OTHER MINDS

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

Other Minds

Content

Editorial: Ready for Round Two!

We are pleased to present you Issue #2 of *Other Minds*. The overarching theme this time is "Númenor". We called and you indeed gave so much material, that *OM2* is much fatter than *OM1*. Enjoy!

In this issue you will sometimes find different versions of the same topic. This is not an error on our side, but intentional. We encourage different viewpoints to be published. When several opinions on the same subject are available, you – the readers of *Other Minds* – have a good range of arguments, quotes and extrapolations at hand to form for yourself a well-backed opinion on this very matter. We strive to keep it that way, thus presenting you a broad spectrum of opinions and views from whose argumentations you can choose the one which best fits your personal opinion on these issues. Conflicting versions also fuel further discussion and improve the whole issue.

We received so many contributions, that issue #3 is already well stocked too!

You might notice that we changed our license. The GFDL proved too restrictive for our purpose, and so we adopted the Creative Commons license model as the better choice for us. See also their website (http://creativecommons.org/).

You may notice some contributions written in US English, while others are in British English. This is due to the international contributors that have different ways of using english. We endorse both versions equally.

Content

So far for the opener – what will await you this time in *Other Minds*? Of course, according to our theme, everything related to Númenor. But there are also contributions in response to the last issue. If the amount of response to an article is any measure of how the readers are interested in a submission, *Mapping Arda* from the last issue has raised the greatest interest by far. The discussions were so intensive – and sometimes controversial – that we have **two** follow-up articles on this piece within the pages of *Other Minds, # 2*! If you are interested in these discussions, they can be found in the forum on the *Other Minds* webpage (http://www.other-minds.com)[1], and for registered users (free registration) in the archives of the Númenor mailing list (http://numenorproject.com/).

The first one is Eric Dubourg's *Response to 'Mapping Arda'*, which draws a quite different picture of many key aspects of its predecessor. The other one, *Mapping Arda – Reloaded* is a follow-up by the same guys who already made the first piece on this matter. It addresses a number of issues that have been revealed in discussions and offers a second view on some topics brought up by Eric. We think that with these three articles on this subject available, a solid base for future contributions has been laid and a broad range of views is now available that should fuel further great discussions and shape future submissions as well!

Gabriele Quaglia's monumental essay *Númenóreans in Endor* gives us an overview of the development of the Númenórean presence in Middle-earth. It comes with a set of maps based on the design from OM1, and linked to key periods in Númenór's history.

What is of paramount importance to any realm with oversea colonies? Correct – a veritable merchant fleet as well as a navy to protect the latter and engage any potential rivals. The issue of which ship types were probably used by the Númenóreans, the development of their shipping and related issues with maritime technology are covered in Thomas Morwinsky's essay *Númenórean Maritime Technology*.

What do you need for ships in these times? Lots of timber. These come from woods of course, and so Hawke Robinson's essay *J.R.R. Tolkien's Love of Trees and the Environment* fits this theme perfectly by detailing the Professor's attitude towards trees and their rôle in his works.

We are very glad to be able to serve you an adventure that fits both the theme of this essay as well as providing great "flavour" and standard. It is a refined version of the *MERPCon I* (held in 2005) adventure entitled *Uswë Númenorello* (Q. "Escape from Númenor"). Due to its immense size, this is published as a separate supplement to *Other Minds #2*.

Last but not least, there is a new feature we introduce with this issue that deals with everything around *Other Minds*. This time you find a tool to gauge the Tolkien-content of contributions as well as wcommonly used abbreviations.

Feedback

There is one big favour we'd like to ask from you: All of you – our readers – can help us to make *Other Minds* better, even if you do not have anything specific to contribute. With this feedback, we can gauge much better what you like, what we can do better etc. This way, *Other Minds* will become ever more suited to your needs and wishes.

If you have already a – **free – account on our website** and log in, you will see a form to evaluate all contributions. It is very easy to fill out, and by doing so you help us a lot. You can even enter a commentary text of your own if you see the need for one. Of course, we will **not** track your answers as to "reward" or penalize anyone! The average scores of all ratings will be visible on the webpage as well, so that everyone can make himself a picture how the contributions so far are rated.

Another way to give us feedback (possible even for readers without an account on our website) is to send an email to **feedback@other-minds.com**.

The webform will be constantly updated, so that even if you create an account later, you can rate the contributions of all previous issues. In this way, everyone can help us regardless of the date of rating.

Hobbit movie

In case you haven't already heard: On December 18th, 2007 New Line Cinema and MGM announced the realization of a pair of movies based on the *Hobbit* in an effort of both studios and with Peter Jackson as producer (http://www.thehobbitblog.com/). This is on the one hand good news, since many of us have yearned to see a full movie adaptation of Tolkien's books. On the other hand, the RPG community should be aware of the potential side effects. From the experiences with the *Lord of the Rings* movies, it is possible that Tolkien Enterprises (TEnt) will make another "sweep" through the internet and other media to "clear the slate" for official licensed products. We hope this will not happen, but one should not be surprised by a new rise of aggressive campaigning on the side of TEnt. After all, a new movie will be fun nonetheless and we look forward to it. On January, 30th 2008 it was confirmed that Guillermo Del Toro would probably direct the movies.

Thomas Morwinsky
Hawke Robinson
January 2008

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[1] Other URL's for the webpage are www.othermindszine.org or www.omzine.org

Other Minds Conventions

Canon Designators

CORE   OPTIONAL   HOUSE

The title of this essay might look somewhat strange for a number of our readers. After all, distinguishing content is quite easy: there are background essays, adventures, place descriptions etc. Thus the goal of this classification is not to invent another category of this kind, but to rate the content of each contribution according to its closeness to Tolkien's works. By doing so, we hope to give you a guideline to easily assess the general outlook of the specific contribution.

Important Note:

Please note that these categories do not represent any valuation of its content. It is merely a tool to gauge the relation of the content to Tolkien's writings.

Categories

We use three basic categories for contributions. The designations are taken from the general roleplaying vocabulary, so that most of you will probably be familiar with them. These categories are "core", "optional" and "house". Their RPG equivalents are "Core Rules", "Optional Rules" and "House Rules". The first are the heart of the rules, without whom nothing could happen. The second (provided by the publisher) offer more possibilities for the game, but are not absolutely necessary, though often helpful and sensible. The last ones are those "tweaks" that the numerous gamers out there have made for a specific system, and which are not "official" rules, but are perhaps interesting and fitting supplements for some.

In our context, **Core** represents any contribution that deals only with those things that Tolkien has written (e.g. an analysis of a certain book, essay etc. to gauge its context and meaning for a particular issue). Especially contributions focussing on those works that Tolkien himself published during his lifetime fall into this category. These are the *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit*, but also *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil*. Other publications like the *History of Middle-earth* can also be categorized here – but with greater care concerning overall compatibility. The most important criterium for "core" contributions is the extent of sub-creation done by the author. This is the most "canonical" level in our system. Contributions which revolve exclusively (or near so) around Tolkien's books would be considered as "core" contributions.

Second is the **Optional** category. This represents contributions that use all of Tolkiens writings – in addition to those he published in his lifetime, e.g. also those that were made available posthumously by his son Christopher. These are especially important, since they highlight much of the background of the world. Here titles like the *History of Middle-earth* series, *Unfinished Tales*, *Letters* and the *Silmarillion* come to mind. The latter is included in the "posthumous" line, because the published form was actually a compilation done by Christopher Tolkien. The Professor himself never achieved a 'finished' state for the legends of the Elder Days, and accordingly it was fragmentary at his death. His son assmebled the fragments as best as he could, but

it still remains problematic internally. Material based on **all** of Tolkien's writings, but with necessary extrapolations where Tolkien himself did not detail to the level desired by the author of our contribution, would be considered "optional". This category may also contain other secondary material (e.g. other authors' ideas – either official from RPG companies or fan-made stuff). The main criterium is a solid and extensive backup by Tolkien's texts that are used for extrapolations and own ideas.

The **House** category is the one that is only loosely based on Tolkiens writings, but primarily on the imagination of the individual writer or GM. It needs not be based on the individual writer's though – everything that builds heavily on other non-Tolkienian sources (like inventions made by RPG companies or fan-made ideas) falls into this area as well. Most contributions dealing with the realms north, east and south of the Northwest as described by Tolkien would fall into this category by default, as Tolkien himself has written nearly nothing about these regions. Contributions focusing on RPG mechanics (e.g. rules questions or rules options) would be "house" too. Most adventures as well as rules suggestions/tweaks etc. would also fall into this category.

We think that the majority of contributions will fall into the 'optional' and 'house' categories – or in-between them. This is likely, since a sound base on Tolkien coupled with fitting one's own ideas makes the best mix to serve both Tolkien enthusiasts and gamers alike. Beside this, we are happy about every pure 'core' and 'house' contribution as well, since both are necessary to make it a good mix where all fits into the overall picture.

Symbols

We use three symbols to denote the categories detailed above. These are:

CORE

This Angerthas rune is for **core** contributions. It is the 'G' rune like the one that Gandalf left at Weathertop engraved in a stone and later found by Aragorn. It is a fitting image for contributions closest to the original works.

OPTIONAL

Yin and Yang are for **optional** contributions, as it symbolizes a certain balance. Many optional material is that – balanced between textual backup and one's own ideas

HOUSE

The writing quill stands for **house** contributions, symbolizing the creative process in writing down one's own ideas with less backup or dependency on a given model.

Usage

At the beginning of each contribution you will find one or more of these symbols. If there is only one of these symbols present, then we deem it to belong to this category exclusively (e.g. only 'core', 'optional' or 'house'). If there are two symbols depicted, the material is somewhere between the two (e.g. between 'house' and 'optional' or between 'core' and 'optional'). In this way, we have five different possibilities to gauge a given contribution. In our opinion, this is fine grained enough to make the necessary differentiations, while remaining not too fine (e.g. by making even finer distinctions).

Common Abbreviations

by Thomas Morwinsky © 2008 (tolwen@gmx.de) per the terms under CC license: ① ⑤ ⑥ [1]

There are some abbreviations that you will encounter ever again in various contributions within *Other Minds.* Naturally, Tolkien's books are among the foremost in this respect. Beside that, there are some other Tolkien- and RPG-related abbreviations that appear here and there. Here follows a list of the commonly used abbreviations (in alphabetical order):

Dec or DEC – *Decipher Inc.* The company who had a license for games in Middle-earth from 2001 to 2007. Core product was LotRRPG.

FotR – *The Fellowship of the Ring* (the first book of the *Lord of the Rings*) by J.R.R. Tolkien

Hobbit – *The Hobbit* by J.R.R. Tolkien

HoMe – *The History of Middle-earth Vol. 1-12* by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited and published by his son Christopher.

ICE – *Iron Crown Enterprises.* The company who from 1982 to 1999 held the license to produce RPG supplements for Middle-earth. Core product was MERP.

Letters – *The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien* by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited and published by his son Christopher.

LotR – *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien and published by his son Christopher.

LotRRPG – *The Lord of the Rings Roleplaying Game.* The RPG produced by DEC.

MERP – *Middle-earth Roleplaying Game.* The RPG produced by ICE.

RotK – *The Return of the King* (the third book of the *Lord of the Rings*) by J.R.R. Tolkien and published by his son Christopher.

Sil – *The Silmarillion* by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited and published by his son Christopher.

TB – *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* by J.R.R. Tolkien

TE – *Tolkien Enterprises.* The licensing company who holds the rights for games and movies based on the *Hobbit* and the *Lord of the Rings*.

TTT – The Two Towers (the second book of the *Lord of the Rings*) by J.R.R. Tolkien

UT – *Unfinished Tales of Númenor and Middle-earth* by J.R.R. Tolkien, edited and published by his son Christopher.

Notes

[1] http://creativecommons.org/licenses /by-nc-sa/3.0/

J.R.R. Tolkien's Love of Trees and the Environment

by W.A. Hawke Robinson © 2007 (May 2nd) per the terms under CC license: ⓘ ⓢ ⓞ [1]

CORE

Austrian Pine - *Pinus nigra*. April 22, 2006. Photo © 2006 by J.R. Crellin. Reproduced with permission as per the terms under CC license: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/

Any Game Master wishing to run a campaign during the reign of Númenor or it's descendants, must constantly take into account the role that trees played in Tolkien's setting. Whether it was the stripping of the lands of Númenor and Middle-earth by the Númenóreans to build their ships, the felling of Nimloth the White Tree, the destruction of greenery by Morgoth's and Sauron's forces, or the forces of nature incarnate from "Old Man Willow", the Ents, the Huorns, or Mirkwood's trees. Trees play a constant role that should not be overlooked, and are a critical part of the "flavor" in a Tolkien-based role playing game setting.

