (Kh. "Tumunzahar") and Belegost (Kh. "Gabilgathol"). The exact location of these cities is not entirely clear when we look at the development as outlined in the *HoMe 11*, but the version which is printed in *The Silmarillion* is sufficient for our purposes.

Tolkien tells us that these tribes were largely absorbed by Durin's people in Khazad-dûm (continued on next page):

After the end of the First Age the power and wealth of Khazad-dûm was much increased; for it was enriched by many people and much lore and craft when the ancient cities of Nogrod and Belegost in the Blue Mountains were ruined at the breaking of Thanorodrim.

– *LotR. Appendix B (Durins Folk)*

This is supported in another passage in the *Lord of the Rings*:

c. 40 [Second Age] Many Dwarves leaving their old cities in Ered Luin go to Moria and swell its numbers

– *LotR. Appendix A*

A problem persists however. If these two tribes had completely merged with Durin's people, there would have been no seven Dwarven lords on whom Sauron could bestow a Ring of Power each. Therefore it is likely that not all of these dwarves went into Moria, but that a substantial number stayed in the Ered Luin – probably with their respective kings. This is also the thinking in *Other Hands* # 25, which deals with the Naugrim of the Blue Mountains.

Decipher followed this argumentation and developed a two-fold solution: On the one hand, there remained independent cities of these two tribes (though small by Khazad-dûm's standards), while on the other hand the majority of these people took shelter in Khazad-dûm. Only later, when even the smaller independent cities failed and Sauron regained the Seven (at least those not destroyed), did the survivors relocate to Khazad-dûm as well. In all respects they acknowledged Durin's heir as their overlord, but they remained *de iure* independent. This latter fact is emphasised by fighting under their own house's banners in war.

Durin's folk

For Durin's people, the situation is similar to that of the Ered Luin tribes. Their origin is described in the *HoMe 12* (see initial quote). They later settled in Khazad-dûm (Moria), the greatest and most famous of all *Dwarven* settlements. Similar to the Ered Luin tribes, they left their original place, but remained within the same mountain range.

Since the information provided by Tolkien about Durin's folk is the most comprehensive we have about the Dwarves, it is this model that serves as the base for many of the later conclusions. The complex fate of Durin's house and the massive external pressure on it

(a Balrog, several dragons) is a good indicator of the maximum distance from their place of awakening where Dwarves are willing to build permanent mansions.

This process [the early to mid-Second Age alliance of Northmen and Dwarves] began not in barter and trade, but in war; for the Longbeards had spread southward down the Vales of Anduin and had made their chief 'mansion' and stronghold at Moria; and also eastward to the Iron Hills, where the mines were their chief source of iron-ore. They regarded the Iron Hills, the Ered Mithrin, and the east dales of the Misty Mountains as their own land. But they were under attack from the Orks of Morgoth.

– *HoMe 12. Of Dwarves and Men*

'Long and deadly was that war, and it was fought for the most part in dark places beneath the earth; and at the last the Dwarves had the victory, and in the Battle before the Gate of Moria ten thousand Orcs were slain. But the Dwarves suffered also grievous loss and his folk were now so diminished that Thrain dared not to enter Moria, and his people were dispersed again.'

– *HoMe 12. The Making of Appendix A (Durins folk)*

The *HoMe 12* presents to us what Tolkien envisioned the Appendices (or part thereof), but had to cut short due to space considerations. It is one of the rare circumstances where he tells us some precise numbers, too. That the Orcs in the decisive Battle of Nanduhirion lost about 10,000 warriors is a very interesting piece of information that can be used to gauge the relative military (and indirectly overall demographic) strength of Durin's people near the end of the Third Age.

The eastern tribes

Information by Tolkien about the eastern tribes is very scarce. Apart from the initial quote about their places of awakening, there are only vague passages that deal with their relation with other people. There is absolutely no further evidence about their mansions.² Accordingly, we have to use a good deal of imagination, common sense and educated guesswork to fill these lacunae.

Following the interpretation adopted by Decipher in the *Moria* sourcebook, Var's folk took

to a separate lifestyle from the middle of the 25th century of the Third Age: The children and women were sheltered in the ancestral home of Vigdís, while the men formed mercenary companies in their quest to redeem their wrongs. This period lasted from T.A. 2458 to T.A. 3019 when Sauron was finally vanquished. During this time, Var's people formed seven mercenary companies that were away on their quest to fight the minions of Sauron. Whenever possible, one or two of them were at Baraz-lagil, returning booty and treasures from the others back home. Thus six of them were away, fighting their own war against Sauron. Along this line, three or four of the temporary mansions (see below) were occupied at the same time.

Compared to the other houses, both Thulin's and Sindri's people never had a great number of mansions at any one time. The former – being smaller in number from the beginning – kept closer together due to the harsh climate of their home. The latter kept closer together around their primary mansion, preferring to be stronger in a single place rather than scattered throughout a greater area. Their strategic position, especially in the First Age and the first third of the Second Age, allowed them to control much of the west- and eastbound traffic in this region. This did not earn them the gratitude of their mannish neighbours, in turn reinforcing the need for a more centralised settlement pattern.

The late Third Age, when Var's people led a personal war of vengeance against the Dark Lord and his minions is marked by the existence of several temporary mansions founded by this tribe. These so-called "war-mansions" are characterized by a total lack of women and children and their overall strict military orientation (e.g. there is no mining beyond the necessary minimum for the maintenance of the war-gear). They are essentially semi-permanent military camps and bases for the Axes of Nargubraz in their vendetta.

Please note that Var's folk has no "war mansions" in the Northwest. Whenever a company of the Axes of Nargubraz happens to operate in the Northwest, they are sheltered in a mansion of the western Dwarves. The same happens for other regions in which other tribes have mansions.

Methodology for the eastern places of awakening and further mansions

It is of the utmost importance to gauge the wandering tendency of the Dwarves, since based on their supposed birthplaces, an estimate of their – claimed – territory can be made. At first, a passage from the *HoMe 12* is of great help:

Though they were loth to migrate and make permanent dwellings or 'mansions' far from their original homes, except under great pressure from enemies or after some catastrophe such as the ruin of Beleriand, they were great and hardy travellers and skilled road-makers; also, all the kindreds shared a common language.
 – *HoMe12. Of Dwarves and Men*

So it is only under great duress that Dwarves migrate. This is not surprising, given the low number of women and accordingly their demographic vulnerability if they were to lose a significant number of them in a war or natural disaster. Thus it is indeed reasonable to assume, that the people stay in their fortified mansions whenever possible. The distinction between **permanent** and temporary mansions makes it possible to locate “real” Dwarven cities in limited areas while temporary dwellings can be found further away. A permanent mansion may be defined by the presence of women, who where even less inclined to wandering than the men, and who therefore stay in the permanent residences.

This sedentary lifestyle of the Dwarves is also stressed in another passage of the same essay:

...for while the Dwarves still lived in populous mansions of their own, such as Moria in particular, and went on journeys only to visit their own kin, they had little intercourse with other peoples except immediate neighbours, ...
 – *HoMe12. Of Dwarves and Men*

The information that even without any external threat or necessity, the Naugrim are no great wanderers, is also important. In this context it is logical that both the tribes from the Ered Luin and Durin’s people only settled in the same mountain range where they awoke (or the adjacent ones in the case of the Ered Mithrin and Eryn Engrin for the Longbeards). Later in its history, Durin’s tribe was forced to leave their homes three times: first the Balrog

colour	House #	founder	mansion #	name of dwelling	notes
Red	1 st	Durin	1	Gundabad/ Gunduzbad	
			2	Khazad-dûm/Moria	
			3	Erebor	
			4	Thakalgund	Norr-dûm in the ICE canon
			5	Barukkhizdîn	Azanulinbar-dûm in ICE canon
			6	Gindabaz*	unnamed (by Tolkien) dwelling in Dunland
			7	Azelanduzur*	unnamed (by Tolkien) halls of Thorin (Hobbit, UT)
			8	Aglarond	founded by Gimli in early Fourth Age
Blue	2 nd	Úri	1	Buzdûm-Mazar*	Awakening Place
			3	Tumunzahar/ Nogrod	
			4	Kalbarazûd*/ Tumnogoth laur	ICE name
			10	Baruk-zigil*/ Mount Gram	
Blue	3 rd	Linnar	1	Buzdûm-Mazar*	unnamed awakening place and intermediary home after ruin of Belegost
			2	Gabilgathol/ Belegost	
			5	Barazbizar/ Cam Dûm	
			6	Nulukkhizdîn/ Nargothrond	
			7	Ruzandum*/ Amon Rúdh	
			8	Narukgindîn*/ Cameth Brin	ICE creation
Green	4 th	Sindri	1	Akgundîm*	Awakening Place
			3	Gamil-nâla	ruined after Akallabêth
			4	Sigal-Nâra*	second home; partly destroyed and occupied by dragons in mid-TA
			5	Nurunkhizdîn	OH (Inland Sea)
			2	Kibil-tarag	occupied by dragon in mid-TA
Green	5 th	Thulin	1	Akgundîm*	Awakening Place
			6	Buzan*	modest base for trade and barter, small community to support dragonslayers
			2	Nargubraz	ancestral home; abandoned until after fall of Sauron
Brown	6 th	Var	1	Baruzkhizdîn*	Awakening Place
			4	Narindazdûm*	colony in contact with Sindri
			5	Garaz-Khamil*	colony in contact with Sindri
			9	Khalarazûm	ICE name (originally a temple of an eastern tribe)
			15	Námagalûz	Fourth Age settlement for contact with the West
			10	Narad-dûm	ICE name (from Bâvor's Folk)
			11	Naragul	ICE name/creation (Blackflame in <i>Shadow in the South</i>)
			12	Akhuzdah	ICE name (a name for an eastern mansion)
			13	Azagarbhun*	ICE name (Thelór's home in central M-e)
			14	Mablad-dûm	ICE creation (see <i>Greater Harad</i>)
Brown	7 th	Vigdís	1	Baruzkhizdîn*	Awakening Place
			3	Baraz-lagil	ancestral home
			6	Baruzdazar*	
			7	Kharukthalad*	
Brown			8	Felbuzad*	

*: These names were generated randomly. They may be replaced by more genuine ones in the future

Table of major Dwarven mansions

drove them out of Khazad-dûm and later Smaug the Dragon seized Erebor. Between these events, other dragons had struck the new mansions in the Ered Mithrin, killing king Dáin I and many more and forcing the Naugrim from their homes in the Grey Mountains. After each of these events the tribe was forced to wander again, eventually settling in a new home, but probably with ever-decreasing grandeur and wealth. In my opinion all of this exceptional misfortune (a Balrog and several dragons) adds up to “great pressure” as adduced above. Apart from Sauron personally, there are in my opinion hardly greater calamities imaginable than those which befell the Longbeards.

Hence the following principles have been applied in the development of the mansions as depicted on map 1.

1. Taking Durin’s people as an example, all known major mansions of this people have been marked on the map. An imaginary circle has been drawn with Gundabad (the place of awakening) at its centre to encompass all the mansions of Durin’s House. This imaginary circle is used to encompass the maximum area where a Dwarven house is made permanent dwellings even under the most intense pressure.
2. If we apply the same radius to the two tribes from the Ered Luin, we get an area that fits well the – admittedly scarce – textual evidence about the activities of these people.
3. When we have a look at the northern end of the Ered Luin/Lindon and Gundabad, we see that both lie at about the same latitude.
4. In applying the same latitude to the eastern places; we must remember that the distance to the east has to be at least the distance between the Blue Mountains and Gundabad. Since there are no mountains in the region (at about this distance) on Tolkien’s *LotR* map, we have to assume that the first of these places was off the map provided in the *Lord of the Rings* and that the distance east must have been “greater” than the distance from the Ered Luin to Gundabad.
5. When applying this latitude and minimum distance to the *Other Minds, Issue #2* map, we end up with possible places for these sites as depicted on map 1.
6. Having determined these places, the maximum radius of wandering (derived from that of Durin’s people) is applied to each. For me, this is the best possible

way of reconstructing the location of the mansions and the maximum area of wandering and secondary mansions, using the maximum amount of evidence available.

The mansions

Unfortunately, we do not know much about the mansions themselves. Khazad-dûm/Moria is almost our exclusive source for some information. In the *Lord of the Rings*, the West-gate of the city, which the Fellowship of the Ring used to enter the once proud Dwarven city, is described. We are also given some information on the East Gate in a note:

8. *They [the Runes; e.g. the ones from Daeron or the Angerthas Moria] did not, however, appear in the inscriptions on the West Gate of Moria. The Dwarves said that it was in courtesy to the Elves that the Féanorian letters were used on that gate, since it opened into their country and was chiefly used by them. But the East Gates, which perished in the war against the Orks, had opened upon the wide world, and were less friendly. They had borne Runic inscriptions in several tongues: spells of prohibition and exclusion in Khuzdûl, and commands that all should depart who had not the leave of the Lord of Moria written in Quenya, Sindarin, the Common Speech, the languages of Rohan and of Dale and Dunland.*
 – *HoMe12. Of Dwarves and Men*

Thus it is not improbable that every primary mansion of a tribe was similarly protected. Of course we do not know the level of protection these spells provided, but they surely helped to keep Durin’s House safe for two and a half ages of the world.

The maps

The maps supplementing this essay can be found in the Appendix of this issue of *Other Minds*. These maps contain several recurring elements that ease the navigation.

First they contain elements in four colors. These represent the awakening order of the Dwarves. Since this is important throughout their history, the colours are retained for all features pertaining to a tribe. The colours are assigned in the following way:

colour	House #
	1 st
	2 nd and 3 rd
	4 th and 5 th
	6 th and 7 th

Colour codes for mansions on the maps

The maps depict Middle-earth during various times from the First throughout the Fourth Age.

It is interesting that there were three pairs of Dwarven fathers laid together and one placed alone. The evidence written by Tolkien suggests that the histories of those houses that awoke together were somewhat more intertwined (for good or bad) with each other than with those of the other houses.³

In addition to the colour codes, you see several symbols on the maps. These are:

	Place of Awakening of one or two tribes.
	Icon for a mansion of the first house from a given site of awakening.
	Icon for a mansion of the second house from a given site of awakening.
	Icon for a Petty-Dwarven mansion known in the West.
	Icon for a temporary mansion used by Var’s people from the 25 th to the 31 st century of the Third Age.

In the Appendix there are twelve maps accompanying this essay. The following table lists their themes. For the abbreviations used, see the next page, column to the right.

Map	Theme
1	Awakening Places of the Seven Houses on a map of the First Age. Circle of maximum distance of mansions from Place of Awakening are provided.
2	Period of the First Age from Y.T 1100 to Y.S. 590
3	Period around S.A. 1200
4	Period around S.A. 2000
5	Period around S.A. 2600
6	Period around S.A. 3200
7	Period around T.A. 100
8	Period around T.A. 1300
9	Period around T.A. 2000
10	Period around T.A. 2810
11	Period around T.A. 3000
12	Period around F.A. 100

Temporal foci of the maps

These periods are not fixed, for most places a few years earlier or later the maps are still valid.

In addition to these “place-icons”, you can see some coloured circles on map 1. Their colour corresponds to the respective place of

awakening and they are centered on this place. These circles represent the maximum radius where we can expect permanent Dwarven mansions from the given house. The methodology for choosing this radius has been detailed above. Note that some of the coloured circles overlap. This means that the radius of permanent settlements is not exclusive, and that dwarves of different tribes may even settle near each other. Therefore the circles around the Places of Awakening must not be seen as exclusive but as a guideline.

The mansions

Only **major** mansions are shown here. Smaller communities or settlements are omitted. The placement of the tribes' major abodes is a good indicator of where smaller settlements could be located.

