



The Court of Purple Robes

A Tékumel Netbook

This is a netbook for the World of Tékumel, the creation of Professor M.A.R. Barker. Please support the Professor by purchasing your netbooks at www.DriveThruRPG.com

The World of Tékumel

For further information about Tékumel, the Professor suggests you visit the official Tekumel website at www.Tekumel.com - this website details the world of Tékumel - steeped in history, hoary tradition, a complex clan and social system, with myriad flora and fauna.

Zottola Publishing, Inc.

The novels of Professor Barker and other Tékumel source materials are published by Zottola Publishing, www.zotpub.com - including *Prince of Skulls*, *Lords of Tsámra*, *A Death of Kings*, and *Mitlanyál*.

Guardians of Order

Forthcoming from Guardians of Order is *Tékumel: Empire of the Petal Throne*, a new role-playing game for the world of Tékumel. Visit www.iguardians.net/ for more information.

Now Available At Game Stores

Contact your Friendly Local Game Shop to purchase items for the World of Tékumel. A list of retailers may be found at www.zotpub.com or at www.Tekumel.com.

The Tékumel mailing list

The Professor invites everyone to join him on the Tékumel Mailing List, the successor to the much-praised Blue Room, at games.groups.yahoo.com/group/tekumel/ - come learn more about this fascinating world and discuss it with others!

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Credits

front layout and design

Victor Raymond

cover illustration

Giovanna Fregni

editorial help

Chris Davis



The Court of Purple Robes and the High Chancery.

The Court of Purple Robes is an ancient council of advisors to the Emperor. It was founded by Metlunel II "the Builder" in 1,207 A.H. (on the model of a much-earlier Engsvanyali advisory body, which had been called something like "The Lords of Purple Illumination.") Metlunel II had lived through the reign of his father, Metlunel I, a rather paranoid ruler whose fear of everyone and everything (plus a few really wild hallucinations) led Metlunel II to gently push him aside and rule the Imperium in his stead -- without actually breaking the line of succession, of course. Later Emperors saw this council of close personal advisors to be a useful thing, and so continued it to this day. It meets at the Emperor's discretion in a special room outside of the Golden Tower. This chamber contains a sorcerously enhanced tube that passes through the thick stone ramparts to carry the voices of the Emperor and his council to and fro between one another as each agenda item is discussed.

There is no fixed number of members of the "Court." There have been as few as five members and as many as thirty, with further non-member outsiders invited in for their special expertise. The council's business is similarly fluid: it discusses and advises on whatever topics the Emperor wishes. He then may assign tasks, projects, or topics for further discussion to this member or that. Unlike the committees and official bodies set up under American official procedures, the "Court" is

entirely at the Emperor's discretion: he establishes its standards and sets forth its structure. Members serve for life -- or as long as the Emperor chooses; there is no fixed term of membership. If a member fails or betrays his charge, he is expelled from the "Court" forthwith (several have gone directly from the "Court" to the Tolek Kana Pits, or even to the dungeons beneath Avanthar for more dire and immediate rewards. Compensation and "pay" similarly depend upon the Imperial whim.

The Chancery is more of a public access point for the Imperial government. Within this labyrinth of chambers are the scribes and bureaucrats who handle the day-to-day business of the Empire. People bring petitions, requests, bribes for this service or that, items to be recorded, and the like. Records are kept in the Chancery, and disputes are adjudicated, if they are interesting enough to the Imperium. There are tiers of seats for the functionaries of this body, and slaves carry documents up and down between the rows of sweating scribes and bureaucrats. Again, there is no fixed membership, no fixed terms of office, etc. All of these matters depend upon the will of the High Chancellor, who, these days, is the Emperor's older half-brother, Prince Rereshqala. The Prince and his family have quarters within Avanthar right beside the offices of the Chancery. Members have no special uniforms but wear whatever finery they prefer. There are, however, customary insignia, "colours," and sigils that identify peoples' status and occupation. They are also given "writs"

by the Emperor and/or the High Chancellor to prove their membership.

Outside of the great halls of the Chancery itself, there are chambers for meetings, offices of the Imperial Guard, more offices for the Omnipotent Azure Legion, more rooms for scribes and slaves performing special tasks, etc. etc. Avanthar is a warren of halls, offices, and dormitories, filled with noise and hubbub. The scribes write, eat, sleep, and bring their families into the Chancery (often to be expelled again by the guards, if they get in the way, or make too much racket). (There are, of course, schools and play-areas set aside for the families of these functionaries, but not everybody obeys the rules all the time.)

Avanthar also contains small shrines to each of the twenty Gods and Cohorts, and there are thus priests and their families, performers of rituals, singers of hymns, and all of **their** entourages. The great clans also have suites of apartments where occupants vie for space and use what wiles they can muster to gain preference. As has been said, "If Avanthar were not a mighty mountain, the Imperium would have long ago collapsed for sheer weight of crowding!"

This is only the tip of the iceberg (the top five handspans of ThenuThendraya Peak, as is the Tsolyani idiom) in any discussion of Tsolyani government structures and policies..

Sorry! Just thought you might like to know...