Tolkien Takes the Part of Trees Against All Their Enemies.

J.R.R. Tolkien loved the unspoiled countryside and felt an especial affinity for trees, especially ancient ones such as the Oak, Willow and one of his favorites, the Piñas Nigra (aka *Pinus nigra*, Black Pine or Austrian Pine) (Carpenter, Humphrey. *J.R.R. Tolkien A Biography*. 144). This "green ideology" of Tolkien's was repeatedly manifested in all his literary (*Letters*. #339) and personal writings (Shippey, Tom. *Author of the Century*. 89). Tolkien was greatly disturbed by the industrial environment he was intimately exposed to in his younger years during the turn of the 20th century. He despised the "infernal combustion" engine (Letters. #64) and felt strongly that heavy industry was causing terrible destruction to the earth with Mordor as his perception of the industrialized modern era (*Letters*. #135). Tolkien repeatedly involved trees in various aspects of his writings, including those based in Middle-earth and Númenor.

J.R.R. Tolkien wrote repeatedly about his affinity for the environment, trees and his dismay at the destruction of so much that he held so dear. He was especially vociferous towards the "lunatic destruction of the physical lands which Americans inhabit" (*Letters*. #328). He would repeatedly write in detail to friends and family about the trees in the area he was currently living or working in (*Letters*. #49,61,77,88,135,321,323). It is probable that the dry barren landscape of Bloemfontein, South Africa where Tolkien was born, and the early industrial town of Sarehole, England from his youth, greatly increased his love for the greenery and many colors of England's natural environment. Tolkien equated himself to his "Hobbits" by stating how he liked "gardens, trees and unmechanized farmlands;" (*Letters* #212). Tolkien stated in no uncertain terms his stance in regards to trees, in a June 30th, 1972 "Letter to the Editor" of the Daily Telegraph, "*In all my works I take the part of trees as against all their enemies.*" (*Letters* #339).

Austrian Pine - *Pinus nigra*. April 22, 2006. Photo © 2006 by J.R. Crellin. Reproduced with permission as per the terms under CC license: http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.5/

A Brief Tolkien Biography

Tolkien is most famous outside of the academic world for his fictional works *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Slightly less well known are his many posthumous Middle-earth related works edited and released by his son Christopher Tolkien. The "short list" includes: *The Silmarillion*, *Unfinished Tales*, *The History of Middle-earth, Vol. 1-12* book series, and most recently *The Children of Húrin*. J.R.R. Tolkien is also highly regarded in the academic world for his translations of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Perl*, and *Sir Orfeo*, from the 14th century works of the English West Midlands. His insightful and positive critique of Beowulf radically changed the previously negative views of "fantasy" literature by academia (*Author of the Century*. Pp 149-150).

Tolkien's mother moved them to England in 1895, he would never see his father again because he died in South Africa. J.R.R. Tolkien initially grew up in Birmingham and then Sarehole, England. He loved the Worcester countryside. When he was forced to live in the more industrialized parts of England he would think longingly of his years in the relatively unspoiled countryside which greatly impacted his later works, and escape to the countryside or the coast whenever his busy schedules allowed.

Many of the few photos he allowed taken of him publicly involved his sitting or standing beside the ancient oak or willow trees of Worcestershire or Oxford. Trees constantly recur in many of his works both related and

unrelated to his Middle-earth mythologies. These were not just peripheral scenery descriptions of trees like most authors. An entire series of short stories known as "Tree and Leaf" were inspired by a single "great-limbed poplar tree" in view through the window of his home on a neighbors yard, that was suddenly cut down by it's owner. Tolkien stated,

> "It is cut down now, a less barbarous punishment for any crimes it may have been accused of, such as being large and alive. I do not think it had any friends, or any mourners, except myself and a pair of owls."
> **The Tolkien Reader, Introductory Note, Tree and Leaf. pp. 33-34)**

Tolkien made trees a critical key aspect of his stories and creation mythology for his universe known as "Eä" and "Middle-earth" therein. In portions of *The Silmarillion* and related *History of Middle-earth* books, Tolkien described the critical importance in detail of the "Two Trees of Valinor"[2], "about their fate all the tales of the Elder Days are woven". (*The Silmarillion*, 35). These trees were named Laurelin and Telperion, that waxed and waned throughout the "day" and "night" between golden and silver. These trees were the precursors to the Sun and Moon.[3] They were later poisoned and destroyed, "withered them, root, branch, and leaf" (*The Silmarillion*, p. 76) by the attack of Morgoth's spear and the envenomed maw of Ungoliant (the mother of Shelob) the hideous giant spider[4] (Silmarillion, p. 73).

Morgoth, Sauron, and Mordor (*Letters* #135, 75, 153) in some aspects represented for Tolkien the more negative aspects of Man and technology, as he frequently called it "The Machine" which he also equated to "magic" (*Letters* #131). Though Tolkien repeatedly stated over the years that he despised allegory (*Letters* #131), he seems to have made some overt exceptions in the case of the environment and trees, especially heavy industry that he considered dirty, and though not inherently evil and malevolent,"pretty certain to serve evil ends" (*Letters* #153). Above all he considered heavy industry destructive of every aspect of the surrounding environment, and he even wished for the (continued) destruction of factories and power-stations (*Letters* #52).

In his world, the Hobbit's calendar included a day known as "Tree's day" which later developed into "Trewsday", and is a nod at our modern "Tuesday", in his view giving weekly homage to trees. (*The Peoples of Middle-earth*, p. 123).

> "Every Tree Has It's Enemy, Few Have an Advocate"
> **Letters #241**

Another recurring reference of the power and significance of trees to Tolkien was the White Tree of Númenor, Nimloth (S. "White Blossom"), which is the Sindarin form of the Quenya Ninquelótë, one of the names of Telperion. Nimloth was descended from the line of trees of Galathilion, the white tree of Tirion, which was in turn descended from White Telperion which Yavanna caused to grow in the land of the Valar. This theme of a white tree playing an important symbolic role, recurred throughout much of Tolkien's Middle-earth tales, ranging from the establishment of the kingdom of Númenor on the island continent, to Isildur's bravery in sneaking into the courts of the Kings of Númenor in Armenelos, to steal the fruit of Nimloth (*Silmarillion*, pp 272-273), just before it was cut down and burned according to the machinations of Sauron. Isildur delivered it to Elendil and the fruit traveled with the few survivors of Númenor to Middle-earth. This fruit was the seed that became The White Tree of Minas Ithil, whose line was later continued in the Trees of Minas Anor/Tirith, and the sign of the direct linking of the kingship of the Númenóreans / Dúnedain to the Valar and therefore ERU. This theme also recurred when Aragorn had to find the sapling high in the mountains as part of fulfilling the renewal of Númenórean kingship and proof that he was the true heir to the throne, as it was also the sign of a new life, and a new "Age" after the death of the previous tree 167 years earlier. The white tree was also on Aragorn's standard (*The End of the Third Age*. pp. 15, 56).

Tolkien manifests a means of defense/revenge in the form of the Ents and the Huorns, especially in the defined characters of Treebeard and Quickbeam (considered "hasty" by the other Ents). Ents were walking, talking, "Tree herders" that had been around for many thousands of years looking after the ancient, but dwindling forests, and wondering as to the fate of their long lost "ent wives". Pippin and Merry, with much cajoling, and "hasty words" managed to talk Treebeard and his fellow Ents into joining the fight against Saruman and his forces. This was despite the initial attitude of Treebeard being "not altogether on anyone's *side*, because nobody is altogether on my *side*" (*LotR,* 472).

Then there were the trees of Mirkwood and Fangorn forest, part of what was long ago a contiguous block of forest known as "Greenwood the Great". Now many of the trees were so ancient, and "angry" about their desecration over the eons, they exuded a palpable sensation that "any that walked on two legs" might feel the trees wished to crush and strangle them (*LotR*, pp 546-547) though most especially Orcs.

A similar state of not-so-latent maliciousness by ancient trees was also shown in the embodiment of "Old Man Willow". The ancient tree did not trust men because of the destruction of his kin by ax and fire caused by Men and Orcs. In *The Adventures of Tom Bombadil* (pp 197-198), when Bombadil came into the area of Old Man Willow, the tree trapped and tried to strangle him. Only through song, cajoling, and convincing of Bombadil's good intentions was he able to be freed from the Tree's clutches. A similar situation occurred with the Hobbits from the chapter "The Old Forest" (*The Fellowship of the Ring*, pp 116-121), when Old Man Willow captured Merry and Pippin in a similar fashion, and only Bombadil was able to save them by threatening Old Man Willow with "Old grey Willow-man! I'll freeze his marrow cold if he don't behave himself." (*LotR* p. 120).[5]

A third distinct version of tree "awareness" was manifest in the "Huorns". These trees were considered more "sleepy", less "awake" than the Ents, and more malicious. They wreaked their revenge upon any that would threaten their kind with axe or fire. The Huorns were also capable of being far more mobile than the likes of "Old Man Willow". Huorns were used to help turn the tide of the Battle of Helm's Deep in The Two Towers. The Huorns traveled the many leagues from Fangorn forest to Helm's Deep, and cleaned up the mess of the remaining Uruk-hai and Dunlendings by surrounding, capturing and cutting off the escape of the orcs who were never to be seen again.

Trees played an especially strong role in Tolkien's personal and public life and in his writing. Tolkien best summed up his overall attitude towards trees versus man and industry with his 1955 letter to his American publisher, Houghton Mifflin Co. stating,

> "The ennoblement of the ignoble I find specially moving. I am (obviously) much in love with plants and above all trees, and always have been; and I find human maltreatment of them as hard to bear as some find ill-treatment of animals."
> **Letters #165**

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Notes

[1] http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/

[2] It is interesting to note that Tolkien in his last sketches on the subject in ,Myths Transformed' downgraded the Two Trees' rôle significantly. See also Note 2. - Editor: T.M.

[3] Please note that the Professor returned later in his life to the rôle of the Two Trees in his *legendarium*, and wrote down a rough draft (like an aid to memory) for the cornerstones of this "new" mythology. According to Christopher Tolkien, this development didn't go far, probably because his father recognized that "the old structure was too comprehensive, too interlocked in all its parts, indeed its roots too deep, to withstand such a devastating surgery." **The History of Middle-earth, Vol. 10. Myths Transformed**

In this "new mythology" Tolkien wrote:

> " *The Making of the Sun and Moon must occur long before the coming of the Elves; and cannot be made to be after the death of the Two Trees - if that occurred in any connexion with the sojourn of the Noldor in Valinor. The time allowed is too short. Neither could there be woods and flowers &c. on earth, if there had been no light since the overthrow of the Lamps!(1)*"
> *The History of Middle-earth, Vol. 10. Myths Transformed*

As you already see from this short text, the rôle of the trees in the myth would have been shaken to its foundations. - Editor: T.M.

[4] Creature of speculative nature in the form reminiscent of a gigantic spider. With „speculative" not the form is meant, but Ungoliant's nature: „The Eldar did not know whence she came". **Silmarillion. Of the Darkening of Valinor**. Although there are several good guesses as to her nature, it is not entirely clear. If one says „the hideous giant spider" it is normal to think of a **natural** animal of gigantic size. A „demon" in the form of a gigantic spider is something entirely different. - Editor: T.M.

[5] In the context of the Old Forest remember that Old Man Willow was perhaps the most powerful and malicious "Huorn" (for want of a better word) there that controlled many of the trees, but that there were lots of other sentient or semi-sentient trees as well. Remember Merry's report about the Bucklanders fighting off the trees who attempted to breach the Hedge:

> "They do say the trees do actually move, and can surround strangers and hem them in. In fact long ago they attacked the Hedge: they came and planted themselves right by it, and leaned over it. But the hobbits came and cut down hundreds of trees, and made a great bonfire in the Forest, and burned all the ground in a long strip east of the Hedge. After that the trees gave up the attack, but they became very unfriendly."
> **The Lord of the Rings.Book I - The Old Forest**

- Editor: T.M.

The Tolkien Email List

The eldest of the lists
This Tolkien discussion group has existed since the
First Age before the world was made round…..

Join and contribute
Our list has existed since the early 1990s with many
members who have been here for years beyond count….

Now we have moved to Google and have become a private
Google Group.