The table to the right complements the maps. The first column is the colour code used on the map. It is intended to clearly differentiate the four Awakening Places of the Dwarves. The second is for the house name (to differentiate between those houses that awoke in the same place). The fourth column numbers the mansions (from 1 to x in each colour code), while the fifth column gives the Khuzdul name of the specific mansion.

Please note that not all mansions do exist in every age. Therefore the numberings on the maps do not always contain all numbers for a given house. This is intentional to ease the numbering scheme.

A number of mansions have been marked with asterisks (*). These names have been created randomly and may need checking for more authentic names.

The map for the First Age depicts all the places of the First Age until the War of Wrath. The later maps assume the situation as it was at the precise date.

Timeline

This time line uses two ways of measuring time in the First Age: From the founding of Valinor until the rising of the sun⁴, 'Valian Years' are used. These are synonymous in length with the 'Years of the Trees' (YT). It is not entirely clear and without doubt how these two methods (Valian/Tree Years and Sun Years) of reckoning should be synchronised, but the most comprehensive and best-documented version equates one 'Valian/Tree Year' with 9.582 'Years of the Sun'.

The 'Years of the Trees' began with the foundation of Valinor and the growing of the Two

Trees Telperion and Laurelin. They lasted until the year 1500 when the sun and moon were created and rose into the heavens. Thus, this part of the First Age lasted about 14,373 Years of the Sun.⁵ Anyone interested in more details of the Valian Years and the count of time in their term should have a look at the HoMe 10. The 'Year of the Sun' column has negative values for the first entries. This is a hypothetical value that is calculated backward from the rising of the sun based on the above mentioned context between both reckonings.

The timing of the awakening of the Khazâd is no easy task and we have to use a lot of guesswork here. At least Tolkien provides us with a few hints from which to start:

[Year of the Trees] 1250. §19. In this year the Norn-folk came first over the mountains into Beleriand. This people the Noldor after named the Naugrim, whom some Men call Dwarves. Their most ancient dwellings were far to the East, but they had delved for themselves great halls and mansions, after the manner of their kind, on the east-side of Eryd Luin, north and south of Mount Dolmed, in those places which the Eldar named Belegost and Nogrod (Gabilgathol and Tumunzahar). Thence they now came forth and made themselves known to the Elves; and the Elves were amazed, for they had deemed themselves to be the only living things in Middle-earth that spoke with words or wrought with hands; and that all others were beasts and birds only.

— *HoMe 11. The Grey Annals*

The passage above implies that in the year 1250 the tribes of the Ered Luin had already established their cities after migrating southwards from their birthplace. This means that they must have multiplied to such an extent that they were able to build considerable mansions (Nogrod and Belegost) and subsequently felt secure enough to venture forth and contact the Sindar. Since the Quendi awoke in the year 1050, there are only 200 Years of the Trees left for the Awakening of the Naugrim. Taking into account the problems mentioned above (increasing numbers and establishing "cities"), the Awakening of the Naugrim should not be placed too long after that of the Quendi. We face another problem in the Battle of the Powers: This titanic clash between the forces of Melkor and the Valar was fought primarily in the North, the region of the Dwarves' awakening. Surely Aulë must have taken precautions that his Children were either

securely sheltered or placed in regions where the battle was less violent (perhaps inspired subconsciously by Eru in his choice for these places?).

However, Tolkien writes in a note, that the Dwarves had been in Beleriand before the Eldar came there:

Indeed it was one of their [the Dwarves'] grievances against the Eldar that they had hunted and slain their lesser kin [the Petty-dwarves], who had settled in Beleriand before the Elves came there.
— *HoMe 11. Quendi and Eldar*

In any case, in my opinion it is unlikely that the Naugrim awoke from the slumber before the Battle of the Powers was won. Since Melkor was led to captivity in Valinor in the year 1100, I assume this year a convenient date for the awakening of the Khazâd. Of course this leaves only very little time for a significant multiplication of the Khazâd and the building of mansions, but in my opinion leaves these events possible.

Major events for all the houses are mentioned, but the focus of the time line are still those events connected to the Dwarves of the Westlands (Durin's, Linnar's and Üri's people respectively).

The following abbreviations are used:

YT — the "Years of the Trees" in the First Age
YS — the "Years of the Sun" in the First Age
S.A. — Second Age
T.A. — Third Age
F.A. — Fourth Age

First Age

Y.T.	Y.S.	Event
1100	-3833	Awakening of Durin (1st house).
	-3832	Awakening of Linnar and Üri (2nd and 3rd house).
	-3830	Awakening of Var and Vigdís (6th and 7th house).
	-3824	Awakening of Sindri and Thulin (4th and 5th house).
1106	-3775	The Bond of Blood and the ordering of the houses.
1108	-3756	Durin comes to Kheled-zarâm and founds Khazad-dûm.
1110	-3737	Linnar and Üri wander south and found the twin cities of Belegost and Nogrod.
	-3732	The ancestors of the Petty-dwarves are expelled from the mansions in the Ered Luin and begin to wander in Beleriand.
1111	-3727	Gamil-nâla founded by Sindri.
1112	-3718	Kibil-tarag founded by Thulin.
1115	-3689	The march of the Eldar reaches Beleriand.

Y.T.	Y.S.	Event
	-3685	Nargubraz founded by Var.
1116	-3679	Baraz-lagil founded by Vigdís.
1134	-3507	Death of Linnar.
	-3503	Death of Sindri.
1135	-3497	Death of Var.
	-3492	Death of Vigdís and Thulin.
1136	-3488	Death of Úri.
1141	-3440	Foundation of Nulukizzdîn (later called Nargothrond) by the Petty-dwarves.
1152	-3335	Elwë awakes from his trance. He gathers the Sindar and becomes the king of Beleriand and is subsequently called Thingol.
1164	-3220	The Sindar are first attacked by the Petty-dwarves; always from ambush. They hunt them, mistaking them for vicious animals or creatures of Melkor.
1171	-3152	
1181	-3056	Death of Durin I. "the Deathless".
1220	-2683	Founding of Garaz-khamil.
1250	-2396	First contact between the Sindar and Úri's and Linnar's people. Grievances concerning the Petty-dwarves are set aside.
1289	-2022	Daeron first devises his runes. They are later eagerly adopted by the Dwarves for carvings in stone.
1300	-1916	Melian counsels Thingol to build a fortress against the looming threat from the remnants of Melkor's realm. Excavation of Menegroth is begun with the aid of Linnar's people.
1308	-1840	Telchar is born in Nogrod.
1310	-1821	The building of Menegroth is finished.
1311	-1811	Baruzdazar founded by the folk of Vigdís.
1318	-1744	Linnar's and Úri's people are troubled again by creatures bred by Melkor that multiply again. They take counsel with Thingol.
1320	-1725	Thingol is arming his realm because of the threat of Melkor's creatures. Úri's and Linnar's people teach the Sindar about crafting weapons and armour.
1330	-1629	Thingol drives off Melkor's creatures and Beleriand has peace again.
1337	-1562	Telchar dies.
1350	-1437	Denethor comes to Beleriand. He and his folk settle in Ossiriant. Beginning of the Golden Age of Beleriand with bliss and peace.
1369	-1255	The Petty-dwarves abandon Nulukizzdîn.
1371	-1236	Ruzandum/Amon Rûdh founded.
1377	-1179	Daeron improves his runes considerably; now called Cirth.
1450	-479	The Petty-dwarves found Amon Rûdh as their last mansion in Beleriand.
1495	-48	Melkor/Morgoth returns to Middle-earth. He begins the re-building of Angband and the breeding of foul things. End of the Golden Age of Beleriand.
1497	-29	First assault of Morgoth upon Beleriand. His eastern army is utterly defeated by Thingol and Denethor. The rescapes are waylaid and routed by Linnar's and Úri's people.
1500	1	Rising of the Sun, awakening of men in Hildórien.

Y.T.	Y.S.	Event
	52	Finrod begins the building of Nargothrond in the abandoned halls of Nulukizzdîn.
150		Úri's and Linnar's people first encounter the Noldor (Caranthir's people). Relations are cool, but they make alliance in the face of the common enemy. The Naugrim learn much craft from the Noldor.
468		The Union of Maedhros is being formed. Úri's and Linnar's people join it both with troops and supplies of weapons and armour.
473		Nirnaeth Arnoediad. The Dwarves of Belegost win renown by holding the rearguard. Azaghâh, the lord of Linnar's people is killed by Glaurung after wounding the great dragon.
489		Ruzandum/Amon Rûdh abandoned.
502		Thingol commissions the insertion of the Silmaril into the Nauglamír. Quarrel of Nogrod's smiths with Thingol who is slain.
503		The host of Nogrod sacks Menegroth. On the return the host is destroyed by an army led by Beren at Sam Athrad. The lord of Úri's people is killed. Linnar's people are dismayed by the ruthlessness of the Nogrodians.
529		Gundabad is taken by Morgoth's Orcs in an attempt to secure his southeastern flank for further campaigns after the final defeat of the Eldar and Edain.
560		Establishment of Narukgindin/Cameth Brin in Eriador by Ibûn's Petty-dwarves.
590		End of the War of Wrath. Morgoth is defeated and Angband broken. Most of Beleriand begins to sink beneath the waves of the Belegaer.



Second Age

Year	Event
36-45	Many of Linnar's and Úri's people leave their old cities which have been shattered beyond repair by the War of Wrath. This exodus swells Durin's people in Khazad-dûm whose craft and wealth is increased by the new arrivals.
40	Second Union of the Khazâd convoked. Gundabad retaken from the Orcs. Alliance of Dwarves and Northmen founded in Rhovanion.
72	Barukkhizdîn founded in the Iron Hills.
120	Thakalgund founded by Durin's people in the Ered Mithrin.
724	Mithril discovered in Khazad-dûm.
750	Noldorin realm of Eregion on the western side of Khazad-dûm founded.
1020	Founding of Narindazdûm by Var's people.
1196	Kharukthalad founded by the folk of Vigdís.
1200-1550	Sauron in Eregion; crafting of the Rings of Power (the Nine and the Seven)
1600	Sauron finishes his Ruling Ring. Celebrimbor discovers the plot of Sauron to enslave the Eldar. He seeks Galadriel's counsel.
1693	Durin III. receives the First of the Seven from Celebrimbor and is asked to keep it in his and his heirs' care. The Dwarf-king agrees and takes Celebrimbor's counsel not to use his Ring as long as Sauron holds the One.
1699	Gundabad taken by Orcs. End of the Dwarf-Northman alliance in Wilderland.
1700	Narukgindin/Cameth Brin abandoned in the wake of the war in Eriador.
1701	Sauron defeated in the War with the Elves and driven out of Eriador. He has gained possession of the remaining of the Seven and all of the Nine however.
1734	Tharâg/Bar-en-Ibûn founded in the Rast Vorn.
1901	Durin III. dies.
1932	Third Union of the Khazâd. Gundabad retaken.
c.	Sauron bestows the remaining six of the Seven to the remaining Dwarven kings.
2100-2150	2324 Beginning of the feud between Var's and Vigdís's people.
2772	Gindabaz founded by Thrór in Dunland.
2797	Sindri's people expel their king and other Dwarves who side with Sauron. These exiles found Nurunkhizdîn.
2911	Linnar's people found Barazbizar (Carn Dûm) in later Angmar.
2979	Foundation of Baruk-zigil/Mount Gram by Linnar's people.
3113	Felbuzad founded by the folk of Vigdís.
3400	All of Var's and many of Sindri's people seduced into open alliance with Mordor. Abandonment of Garaz-khamil by Var's people.
3434	Dwarves fight (on both sides) at Dagorlad. Only few fight on Sauron's behalf however.

Third Age

Year	Event
1-40	Abandonment of Gamil-nála by Sindri's people.
13	Sigil-Nára founded as the new primary mansion of Sindri's people.
58	An unknown evil befalls Nurunkhizdín, and news of the renegades ceases. Sindri's ring passes out of all knowledge.
280	Tharâg/Bar-en-Ibûn is deserted when the last of its inhabitants die.
1280	Felbuzad deserted by the folk of Vigdís.
1289	Scatha the Dragon sacks Makalkukhizdín.
1302	Gundabad taken by Orcs under the command of the Witch-king.
1305	Baruk-zigil/Carn Dûm taken by the Witch-king's forces.
1307	Witch-king occupies Angmar and captures Barazbizar. Linnar's ring comes into Sauron's possession.
1480	Buzdûm-Mazar abandoned by Linnar's people.
c. 1650	The Dragon wars begin.
1660	Feud between the peoples of Var and Vigdís formally set aside.
1712	Thulin's ring and heir devoured by a worm. Loss of Kibil-tarag to the dragons. Legacy of the Dragonslayers born.
1720	Buzan founded by Thulin's folk.
1722	Akgundîm occupied by a dragon.
1723	Sigil-nára attacked and occupied by a great worm.
1729	Fourth Union of the Khazâd. The advance of the worms is halted, though both Kibil-tarag and Akgundîm remain lost.
1852	Baruzdazar falls to the dragons.
1855	Baruzkhizdín falls to the dragons.
1871	Narindazdûm sacked by a dragon.
1873	Fifth Union of the Khazâd. Further progress of the worms is halted again, but no territory can be won back.
1981	The Balrog conquers Moria. Durin's people go into exile.
1999	Thráin I. founds Erebor
c. 2000	Fram the Northman slays Scatha but falls victim to Dwarf-malice.
2063	Sauron flees Dol Guldur into the East, where he takes refuge at Nargubraz. War with Vigdís's people erupts again.
2460	Saruman helps Var and Vigdís's people to expel Sauron from Nargubraz. The feud between the two houses set right once and for all.
c. 2480	Sauron begins to colonise the upper levels of Moria with his minions.
2480	Khalarazûm is founded by the Axes of Nargubraz in the Red Mountains.
c. 2570	Time of Afflictions begins for Durin's people. Dragons capture the Dwarf holds of the Grey Mountains.
2589	Dáin I. and Frór slain by Skell. Kúri - lord of Úri's people - perishes while holding the Pass of Nuril-lagil in a heroic rearguard action.
2590	Thrór returns to Erebor. Grór goes to the settlements of the Iron Hills.
c. 2600	Golden Age of Erebor begins. Dale founded.
2614	War mansion of Mablád-dûm founded.
2675	Khalarazûm closed for the first time.
2705	Akhuzdah as a war mansion founded by the Axes of Nargubraz.

Year Event

2770	Smaug desolates Erebor and Dale.
2772	Gindabaz founded by Thrór in Dunland.
2778	Thrór and Thráin II. settle in Dunland. Gindabaz founded.
2790	Thrór slain by Azog.
2793	Sixth Union of the Khazâd. War of the Dwarves and Orcs begins.
2795	Gundabad retaken by the Union.
2799	Battle of Dimrill Dale (Nanduhirion). Dáin Ironfoot becomes Lord of the Iron Hills.
2800	Narad-dûm founded by the Axes of Nargubraz.
2801	Thráin II. abandons Gundabad and settles in the Blue Mountains.
2802	Second occupation of Khalarazûm by the Axes of Nargubraz.
2810	Azelanduzur founded by Thorin II. in the Blue Mountains.
2815	Gindabaz abandoned by Thorin II.
2841	Thráin II. sets out to reclaim Erebor. His party is shadowed and harassed by Sauron's minions.
2842	Orcs under Bolg retake Gundabad. Akhuzdah closed by the Axes of Nargubraz.
2845	Thráin II. captured in Mirkwood and taken to Dol Guldur. Sauron recovers the last of the Seven from him.
2850	Gandalf discovers Thráin II. in Dol Guldur and obtains the map and key to Erebor before the Dwarf dies. Naragul founded by the Axes of Nargubraz.
2905	Azagarbhun founded as a war-mansion by the Axes of Nargubraz.
2915	Narad-dûm abandoned by the Axes of Nargubraz.
2941	Quest of Erebor. Battle of Five Armies. Dáin II. becomes King under the Mountain.
2989	Balin attempts to re-colonise Moria.
3005	Azagarbhun closed by the Axes of Nargubraz.
3018	The War of the Ring begins.
3020	Khalarazûm abandoned the second time. Naragul and Mablád-dûm left by the Axes of Nargubraz.

