

Arcane Kingdoms



Sample file

Seven Realms Beyond the Horizon



Seven Realms Beyond the Horizon

A gaming supplement by Fraser Ronald

Special Thanks to Walt Robillard for valuable commentary and contributions
Special Thanks to Graeme and Dominique for helping me put my head on straight

Contents copyright 2010 Fraser Ronald. All images are Public Domain except the Arcane Kingdoms logo, copyright 2010 Sword's Edge Publishing. This is a work of fiction and any resemblance to actual persons living or dead is purely coincidental. That or just a good, educated guess. There are myriad of possible reasons. Pick your own. Unless you are a lawyer, then pick the one that doesn't get me sued. Obviously, this work is not for the humour impaired.

**Visit us on the web at swordsedgepublishing.ca
and swordsedge.ca**

Across the seas or perhaps trackless deserts, places of legend in stories told by sailors who have seen the edges of the world, these Arcane Kingdoms are beyond the knowledge of many. But here, collected in these pages, is all the information known of these realms.

For now.

When adventurers find these lands, they may add new understandings, upset accepted wisdom, and possibly even forge a new history for these dominions.

What Do I Do With This?

Whatever you want.

The purpose of Arcane Kingdoms is to provide a small amount of information on a collection of nations that could be used in your game. How these are used depends on what you need. If you are running a “points of light” campaign, your players’ characters may find themselves near the edge of the map, and begin asking what’s beyond that. You may need a background for a mysterious character, some place beyond the confines already known in your campaign. One of your players may want a character who likewise comes from beyond the known lands.

Basically, this saves you from thinking up some foreign lands, for whatever purpose they might be needed.

The Kingdoms

Each listed realm includes the following information.

Capital: This is the capital city or location for the nation. This will be either a seat of power for the controlling institution, or a gathering place from which legislation issues.

Population: This is the number of individuals living in the area controlled by this nation.

Government: In general terms, this is the kind of governmental structure or societal order which controls the nation.

Imports: These are the main goods which the nation purchases from outside its area of control. These are not the only imported goods, just the most common.

Exports: These are the main goods which the nation sells outside its area of control. These are not the only exported goods, just the most common.

General Description: These opening paragraphs provide a general feel for the nation, what it is, what it does, and how it does it.

Life and Society: This provides a general understanding of the nation, its people, and the functioning of its government, elites, and culture.

Important Sites: These are areas within the nation’s area of control that are important either to the nation itself, or are of interest to those outside of the nation.

Regional History: This provides a very brief glimpse at how the nation emerged, how it was formed, and how it evolved into its present form.

FX Campaign: The descriptions of the nations provide no racial information, and all can be assumed to be populated by whatever races are common in your campaign. If your campaign includes non-Human races, this section provides an idea for a race that can be the basis for the nation's population.

The Free City of Argopolis

Capital: Argopolis

Population: 765,000

Government: Constitutional Monarchy with Elected, Representative Assembly

Imports: Grain, livestock, leather, ore, timber, wine

Exports: Ale, books, furnishings, leather goods, metal goods, miscellaneous finished goods.

Situated on three major trade routes and a navigable river, Argopolis has become one of the wealthiest nations in the known world, as well as being one of the smallest. Claiming only a single valley in the mountains, Argopolis is divided into the City—which includes everything within Argopolis' walls—and the Precincts—which include the city that has grown beyond the walls.

Argopolis is known as a bastion of law. The strength of its legal system and the impartiality of its courts have made it very inviting for merchants as well as radical thinkers and non-conforming religionists. This reputation is reflected in the common saying "honest as an Argopolis moneychanger." Though its tariffs and duties are relatively low, the vast flow of trade through the city insures a continuing supply of coins for the government's coffers.

In addition to its reputation as a center for commerce and law, Argopolis has also gained fame as the home of a device known as the "word press." With this device, a room of scribes is no longer necessary to copy books, rather this press can do so. It is both quicker and more accurate in the bargain. Already a haven of free-thinkers due to its impartial law courts, Argopolis has begun to profit from exporting ideas and philosophies in the form of

collections of books. A portion of the “page tithe” paid on exported books is provided to the Guild of Press Craftsmen to allow for further improvements of the word press.

Life and Society

Though Argopolis is known as a center of law, this does not necessarily mean it is a place of tranquil order. As a boiling cauldron of commerce, Argopolis is a battleground of merchants. Though the law and its application keep most in check, the merchants continue their duplicitous ploys and petty plots against each other. Some work in alliances or blocs, while others strike out as lone mavericks or madmen.

As with any major urban center, Argopolis has its own underworld and criminals. Though not blatant or numerous, the underworld includes smugglers, thieves, loan sharks and fleshmongers. It is not unknown for such individuals to use violence in pursuit of their illegal activities, however this is an extreme measure, considering the strength of the legal system.

The Urban Militia act as a police force, patrolling both the City and the Precincts. They have powers of arrest granted them by the City Charter, and may use physical force in pursuit of their duties. Not truly a militia, the Urban Militia is chosen from among the Haldrael by the Royal Duke’s Commission, made up of members of the courts, the Parliament and the Royal Duke’s staff.

The Haldrael is the military force of Argopolis. The force is composed of mercenaries, and few of the Haldrael are native to Argopolis or even the surrounding mountains. The Haldrael will accept any individual between the ages of 17 and 41 into its ranks. If an individual remains with the Haldrael for fifteen years, that individual may retire with a pension and citizenship in Argopolis.

Important Sites

Hall of Burghers: This is the city hall and parliament for Argopolis. It incorporates the offices of the bureaucracy as well as the parliament chamber and the Royal Court. Due to the continued increase in the business of government, the Hall of Burghers is no longer a single structure but encompasses a collection of buildings centered on the actual Hall itself.

Haldrael Citadel: This fortress sits against Aldfast Mountain, the northern boundary of the City. It is the principal military base in Argopolis and the home of both the Urban Militia and the Haldrael. The Citadel is off-limits to regular citizens. It includes not only barracks, training grounds and armoury, but also the Royal Duke’s palace, military stables, and a collection of smithies for the production of weapons and armour known as the Yard.

Regional History

Centuries ago, Argopolis was merely a mountain village, and a poor one at that. Fiercely independent, the people of Argopolis joined with the other mountain villages in a mutual protection pact. Many of the young men of landless families were provided with room and board in exchange for regular military service. Residents of the chieftain’s hall, these young men were called Haldrael, the name now attached to the mercenary military force of Argopolis.

The mountains that house Argopolis sat at the crossroad of great civilizations. While passes provided access to and travel through the mountains, the routes were tricky, unsuited for large caravans. Many of those younger sons not accepted into the Haldrael worked as bearers and guides. This employment drew much needed currency into the mountain villages, allowing them to