To request to subscribe to this group, please visit
the following page:

http://groups.google.com/group/tolkien_list/subscribe?hl=en-GB

or contact rossiele@yahoo.com

(Elena Rossi, ½ Listowner)

Númenóreans in Endor

An essay on the Númenórean influence in Middle-earth

by
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OPTIONAL

In this essay we attempt to make a summary and analyse the main aspects of Númenórean influence in Endor, from their first travels of exploration to the later exploitation of Endorian peoples and the War with Sauron. We then make a brief point of what their lingering influence might have been after the Downfall of Númenor and the defeat of Sauron in the War of the Last Alliance, which brought a power void never experienced before in Endor.

We divided this history into large temporal segments, in order to discuss more fully each time period.

The Isolation of Númenor (1-600)

At the beginning of the Second Age, the survivors of the Three Houses of Men who had fought alongside the Eldar in Beleriand were rewarded by the Valar with a new home, the island of Númenor. So they gathered and sailed to their new homeland.

> *"Then the Edain set sail upon the deep waters, following the Star; and the Valar laid a peace upon the sea for many days, and sent sunlight and a sailing wind, so that the waters glittered before the eyes of the Edain like rippling glass, and the foam flew like snow before the stems of their ships. [...] Then they went up out of the sea and found a country fair and fruitful, and they were glad. And they called that land Elenna, which is Star-wards; but also Anadûnë, which is West-ernesse, Nùmenòrë in the High Eldarin tongue."*
>
> **Akallabêth, Sil**

None of the Three Houses had ever dwelt close to the Sea, and they knew nothing of sailing and shipwrighting. Guided by the star Eärendil, they were assisted in their travel by the Falathrim of Círdan.

> *It is said that when the Edain first set sail upon the Great Sea, following the Star to Númenor, the Elvish ships that bore them were each steered and captained by one of the Eldar deputed by Círdan; and after the Elvish steersmen departed and took with them the most part of their ships it was long before the Númenóreans themselves ventured far to sea. But there were shipwrights among them who had been instructed by the Eldar; and by their own study and devices they improved their art until they dared to sail ever further into the deep waters*
>
> **Description of the island of Númenor, UT**

Númenor was relatively close to the Undying Lands, but the Ban of the Valar forbade the Númenóreans to sail westwards beyond sight of their coast, and Middle-earth was a land marred by the touch of Morgoth, and thus of little interest to them, the people of Númenor remained content in their homeland for many centuries. The first vessels built in Númenor in the following years were probably not used for more than fishing or at most coastal trade.

> *The hardiest of the people were the fisherfolk; fish were abundant all about the coasts, and were at all times a chief source of food in Númenor; and all the towns where many people congregated were set by the shores. From the fisherfolk were mostly drawn the Mariners, who as the years passed grew greatly in importance and esteem.*
>
> **Description of the island of Númenor, UT**

As they came to their new home, the Three Houses abandoned their formal division and accepted the kingship of Elros, as ordained by the Valar. He was the son of Eärendil who saved Middle-earth from the rule of Morgoth by challenging the Belegaer and the Enchanted Isles of Valinor, and who guided the Edain to Elenna.

From UT, we learn that the Edain "brought with them to Númenor the knowledge of many crafts, and many craftsmen who had learned from the Eldar, besides preserving lore and traditions of their own." Yet Númenor, though being rich in stone and wood, had little wealth of metals, especially precious ones, and treasures brought from Endor or given as gifts by the Elves of Eressëa were for long time prized heirlooms.

Among the crafts learned from the Elves there was smithery, and "Swords the Guild of Weapon-smiths still made, for the preservation of the craft, though most of their labour was spent on the fashioning of tools for the uses of peace." It is also said that "[a]xes and spears and bows they had, and shooting with bows on foot and on horseback was a chief sport and pastime of the Númenóreans."

Horses were brought from Middle-earth too, and soon Númenórean horses were bred to grow large and sustain the weight of a full-sized Númenórean man, whereas most of the horses in Middle-earth were of small size and could not carry a rider from Andor.

For centuries, the Númenóreans were happy to settle in their island-kingdom, the elven-mariners from Avallónë being their only contact with the outside world.

The rise of the Guild of the Venturers (600-1098)

It was in the time of Tar-Elendil (590-740) that some Númenóreans took interest in sailing to the East, explored the coasts of northwestern Middle-earth and made contact with the Eldar. All of this was mainly due to the effort of Vëantur of Rómenna and Anardil, Tar-Elendil's grandson.

In 600 a ship captained by Vëantur, Entulessë, the „Return", sailed to Middle-earth and reached the Grey Havens. Here Vëantur and his crew met with Gil-galad and Círdan the Shipwright, and restored an old friendship; and they also met with their long-sundered kin in Eriador:

> But when they [the Men of Eriador] looked on the shipmen fear left them, though for a while they stood silent in awe; for mighty as they were themselves accounted among their kin, the shipmen resembled rather Elvish lords than mortal Men in bearing and apparel. Nonetheless they felt no doubt of their ancient kinship; and likewise the shipmen looked with glad surprise upon the Men of Middle-earth, ... But now they looked upon faces free from the Shadow and Men who could have walked in Númenor and not been thought aliens save in their clothes and their arms. Then suddenly, after the silence, both the Númenóreans and the Men of Eriador spoke words of welcome and greeting in their own tongues, as if addressing friends and kinsmen after a long parting. ... It appears that they [the Eriadorans]were in origin Men of the same stock as the Peoples of Bëor and Hador who had not crossed the Blue Mountains into Beleriand during the First Age.
> **Aldarion and Erendis, UT**

As nothing more is said about the voyage of the Entulessë, we may assume that its crew did not make any contact with other folk, and that they simply pursued a return to the old lands they knew, where the Elves now dwelt.

> Thereafter seafaring became the chief enterprise for daring and hardihood among the men of Númenor;...
> **Description of the island of Númenor, UT**

In the following years other embassies were exchanged with Gil-galad, but given elven attitude for trade, it is unlikely that the Númenóreans sought for goods they could not find in their island, such as metals. Instead, it is safe to assume that a basic trade was started with the Men of Eriador, who had access to some resources, mainly precious metals. In turn, the Men of Eriador received many teachings from the Númenóreans, such as the rudiments of agriculture, the harvesting of grain and the making of wine, and the building of structures of wood and stone; and they learned about Eru and the Valar, and how to properly rule and order themselves.

When Vëantur was old, he passed his role as Elf-friend among the Númenóreans and explorer to Anardil, nephew of both himself and the King. Vëantur's last voyage and Anardil's first one took place between 725 and 727, when the boy was still very young, on the ship Númerramar (S. "West-wings"). In this voyage they traveled through Lindon and western Eriador, and Anardil spent long time under the teaching of Círdan the Shipwright, and became a great friend of Gil-galad. The Elvenking saw the potential of an alliance between the Eldar and the Númenóreans, and probably instilled in the boy the interest for Middle-earth, although at first he did not reveal to him his worries about a new rise of the Shadow.

Afterwards Anardil took many travels and he always kept written records of them, greatly contributing to the advancement of shipwrighting, geography and other lore. He embarked on a second voyage, this time as captain of the Númerramar, between 730 and 733. A third voyage took place between 735 and 739, and brought the exploration of all the coasts between the mouths of the Baranduin and those of Anduin, where Anardil made contacts with the Nandor of Belfalas.

The successor of Tar-Elendil was Tar-Meneldur (740-883): he was a lover of peace and was more interested in star-lore than navigation, and attempted to restrain his son Anardil from sailing to Middle-earth, but to no avail. In this time Anardil strengthened the relations with Gil-galad, extended the exploration of Middle-earth, made contact with many peoples living on the shores and founded the first Númenórean outpost in Middle-earth, Vinyalondë, although little was known in Númenor about his efforts. The Guild of the Venturers was founded and the Númenóreans began their sea-faring tradition.

In the first years of Tar-Meneldur's reign his son Anardil stayed in Númenor where "he put to use the knowledge he had gained of Círdan concerning the making of ships, devising much anew of his own thought, and he began also to set men to the improvement of the havens and the quays, for he was ever eager to build greater vessels". At last he conceived ambitious expeditions, and to this end in 750 he founded the Guild of the Venturers, becoming its Great Captain and attracting many hardy young men from all over Númenor. By his knowledge and craft he built a ship to serve as his moving palace and as Guildhouse of the Venturers, and he called it Eämbar (S. "Sea-house"). The Venturers grew in esteem and they were called by the people Uninendili (S. "Lovers of Uinen"), after the wife of Ossë and the protector of Númenórean ships, and it became a tradition that the Queen put a branch of *oiolairë* tree on the prow of every ship to bless its journey.

Between 750 and 800 Anardil set out many expeditions composed of more than a ship, and the size of vessels was increased so that they carried many men and great goods. At this time he probably made the first contacts with those Men who inhabited the lands around the Gwathló and the Isen.

At the end of the 8th century of the Second Age, after his father set a rule to restrain logging in Númenor, Anardil became interested in the great forests of Eriador, and he founded the first Númenórean outpost on Endor, Vinyalondë at the mouths of Gwathló. During the building of the haven, he established relations with the tribes of Men living nearby: those people belonged to a different kin than those living around Evendim, and were shorter and darker. They were in fact related to the Folk of Haleth, but both parts failed to recognize the ancient kinship between them. Anardil, maybe on suggestion of Gil-galad, probably tried to obtain the friendship of these people and taught them the basics of agriculture and smithery, and though at first the wild men were frightened by the "Men from the Sea", eventually they accepted their presence and maybe established some primitive trade, in which the locals would offer hides and other products of the forest, and the Númenóreans gave finished products such as tools and clothes. The Númenóreans simply called them Gwathlódain, "Men of Gwathló", although later they would be also known as Brêg Taurwaith, "Wild Forest-folk".

In 800 Anardil was proclaimed King's Heir by his father, and for a time he restrained himself from traveling, although the Venturers still journeyed to Mithlond and Vinyalondë. In that time, however, the Gwathlódain became aware of the danger posed by the Númenóreans to their lands, as the settlers would fell great areas of trees to build their ships. Until that time, Númenóreans had never brought with them any weapon, except some axes for logging or bows for hunting. Yet, at that time they had to face the hostility of the

tribes of Gwathló who saw them as invaders and, though scattered and without any central leadership, were numerous, warlike and knew the land better than the mariners.

Anardil returned to Vinyalondë in 806, and he spent seven years fighting back the Men of Gwathló. It may have been at this time that Gil-galad asked the sea-captain's support in exploration, and in establishing contact with the Dark Elves of the East. Elven sailors had tried a northern way before, but found that it was too dangerous because of storms and the lingering evil of Morgoth's realm, and the sea was frozen for long winters, with floating ice threatening the hulls of ships. Therefore Gil-galad and his loremasters had resolved to look for a southward route to the East, although they had not yet been successful in the enterprise.

In this time, Anardil probably increased friendly relations with the Men of Eriador, and he traveled farther South, around and beyond Belfalas, where he met with the inhabitants of those lands. On the northern coasts, he met tribes akin to the Men of Gwathló, and it is possible that for this reason all those tribes sharing their language, their wild look, and the preference to live in deep forests of dark valleys were given the common name Gwathuirim, "People of Shades". Anardil came back to Númenor in 813 with a great bounty of silver and gold. This detail is worth underlining – never before did the Venturers gather precious metals in the travels. Who were these folks so rich in metals? We can imagine they were living in the great river valleys south of Belfalas, and were probably akin to later Haradrim and peoples of Umbar, and though they were but herders of sheep, their land was rich in precious metals, and Anardil, after learning how to communicate with them, taught them agriculture and the casting of iron, and presented them tools and clothes from Númenor, possibly even coloured glass beads, bells and mirrors, being rewarded by them with silver and gold. This was the starting point of the Venturers's profitable trade in Endor, which made their Guild self-sustaining in later years, even without the support of the crown. The Númenóreans may have called such peoples Malcelebrim, "Lords of Gold and Silver".

The news of the hostilities and the death of some Númenóreans in Eriador greatly troubled Tar-Meneldur, but it was only later that he took action, and between 816 and 820 Anardil sailed again to Endor; then the King forbade Anardil to sail again to Middle-earth, but in 824 he defied his father's will, and was thus stripped of his title as Lord of the Ships and Havens of Númenor. Tar-Meneldur ban-

ned the Guild of the Venturers and closed the shipyards of Rómenna, forbidding the felling of trees for the purpose of shipbuilding. And thereafter Anardil sailed without the blessing of the *oiolairë*.

Bound by no authority save his own, and counselled by Gil-galad, Anardil sailed then southwards on the Palarran (S. "Far-wandering"), exploring the western coasts of Middle-earth and making contacts with the wild men of those countries.