Fourth Age

Year Event

1	Nargubraz re-occupied by Var's people.
2	Barukhizdín re-taken from the dragons.
7	Aglarond founded by Gimli.
10	Felbuzad re-opened on a modest scale.
23	Akgundîm re-taken from the worms.
31	Námagalûz founded by Var's people.
61	Khalarazûm re-opened again for trading. It remains a temporary outpost though, since no families dwell there.
70	Gundabad re-taken from the Orcs in a great union of the Free Peoples of the West.

Listing and short descriptions of mansions

The mansions are listed in the same manner as in the table above, i.e. according to the order of the Dwarven houses. The numbers in parenthesis refer to the mansion's number in the table above in reference to the houses'

place of awakening. The number's colour refers to the same colour in the maps.

Durin's people

Gundabad/Gunduzbad (1)

The Place of Awakening for Durin. Most of its history it is inhabited by his house. It is occupied by Orcs only briefly in the early and around the middle of the Second Age and since the beginning of the second millennium of the Third Age. Its status as the birthplace of the most ancient revered "founding father" makes it a special place for all Naugrim. For instance, it was the place of many and regular diplomatic meetings between embassies of all the seven houses.

The term 'Gunduzbad' is the original Dwarven name, but time has altered the spelling (in the Dwarven neighbours' tongues), so that 'Gundabad' prevailed as the most widely used form.

During its eventful history, it changed hands several times. It was first taken by Morgoth's Orcs In the Year of the Sun 529. In S.A. 40 the Second Union of the Khazâd re-took the ancient halls. In the wake of the War of the Elves with Sauron, Gundabad is again taken by the Orcs in S.A. 1699 though. It took 133 years until the Third Union of the Khazâd was able to expel them again. In the year 1302 of the Third Age, the future Witch-king conquered the ancient Dwarven citadel in his quest to found a realm in the North. The Dwarves are unable to dislodge him again and it is only during the Sixth Union of the Khazâd that Gundabad again comes under Dwarfish rule in T.A. 2795. However, since the strength of the Dwarves is insufficient, it is deserted by Durin's people in T.A. 2802. Forty years later the Orcs under Bolg are able to breach the protective measures that the dwarves used to secure Gundabad and another era of Orcish rule begins. It is during Elessar's reign, in F.A. 89, that a union of Durin's house (including the remnants of Linnar's and Úri's houses), the Elves and Dúnedain finally expels the Orcs from this site for good.

Khazad-dûm/Moria (2)

There is no need to describe this most famous Dwarven dwelling in much detail here. Both Tolkien's books as well as the RPG interpretations of ICE and Decipher offer ample descriptions and accounts of its history.

Erebor (3)

This mansion does not require much by way of an introduction owing to being featured in *The Lord of the Rings* and especially *The Hobbit*. Though adjacent to the territory of the Long-

beards (see quote on page 12), it was not settled as a Dwarven mansion until T.A. 1999 when Thráin I. founded the Kingdom under the Mountain. From then, it was continually inhabited until T.A. 2770 when Smaug took it as his own. After the death of Smaug in T.A. 2941 again it once became the main mansion of Durin's folk.

Thakalgund (4)

This settlement is the primary Dwarven mansion in the Iron Hills. It was founded in S.A. 120 after the foundation of Barukkhizdín to secure communication between the Misty Mountains and the Iron Hills. During the time when the Longbeards were marking their claims in the mountain ranges in the vicinity of Gundabad. Throughout the remainder of the First, Second and much of the Third Age it remained an important but modest settlement in size. It was only after T.A. 2210 when Thorin I. relocated his throne to Thakalgund, that a massive expansion took place, transforming the small old dwelling into a veritable and splendid mansion. It was given up in T.A. 2589 when the dragons were starting to press against Durin's people harder and harder.

A controversy remains however. In the Appendix A of *The Lord of the Rings*, Tolkien tells us that the Grey Mountains were explored little in the late Third Age:

But Thorin I (d. T.A. 2289) his son removed and went into the far North to the Grey Mountains, where most of Durin's folk were now gathering; for those mountains were rich and little explored.
— *The Lord of the Rings*.
Appendix A

On the other hand the *HoMe 12* tells us:

They [the Longbeards] regarded the Iron Hills, the Ered Mithrin, and the east dales of the Misty Mountains as their own land [in the early Second Age].
— *HoMe12. Of Dwarves and Men*

In my opinion these seemingly contradictory passages can be reconciled. The Grey Mountains were *claimed* by Durin's People and explored in a limited area very early, but their primary value was their strategic location between the Iron Hills and the Hithaeglin (see the quote at the beginning of the chapter about Durin's people). Thus they served as a relay and a link between the two areas: The Iron Hills as the primary source of iron ore and the Misty Mountains as the tribe's population centre. In these times, the resources of

Durin's tribe were bound in the Iron Hills, Gundabad and Khazad-dûm with unearthing vast riches; reducing the grey Mountains to a minor status with very limited resources. It was only much later in the Third Age, when the Misty Mountains were lost for the Longbeards, that they considered a more thorough exploration of this neglected area and were pleased by the resource that they found.

In addition, we might use a combination of two genuine Tolkien sources as a further explanation: First, the quote above says that the Grey Mountains were only **little** explored. This leaves room for a bit of exploration that brought forth satisfying results. This can easily be achieved by adding Thakalgund as an early small colony that explored its surroundings a bit, but never much: The abundance of wealth found elsewhere in those happy ancient days made the Ered Mithrin a low-priority area for Durin's folk (at least in terms of extensive mining). With the relocation of the tribe after their expulsion from Khazad-dûm, the Grey Mountains came into the focus of its folk. The relative long time since the appearance of the Balrog and the final abandonment of the place by the Dwarves suggests some kind of organized evacuation. This is likely to include precious items and minerals/metals too (of course in such an extent that was feasible to move around). Thus Durin's folk was perhaps not driven out from Moria in poverty. Here comes the second original source into play:

The Ring Of Power still possessed by the heir of Durin might have been used to compensate the lost treasures by locating and mining new ones. Usage of the Ring is only efficient when its owner already has riches; the Ring needing "gold to breed gold" in Thrór's words. Fortunately for the Dwarves, their remaining funds were great enough to effectively use the Ring. Now the Grey Mountains suddenly became very important: Their apparent wealth of minerals was a tempting target for re-gaining wealth lost in Khazad-dûm and thus Durin's heir decided to move his seat here.

Barukkhizdín (5)

This is the Longbeards' primary mansion in the Iron Hills. It was founded early in the Second Age after the influx of immigrants from Nogrod and Belegost both swelled the tribes' numbers and increased its skill. The increase in population led to an era of expansion for the Dwarves of Durin. In the course of this expansion, Barukkhizdín was founded in S.A. 72.

Gindabaz (6)

Founded in T.A. 2772 by Thrór after Smaug occupied Erebor. Finally abandoned by Thorin

in T.A. 2815.

Azelanduzur (7)

Founded by Thráin II. in T.A. 2810. It was occupied into the Fourth Age, serving as a base for Durin's people in the west of Eriador.

Aglarond (8)

This settlement was founded by Gimli early in the Fourth Age (year 7). It remained the outpost of Durin's Folk within the Reunited Kingdom for many years thereafter.

Linnar's and Úri's Peoples

Buzdûm-Mazar (1)

The awakening place of Linnar and Úri and consequently sacred to both tribes for many millennia. After the ruin of Belegost and Nogrod, Linnar's heir built new halls directly adjacent to the old ones. This new part of the mansion then served as his residence for a long time. In the year 2900 of the Second Age, the lord of Linnar's people left it for the new mansion at Barazbizar. Buzdûm-Mazar remained occupied. It was not until T.A. 1480 that the mansion was finally abandoned. The remaining population resettled to Khazad-dûm. This was also the end for Linnar's people as an independent house. From then on, their fate was intertwined with that of Durin's people.

The abandoned halls of this mansion are the 'old dwarf-mines' where Arvedui, last king of Arthedain, took refuge after his flight before Angmar's victory in T.A. 1974:

'For a while Arvedui hid in the tunnels of the old dwarf-mines near the far end of the Mountains, but he was driven at last by hunger to seek the help of the Lossoth, the Snowmen of Forochel.'
— *LotR. Appendix A*

It is likely that the Dwarves protected the abandoned halls from unwanted intruders through several means. Therefore Arvedui's company probably is therefore likely to have only seen the upper, meagre, halls.

Tumunzahar/Nogrod (3)

This city is well-known from *The Silmarillion*. It was founded in YT 1110. It was deserted by the Naugrim following its ruin in the sinking of Beleriand.

Kalbarazûd/Tumnogoth Iaur (4)

This mansion was founded in S.A. 28 by the king of Úri's folk after the ruin of Nogrod in the War of Wrath. It was continually occupied until T.A. 2610 when Úri's line failed and its last inhabitants attached themselves to the mansions of the Longbeards (though keeping

themselves as a house apart there).

Gabilgathol/Belegost (2)

Being a sister city to Tumunzahar/Nogrod, both its foundation date and the time of its ruin are the same as that of the great mansion of Úri's folk.

Barazbizar/Carn Dûm (5)

This hold of Linnar's folk was founded in S.A. 2911. Soon thereafter, it became the house's primary mansion and flourished into a reminiscence of lost Nogrod. Made strong and rich by the Ring of Power granted to Linnar's folk by Sauron, the Broadbeams prospered here and created great works. Barazbizar was lost in T.A. 1307 to the forces of the Witch-king in his quest to found his realm (which was later called 'Angmar').

Normally the Hithaeglr were regarded as Longbeard territory by Durin's house, but they came to an agreement with Linnar's folk that the latter might settle and build on the two northeastern spurs if they confined their activities to these regions alone. Thereafter, this agreement was mostly respected by both sides and hostilities on these issues occurred only occasionally.

Baruk-zigil/Mount Gram (10)

This was the second mansion of Linnar's folk in the Misty Mountains. It was their primary settlement in the southern spur of what would be later called the mountains of Angmar. Founded in S.A. 2979, it continued to be inhabited by the Naugrim until T.A. 1305 when it fell to the invading forces of the Witch-king. It's population had been considerably reduced by this time however and there was no serious hope of resistance. The survivors fled to Barazbizar where they swelled the numbers of the defenders.

Nulukkizdîn/Nargothrond (6)

This ancient site of the Petty-dwarves was founded early in the First Age in the Year of the Trees 1141. In YT 1369, the halls were abandoned by the Petty-dwarves; most likely because of population decline. Much later, 60 years after the rising of the sun, it was occupied by Finrod Felagund and enlarged into the famous underground city-fortress of Nargothrond.

Ruzandum/Amon Rûdh (7)

This was the last known refuge of the Belegian Petty-dwarves. Its fate is told in the legends of the Children of Húrin. It was officially built in YT 1371 and abandoned in YS 489 when it was sacked by Orcs. The last survivor – Mîm – then left for ruined Nargothrond.

Narukgindîn/Cameth Brin (8)

This last great mansion of the Petty-dwarves was founded by Ibûn in YS 560 after decade-long wanderings in the wilds of Middle-earth. It was occupied by the last remnants of this people until S.A. 1700 when it was sacked during Sauron's invasion of Eriador and its last inhabitants were either killed or driven away. The few remaining survivors re-located to the Rast Vorn peninsula where they founded the last Petty-Dwarven community in the West-lands.

Tharâg/Bar-en-Ibûn (9)

This last Petty-Dwarven refuge was founded in S.A. 1734 after the abandonment of Narukgindîn. It continued to serve the last Petty-dwarves as a humble home until T.A. 280 when its last inhabitants died and with them the legacy of the Petty-dwarves.

Thulin's and Sindri's Peoples

Akgundîm (1)

This is the place of awakening of Thulin's and Sindri's peoples (the 4th and 5th houses). It continued to be inhabited until T.A. 1765 when it fell in the dragon wars. It was cleansed of the occupying worm in F.A. 23.

Gamil-nâla (3)

This first and greatest mansion of Sindri's folk was founded in YT 1111. After the end of the First Age its fortunes already began to dwindle, since its strategic position which had allowed it to exact heavy tribute from the men crossing the area began to fail due to the slow recession of the Sea of Helcar. Though not destroyed outright, its many mines failed and with them the source of its wealth. With this came an ever-increasing evil reputation. Consequently, it was gradually abandoned over the first four decades of the Third Age.

Sigal-Nâra (4)

This, the second home of Sindri's folk was founded in T.A. 13 and finally replaced Gamil-nâla as the tribe's principal home. It served in this role until T.A. 1723 when Sindri's people were driven from it during the dragon wars.

Nurunkhizdîn (5)

This mansion was founded by the exiled king of Sindri's people in S.A. 2797, when the majority of the house would not have any more dealings with him and his followers due to the latter's open friendship with Sauron. It continued to serve in the royal seat (though not the population centre) of Sindri's people until T.A. 58 when all contact with the mansion was lost. The remainder of the house did not investigate why and Nurunkhizdîn passed

into oblivion.

Kibil-tarag (2)

This primary mansion of Thulin's people was founded in YT 1112 by Thulin. It was habited by his house until T.A. 1712 when it fell during the dragon wars.

Buzan (6)

This modest mansion was a temporary refuge to Thulin's tribe after its expulsion from Kibil-tarag and was founded in T.A. 1720. It is not a real 'mansion', but a trading post with the outside world and a resupply opportunity for the scattered families. Thus it is staffed with only a small number of people (compared to a real mansion). This "garrison" is rotated regularly between all the families of the tribe, so that every single clan has the opportunity of pursuing the ultimate goal of Thulins house: hunting down dragons. Buzan remained occupied until the Fourth Age. It is intentionally devoid of any typical Dwarven riches. It stocks only simple supplies, no gold or other treasures that a dragon might covet which the Dwarves hope may prevent the worms from becoming interested in Buzan .

Var's and Vigdis's peoples

Baruzkhizdîn (1)

This place saw the awakening of the fathers of the 6th and 7th tribes (Vâr and Vigdis respectively). It served as their primary place of reverence throughout the ages until T.A. 1855 when it was sacked by the worms in the dragon-wars. In F.A. 2 it was re-taken from the dragons.

Nargubraz (2)

The ancestral home of Var's people, Nargubraz was founded in YT 1115 and stood fast and unconquered from the outside right into the Fourth Age. After T.A. 2460 when the Necromancer was expelled from its halls, Var's house willingly left their home, vowing only to return after Sauron had been defeated and the tribe's shame being redeemed. After Sauron's fall, Var's people officially re-located their royal home to Nargubraz in the first year of the Fourth Age.

Narindazdûm (4)

This mansion was built in S.A. 1020 in the central mountains of Middle-earth; near Sindri's mansion of Gamil-nâla. It served as a trading outpost as well as strengthening ties with Sindri's people. At times (especially after the distribution of the Rings), Var's people were helped by Sindri's house in its feud with Vigdis' tribe. Here Narindazdûm served as the perfect link. Since the beginning of the Third

Age, its wealth and mines began to decline. It was finally sacked and occupied by the dragons in T.A. 1871; the last dwarf-hold to be lost to the worms during the dragon-wars.