> "Then the Men of Middle-earth were comforted, and here and there upon the western shores the houseless woods drew back, and Men shook off the yoke of the offspring of Morgoth, and unlearned their terror of the dark. And they revered the memory of the tall Sea-kings, and when they had departed they called them gods, hoping for their return; for at that time the Númenóreans dwelt never long in Middle-earth, nor made there as yet any habitation of their own. Eastward they must sail, but ever west their hearts returned."
> **Akallabêth, Sil**

More Thoughts on the Men of Middle-earth

Beyond the lands of the Malcelebrim there was a wide river valley, probably inhabited by different peoples, akin to the later inhabitants of the Seven Lands. They were probably no more than fishermen and herders of sheep and goats, and did not possess any great wealth beside their livestock. To the Númenóreans these Men had nothing strikingly different from the Malcelebrim, besides looks and language, and maybe they chose to call them according to their own name for themselves: Majitu, People of the River, which the Númenóreans translated as Magiwaith. They had welcomed the Númenóreans as friends, and possibly as protectors against the more powerful folk upriver, riders of what Anardil and his crew judged foul and ugly beasts, and were indeed camels coming from beyond the great mountains to the East.

Besides these peoples, Anardil found others by sailing upriver in the wide and muddy waters of the Balduin, the "Mighty River", which connected the Belegaer to a great freshwater lake surrounded by lush and impenetrable forests. On the coasts of that lake Anardil and his men met with dark-skinned men. The Venturers named the lake Mirror-waters, Nen Celedril, and established contact with some Men, living on the other side of a large river that was called Koro. These people, whose skin was black as night, at first seemed ugly and alien to the Venturers, but after some

time basic communication was possible and they established friendship, and taught them many ways of civilisation.

It is likely that both the Magiwaith and these Black Men were troubled by remnants of Morgoth's evil, in superstition and fear, and also by a physical threat from other folks oppressing them. By learning from the Númenóreans, they established the first villages, planted crops, built earthen or wooden walls, and by medicine their lives became longer and healthier.

Anardil returned briefly to Númenor in 829 but left that same year:

> He had sailed first to the haven of Vinyalondë, and thence he had made a great coastwise journey southwards, far beyond any place yet reached by the ships of the Númenóreans; but returning northwards he had met contrary winds and great storms, and scarce escaping shipwreck in the Harad found Vinyalondë overthrown by great seas and plundered by hostile men. Three times he was driven back from the crossing of the Great Sea by high winds out of the West, and his own ship was struck by lightning and dismasted; and only with labour and hardship in the deep waters did he come at last to haven in Númenor.
> **Aldarion and Erendis, UT**

During this last voyage, Anardil traveled southwards along the coast, beyond the Balduin, and sailed past deserted beaches and wild lands where no child of Ilúvatar ever lived. And he finally came to the land's end, where the waters of Belegaer meet those of the Inner Sea which once was the Sea of Ringil. And there his ships were pushed back by fierce storms, and landed in southward lands which were severed from the continent after the Battle of the Powers, the legendary Harendor, "Southern Middle-earth", which the Venturers called "Morendor", "Black Middle-earth", some say because of its black volcanic beaches, some say because the southern sky was dark and uninviting, and they believed no creature but ancient and forgotten beasts and spirits would have that land as their abode.

Anardil finally returned home in 843 and obtained the pardon of the King and his titles, and was also given the charge of Master of the Forests, overlooking the felling and replacements of trees in Númenor; and the Guild of the Venturers was restored.

For twenty years, between 843 and 863, Anardil remained in Númenor, and in that period he built the Calmindon, the Light-tower of Rómenna, which was to become the model for many others built on the shores of Endor.

His captains, lacking his courage and his re-sources, abandoned his great expeditions and only sailed to Vinyalondë and Mithlond.

Then again Anardil set sail to Middle-earth, summoned by the pleas of the Venturers, and the need to repair Vinyalondë, that had been further damaged by sea-storms; at that time Gil-galad brought him news about some lord in Middle-earth who hated the men of the ships, and who was probably behind the plun-der of Vinyalondë more than twenty years be-fore. Between 863 and 869 Anardil fought back the Gwathlódain and destroyed great areas of woodland around the mouths of the Gwathló and moved inland around the banks of the river for more wood, which was then floated to Vinyalondë.

After eight years home, Anardil built the Hirilondë (S. "Haven of Lords"), which his men called the Turuphanto (Ad. "Wooden Whale"), the largest ship ever built up to that time, and in 877 he left for what was meant to be a short voyage, and a last one before his marriage. But while he was in Middle-earth, Gil-galad revealed to him more news about a rising threat inland, and he delayed his return. Undoubtedly the Hirilondë was instrumental for more thorough exploration, being able to comfortably carry many more Men, both ar-med warriors and loremasters who could di-sembark for expeditions inland without fear of being threatened by beasts or other Men, be-cause of their numbers. We may suppose the Hirilondë stopped in all the lands known at that time by the Númenóreans, collecting all kinds of information and establishing contact with new tribes of Men never met before by the Venturers.

Nobody knows exactly what discoveries were made, and what secrets were uncovered by this expedition, but on his homecoming, in 882, Anardil brought with him a letter of plea from Gil-galad to Tar-Meneldur, by which the Elvenking openly asked for the assistance of the Númenóreans against the rise of a servant of Morgoth in the East. At that Tar-Meneldur renounced the sceptre and passed his powers to his son, whom he deemed more fit for such a responsibility. Therefore the following year Anardil ascended the throne as Tar-Aldarion (883-1075).

Immediately after his crowning he set sail to Middle-earth, being the first King to leave Númenor, and he visited Gil-galad in Mithlond discussing a strategy against the threat in the East. He journeyed often and again, and he greatly promoted the develop-ment of the Guild of the Venturers, who in the first years of his reign built the city of Tharbad, a logging outpost on the higher cour-se of the Gwathló, not far from the boundaries of Eregion. In that city Aldarion met with Ga-ladriel, who at that time was Queen of that realm. Aldarion's voyages remained frequent until 901, after which they became less com-mon. His last voyage as King was towards the end of the 10th century.

To his dismay, his works at Vinyalondë we-re never completed as he desired, as other sea-storms ruined the harbour, and during his reign it never grew into the mighty fortress it was meant to be. There were several petty wars with tribes of the Gwathló, which displa-ced them from their territories towards the Hithaeglir; the Númenóreans saw the Gwathlódain as Men of Darkness, and although they did not fight them actively, still they defended their activities without under-standing the reasons of their wild kin.

We do not know who became Lord of Ships and Havens after Aldarion, but surely the chief candidate to that position may have been Soronto, the son of his elder sister Aili-nel. However, there should have been no good relation between him and the King, as Aldarion still managed the operations in Midd-le-earth, and as he changed the Law of Succes-sion to allow his daughter Ancalimë take the sceptre, thus stripping Soronto of his chance of becoming King. It is also possible that Alda-rion chose to send Soronto away as a Captain to keep him away from Armenelos. It was in this time that the relations with Men of Midd-le-earth were strengthened, and under Núme-nórean impulse the first towns were built to serve as harbours and markets; and the leaders of those towns, because of their riches and their knowledge, became mighty lords among the Men of Middle-earth. This tendency was strongest among the Malcelebrim, but possibly small harbours were established by the Magi-waith and the Black Men of Koro. We can imagine that a Númenórean expedition trave-led eastwards along the Harnen river, making contacts with the ancient market towns of that region, and uncovering more signs of the in-fluence of Shadow over the Endorians.

Shortly after Aldarion's last voyage as King to Middle-earth (c. 1000), Sauron chose Mor-dor to make into his stronghold, and he star-ted the construction of Barad-dûr. This decisi-on was influenced by the strength of Eregion and the increased activities of Númenóreans on the coasts of Eriador, and their alliance with Gil-galad. At this Sauron must have suspected that some of his moves had been no-ticed by the Elves, and decided to withdraw from Eriador for a time, in the hope that his enemies would lower their guard. It may be assumed that he sent many of his servants among the peoples around Mordor fostering conflicts and wars, and especially among the peoples of Harnen, who turned hostile to-wards the Númenóreans, and welcomed them no more in their towns.

In 1075 Tar-Aldarion surrendered the sceptre to his daughter, Tar-Ancalimë (1075-1280). He probably took back the Title of Lord of Ships and Havens in Númenor, and once again traveled frequently to meet Gil-galad and strengthen Vinyalondë and its shipy-ards. After his death in 1098, Ancalimë let the Venturers go as was their desire, but lent no support to them or Gil-galad.

Soronto and the development of the Guild's hegemony (1098-1400)

After Tar-Aldarion, his successors on the throne of Númenor took little interest in Middle-earth. Soronto, as leader of the Ven-turers, probably followed Aldarion's steps, at first carrying on his policy of diplomacy and close relations with the Eldar and the Men of Middle-earth, building an alliance against the rising Shadow in the East. He still longed for the throne, but was finally denied it when the Queen married Hallacar of Emerië, a shepherd like her. After that it is likely that Soronto re-solved to create his own dominion in Middle-earth as Great Captain of the Venturers: de-prived of the financial support of the Queen, he needed to sustain his men and remodelled the organisation and activities of the Ven-turers. Instead of attempting other risky and expensive explorations in lands not likely to be populated, Soronto chose to focus on rela-tions with peoples already known. Where Al-darion had been an explorer and a teacher, So-ronto was an administrator and a diplomat.

He greatly supported those chieftains whom he could trust, and let them grow in wealth, fame and power, and by the Ven-turer's help the Men of Middle-earth secured their lands against the threat of the Shadow. Harbours were delved and walls erected, and the Venturers brought to Númenor not only the wood of Gwathló, but also gold, silver and gems, and iron, copper, hides of marvellous beasts, hardwood and spices. Under Soronto's guide, the Guild kept the Gwathlódain away from its towns, and the waterway of Gwathló remained safe. Relations with Lindon remai-ned good, but there was little support Soronto could offer to Gil-galad without the financial support of the Númenórean crown.

Thus the Venturers survived managing their own business in Middle-earth, still main-taining good relations with the Eldar, and ef-fectively becoming a parallel power to that of the King. It is possible that such change was even started by Aldarion, at first when he was denied support from his father in his youth, and later foreseeing the policies of his daugh-

ter; although saddened to renounce the help of his own line, he was led to this by the need to support the Eldar against the Shadow.

Aldarion's worries were well founded, as it was during this time that Sauron wore his mask as Annatar and tried to seduce the Eldar. Gil-galad closed his kingdom to him, and he became even more alarmed by the rising Shadow, and sent his servants abroad to warn the Elves and gather more information. But Eregion honoured Annatar as a great guest and he rose high in power and esteem.

As Sauron was welcomed in Eregion, the Venturers started to build other permanent havens. The coincidence of the two events may indicate that Sauron's spies had become more and more active in spreading worship of Morgoth and hatred against Elves and Númenóreans. The pressure against their allies may have convinced Soronto of the need of a permanent Númenórean presence in many areas of the continent.

The first permanent havens of the Númenóreans were probably set at the mouths of rivers, serving as markets, harbours and fortresses. Most of them were possibly built close to the allies' settlements: the Malcelebrim and the Magiwaith were the most likely to welcome the Númenórean presence on their coasts.

We don't know who succeeded Soronto as the leader of the Venturers, but we may well imagine that he left his position to a relative, thus contributing to earning the Guild a deeper distrust from the crown. Soronto's successors continued his policy of strengthening and alliance-building.

The height of the Guild (1400-1700)

It was towards the end of the time of Tar-Anárion (1280–1394) that Vinyalondë was probably completed as a fortress and many ships were built there, and its name changed to Lond Daer, the Great Harbour.

The flow of goods between Middle-earth to Númenor increased, though quantities were still small, and served well to cover the costs of maintaining the Guild of the Venturers, who built alliances with local leaders of Men and actively promoted Númenórean civilisation.

As time went by, the Venturers rose in power and numbers and they built many other outposts in Middle-earth. Their conflict with the Gwathlódain became bitter and the Númenóreans resolved to displace utterly the Wild Men from the Vale of Gwathló:

> *The fellings had at first been along both banks of the Gwathló, and timber had been floated down to the haven (Lond Daer [Vinyalonde]); but now the Númenóreans drove great tracks and roads into the forests northwards and southwards from the Gwathló, and the native folk that survived fled from Minhiriath into the dark woods of the great Cape of Eryn Vorn, south of the mouth of the Baranduin, which they dared not cross, even if they could, for fear of the Elvenfolk. From Enedwaith they took refuge in the eastern mountains where afterwards was Dunland; they did not cross the Isen nor take refuge in the great promontory between Isen and Lefnui that formed the north arm of the Bay of Belfalas [...] because of the "Púkel-men"....*
> **The Port of Lond Daer, UT**

In the same period, the Elven-smiths of Eregion, under the teachings of Annatar, reached the height of their skills, and they began the forging of the Rings of Power. Annatar spent most of his time in Eregion, but it is possible that he temporarily took leave from there to meet with his minions, and let them blow over the fire of anger of the Brêg Taurwaith, to keep the war against the Númenóreans going.

It is possible to imagine that at this time the Guild had become a rich organisation and could start to look beyond its traditional harbours. With the blessing of Gil-galad, they resumed the explorations started by Aldarion and, for the first time, braved the Straits of Hyarmentil and the Inner Seas, where they established contacts with other tribes of Black Men, some of whom were worshippers of Shadow and slaves to Morgoth's old minions. Further north, they may have met fairer populations, the Múranians related to the westerly Magiwaith, who had already developed a kingdom of their own, although plagued by superstition spread by Sauron's spies; the Lynerians, loyal mariners and brave merchants who still resisted the lure of Shadow; and the Vulmaw, fierce sailors and warriors who saw the Men of the West as competitors over the rule of the seas.

It was under Tar-Telperien's reign (1556 – 1731), though, that the long-feared moment, when the Shadow would make itself manifest, would come. Tar-Telperien was the second Ruling Queen of Númenor, and like Tar-Ancalimë she was single-minded and peculiar. Although her reign was long, she is not remembered for any specific act, and singular is

also her choice not to marry, leaving her without descendants.

We can not but conjecture on the reasons of this. There is also a problem related to her reign: while in UT it is stated that she reigned until 1731, in LotR it is recorded that a fleet was sent to Endor in 1700 by Tar-Minastir, her successor.

> *The date 1731 here given for the end of the rule of Tar-Telperien and the accession of Tar-Minastir is strangely at variance with the dating, fixed by many references, of the first war against Sauron; for the great Númenórean fleet sent by Tar-Minastir reached Middle-earth in the year 1700. I cannot in any way account for the discrepancy.*
> **Christopher Tolkien, Note to The Line of Elros, UT**

One possible hypothesis could be that Tar-Telperien was not interested in government, and while she indulged in other activities, her court became increasingly alarmed by her attitude and forced her, with or without her agreement, to accept a Regent who would take charge of some issues she neglected. And for that they choose the heir apparent, son of Telperien's younger brother Isilmo. This situation could have well been arranged by Tar-Súrion himself, who died in 1574.

Under Telperien's and her Regent's rule the Venturers continued to grow in fame and power, and their weight in the economy of Númenor began to be felt, possibly because of their trade of timber and metals. Their territory around the Gwathló increased with wars, and Sauron began to perceive them as a threat:

> *The devastation wrought by the Númenóreans was incalculable. For long years these lands [the mouths of Gwathló] were their chief source of timber, not only for their ship-yards at Lond Daer and elsewhere, but also for Númenor itself. Shiploads innumerable passed west over the sea. The denuding of the lands was increased during the war in Eriador; for the exiled natives welcomed Sauron and hoped for his victory over the Men of the Sea. Sauron knew of the importance to his enemies of the Great Haven and its ship-yards. and he used these haters of Númenor as spies and guides for his raiders. He had not enough force to spare for any assault upon the forts at the Haven or along the banks of the Gwathló. but his raiders made much havoc on the fringe of the forests, setting fire in the woods and burning many of the great wood-stores of the Númenóreans.*
> **The Port of Lond Daer, UT**

The Gwathlódain turned to Sauron for help, and he stirred their hatred against the Men of the Sea, making wars bitter and bitter. In spite of this, the Venturers drove inland, and the town of Tharbad became an important station for their traffic. No longer did the Venturers keep to the coast, and their approach to Middle-earth had become more and more aggressive and militarised. Evidently, both they and their ally Gil-galad had perceived a need for change, to face a growing threat, both from the presence of Annatar in Eregion and the growing hatred for Elves and Númenóreans among the Men of Middle-earth.

It was as this escalation was in progress, that events that would change the history of Arda took place. In SA 1590, the Gwaith-i-Mírdain completed the last three Rings of Power. Shortly thereafter the worst happened, in SA 1600 Annatar, the mentor of the Elvensmiths, crafted the One Ring in his secret forge of Sammath Naur, and by this act he revealed himself as Sauron.

Events immediately precipitated: Celebrimbor, understanding the purpose of the One to rule and enslave the other Rings of Power, ordered to hide them. Of the Three, he gave Nenya to Galadriel in Lórinand and Vilya and Narya to Gil-galad, informing them of the betrayal of Annatar. Although the existence of the Rings was kept a secret among the kings of the Eldar, Gil-galad contacted the Venturers and entrusted them with pleas to the Queen of Númenor and the Regent to send help against the upcoming war with Sauron, as the forces of the Eldar and the Venturers alone could never withstand the invasion which was being prepared.

> Now for long years the Númenóreans had brought in their ships to the Grey Havens, and there they were welcome. As soon as Gil-galad began to fear that Sauron would come with open war into Eriador he sent messages to Númenor; and on the shores of Lindon the Númenóreans began to build up a force and supplies for war.
> **The History of Galadriel and Celeborn, UT**

After SA 1600 Sauron needed no more to hide his activities, and he completely unleashed his power. The Men of Upper Harnen fell under the worship of Shadow, as did many other peoples close to Mordor. But everywhere in Middle-earth Sauron's spies came out of hiding and stirred the Men of Middle-earth to war and conquest, and Man attacked Man out of greed or fear, and the allies of the Númenóreans were called betrayers by other Men, and they built higher walls for their cities to

separate themselves from the Men of Darkness.

In 1695 the invasion came: Sauron's greatest force must have come from his domain of Mordor, composed of Orcs and Trolls. Wild Men from around Mordor followed them, and other Orcs and Trolls possibly came from the Misty Mountains, and Wargs from the Wild Lands east of it. They joined the Gwathlódain of Eriador, eager to repel the Númenóreans toward the sea, and swept across Eriador. In 1697 they defeated the Elves of Eregion, sakking their capital of Ost-in-Edhil, where they seized most of the Rings of Power and other treasures of the Mírdain; they captured Celebrimbor and many other smiths, and all those who refused to bow to Sauron were tortured, maimed and killed. The remnants of the defeated defenders of Eregion, including battalions sent from Gil-galad and Lothlórien, retreated northwards under the leadership of Elrond Half-elven, son of Eärendil and herald of Gil-galad, and fortified in the vale of Imladris. Whether the Venturers attempted to defend the old settlement of Tharbad we do not know, but it was lost shortly after Eregion, and the Free Peoples organised their line of defence around Lond Daer, Mithlond and the River Lhûn, while Sauron's hordes swarmed through Eriador laying waste to it and enslaving all the survivors of the war. By 1699 Eregion belonged to Sauron. It was then that Númenor finally intervened.

> In 1695, when Sauron invaded Eriador, Gil-galad called on Númenor for aid. Then Tar-Minastir the King sent out a great navy; but it was delayed, and did not reach the coasts of Middle-earth until the year 1700. By that time Sauron had mastered all Eriador, save only besieged Imladris, and had reached the line of the River Lhûn. He had summoned more forces which were approaching from the south-east, and were indeed in Enedwaith at the Crossing of Tharbad, which was only lightly held. Gil-galad and the Númenóreans were holding the Lhûn in desperate defence the Grey Havens, when in the very nick of time the great armament of Tar-Minastir came in; and Sauron's host was heavily defeated and driven back. The Númenórean admiral Ciryatur sent part of his ships to make a landing further to the south.
> **The History of Galadriel and Celeborn, UT**

We do not know what delayed so long the Númenórean host: if we look at the voyage of Aldarion, the trip from Andor to Lindon was a seasonal one, and no longer than a few weeks.

One possibility is that, having never been at war, the Númenóreans took rather a long time assembling, training and equipping an army. This certainly can be a part of the explanation. Another factor might be seasonal winds and currents that delayed the arrival of the fleet. Another part might be that neither Telperien nor the son of Isilmo were eager to get involved in the affairs of Middle-earth. Númenor had fought no war since its foundation, and they saw no reason to send their men to distant Lands of Shadow, for a cause they felt detached from. It was of course difficult for them to understand the size of the Sauronic threat, and it is likely that at first they sent but a few ships to strengthen Lond Daer and Mithlond, and only later, as they received ever worse reports of the situation, finally decided for a decisive involvement, five years after the beginning of the war.

We have already briefly addressed the inconsistency between the reign of Tar-Telperien and the war with Sauron, which in UT is said to have been ordered by Tar-Minastir. One assumption could be that the final decision to intervene came from the Regent at that time, the son of Isilmo, the later Tar-Minastir. This may be because the Queen kept a cool attitude towards Middle-earth, or simply for a political reason, been unwilling to take responsibility of such a risky endeavour.

The Númenórean fleet, led by admiral Ciryatur, disembarked at Mithlond, where the defences were strongest, and from the beginning the superiority of their forces was apparent, especially related to armament:

> In later days, in the wars upon Middle-earth, it was the bows of the Númenóreans that were most greatly feared. "The Men of the Sea," it was said, "send before them a great cloud, as a rain turned to serpents, or a black hail tipped with steel;" and in those days the great cohorts of the King's Archers used bows made of hollow steel, with black-feathered arrows a full ell long from point to notch.
> **Description of the Island of Númenor, UT**

Sauron's forces were driven back from the Lhûn and defeated at Sarn Ford. Then, in Minhiriath, they were assailed from the back by a second smaller army, which Ciryatur had sent to Lond Daer.

> *In the Battle of the Gwathló Sauron was routed utterly and he himself only narrowly escaped. His small remaining force was assailed in the east of Calenardhon, and he with no more than a bodyguard fled to the region afterwards called Dagorlad (Battle Plain), whence broken and humiliated he returned to Mordor, and vowed vengeance upon Númenor. The army that was besieging Imladris was caught between Elrond and Gil-galad, and utterly destroyed. Eriador was cleared of the enemy, but lay largely in ruins.*
> **Description of the Island of Númenor, UT**

By 1701, Eriador had been freed, ensuring the Westlands a long period of peace. However, most of the precious timber resources of the Venturers were gone, as Sauron had set the forests to fire, turning Minhiriath and Enedwaith into barren heaths.

> *When Sauron was at last defeated and driven east out of Eriador most of the old forests had been destroyed. The Gwathló flowed through a land that was far and wide on either bank a desert, treeless but untilled.*
> **The Port of Lond Daer, UT**

After the War, the Elves took secret Council. There they decided to build a stronghold at Imladris rather than rebuild Eregion, and Gil-galad gave Vilya to Elrond, appointed to be master of the Vale. It is unlikely that the Elves were willing to share the secret of the Rings with the King of Númenor, delicate as the matter was for the relations of the two folks; if any mortal was participating in this, it would be the Master of the Venturers, the main ally of Gil-galad and one to truly understand the situation of Middle-earth. And considering the implications, even this is unlikely.

The rise of the Royal Fleet
(1700-2029)

The war was the turning point of Númenórean history in Middle-earth. It was the first time since Aldarion's reign that the crown got involved in Endorian affairs, already the first war of Númenor was a huge success, and the first time that large numbers of Númenóreans traveled to the continent. The war spelled the start of the decline of Vinyalondë and the old settlement of Tharbad, deprived of their economic importance given the scarcity of timber, and their strategic importance in a free Eriador with Eregion gone. But the huge possibilities of Middle-earth now became apparent to many Númenóreans, and the Ven-

turers greatly improved their numbers and resources, with more and more volunteers willing to sail to Endor. In this time they founded permanent settlements along the Bay of Belfalas, settlements encouraged both by Gil-galad and the Númenórean crown as watches over Sauron's stronghold in Mordor.

> *[…] but the Númenóreans had tasted power in Middle-earth, and from that time forward they began to make permanent settlements on the western coasts [dated "c. 1800" in the Tale of Years], becoming too powerful for Sauron to attempt to move west out of Mordor for a long time.*
> **The History of Galadriel and Celeborn, UT**

It was in these years, between 1701 and 1731, that probably the first comprehensive explorations of the western coast of Middle-earth took place, with groups of armed men landing and establishing contacts with many local Men. It was then, too, that Númenórean trading ships reached the wealthy lands of the Inner Seas and the potential of trade was first understood. At the same time, being virtually besieged on three sides, Sauron extended his power eastwards, in regions unknown to the Men of the West.

Tar-Telperien relinquished power in 1731, and died that same year. This was contrary to Númenórean custom, and it may point to a quick debilitation of her body or mind, which forced her to abdicate. The Regent, and son of her brother Isilmo, responsible for the War in Middle-earth, succeeded her as Tar-Minastir (1731 - 1869).