Garaz-khamil (5)

This early settlement was founded in YT 1220. Its rich mines served Var's people well until they were flooded and ruined after the Akallabêth flooded much of these. Consequently, Garaz-khamil was gradually abandoned until S.A. 3400, when the last Dwarves left.

Khalarazûm (9)

One of the war-mansions used by the Axes of Nargubraz in their self-imposed revenge against Sauron. It was founded in T.A. 2480 and occupied until T.A. 2675. A second occupation took place from 2802 until 3020. In the Fourth Age it was again opened as a trading outpost in the year 61.

Námagalûz (15)

This mansion of Var's people was founded relatively close to the old place of Narindazdûm. Even though the dragon occupying it had been killed by a Dragonslayer in T.A. 2954, the memories of the sack and occupation of Narindazdûm together with their memories of their past questionable deeds led Var's people to the establishment of this new mansion rather than moving back into the old halls. In addition, the location of Námagalûz is strategically ideal to establish contacts with the West through its location on a river that leads to the Sea of Rhûn. The mansion was founded in Fourth Age 31. Though modest in size (compared to Nargubraz), it served Var's people well in this period.

Narad-dûm (10)

This war-mansion in the Yellow Mountains served for the Axes of Nargubraz from T.A. 2800 to 2915. After that, it was sealed and not re-opened again.

Naragul (11)

This war-mansion in the uttermost southwest of Middle-earth was home to a company of the Axes of Nargubraz from T.A. 2850 to 3020. Thereafter it was sealed and left alone.

Akhuzdah (12)

Another war-mansion of the Axes of Nargubraz. These halls were opened in T.A. 2705 and closed in 2842.

Azagarbhun (13)

This war-mansion served as a link between the war-mansions in the south as well as a base for operations in central Middle-earth. It was occupied by the warriors of Var's people from

T.A. 2905 to 3005.

Mablad-dûm (14)

This war-mansion in the central Yellow Mountains was the main base of operations in this area. It was opened in T.A. 2614 and continually occupied until T.A. 3020.

Baraz-lagil (3)

The ancestral home of Vigdís' folk was founded in YT 1116. It remained occupied by his folk until the Fourth Age; the only ancestral mansion in which its founding tribe was able to remain undisturbed.

Baruzdazar (6)

This mansion of Vigdís's people was founded in YT 1311 in the First Age. The profitable and rich colony thrived until it fell in T.A. 1852 during the dragon wars.

Kharukthalad (7)

This colony of Vigdís's people was founded in S.A. 1196 in the valley were later a branch of the Talathrant would flow. The richness of the surrounding hills and (later) the access for trade by river made this mansion a very successful one. It continued to be habited into the Fourth Age.

Felbuzad (8)

This final settlement of Vigdís's people was founded in S.A. 3113 and served as the principal point of contact with the men of the eastern plains. It was abandoned in T.A. 1280 due to growing hostility in this Sauron-dominated area. In the year 10 of the Fourth Age it was re-opened with a modest number of people and again served its ancient purpose.

Sources

The following books/publications were particularly useful when researching this essay. The most important are of course Tolkien's books and the various official RPG publications, but fan-made material as well as auxiliary software was helpful as well.

Colburn, R. Mark et al. - *Lords of Middle-earth Vol. III – Hobbits, Ents, Orcs & Trolls*. Iron Crown Enterprises 1989

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Tolkien, J.R.R. (edited by C. Tolkien) - *Morgoth's Ring: The History of Middle-earth, Volume 10*. HarperCollinsPublishers 1994

Tolkien, J.R.R. (edited by C. Tolkien) – *The War of the Jewels: The History of Middle-earth, Volume 11*. HarperCollinsPublishers 1994

Tolkien, J.R.R. (edited by C. Tolkien) – *The Peoples of Middle-earth: The History of Middle-earth, Volume 12*. HarperCollinsPublishers 1996

In the Yahoo fan-sourcebooks group you can find the comparison between the ICE and Decipher interpretations of the Dwarves. The group can be accessed at:

<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules/>

The random names from a number of the mansions were created with the help of the *Everchanging Book of Names (EboN)* software. You can find this fine roleplaying aid at:

<http://ebon.pyorre.net/>

Notes

¹ <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>

² Which is not surprising, since Tolkien did not even detail the 'East' in any way beyond vague sketches.

³ This is of course based on the sole example of the Dwarves of Nogrod and Belegost.

⁴ The First Age is **not** only the time from the rising of the sun and moon, but also the years before these events. See the *HoMe 10* for more details of the chronology of events of the earlier First Age.

⁵ Before that, the Valian Years from the entry of the Valar into Arda until their retreat to Aman following the destruction of Almaren numbered 3500. The total span of the First Age from the very beginning until the death of the Two Trees was therefore 5000 Valian Years (equates to 33,537 Years of the Sun). To this come the 590 years after the rising of the sun, bringing the whole First Age to the equivalent of 34,127 Years of the Sun.

A Dwarven Runic Cryptogramm

by Neville Percy © 2008

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You might encounter this small piece of information anywhere in the abandoned abandoned halls of Khazad-dûm. It is the key to further adventure and treasures and may be placed in any place convenient for your campaign.

It is intended as a sidekick within an ongoing campaign rather a campaign itself (though you might devise the bigger story behind this of course to make it a campaign in its own right).

The runes on the image below read as follows:

:The•sheeld•wall•ov•bavern:the
 ey•fell•in•khazadûm•that•the
 •trezhure•entrusted•to•theyr•
 house•shud•remaan•to•the•khaz
 ad•eeven•az•soo•much•else•wo
 z•must•needz•hidden•seekret•a
 nd•saafe:

The Shield Wall of Bavern. They fell in Khazad-dûm that the treasure entrusted to their house should remain to the Khazâd even as so much else was must needs hidden secret and safe.

The inscription purports to be a memorial to the memory of the retainers of Bavern, a dwarven loremaster of great wisdom who had a somewhat chequered relationship with Durin VI in the years before the coming of Durin's Bane. The inscription implies that they died so that a treasure in the keeping of the house of Bavern should remain in dwarven hands when most of the treasures of Moria were being sealed up in their vaults as the Dwarves fled into exile in Rhovanion.

The inscription itself is of little significance, except to establish the correct context for the true message encrypted in the image of the 'shield wall' of dwarves itself.

In *An Introduction to English Runes*, R. I. Page reproduces archaeological "cryptic rune types found in Bergen", including a row of bearded

faces in which the number of strands in the left half of the beard direct the code-breaker to row 1, 2 or 3 of the futhark or Norse runerows, and the number of strands in the right half give the individual rune within that row.

This cryptogram extends that principle somewhat artificially to the columns in which the runes of the Angerthas Moria are arranged in Appendix F of *The Lord of the Rings*: the left half of the beard gives the column and the right half (with a 'V' strand of beard counting for 5 singles) gives the row.

The beards of the Dwarves in the Shield Wall of Bavern therefore spell out GIMLU-NITÏR, (Khuzdul: "star's kindler"). This phrase could be the command word – "the spell in the tongue of the dwarves" as Gandalf might have called it – for the treasure that this Bavern smuggled out of Moria as such great cost of lives. Or a GM could use the same cryptogram for any puzzle within their own game.

Notes

- ¹ <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/>
- ² Ardalambion: <http://www.uib.no/people/hmohf/khuzdul.htm>





Arda in the Second Age
around the year 1300

THE WORLD THAT IS

Eä:

“Ilúvatar called to them, and said:

*'I know the desire of your minds that what ye have seen should verily be,
not only in your thought, but even as ye yourselves are, and yet other.*

Therefore I say:

Eä! Let these things Be!

*And I will send forth into the Void, the Flame Imperishable,
and it shall be at the heart of the World, and the World shall Be;
and those of you that will may go down into it.'*

*And suddenly the Ainur saw afar off a light, as it were a cloud with a living heart of flame;
and they knew that this was no vision only, but that Ilúvatar had made a new thing:*

Eä, the World that Is.”

--J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Silmarillion*, *Ainulindalë* (The Music of the Ainur).

The Eä RPG system is dedicated to role playing gaming in J.R.R. Tolkien's universe.

Eä d20 is currently well along in it's development with the “Races & Cultures” tome nearing completion. Eä d20 is the adaptation of the Open D20 (D&D 3.5) role-playing gaming system modified to more accurately fit the “feel” of Tolkien's Middle-earth.

Tomes of lore include:

- Races & Cultures (near completion)
- Magic in Middle-earth (core mechanics complete, conversino charts in progress)
 - Destinies & Lore (Classes, Skills, Feats, etc. - in early stages)
 - Creatures & Monsters (Ancalagon through Zigurim) (planned)
- Valar & Maiar (Includes Vala, Maia, Istari, Lords and Characters of Reknown) (planned)

Find details and downloads at: www.earpg.com

Swept off by your feet...

by Thomas Morwinsky © 2008

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"It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out of your door," he [Bilbo] used to say. "You step into the Road, and if you don't keep your feet, there is no knowing where you might be swept off to..."

— *The Lord of the Rings. Book I (A shortcut to mushrooms)*

There are many paths prone to take you somewhere if you are not careful and the internet is certainly among them. Its vast reaches harbour numerous roads and paths – some dangerous and some not – but it also has many havens of lore and respite where the weary traveller or loremaster seeking knowledge may find what he is looking for. In order to ease the navigation, this new column of *Other Minds* wants to give you a quick overview and orientation what might be an interesting Middle-earth RPG-related link.

To each link we give you a short description of its primary purpose and content to give you an overview for better judging its content compared to your needs.

The following list does not claim to be exhaustive or representative. All the content of these pages lies in the responsibility of their operators. They are listed in alphabetical order, so there is no order of preference on our side within this selection. If you find any other sites that may be fitting for this rubric, just drop us a mail, and we will check and (likely) list it.

Chronicles of the North: A board that deals with Decipher's (now defunct) *Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game*. It focuses on several campaigns (hence the name) that might prove inspirational for your own.

<http://rpg.avioc.org/boards/>

Fan-sourcebooks: This Yahoo group (formerly fan-modules) was founded in 2001 after the demise of Other Hands.

<http://games.groups.yahoo.com/group/fan-modules/>

Games Workshop: If you are interested in miniatures made after the movies, then the Games Workshop miniature line (actually tabletop acceseoire) is for you:

<http://www.games-workshop.com/gws/catalog/>

The Hall of Fire: is an excellent resource if you are looking for game-oriented material for Decipher's *Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game* (LotRRPG). They also have a wiki and an extensive link section in their zine themselves.

<http://www.halloffire.org/>

Wiki:

http://wiki.halloffire.org/Main_Page

Lindëfirion: This site has quite a lot of interesting information on several territories of the Northwest. The imagery draws heavily from the movies and movie-inspired products (e.g. miniatures).

<http://wiki.lindefirion.net/>

MERP.COM: The site devoted to roleplaying in Middle-earth (not just ICE's MERP as the title may suggest). It contains a vast vault of useful of information and gaming material.

<http://www.merp.com/>

MERP printing edition reference: A great reference for all the editorial changes and different printings of MERP 1st edition. If you are interested in the various editions of MERP 1st ed., this is for you for sure!

<http://homepage.mac.com/guyf/MERP/PrintingEditionReference.html>

Mithril miniatures: This company has been around in the Middle-earth figurines business since 1988; thus being one of the oldest still in uninterrupted business. They now have a general line (though diminished

in volume compared to earlier times) and an exclusive fellowship one with access to very expensive but well-done miniatures for only this "club". They also have a board which is mostly miniatures-centered but some general Middle-earth related information can be found as well.

<http://www.mithril.ie/>

Forum:

<http://mithrilfigures.proboards19.com/index.cgi>

Notes

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Outer names for the Western Dwarves

by Neville Percy © 2008

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This list of dwarves' outer names is presented as an expansion on the The Hobbit- and The Lord of the Rings-derived (and therefore to many gamers not reusable) names often listed in game books.

Basics

It starts from a review of Norse names, and avoids: (1) those derived from or imitative of Christian, Celtic or Latin names; (2) names too similar to their own modern survivals (e.g. Bjorn, Erik, Olaf); (3) names linking the individual with European places or nations (e.g. –iutr, –gautr, –finn, –dan; the Jute/from Jutland, the Gaut/from Götland), the Finn/from Finland, the Dane, from Denmark); (4) names conspicuously composed of two common elements, such as Aðalsteinn, “Noble stone”. These are common in Old Norse, if not so characteristic as they are of Old English, but none of the Norse names Tolkien used for dwarves were in this style; (5) names using Alf- referring to an elven quality(!); (6) names using Thór-, Frey-, –þórr etc. referring to the gods of northwestern Europe; (7) names referring to wolves (Ulf-, –ulfr) or dragons (Orm-, –ormr) which are consistently evil in M-e; (8) names based on ships and maritime references; (9) names that are too different in style from the simple forms of TH; (10) names using consonant-combinations that are difficult in the English language use to represent the Common Speech, such as Gj-, Gn- J-, Lj-, –kk- Skj- Spj-, Sv-, Thjo-

For the remainder diacreses are mostly simplified to single vowels or the –ái- and –ói- vowel combinations Tolkien did use, and the guttural ON ending –R is omitted.

Usage of the tables is pretty straightforward: You either pick a name of your liking or you roll 1d100 and then 1d4 to generate a male name or 1d100 only to generate a female name.

Rolls 1-50

Roll	Male I	Male II	Male III	Male IV	Female
01	Abbi	Erlend	Hani	Róin	Ádís
02	Afi	Erti	Hár	Róki	Aerin
03	Agi	Evi	Hara	Róki	Áfrith
04	Agnar	Fadi	Harthi	Rónar	Alma
05	Agni	Fari	Hári	Rorik	Arngerth
06	Agwith	Fastar	Harri	Roth	Arnóra
07	Áki	Fasti	Hávar	Rother	Ása
08	Alar	Fathi	Haver	Róthi	Ásný

Roll	Male I	Male II	Male III	Male IV	Female
09	Aldi	Fathir	Hegi	Rúni	Astrith
10	Áli	Fati	Helm	Sandar	Athisla
11	Almar	Feg	Herni	Sarth	Auga
12	Alver	Fegi	Hersir	Scagi	Autha
13	Ambi	Feti	Hervi	Scalli	Bera
14	An	Firir	Hethin	Scarthi	Birla
15	Áni	Flain	Hildir	Sefi	Birna
16	Anki	Flár	Hior	Selvi	Bolla
17	Api	Flóki	Holfi	Sibbi	Borga
18	Ari	Flosi	Holti	Sigar	Busla
19	Arn	Fóli	Hugi	Siggi	Dageith
20	Árni	Forni	Humli	Sindri	Dagný
21	Asar	Forsil	Húni	Sinir	Dalla
22	Asel	Fraki	Hursi	Skáld	Drífa
23	Ási	Frithi	Ígal	Skefil	Dýrfa
24	Áskel	Frosti	Ingi	Skeggi	Eilíf
25	Ásli	Frothi	Ívar	Skithi	Eirný
26	Ásmar	Fugli	Kabbi	Skógi	Embla
27	Ásti	Fúl	Kafli	Skúfi	Erna
28	Aswith	Fuldar	Kál	Skúli	Ethla
29	Ati	Fúlnir	Kani	Skúti	Ethný
30	Atli	Fundin	Kapi	Slóra	Eyfura
31	Aunn	Fúsi	Kári	Slóthi	Eyild
32	Authin	Gadi	Kárni	Snari	Falgerth
33	Autir	Gagar	Kárr	Snerrir	Fasta
34	Aver	Gagi	Karsi	Snorri	Fastný
35	Bagi	Galandi	Kasi	Solgi	Folka
36	Baldí	Galín	Keli	Solvi	Fritha
37	Bali	Galli	Ketil	Staki	Geira
38	Balsi	Galmi	Kilfir	Stáli	Gerth
39	Barki	Galti	Kobbi	Stari	Gilla
40	Barni	Gamal	Kofri	Starr	Ginna
41	Barth	Gamli	Kolli	Stigand	Gísla
42	Basi	Gapi	Kóri	Stóri	Grélath
43	Begi	Garni	Kúsi	Stóthi	Gróa
44	Beli	Garthar	Láfi	Stúrla	Gudda
45	Belir	Gási	Lafsi	Styrmir	Gufa
46	Benir	Geda	Láki	Styrr	Gulla
47	Bersi	Gegnir	Lefi	Súlki	Gynna
48	Bili	Geilir	Lini	Sútari	Gyra
49	Birgir	Geir	Lófi	Syvurr	Gytha
50	Bisi	Gelir	Lothin	Taf	Gythrith

Rolls 51-100

Roll	Male I	Male II	Male III	Male IV	Female
51	Biur	Getir	Magni	Tanni	Halla
52	Blár	Gildi	Máni	Tárr	Hallbera
53	Blási	Gilfir	Már	Tassi	Hálma

Roll	Male I	Male II	Male III	Male IV	Female
54	Blesi	Gili	Miki	Tati	Heith
55	Bodi	Gilir	Morth	Thialfi	Hildiríth
56	Bófi	Gipi	Múli	Thrain	Hithindís
57	Bógi	Girgir	Munán	Thrand	Holma
58	Bói	Gísi	Mundi	Thrassi	Hulda
59	Bóla	Gísli	Nafni	Tindr	Ithun
60	Bóli	Gizur	Nagli	Tiorvi	Jódís
61	Bondi	Glaggi	Naki	Tófi	Jóka
62	Bónði	Glethir	Nani	Tóki	Jólinn
63	Bósi	Glóthi	Narfi	Tóli	Jóra
64	Bóti	Glúm	Nasi	Torfi	Jóreith
65	Bóvi	Gorm	Nefi	Tósti	Káta
66	Bragi	Goti	Nefi	Tóti	Kíla
67	Bredi	Grái	Nem	Trani	Kísla
68	Bresi	Gráni	Nolar	Trausti	Kitta
69	Brísi	Grefi	Obbi	Trion	Kolla
70	Brodi	Grein	Ogur	Tubbi	Leikný
71	Brodir	Grepí	Óli	Túni	Leith
72	Brosa	Gretir	Olver	Tyrvi	Líf
73	Brúni	Grími	Omun	Ubbi	Lúta
74	Brúsi	Grímsi	Ónar	Ubin	Mábil
75	Brynki	Grípi	Onas	Uffi	Maer
76	Bryti	Grís	Öndur	Uggi	Máfa
77	Bugi	Gróm	Ongli	Úlfar	Molda
78	Buki	Grubbi	Orlog	Uli	Mungerth
79	Buldi	Grúmi	Ormi	Unar	Nauma
80	Bur	Gubi	Orn	Unir	Óleif
81	Burir	Gufi	Orri	Unni	Olrún
82	Bursti	Gulli	Ótta	Vafri	Refna
83	Butni	Gumi	Óttar	Valdi	Ríúpa
84	Dali	Gunar	Ozur	Váli	Róta
85	Dari	Gurthir	Ragi	Vani	Rótha
86	Dómari	Gusi	Ragni	Varin	Sefa
87	Dómi	Guthi	Randi	Varr	Signý
88	Dóti	Guti	Rangi	Vathi	Sítha
89	Dreng	Gutir	Rani	Vati	Thruthi
90	Drosbo	Habi	Ranver	Vékell	Thyra
91	Dúfa	Hadi	Rathi	Veni	Tobba
92	Dúsi	Haki	Refi	Vífi	Tófa
93	Dúthi	Hákon	Reffi	Vífill	Tóka
94	Dýri	Hali	Reinn	Vígi	Tóla
95	Egil	Hali	Reithar	Víkarr	Tonna
96	Einar	Halmi	Rifli	Víli	Tóra
97	Eitri	Halti	Riger	Vithar	Torfa
98	Ekil	Hamall	Ríki	Vithi	Unna
99	Éldi	Hamarr	Rithir	Víti	Uth
100	Endrith	Handi	Róar	Róin	Valka

The Dwarves of different communities (probably the Seven Houses) possessed systems of sign-language that they called *iglishmêk*. They used them

“for secrecy and the exclusion of strangers. . . . The component sign-elements of any such code were often so slight and so swift that they could hardly be detected, still less interpreted by uninitiated onlookers. . . . they could speak with their voices but at the same time by ‘gesture’ convey to their own folk modifications of what was being said. Or they could stand silent considering some proposition, and yet confer amongst themselves meanwhile.”—The War of the Jewels p. 395

Notes

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“Then Ilúvatar said to them: 'Of the theme that I have declared to you, I will now that ye make in harmony together a Great Music. And since I have kindled you with the Flame Imperishable, ye shall show forth your powers in adorning this theme, each with his own thoughts and devices, if he will. But I will sit and hearken, and be glad that through you great beauty has been wakened into song.'”

- Ainulindalë (The Music of the Ainur)

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Bestiary of Middle-earth: The Giant Armoured Moldewarp

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In Middle-earth the mythic, the magical or the monstrous may always be within a day's march. But those who have read a lot of fantasy, and seasoned gamers who've battled any number of different monsters, may think the bestiary of the Free Peoples' foes limited: there are clear details 'only' of orcs and trolls, wolves, spiders, dragons and a smattering of more-or-less undead beings.

At various points Tolkien offered less-than-glimpses of "dark shapes", "dark things", "fell beasts", "great beasts", "shadows" and "strange creatures". Where Tolkien's books were best served by chilling hints, gamers in Middle-earth may wish for other minds to offer more specific details.

Gandalf: "Far, far below the deepest delvings of the Dwarves, the world is gnawed by nameless things. Even Sauron knows them not. They are older than he."
– *The White Rider, LOTR, p. 491*

The evil of Melkor and the blight of his hatred flowed out . . . and beasts became monsters of horn and ivory and dyed the earth with blood
– *Of the Beginning of Days, Silm. p. 41*

Whether once-natural beasts warped by the *Mordo*, the outpouring of Morgoth's own corrupted soul-power into Middle-earth, or whether bred in the pits of Angband, the origin of these monsters is lost in the deeps of time. In the Common Speech they might be described as giant armoured moles, or where the Common Speech is coloured by Northron tongues, moldewarps.²

Where the common mole does have tiny eyes, the eyeless moldewarp is truly blind, and relies entirely on its excellent sense of sound

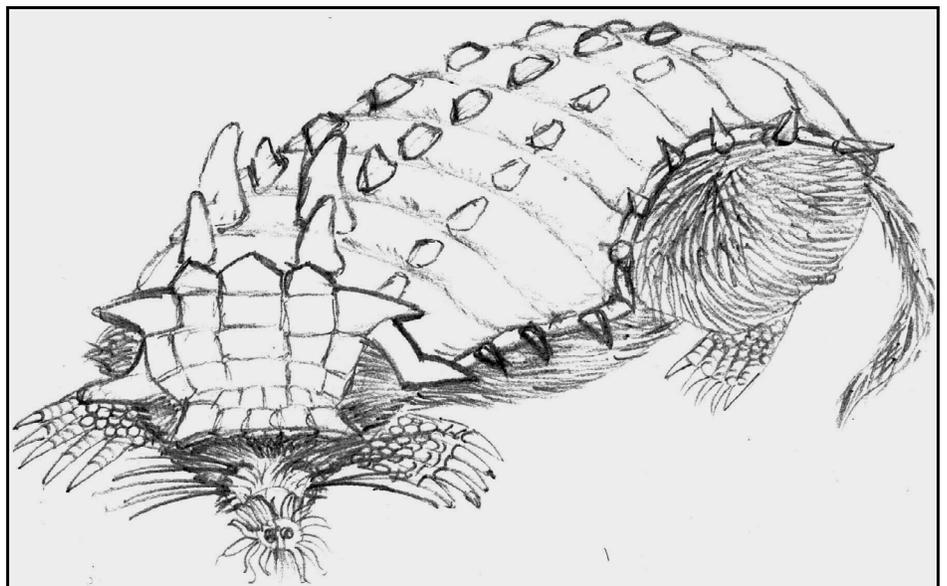
and smell. It detects sound vibrations as much through its body and whiskers as with its ears, which are small and hidden within its fur. In addition to its whiskers, which spread as wide as its shoulders, the snout which projects forward above its fanged mouth bears a striking array of fleshy tentacles radiating from its nostrils.³ The legs are shorter than in many creatures but stout and immensely powerful, with scaled, shovel-like forefeet turned outward to angle the strong claws for digging.

These creatures are able of digging through rock like their lesser cousins through earth. It takes longer of course, for the Moldewarp to dig through living rock.

Where common moles are voracious, eating two to three times their own body weight a day, the giant moldewarp of the Underdeeps can enter a state of hibernation-like torpor in which, as for the sleep of dragons, it is sustained by its own dark spirit

Notes for Game-Play

The head, back and flanks of a Giant Moldewarp are covered with horny plates of armour, much-scarred by scraping through rock-tunnels. Its short limbs mean its body remains close to the ground, making it difficult to land



a powerful blow on its furred-hide under-regions. Seeking to stab an eye below the brow-
armour will prove vain.

To fight such a beast calls for a dragon-
slayer's valour. Its most vulnerable point is its
snout, a blow to which will cause it to recoil in
pain, or thrash about in a dangerous but unfo-
cussed fashion. But to attack its snout is to put
oneself in the path of the two mighty
forepaws, the digging-like attacks of which are
likely to sweep a man off his feet and pound
him against the tunnel wall to left or right.
The sensing-tentacles are also coated with a
slime that will paralyse or at least slow a man-
sized victim if they contact exposed skin. A
stunned, pummelled senseless or paralysed
victim will be finished off with a stab of the
claw-points.

Dwarves and Crossbows?

Tolkien never once uses the word "crossbow", so despite most people now thinking the
Dwarves' mechanical bent suits their use of crossbows, Tolkien quite possibly never intended
it.
(Into Norman times, when crossbows became more common, "bow" and "archer" seem to
have been used for crossbows and longbows alike; and note that Tolkien only uses "bow", not
"long bow" or "short bow", either.)

Game Statistics

Type	Lvl	#/Enc	Size/Crit	Speed	Hits	AT	DB	Primary/2ndary/etc Attack	Notes
Great Moldewarp	7	1 (1-5)	M	MD/SL	150	PI/18	25	40HBa×2/25LCI/30SSt (pois)	Ravenous. Blind but other senses compensate.
Huge Moldewarp	10	1 (1-5)	L/La	MD/SL	250	PI/18	35	50HBa×2/40LCI/30SSt (pois)	Adult Moldewarps might be the size of a bear, a cave bear, or a cave drake.
Giant Moldewarp	13	1 (1-5)	H/SL	MD/SL	400	PI/18	40	60HBa×2/40LCI/30SSt (pois)	

Notes

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² OED2 says this exists in fully 136 variant spellings, some of which are still in use in Northern English dialects. Moldywarp is attested from 1325, but the origin is Old English:

Moldwarp etc., n. [OE. moldwerp: AS. *molde* soil + *weorpan* to throw up...]
– Webster's Revised Unabridged Dictionary (1913)

A popular term for the mole was the "Moldwarp" or "Mouldiwarp," so called from the Anglo-Saxon, denoting turning the mould [or earth].

– Folklore of Shakespeare, TF Thiselton Dyer, p. 184

³ After the manner of a star-nosed mole.

The Sword of Aulë

by Tom Davie © 2008

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This small campaign idea takes up motives and ideas from a broad range of Tolkien's creativity. A secondary influence is from the various ICE (Iron Crown Enterprises) MERP (Middle-earth Role Playing) modules and fan-created files and ideas found on the Internet. You might notice that these ideas are in many places not compatible with other contributions found in this issue of Other Minds. This is neither a fault nor an oversight on our part. It is the expression of our wish to provide a broad spectrum of opinions and interpretations of Middle-earth. This gives you – our readers – the best possible pool of ideas to choose from for your own games or ideas about Middle-earth. Perhaps you also feel inspired to make a contribution that is based on an earlier one found in these pages and thus enhance the coherence over several issues.

-- Editors

The tale

One of the legends from the Elder Days tells how Melkor was made war upon by the other Valar, captured and imprisoned due to the coming of the elves, known as *The Tale of Melkor's Chains*. According to the books *Translations from the Elvish* compiled by Bilbo Baggins and included in the *Red Book of Westmarch*, the version of this legend told of how Melkor was bound by the chain Angainor that had been wrought by Aulë for this purpose.

Origins of the sword

Another version of this legend calls the chain Angaino, and that Aulë created a new substance called *tilkal*, being an alloy of six metals: gold, silver, iron, copper, tin & lead. The word *tilkal* represents the initials for the words for each metal, thus: **tambë** (copper), **ilsa** (silver), **latúken** (tin), **kanu** (lead), **anga** (iron), and **laurë** (gold). *Tilkal* had all the properties of the six metals used to make it, and also its own properties: it was bright green in colour (or red in varying lights) and could not be broken, and only Aulë could forge it. According to this version, there was only enough *tilkal* for Aulë to add a little to each link of the chain.

But there is another version of this legend that Bilbo was either not aware of or was not able to translate at the time. In this version of the legend Aulë had often seen Melkor corrupt his work, and indeed it was Aulë and his wife Yavanna who went to Manwë concerned at there being any of Arda left unmarred when the Children of Illuvatar arose. So Aulë created a new substance called *tilkal*, being a mixture of the six metals, and from this new metal forged a sword that would hopefully remove evil corruption from Aulë's works. It was at this point that a council was then called and the problem of how to capture Melkor was mentioned. Aulë then used the remaining *tilkal* to forge the chain Angaino.

But with the Darkening of Valinor and the theft of the Silmarils, Aulë realised that the sword itself could also be perverted by Morgoth. But Aulë did not destroy the Sword, as he foresaw a time when it would be needed. So he broke the sword into pieces, transformed them and scattered them around Middle Earth. Trusting to Iluvatar that the Sword

istene in the tome *The Arcane Mysteries*, and got his Noldor apprentice Rumil to swear an oath not to reveal the truth, and to pretend that all the *tilkal* had been used on the chain Angaino, and thus most versions of the Tale of Melkor's Chains are copies of Rumil's version. This oath Aulë took from Rumil applied only to the First- and Secondborn, as he supplied this knowledge (even if only in legendary form) to 'his' children – the Dwarves.

The tome *The Arcane Mysteries* was written by Rumil but the only surviving copies of it were hidden by him as part of his oath to Aulë to keep secret the Sword's existence. This tome includes the version of *The Tale of Melkor's Chains* mentioned above, and also goes into more detail about the Sword itself and the pieces that make it up. Where copies of this tome now lie is not known, as the knowledge has been lost...

Properties and Appearance of the Sword

When remade the Sword in its scabbard looks rather plain and ordinary. It is the size of a normal elven longsword except that the blade when revealed is bright green, but the sword is blunt or like a 'rebat' weapon², as Aulë did not make it to inflict physical harm. Physically it only does damage as a rebated longsword would do, but if the sword strikes an 'evil' object that has been crafted (i.e. of Aulë's realm) the evil – the *mordo* – is expelled from that object. Aulë named the sword *Celebvagor* ('Dark bane').³

The sword was broken into seven pieces and transformed back into the original materials used to make it – i.e. gold, silver, iron, tin, lead and copper for the *tilkal*, with the seventh piece being the enchanted blade runes and scabbard. The blade runes hold the sword together and say 'Celebvagor'.