Even after the successful War, he had little interest in Endor, and most probably saw with distrust the growing power and prestige of the Venturers. Even before his crowning he had built a high tower on the hill of Oromet, near Andunië, and from there he gazed westwards, one of the first of his kin to feel a yearning for the immortal lands. This tower gave him his crown name, and it is said he loved the Eldar but envied them. This feeling was later shared by some of his countrymen, even those joining the Venturers:

> *The Númenóreans had now become great mariners, exploring all the seas eastward, and they began to yearn for the West and the forbidden waters; and the more joyful was their life, the more they began to long for the immortality of the Eldar.*
> **The Númenórean Kings, Appendix A, LotR**

The crown prince, though possibly sharing these feelings, was of a different temper than his melancholic father, and refused to look West, rather sailing to the East:

> *[…] he built a great fleet of royal ships, and his servants brought back great store of metals and gems, and oppressed the men of Middle-earth. He scorned the yearnings of his father, and eased the restlessness of his heart by voyaging, east, and north, and south, until he took the sceptre.*
> **The Line of Elros, UT**

He was not interested in the alliance with the Eldar, but rather moved by economic interests in the new lands. For these reasons he might have been at odds with the Venturers, who started to appear as an independent power in Númenor, whose interests were more in line with those of Gil-galad than those of their own King: for this reason the crown prince built a "Royal Fleet" under his command, and with it he pursued his interests more aggressively and farther from the bases of the Eldar and Venturers. In his time the Númenóreans continued their explorations to the eastern edges of the continent, reaching the Eastern Sea, and their trade with far and exotic lands grew substantially. It is likely that, upon making contact with local folk, they requested their alliance against Sauron, having their young princes educated in Númenórean havens, acting as hostages. Some kings bowed to them, mostly out of fear of them or of Sauron; but others tried to resist, and as they took arms against the Men of the Sea, bloody fights erupted between Men, and the Númenóreans called these Men slaves of Sauron, even if they never bowed to him. The prince also sailed northwards, exploring the Bay of Lingering Shadows, possibly looking for a way to sail past Mordor and attack the heart of Sauron's Empire: but he found no way through the rocky coasts, and was not able to reach the eastern seas because of the frozen straits and the floating mountains of ice.

Tar-Minastir left the sceptre to him in 1869, and retired in western Númenor, dying there four years later. The new King (1869 - 2029) took the name Ciryatan, that is "Shipwright". He stopped his travels eastwards but increased the Royal Fleet and empowered his captains, bidding them to explore and found havens on the continent. The Faithful reckon him as a "mighty King, but greedy of wealth" (UT).

> *Moreover, after Minastir the Kings became greedy of wealth and power. At first the Númenóreans had come to Middle-earth as teachers and friends of lesser Men afflicted by Sauron; but now their havens became fortresses, holding wide coastlands in subjection.*
> **The Númenórean Kings, Appendix A, LotR**

Soon, as we read, havens intended as trading posts or stations became fortresses, as tensions grew between the Men of the Sea and the locals, both as a result of Númenórean aggressiveness and the influence of Sauron's spies among the Men of Endor. Whereas the Venturers came as allies and teachers, the Royal Captains made local lords their subjects, thus taking the right to receive tribute and at the same time keeping in check their armed forces under their own orders. Many a king of the Men of Darkness had to swear allegiance to the King of Armenelos, who would extend his knowledge and protection to save his folk from the Shadow. The weakest or less trustworthy of such lords may even have been forced into protectorate, with Númenóreans taking charge of all foreign policies, including the responsibility to maintain a local army, while the rightful local rulers would rule their own internal affairs as they wished. Númenórean ambassadors were sent to many courts, as military officials in charge of troops or teachers to spread the high civilisation of Andor. And though Númenórean warriors organised and trained the troops of their allies, in order to withstand attacks from enemies, all the same they were careful not to share with them all their secrets, lest they turn against them as it happened and would happen again later.

In Tar-Ciryatan's time the Númenóreans' yearning for the West increased together with their power and glory, and murmured against the Ban of the Valar forbidding them to sail westwards. This was the seed of the division that centuries later would tear Númenórean society apart: for while some still honoured their tradition of friendship with the Eldar and loyalty to the Valar, others grew envious and turned more and more aggressive towards what they considered a theft of happiness, as if Eldar and Valar were keeping eternal life from them out of malice.

The establishment of Númenor's empire in Middle-earth (2029-2386)

Tar-Atanamir the Great (2029-2221) succeeded his father Ciryatan: while young he had commanded many ships in Middle-earth substituting his father after his crowning as head of operations in Endor for the Royal Fleet. He was a controversial ruler whose memory is all but honoured by the Faithful:

> *Much is said of this King in the Annals, such as now survive the Downfall. For he was like his father proud and greedy of wealth, and the Númenóreans in his service exacted heavy tribute from the men of the coasts of Middle-earth.*
> **The Line of Elros, UT**

It was in his time that the Númenóreans first openly spoke against the Ban of the Valar, and the Lords of the West grew worried of the their attitude, so they sent Messengers to Tar-Atanamir, warning him of the danger of such unrestrained and blasphemous desires, but his heart was hard, and like him many of his countrymen, feeling robbed of immortality by the Valar, resolved to take what they could from the Men of Middle-earth, and sailed to the East out of desire for the West.

Whereas the King and many Númenóreans felt this way, other countrymen of theirs still deeply honoured their faithfulness to the Valar and the alliance with the Eldar.

> *It is stated that the Guildhouse of the Venturers "was confiscated by the Kings, and removed to the western haven of Andúnië; all its records perished" (i.e. in the Downfall), including all the accurate charts of Númenor. But it is not said when this confiscation of Eämbar took place.*
> **Cristopher Tolkien, Note to Aldarion and Erendis, UT**

Although we do not know when the confiscation of *Eämbar* took place, it seems fit to have it in this period, prior to the rise of the Faithful faction, and yet after the division of Númenórean society. Undoubtedly by this time the Guild of Venturers appeared as a useless independent power, deprived of its riches and prestige by the more successful Royal Fleet, and entertaining good relations with Gil-galad, something which could have well resulted in the accusation of being spies of the Eldar. Tar-Atanamir would have had many a pretext to shut the Guild down once and for all.

So, *Eämbar* was confiscated, and its secret documents examined by the King's envoys. Some of the high members of the Guild would

be arrested, and some of them would escape with the support of the Eldar. This would have been a major blow to the already deteriorating diplomatic relations between Númenor and Lindon.

Why remove *Eämbar* to Andúnië? At first it may seem that it would be the most remote haven from Middle-earth, stating the end of eastwards travels for the Guild. Yet we must not forget that Andúnië would be, later in time, the political centre of the Faithful, and it would be difficult to deny a link between the two. Undoubtedly the surviving Venturers were instrumental in the creation of the Faithful community, and perhaps the early Faithful were allies of the Venturers since the beginning, both feeling threatened by the King's hostile attitude for the Eldar. The removal of *Eämbar* to Andúnië was possible because at the time of the Guild's confiscation its prestige, especially rooted in the past, was still great, and all Númenóreans still honoured the efforts of Tar-Aldarion and the first pioneers. As bad as personal attacks could have been in this time, nobody questioned the glorious past of the Guild, which led to the decision to preserve *Eämbar* as a monument to what was no more.

It is possible that the Guild, although stripped of its possessions and prerogatives by the King, survived as an underground organisation primarily based in Andúnië and the Númenórean havens of Eriador, and financed by Lindon itself.

The Royal Fleet traveled far and wide along Middle-earth's shores, and possibly even circumnavigated it. Númenórean ships came every year to Rómenna laden with tributes from "Men of Darkness", as the Mannish people of Middle-earth were dubbed at that time. Meanwhile, Sauron was consolidating his power and finally, thanks to the silence of the Eldar about the Rings of Power, he was free to grant them to the Kings of the Dwarves and to nine powerful Lords of Men. Such Mannish Lords created strong dominions for themselves and inevitably allied with the cause of Sauron of Mordor, openly or covertly.

> *Those who used the Nine Rings became mighty in their day, kings, sorcerers, and warriors of old. They obtained glory and great wealth, yet it turned to their undoing. [...] And one by one, sooner or later, according to their native strength and to the good or evil of their wills in the beginning, they fell under the thralldom of the ring that they bore and under the domination of the One, which was Sauron's. And they became for ever invisible save to him that wore the Ruling*

> *Ring, and they entered into the realm of shadows.*
> **Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age, Sil**

Three of them were Númenóreans, and we may suppose not all of them attempted to build a kingdom of their own, but rather worked as spies of Sauron inside the Númenórean Empire. And one or more of them may have been the first of those who later would be named "Black Númenóreans", worshipers of Shadow, sorcerers, necromancers, and servants of Sauron.

> *Yet Sauron was ever guileful, and it is said that among those whom he ensnared with the Nine Rings three were great lords of Númenórean race. And when the Ùlairi arose that were the Ring-wraiths, his servants, and the strength of his terror and mastery over Men had grown exceedingly great, he began to assail the strong places of the Númenóreans upon the shores of the sea.*
> **Akallabêth, Sil**

The last years of the reign of Tar-Atanamir marked the end of the peace established after the War in Eriador. Some Lords of Men built armies and the Númenóreans havens, as well as the lands of their allies, were under attack. This, for a time, slowed the expansion of Númenórean hegemony in Middle-earth, as greater numbers of soldiers were needed to protect their fortresses and their allies' lands, and there was war on the coasts: yet, at the same time, the dispatch of Númenórean warriors in Endor sped up the growth of many outposts and the integration between the locals and the Men of the Sea, who protected them but relied on their food and their services to survive.

Tar-Ancalimon (2221-2386) took the sceptre from his father when the latter was forced to step down due to old age and dotardy, dying that same year. As his sire had done before him, Tar-Ancalimon expanded Númenórean influence over the Men of Endor and levied heavy tributes.

> *In his time the rift became wider between the King's Men (the larger part) and those who maintained their ancient friendship with the Eldar. Many of the King's Men began to forsake the use of the Elven-tongues, and to teach them no longer to their children. But the royal titles were still given in Quenya, out of ancient custom rather than love, for fear lest the breaking of the old usage should bring ill-fortune.*
> **The Line of Elros, UT**

During his reign the division of Númenórean society, originating from different attitude towards the Valar and the Eldar, became apparent:

> *Then Tar-Ancalimon, son of Atanamir, became King, and he was of like mind; and in his day the people of Númenor became divided. On the one hand was the greater party, and they were called the King's Men, and they grew proud and were estranged from the Eldar and the Valar. And on the other hand was the lesser party, and they were called the Elendili, the Elf-friends; for though they remained loyal indeed to the King and the House of Elros, they wished to keep the friendship of the Eldar, and they hearkened to the counsel of the Lords of the West. Nonetheless even they, who named themselves the Faithful, did not wholly escape from the affliction of their people, and they were troubled by the thought of death.*
> **Akallabêth, Sil**

According to the LotR timeline, which we will follow in spite of the obvious inconsistencies with the later UT where the two are not conflicting, in Tar-Ancalimon's time there was a great deal of activity around the Bay of Belfalas, with the fortification of Umbar in 2280 and the foundation of Pelargir at the Mouths of Anduin in 2350, the chief haven of the Faithful in Middle-earth. We may safely assume that the threat of Sauron and his allies, among them the Lords of Men who had created their own dominions, convinced the Númenóreans of the need to strengthen their havens and, where possible, cluster them, laying the bases for colonies. The unreliability of local people must also have pushed the Númenóreans to create standing forces, composed of both their own and local people, under their direct command. Regarding Pelargir, many times addressed in Tolkien's writing as the main haven of the Faithful, we can draw several conclusions: the Faithful still continued the tradition of the Venturers, maintaining relations with the Eldar, although no longer openly, Pelargir being relatively close to Lindon and but a day's navigation from Edhellond and Galadriel's Tower; they still maintained harbours in North-western Middle-earth, and it is possible that many of them left Númenor as the result of political difficulties. Yet the crown was not worried about their strong presence in one harbour, being that Pelargir sat so close to Mordor as to constitute a first line of defence against the Shadow.