The Sword pieces

Now as there were seven pieces of the original sword, Aulë gave one piece to each of the seven Fathers of the Dwarves as a gift. All dwarves know of the legend of Aulë's Sword, but most regard it as a legend and a fairy tale for children. There is an ancient rhyme taught to all dwarves when they are young:

'Seven is the number of the Khazâd tribes
And Seven are the Fathers of the Khazâd.

Seven is the number of the sacred halls
 And Seven are the useful arts.
 Seven is the number of the rings given by
 the Deceiver
 And Seven are the gifts given by Mahal”⁴

The number seven is a superstition shared by most dwarves, because of the rhyme they are taught, and the coincidence that most of the important things in Dwarvish history happen to number seven. The last line of the verse has been disputed by many historians, both Dwarvish and non-Dwarvish. Some historians argue that this line refers to the pieces of Aulë’s sword, others argue that Aulë gave seven gifts to each of the seven fathers.⁵

Now when Aulë gave the pieces to each Dwarven father (except for Durin), he told them that they would ‘know’ when the metal should be used. Aulë said that the metal was enchanted, and there would be enough metal to achieve whatever purpose was required. Thus a transformed piece of the sword can be of any size or shape.

The transformed pieces of the sword are:

Gold – The uttermost spire of the golden tower at The Great Oasis in Far Harad (mentioned in the ICE *Far Harad* module). The spire was constructed by the Firebeards tribe of Belegost for Forlindaal the Last, in thanks for the smithcraft he taught them. After the fall of Beleriand, he took the spire with him into the South.

Silver – The Mirror of Aulë of the Stonefoot tribe of the Far East (see ICE’s *Lords Of Middle Earth III*). Its current whereabouts are a mystery.

Iron – The Hammer of the North, of the Stiffbeards tribe from the hold of Kibil-tarag in the Far North (see *Lords Of Middle Earth III*). Where the Hammer rests is also a mystery.

Tin – A special circular room made out of tin, the room was originally constructed by Runin the Headstrong when he led a small portion of the Ironfist tribe to the Mountains of Rhun to found the mansion of Nurunkhizdin.

Lead – Tomb of Beren on the central island of the Isles of the Dead that Live, made by some of the Broadbeams tribe of Nogrod, as restitution for the sack of Menegroth. The location of Beren’s tomb has never been found, largely because of the fearsome reputation the islands have with sailors

Copper – Rune key made by the Blacklocks tribe for Imrazor I of Mirëdor for the maze below the Watch at Unulló, in thanks for Imrazor saving the life of the Dwarven Heir

(see ICE’s *Shadow in the South*).

Blade runes & Scabbard – Leatherbound book, placed secretly by Aulë himself with Durin the Deathless of the Longbeard tribe, in a secret cave just beside the main chambers at Gundabad.

In order to locate a piece of the sword, either a copy of the tome *The Arcane Mysteries* must be found as the tome will reveal the command word to transform a piece back into shard of the sword, or already have a shard of the Sword form. A piece of the sword will glow if near another piece, and will glow brighter the closer to the other piece.

References

The Main References for this campaign/adventure idea are:

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2. The History of Middle-earth, Vol. XII: The Peoples of Middle Earth, by J.R.R. Tolkien, pp 301-302, 322.
3. Seven Tribes (CODA vs. ICE) by Eric Dubourg (on the Yahoo fan-modules website). You have to register in the group to be able to download this file
4. The Inland Sea (in fan-modules website; see above).
5. Lords of Middle Earth Vol. III – Hobbits, Dwarves, Ents, Orcs & Trolls (ICE, 1989), pp 42, 44, 56.
6. Sea Lords of Gondor (ICE 1987), pp 33-36.
7. Shadow in the South (ICE, 1988), pp 6, 9, 33, 39, 41-42, 61-62.
8. The Northern Waste (ICE, 1997), pp 61, 63, 75, 81, 105.
9. Far Harad (ICE, 1988)
10. Moria (incl. Dwarves of Middle Earth, pp 12-27. Khazad-Dûm p 24, 2003)

Notes

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² Rebated weapons were commonly used in late Medieval Europe for tournaments, and these weapons were the normal weapons but with the edge and points ‘rebated’ or blunted so as to minimise damage. I assume that this technique would have been known to Aulë.

³ This is the Sindarin form of the name – the Quenya form will vary.

⁴ The ‘sacred halls’ are the original halls delved by the Fathers of each tribe. The

‘useful arts’ taught to all dwarven children were: warcraft, smithcraft, stonecraft, outdoorcraft (survival), lore (included religion and history), healing craft (medicine) and leisure craft (music and tales etc.). The Deceiver is a Dwarven title for Sauron. Mahal is the Dwarven name for Aulë.

⁵ ICE had the ‘Seven Hammers’ for each tribe. GM’s should decide for their own campaigns.

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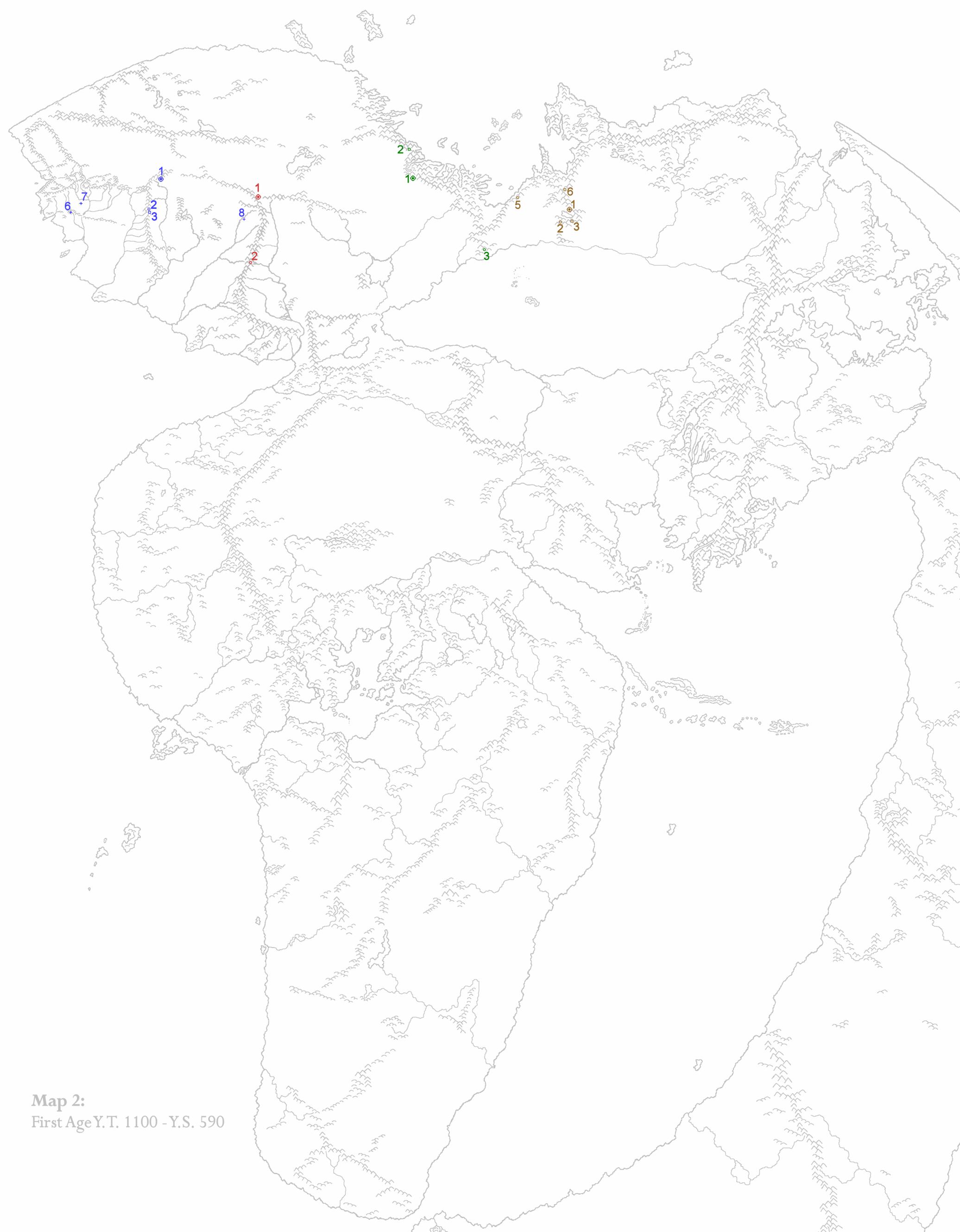
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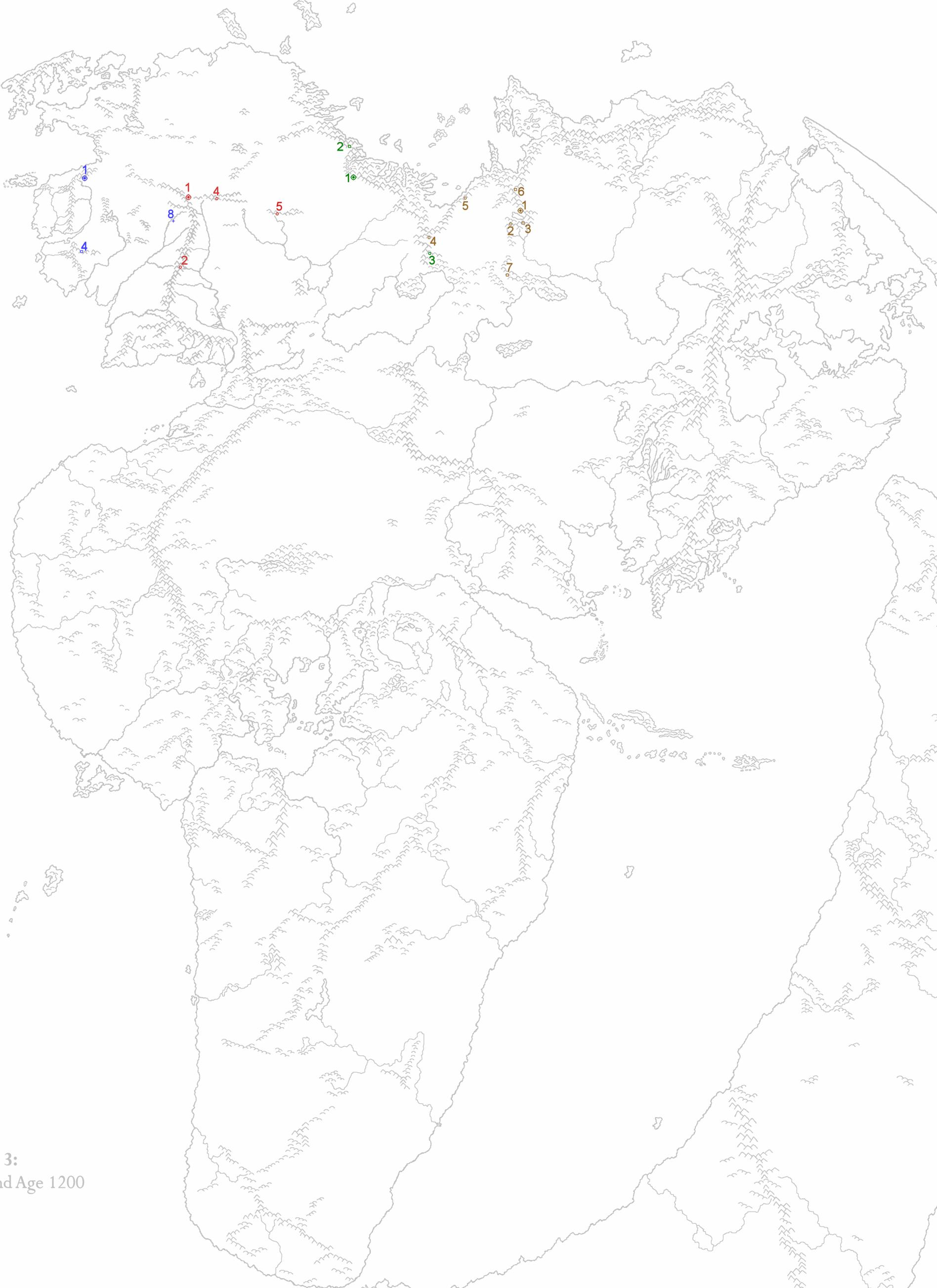
Maps for “A Brief History of the Dwarven Mansions”



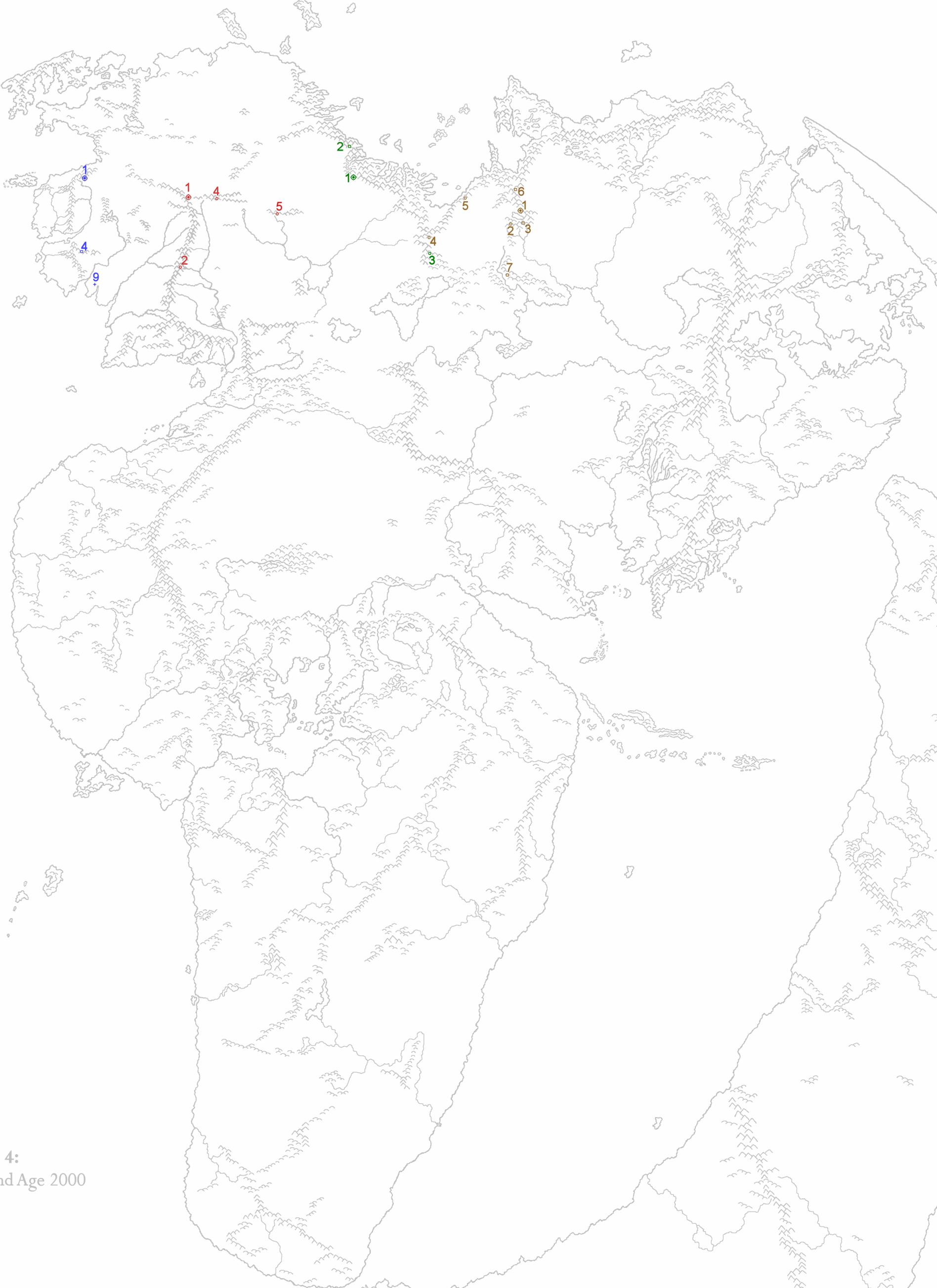
Map 1:
Places of Awakening
with territorial circles



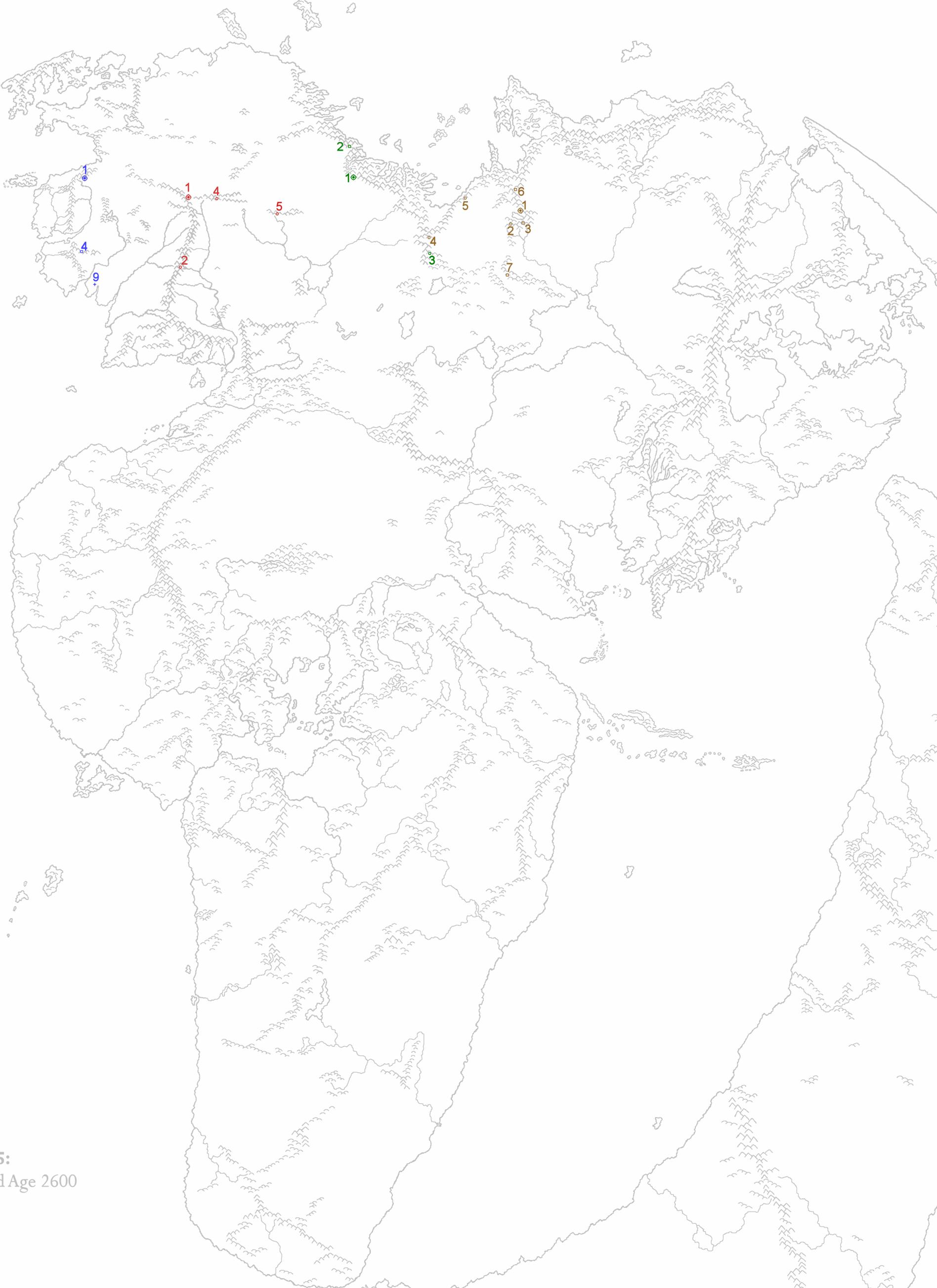
Map 2:
First Age Y.T. 1100 - Y.S. 590



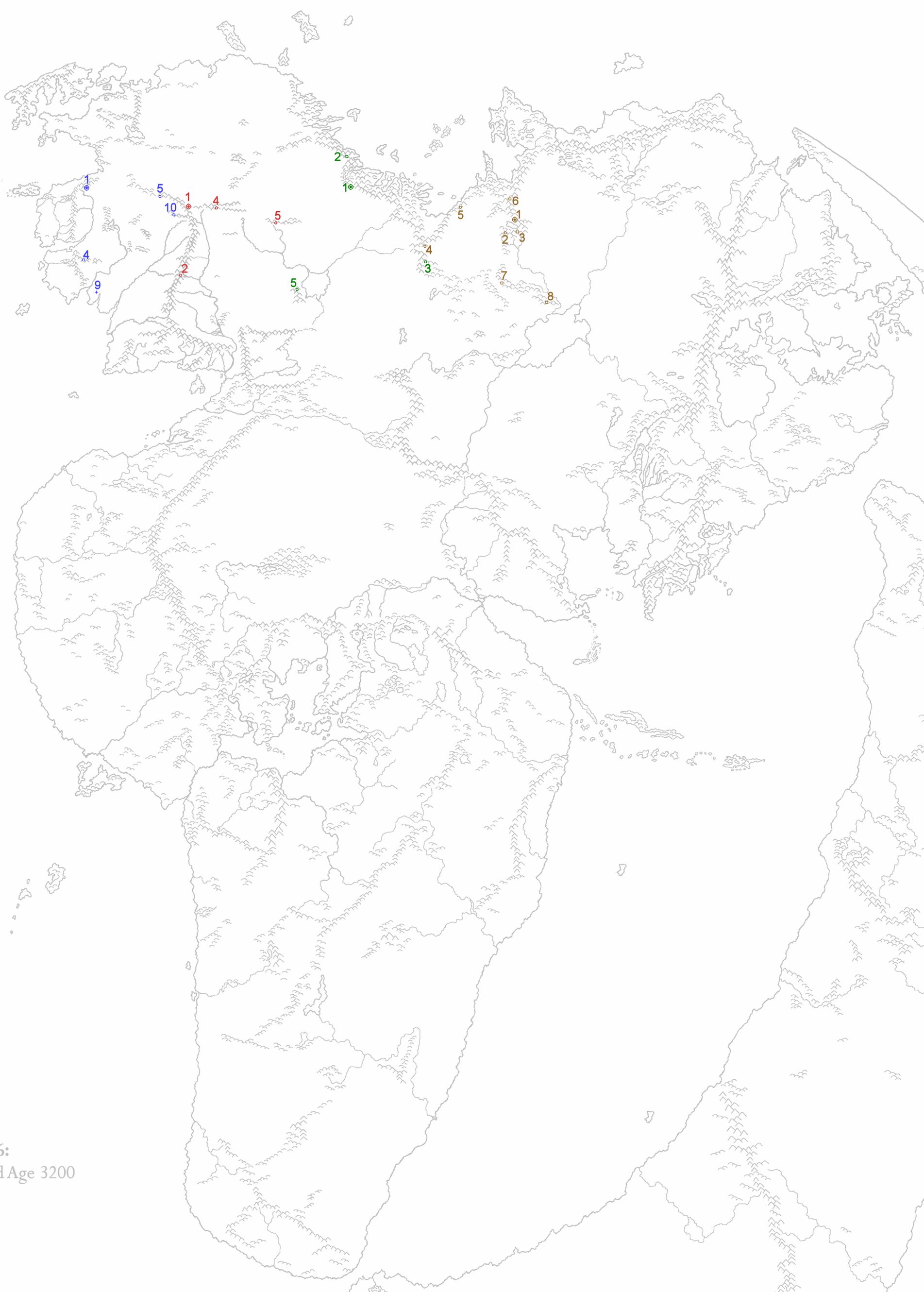
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Second Age 1200



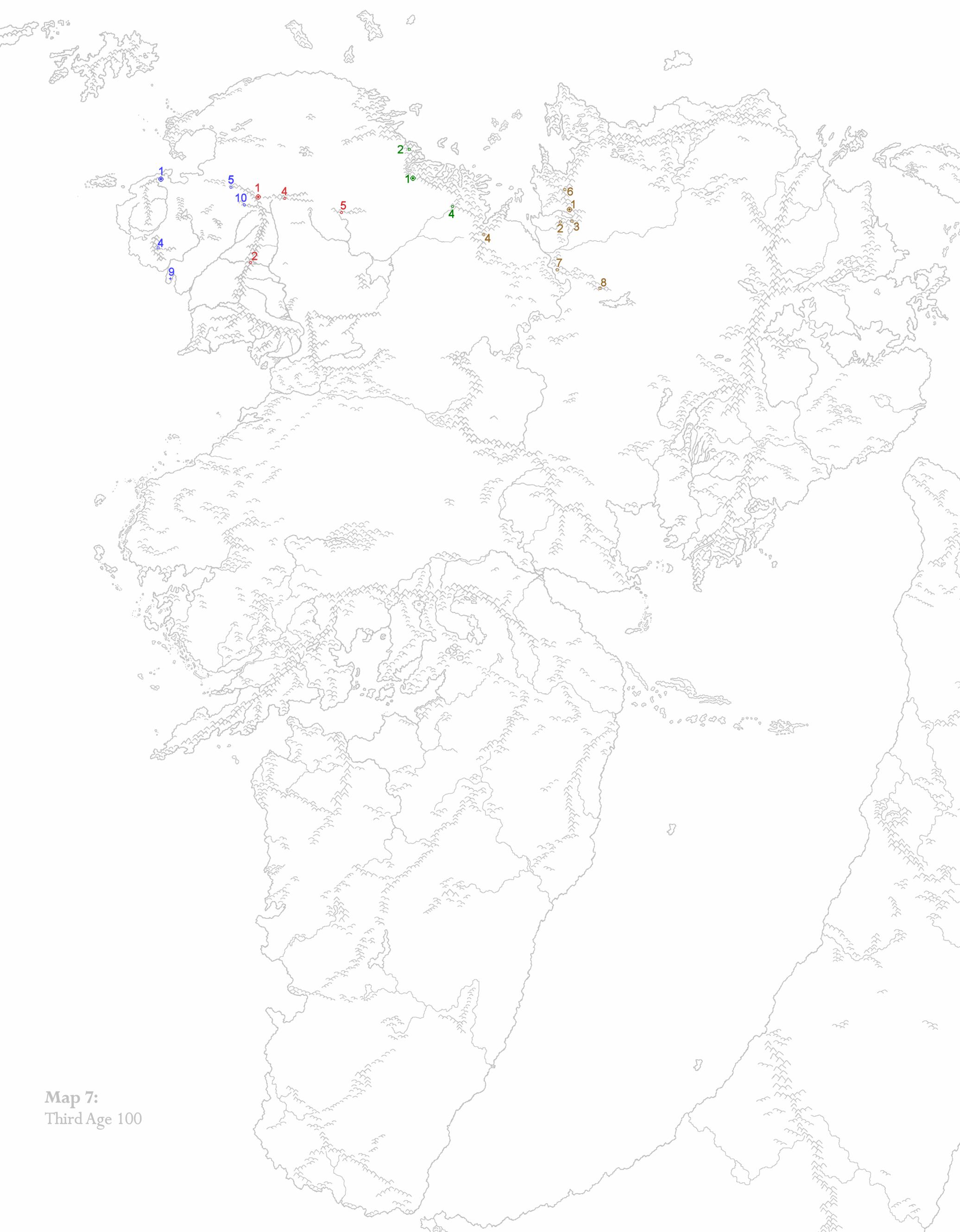
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Second Age 2000



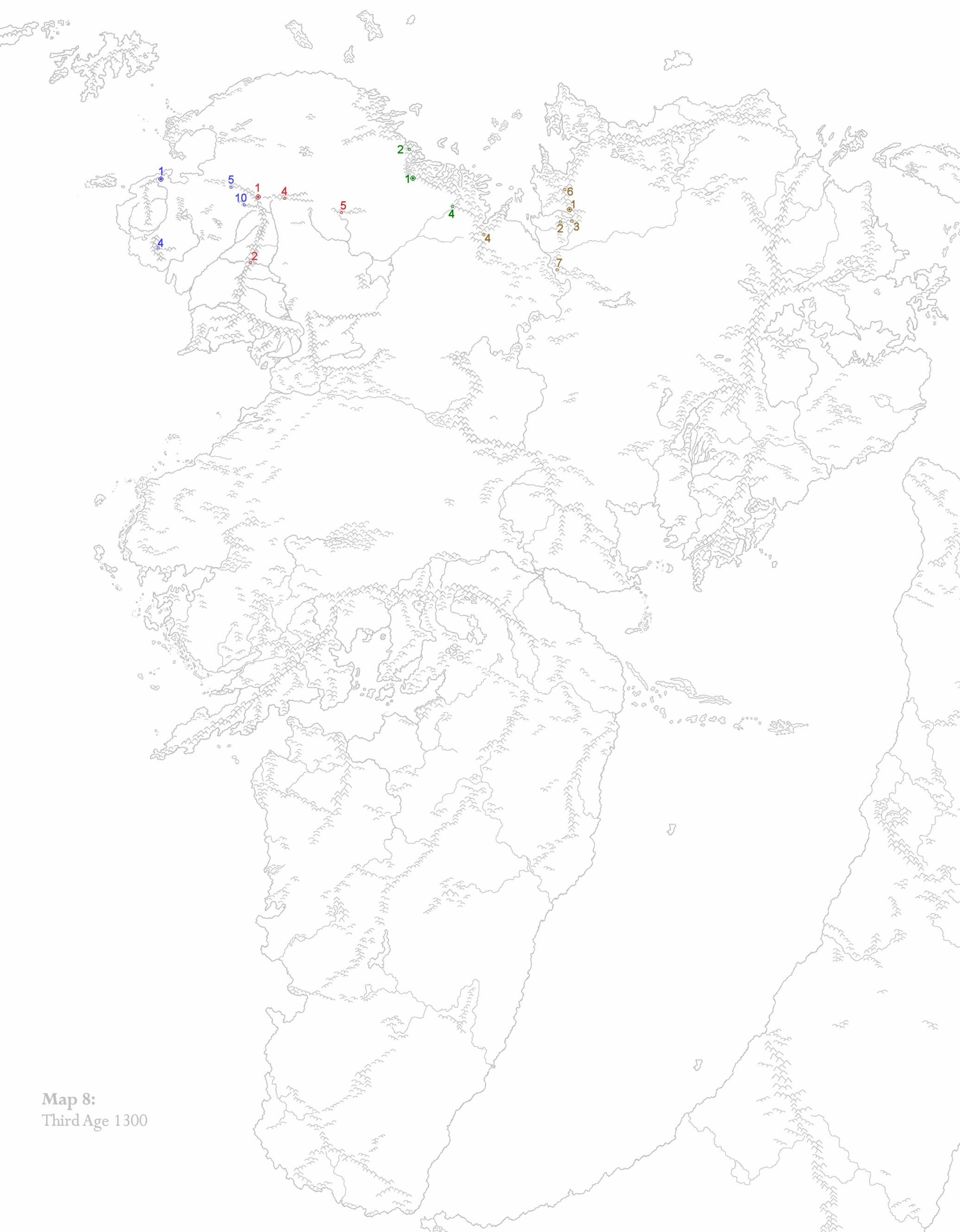
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Second Age 2600