War on the coasts and explorations inland (2386-2825)

Tar-Telemmaitë (2386-2526) took the sceptre after the death of his father, although he had started joining the rule earlier:

> *Hereafter the Kings ruled in name from the death of their father to their own death, though the actual power passed often to their sons or counsellors; and the days the descendants of Elros waned under the Shadow.*
> **The Line of Elros, UT**

The King took his name because of his love of silver, and over all precious things he craved *mithril*, bading his servants look everywhere for it. As a result Númenóreans must have established sound relations with Dwarves all over Middle-earth, promoting trade with them. Not always, though, must the Dwarves have been welcoming them, especially given that some of them were on good terms with Sauron, and all of their kings already had a Ring of Power. This craze for *mithril* must have resulted in local wars, which damaged relations between Númenor and the Dwarves. Another consequence of the quest for *mithril* could have been the mapping of inland areas of Endor, where expeditions were sent to look for mines, straying from the coasts where Númenóreans had kept their interests up to that time. This of course caused a clash with Sauron's dominions, where such explorers were mistaken for simple spies.

The search for silver and *mithril* also opened new horizons to Númenórean expansion: whereas before the Royal Feet had been looking for settled lands to trade with and from there find allies and exact tributes, now they went to uninhabited lands where mountains and hills had never been excavated. Following traces of precious metals in rivers, they sailed inland and established small settlements, possibly populated with volunteers among the Endorians, and the first explorations of Morendor occurred.

Tar-Telemmaitë's reign marked an increase in luxury and Númenórean nobles started caring about beauty and pleasure as a result of their increasing fear of death. And for the first time the Númenóreans started to build monumental tombs and learned to preserve the bodies of the dead, testimony of their bliss after their spirits had departed Arda. Such lavish lifestyle needed to be financed, and the Royal Fleet continued to sail eastwards:

> *Thus it came to pass in that time that the Númenóreans first made great settlements upon the west shores of the ancient lands; for their own land seemed to them shrunken, and they had no rest or content therein, and they desired now wealth and dominion in Middle-earth, since the West was denied. Great harbours and strong towers they made, and there many of them took up their abode; but they appeared now rather as lords and masters and gatherers of tribute than as helpers and teachers. And the great ships of the Númenóreans were borne east on the winds and returned ever laden, and the power and majesty of their kings were increased; and they drank and they feasted and they clad themselves in silver and gold.*
>
> *In all this the Elf-friends had small part. They alone came now ever to the north and the land of Gil-galad, keeping their friendship with the Elves and lending them aid against Sauron; and their haven was Pelargir above the mouths of Anduin the Great. But the King's Men sailed far away to the south; and the lordships and strongholds that they made have left many rumours in the legends of Men.*
>
> ***Akallabêth, Sil***

Tar-Vanimeldë (2526–2637) succeeded her father, but like her female predecessors she was little interested in government, and especially in foreign affairs. This Queen spent most of her time enjoying courtly life, and left the government to her husband Herucalmo, descendant like her from Tar-Atanamir. After Tar-Vanimeldë's death, Herucalmo took the royal title of Tar-Anducal (2537-2657), withholding the rule from his son with no right. Although many do not reckon him as rightful ruler, he must have been very powerful at his time. His usurpation, though, must have resulted in a relative division among the Númenóreans.

His name, meaning "Light of the West", makes his political agenda clear, styling himself as the source of power, wealth, glory and civilisation for the Men of Middle-earth. He must have stressed the importance of spreading Númenórean culture among the Men of Darkness, and build an empire based on loyalty, to overcome both internal enmities and the tensions aroused by his predecessors Ancalimon, who made many local Men his direct subjects, and Telemmaitë, who made Númenor many enemies. As such, he must have been a more peaceful ruler than others.

Succeeding his usurping father after his death, Tar-Alcarin (2657–2737) took a more aggressive stance than his father. His title name means "Full of Glory", and once his own kingdom was clear of opposing parties, arisen during the usurper's reign, he was dedicated to wars in order to show Númenor's might to his enemies, Sauron and his vassals, the Nine Lords of Men.

Alcarin's oldest son and crown prince was in charge of affairs in Middle-earth, a policy perhaps started by Anducal himself to keep the rightful rulers away, and continued by Alcarin after the great deal of experience he obtained.

> *[…] in his youth he was great captain, and won wide lands along the coasts of Middle-earth. Thus he kindled the hate of Sauron, who nonetheless withdrew, and built his power in the East, far from the shores, biding his time.*
>
> ***The Line of Elros, UT***

Alcarin's son secured many dominions of Númenor, and effectively eliminated the threat of enemies from many lands, and especially the western coasts of the continent. Such lands were always under threat, and we can suppose it was not a rare event that they suffered invasions, or rebelled against the Númenóreans. We may also imagine that he would bring war upon their enemies even inland, especially against the dominions of the Nine, although he could not or did not attempt to hold these lands. He strengthened old cities and built new fortresses and walls, enlarged garrisons and the whole Númenórean war machine. He also ensured the reliability of his allies, eliminating traitors and building an effective structure for Númenor's network of colonies, protectorates and allies. He acted as his father's spokesman in Middle-earth, representing the King to his vassals.

At his father's death the crown prince took the title name of Calmacil, "Bright Sword" (2737-2825). Having lived for many years away from Númenor, he was more accustomed to Adûnaic, spoken by common people, rather than the elven tongues, used in the court, and his Men called him Ar-Belzagar. He continued the tradition of sending the crown prince to Middle-earth as a traveling Viceroy and head of the Royal Fleet.

A divided empire
(2825-3255)

Tar-Ardamin, Ar-Abattârik in Adûnaic, had the significance of "First of the World" or "Pillar of the World". This King continued to withhold the policy of supremacy and majesty of his predecessors, spreading Númenórean civilisation and order in Middle-earth. Tar-Ardamin's son took the Adûnaic title of Ar-Adûnakhôr, the "Lord of the West" (2899 –

2962). This title had a deep significance, first because it was not taken in Quenya, and second because it had been the title of Manwë, first of the Valar. Ar-Adûnakhôr brought to an end the process of detachment of Númenórean culture from its primary root, the traditions of the Eldar. By now most of the Númenóreans held themselves a superior people set to rule over "lesser Men" and bring order and glory to them.

The Faithful, which during his predecessors' reign, had been waning in numbers and power, started to be persecuted with specific laws, of which the first one was the ban of elven tongues. Eldar were no longer welcomed in Númenor, and all official contacts were broken both with Valinor and Lindon.

Ar-Zimrathon (2962-3033), the "Jewelgatherer", styled himself as the richest ruler of Arda. During his reign the flow of tributes from Endor to Númenor reached amounts never dreamed of before. He was probably greedy but had a sense of beauty which resulted in many monuments built in Númenor, and possibly in the main colonies in Middle-earth, as a testimony of his greatness.

From the title name of his successor, Ar-Sakhalthôr, the "Shore-son" (3033-3102), we can presume he had been a great mariner who enlarged and empowered the Royal Fleet, building better communications for Númenor both in terms of safety and availability of support on the routes and by improving the quality of vessels. An enemy of pirates, he founded his rule on his ships, constantly moving Men, riches and information all over the Empire.

Ar-Gimilzôr (3102-3177), the "Silver-fire", focused his reign on solving the divisions that had arisen among the Númenóreans, among them the waning community of the Faithful who had their political centre in Andûnië, and looked at its lord for guidance. He issued severe laws banning the Eldar and the use of their tongues, and neglected the traditional rites related to the worship of Eru. Ironically, his Queen was secretly one of the Faithful, of the House of Andûnië, so that the division of Númenor affected even the Royal Family. In spite of the laws issued since the time of Ar-Adûnakhôr, the Faithful were still a powerful faction, so powerful that even the King did not dare to take direct action against the House of Andûnië.

This "cleaning" of opposite factions undoubtedly affected Númenórean dominions in Middle-earth, where laws were issued against all those factions whose loyalty the King deemed questionable, including the loathsome Black Númenóreans, and even those, loyal to the King, which disagreed with his imperial policies. It was a time of terror, where people

were afraid to speak openly lest they were accused of being enemies of the King and conspirators.

The King had two sons, Inziladûn, the firstborn, who often sided with his mother; and Gimilkhâd, who was more loved by his father. As Ar-Gimilzôr did not trust his elder son, he may have decided not to fully rely on him in Middle-earth, as had been the tradition. It is possible that at this time the King decided to have both of his sons in Endor, assigning Inziladûn to the largest and older dominions, and giving Gimilkhâd the most remote ones, where he could distinguish himself and gain glory.

Inziladûn succeeded his father as the elder son, in spite of Ar-Gimilzôr's preference for his younger son. The new monarch took a name in Sindarin, Tar-Palantir, the "Far-sighted" (3177-3255), and inaugurated a time of freedom, and although his faction was all but popular among many, yet most Númenóreans welcomed the open policies of the new King. The most radical of the King's Men, who had received high offices under Ar-Gimilzôr, were ousted from power, although little could the new King do against the most powerful Houses, and his hand did not reach far into the colonies. As Palantir had no male heir, his representative in Middle-earth remained his brother, leader of what was called the King's Party, a name that naturally assumed Tar-Palantir as not being a rightful monarch. Gimilkhâd resisted his brother's policies setting up his own secret net of supporters and spies, so that the division of the Númenóreans was not overcome. And Gimilkhâd rooted his power in Middle-earth's dominions. We do not know the reason why Palantir appointed his brother as head of the Royal Fleet – it may have been a way of keeping him far from the court in Armenelos, or even a compromise, an attempt to "buy" Gimilkhâd's peace by offering him a part of the power.

Whatever the reason, it is without doubt that Tar-Palantir implemented a great change in the ruling class, and banned most of the persecutory laws of his father (excluding, perhaps, those against Black Númenóreans).

We know From UT that in 3243 Gimilkhâd died, and his son came back from Middle-earth:

> *For Pharazôn son of Gimilkhâd had become a man yet more restless and eager for wealth and power than his father. He had fared often abroad, as a leader in the wars that the Númenóreans made then in the coastlands of Middle-earth, seeking to extend their dominion over Men; and thus he had won great renown as a captain both by land and by sea. Therefore when he came back to Númenor, hearing of his father's death, the hearts of the people were turned to him; for he brought with him great wealth, and was for the time free in his giving.*
> *Akallabêth, Sil*

We may then suppose that Gimilkhâd had retired from his offices in Middle-earth because of age, his body maybe weakened by the hardships of war in hostile lands; but he left his title to his son, who then became the head of the Royal Fleet and won renown and support in Endor. From UT we learn that Ar-Pharazôn had many Captains, and one of the dearest to him, who later would become his advisor, was Amandil of Andúnië, who often resided in Rómenna being a member of the Royal Fleet.

After his father's death (3243) the young Captain returned to Middle-earth, and there stayed renouncing his title. For he knew that Tar-Palantir as well was old and with no male heirs, and then he awaited his moment to take power.

The Kingdom of Men
(3255-3319)

Tar-Palantir died a few years after his brother, and his daughter Míriel, the rightful successor, had not married. Before she was crowned, the King's Party acted by surprise and conquered the palace, so that Gimilkhâd's son took, against the law of Númenor, Míriel as spouse, and they were crowned King and Queen of Númenor, Ar-Pharazôn, the "Golden", and Ar-Zimraphel, the "Jewel". In spite of the usurpation, no one took action, not even the Lord of Andunië, as any attempt would have resulted in a civil war.

Ar-Pharazôn realised his frailty in the situation, and so did Sauron. Apparently, Pharazôn's successor in Endor was not as able as the new King and could not hold the position in a full-scale war.

> *And now there came to him [Ar-Pharazôn] the masters of ships and captains returning out of the East, and they reported that Sauron was putting forth his might, since Ar-Pharazôn had gone back from Middle-earth, and he was pressing down upon the cities by the coasts; and he had taken now the title of King of Men, and declared his purpose to drive the Númenóreans into the sea, and destroy even Númenor, if that might be.*
> *Akallabêth, Sil*

Ar-Pharazôn had no choice – should he defeat Sauron, he would have won such renown as to support his full right as King; should he be defeated, he would lose popularity and the throne. In 3261 he set sail for Middle-earth with a huge host, he disembarked at Umbar and challenged Sauron. Such was the power of the Royal Host that Sauron chose to bow to him and was taken prisoner to Númenor. The result of this was that Ar-Pharazôn gained his right to rule due to his success on the battlefield, and even claimed the title sought by Sauron – King of Men. Sauron's power was not ended but only reduced, as Ar-Pharazôn accepted him as his vassal, letting his Empire survive, though its monarch resided now beyond the Sea in apparent captivity. Yet, revolts must have erupted all over the lands in the grip of Shadow, with local peoples trying to free themselves from the yoke of a weakened and humiliated Sauron. Gil-galad and the Eldar may have taken profit of the situation to send envoys to the oppressed Avari in the East and convince them to revolt or flee.