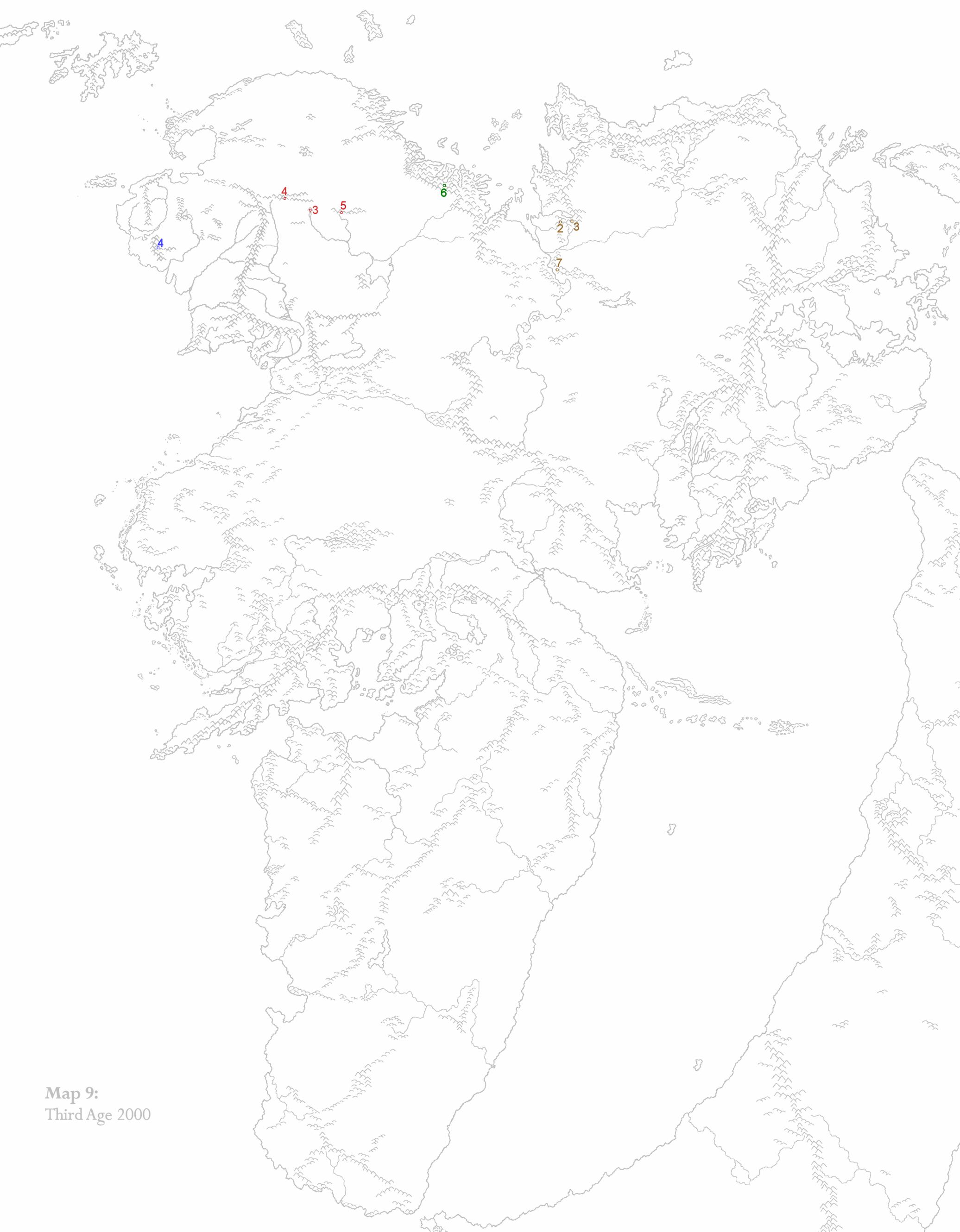
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Second Age 3200



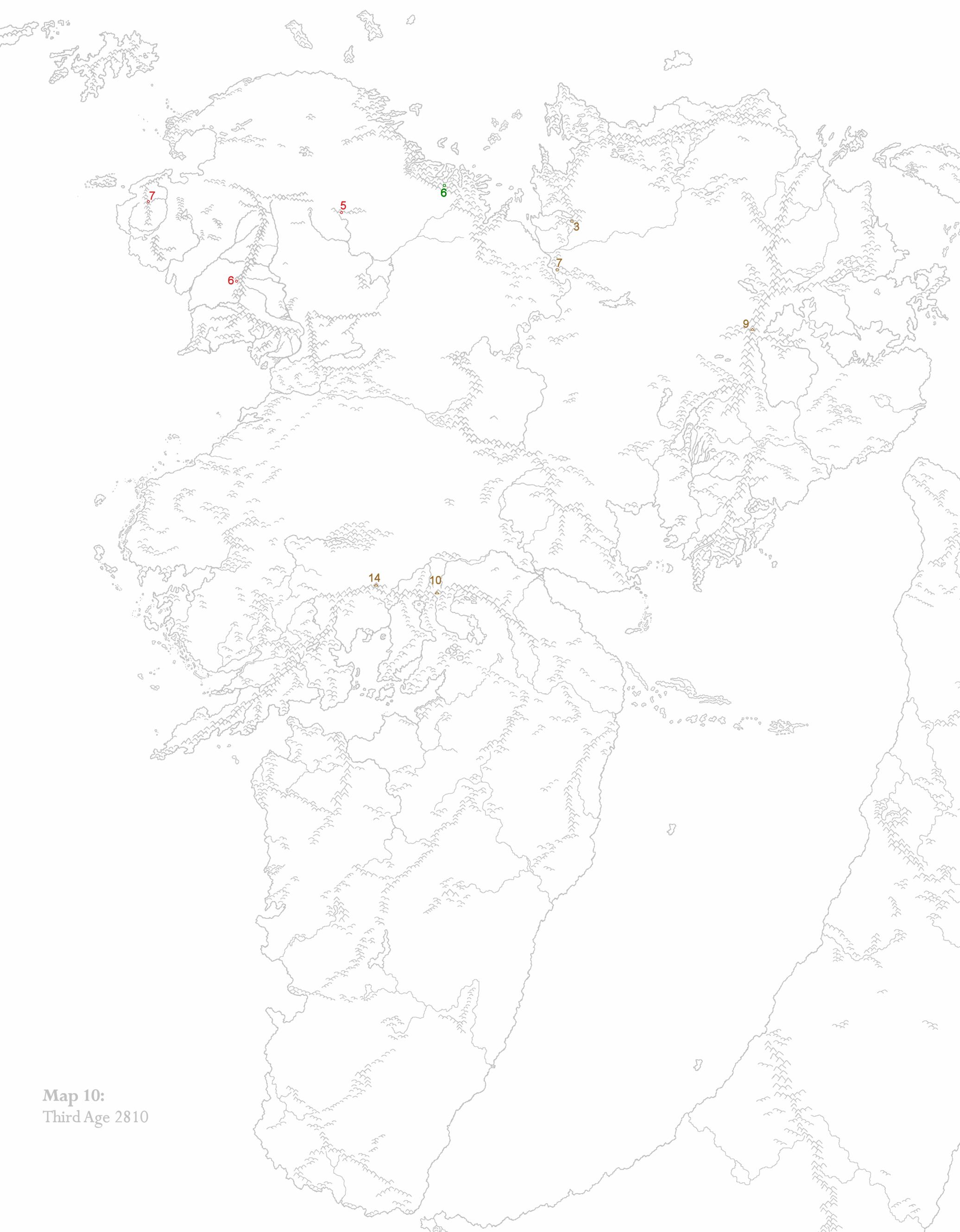
Map 7:
Third Age 100



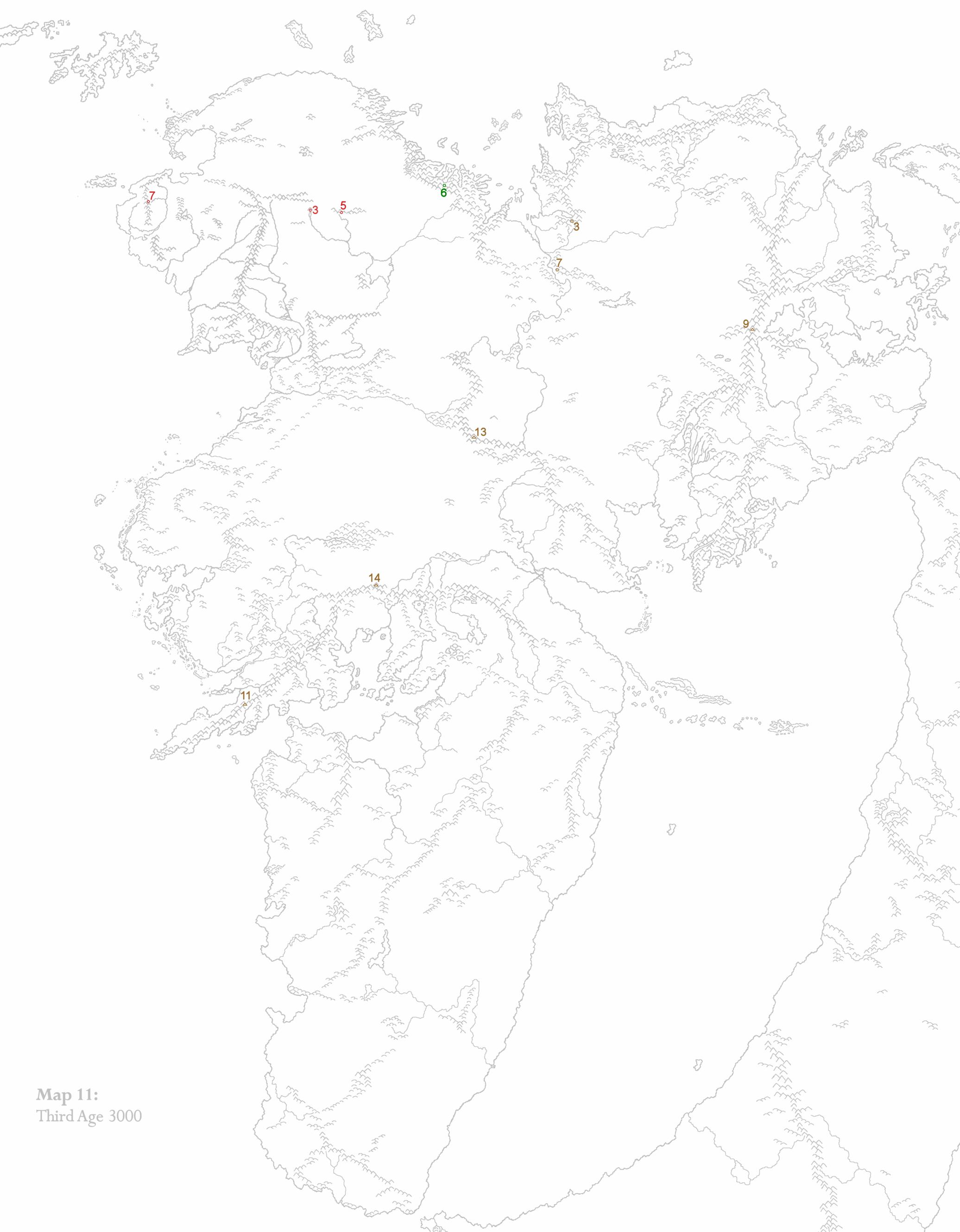
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Third Age 1300



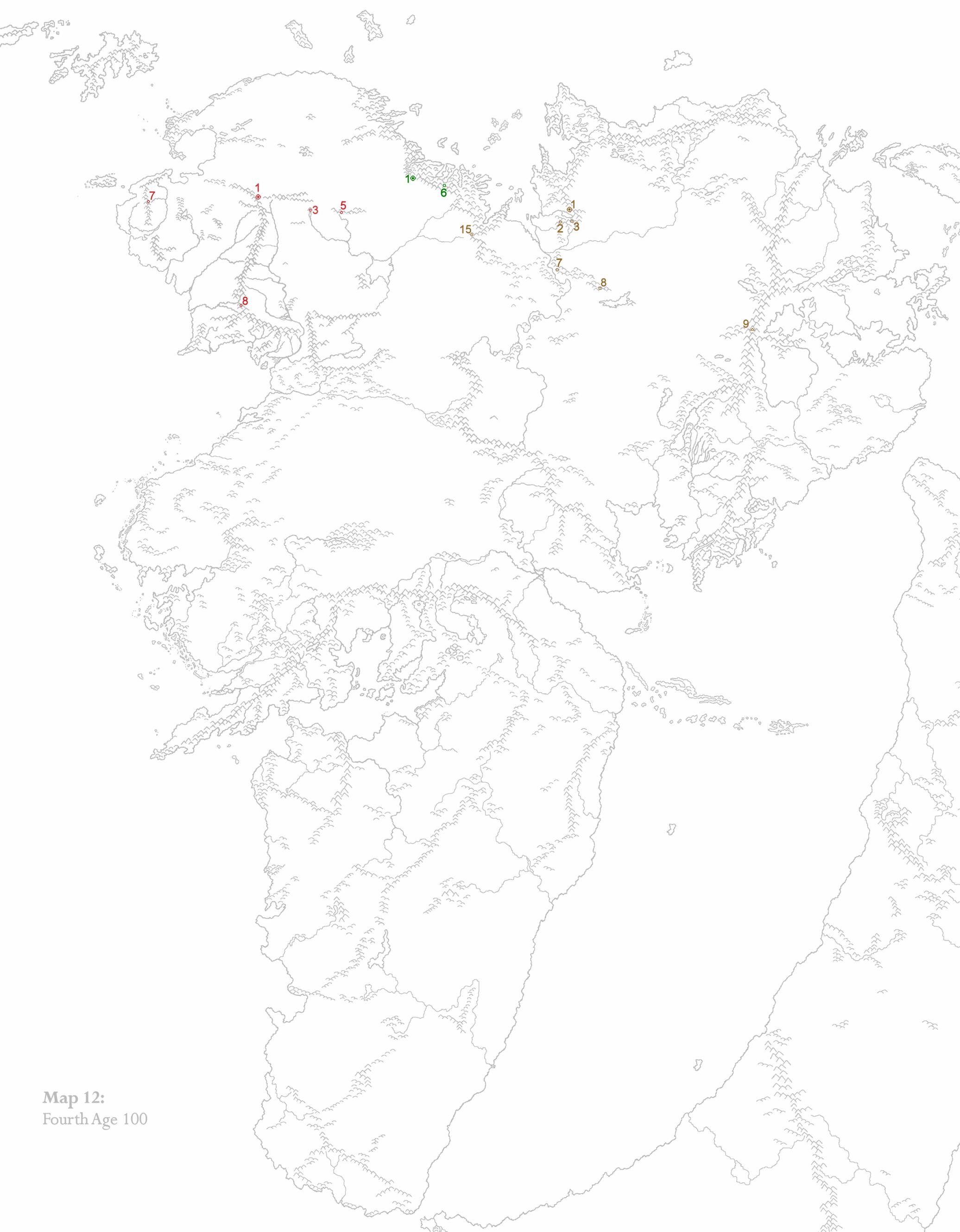
Map 9:
Third Age 2000



Map 10:
Third Age 2810



Map 11:
Third Age 3000



Map 12:
Fourth Age 100