Meanwhile in Númenor Sauron became the King's chief advisor and soon earned his trust: and he taught many new things regarding the shape and nature of the world, and the worship of Darkness. As time passed, it became clear that Sauron was controlling the King, who converted to the beliefs of what were called "Black Númenóreans", and he removed all bans against them, and even built a great temple were people were killed in necromantic rituals to prolong his life. Sorcery and the black arts spread among many Númenóreans, and many others who already practiced it came out of hiding, and exposed the cancer of their society.

> *Then Ar-Pharazôn the King turned back to the worship of the Dark, and of Melkor the Lord thereof, at first in secret, but ere long openly and in the face of his people; and they for the most part followed him.*
> *Akallabêth, Sil*

Then a dark time came for the Faithful, as Sauron did everything he could to oust them from power and persecute them. At that time their leader was Amandil of Andunië, a Captain of the Royal Fleet residing in Rómenna: being of the line of Elros Tar-Minyatur, and a great Captain and once a close counselor to Pharazôn, he was a powerful and respected man, but now he felt threatened and excluded from the court.

In Tar-Palantir's and Ar-Pharazôn's earlier reign the Faithful had been an important part of the Royal Fleet, in spite of their persecution. We do not know if this situation had been going on for a longer time, under Kings like Gimilzôr and Sakhalthôr, but probably the

Faithful had always been part of the Fleet, their numbers and power ebbing and flowing according to the political situation. After Sauron came to power in Númenor, the Faithful were physically threatened, and although still the King did not strike their group as a whole, signifying that they were still important and strong, single members of their community were targeted and attacked, and many of them were sacrificed in the new temples to Darkness.

Similar temples existed and persecutions happened in Númenórean havens in Middle-earth, and especially in those colonies where the Black Númenóreans had been powerful, and we may safely suppose that their victims were mostly chosen among those who opposed Sauron and the King, which is the Faithful or, even better, lesser Men fighting for their freedom.

> *Nonetheless for long it seemed to the Númenóreans that they prospered, and if they were not increased in happiness, yet they grew more strong, and their rich men ever richer. For with the aid and counsel of Sauron they multiplied then: possessions, and they devised engines, and they built ever greater ships. And they sailed now with power and armoury to Middle-earth, and they came no longer as bringers of gifts, nor even as rulers, but as fierce men of war. And they hunted the men of Middle-earth and took their goods and enslaved them, and many they slew cruelly upon their altars. For they built in their fortresses temples and great tombs in those days; and men feared them, and the memory of the kindly kings of the ancient days faded from the world and was darkened by many a tale of dread.*
> **Akallabêth, Sil**

It was under the influence of Sauron that Númenor started a policy of submission – tributes were no longer enough, now the Númenóreans wanted to rule directly other Men and enslave them, and the old principle of spreading civilisation was abandoned even in name. Not even worthy were deemed the Men of Darkness of learning the ways of the High Men, and their kings were dethroned and in their place Númenórean governors were established.

Aging and afraid of death, finally Ar-Pharazôn came up with a project suggested by his counselor, the conquest of the Immortal Lands, which – according to Sauron's teachings - held the secret of endless life and youth. In 3310 the King ordered preparations for the Great Armament. The flow of tributes from Middle-earth reached its peak, as entire realms were stripped of their wealth to finance the unholy war against the Valar.

In spite of many bad omens, Ar-Pharazôn launched his invasion in 3319. When he finally disembarked to Valinor, his army was buried by the hills, and his fleet and his kingdom, Númenor the Great, were swallowed by the sea. The cataclysm that punished the pride of the Númenóreans affected also their colonies – the waves and earthquakes following the Downfall fell heavily all over the western coast, drowning vast lands. The shape of the continent of Middle-earth was changed, and a new age, ruled by the peoples of Middle-earth, started.

> *And all the coasts and seaward regions of the western world suffered great change and ruin in that time; for the seas invaded the lands, and shores foundered, and ancient isles were drowned, and new isles were uplifted; and hills crumbled and rivers were turned into strange courses.*
> **Akallabêth, Sil**

The Aftermath and the War of the Last Alliance (3319-3441)

While most of Númenórean havens and lands on the shores of Belegaer had been destroyed during the Downfall, some lands preserved a Númenórean heritage both by blood and culture.

Elendil and his sons, Isildur and Anárion, founded the Realms in Exile of Arnor and Gondor. These lands, ruled by a Faithful aristocracy, were mostly inhabited by men akin to the old Edain. Númenóreans, which now took the name of Dúnedain, Men of the West, often intermarried with them and only a small percentage of the ruling class remained pure-blooded. In spite of this, Númenórean blood was still highly valued, and a prerequisite for Kingship. The Realms in Exile, being ruled by relatives of the Royal Line, claimed supremacy over remaining Númenórean lands, but mostly failed. They joined arms with Gil-galad and the Eldar and they made war upon Sauron in Mordor, and were victorious. The Realms in Exile survived well into the Third Age and beyond, remaining the keepers of Númenórean Faithful tradition.

The great port of Umbar too survived the cataclysm thanks to its protected harbour, but its ruling class remained Black Númenórean.

> *[…]. And Sauron gathered to him great strength of his servants out of the east and the south; and among them were not a few of the high race of Númenor. For in the days of the sojourn of Sauron in that land the hearts of well nigh all its people had been turned towards darkness. Therefore many of those who sailed east in that time and made fortresses and dwellings upon the coasts were already bent to his will, and they served him still gladly in Middle-earth. But because of the power of Gil-galad these renegades, lords both mighty and evil, for the most part took up their abodes in the south-lands far away; yet two there were, Herumor and Fuinur, who rose to power among the Haradrim, a great and cruel people that dwelt in the wide lands south of Mordor beyond the mouths of Anduin.*
> **Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age, Sil**

The Umbarean aristocracy and their Haradrim subjects joined the side of Sauron in the war, and were defeated, subsequently being conquered by Gondor.

The colonies immediately south of Umbar, which once were the Malcelebrim kingdoms, suffered greatly from the Downfall and all harbours were drowned, but inland castles survived, and the coastal survivors moved to these fortresses, settling again around them and building new cities.

Other protected havens may have survived along the coast, and greater colonies in more remote lands, such as the Inner Seas or the East, may even have suffered little or no damage. They fell, however, under Sauron's sway and that of his followers, and as no tidings of them reached the North-west, it is difficult to say how much of their Númenórean heritage was preserved into the Third Age.

> *[..] although before its downfall Men of Númenor had explored the coasts of Middle-earth far southward, their settlements beyond Umbar had been absorbed, or being made by men already in Númenor corrupted by Sauron had become hostile and parts of Sauron's dominions.*
> **The Istari, UT**

The power of Sauron, which had been partly restored upon his return to Mordor, was utterly destroyed. The Ringwraiths disappeared, destroyed or in hiding, and their Empires shrunk or even crumbled. Cults and necromantic societies, though, may have survived all over Endor, waiting for the return of their Master or simply following their own

agenda, unrestrained by the Master of Barad-dûr.

> *The servants of Sauron were routed and dispersed, yet they were not wholly destroyed; and though many Men turned now from evil and became subject to the heirs of Elendil, yet many more remembered Sauron in their hearts and hated the kingdoms of the West. The Dark Tower was leveled to the ground, yet its foundations remained, and it was not forgotten. The Númenóreans indeed set a guard upon the land of Mordor, but none dared dwell there because of the terror of the memory of Sauron, and because of the Mountain of Fire that stood nigh to Barad-dûr; and the valley of Gorgoroth was filled with ash.*
> **Of the Rings of Power and the Third Age, Sil**

Notes

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Timeline

Year	Event
32	The Edain reach Númenor.
c. 500	Sauron begins to stir again in Middle-Earth.
600	The Entulessë, captained by Vëantur, sails to Mithlond and establishes relations with Gil-galad and the Men of Eriador.
600-725	Vëantur sails many times to Eriador, exploring the coasts, exchanging gifts and lore with the Eldar and the Men of Eriador. The Númenóreans teach agriculture and smithcraft to those Men.
c. 700	The kingdom of Eregion is founded by Noldor.
725-727	Vëantur's last voyage and Anardil's first one, sailing on the Númerramar to Lindon. Anardil here studies under the tutelage of Círdan, and learns to love the Sea and the Wide Lands beyond.
730-733	Anardil captains the Númerramar to Lindon, where he studies again the lore of the Sea and the Stars.
735-739	The Númerramar explores the coasts between the mouths of the Baranduin and those of Anduin, where Anardil makes contacts with the Nandor of Belfalas.
739-750	Anardil stays in Númenor, where puts to use his knowledge, building ships and navigation instruments and teaching other men.
750	Anardil establishes the Guild of the Venturers and builds the Eämbar. The Noldor found Ost-in-Edhil, capital of Eregion.
c. 750-775	Anardil sets off to many expeditions composed of more than a ship. The size of vessels increase so that they carry many men and great goods. At this time he probably makes the first contacts with the Gwathlódain of Eriador, who inhabited the lands around the Gwathló and the Isen.
c. 775-800	Tar-Meneldur sets a rule to restrain logging in Númenor, to prevent Anardil from sailing. As a result, the Venturers start to log around the mouths of Gwathló, where Anardil founds Vinyalondë. The Venturers establish relations with the tribes of Gwathlódain living nearby.
800	Anardil proclaimed heir by Tar-Meneldur, returns to Númenor, and receives the title of Lord of the Ships and Havens of Númenor. Logging is permitted again. Around this time the Men of Gwathló turn aggressive and start to clash with Númenórean loggers.
806-813	Anardil returns to Vinyalondë where he fights back at the Gwathlódain. He probably increases friendly relations with the Men of Eriador, and travels farther South, around and beyond Belfalas, where he meets with the Malcelebrim. He comes back to Númenor with a great bounty of silver and gold.
816-820	Anardil sails again to Endor, fighting the Gwathlódain and managing relations with the Men of Endor.
824	In spite of Tar-Meneldur's prohibition to sail again, Anardil leaves. He is stripped of his title as Lord of the Ships and Havens of Númenor, and the Guild of the Venturers is shut, the shipyards of Rómenna closed, the felling of trees for the purpose of shipbuilding forbidden.
824-829	Anardil sails on the Palarran, counsels with Gil-galad and establishes relations with the Men of Darkness on the western coast of the Belegaer. He establishes relations with the Magiwaith, then sails up the Balduin to the Nen Celedril, making contact with the Kinn-lai and the Black Men of the mouths of Koro river.
829-843	After a short stay in Númenor, Anardil captains again the Palarran to Middle-earth. From Vinyalondë he travels southwards to Utter Harad, reaching the Straits of Haradil and landing of Morendor, but on the return he is almost shipwrecked. He lands in Vinyalondë and finds it damaged by storms and plundered by Gwathlódain. His return to Númenor is also plagued by storms.
843	Anardil obtains the pardon of the King and his titles, and is also given the charge of Master of the Forests, overlooking the felling and replacements of trees in Númenor; the Guild of the Venturers is restored.
843-863	Anardil remains in Númenor. In this period he builds the Calmindon of Rómenna. His captains, lacking his courage and his resources, abandon his great expeditions and only sail to Vinyalondë and Mithlond.
863-869	After Vinyalondë is damaged by storms and news about a single leader behind the attacks to Vinyalondë many years before, Anardil leaves and repairs the haven, fighting back the Gwathlódain. He destroys vast areas of forest, and moves inland to log along the banks of the river.
877-882	Anardil builds the by Hirilondë and he leaves for what is meant to be a short voyage. But while he is in Middle-earth, Gil-Galad reveals to him more news about a rising threat inland, and he delays his return. Expedition to the Bay of Lingering Shadows and the Dark Eves of Thûrlornar, and uncovering the presence of a servant of Morgoth setting the Men of Middle-earth against Númenóreans and Eldar.
882	On his homecoming Anardil brings with him a letter of plea from Gil-Galad to Tar-Meneldur. Tar-Meneldur abdicates to

Year	Event
	his more fit son.
883	Anardil ascends the throne as Tar-Aldarion.
883-901	Immediately after his crowning, Tar-Aldarion sets sail to Middle-earth to visit Gil-Galad and discuss a strategy against the threat in the East. He journeys often to Endor, greatly promotes the development of the Guild of the Venturers, who builds the city of Tharbad. In that city Aldarion meets with Galadriel, Queen of Eregion. Harbours and markets rise on the coast of Belegaer, and once tribal chieftains rise to be mighty kings under Númenórean blessing.
901-1000	Tar-Aldarion travels to Middle-earth several times to promote cooperation with the Kings of the Eldar. His travels become less and less frequent, though. Exploration of the valley of Harnen.
c. 1000	Sauron, alarmed by the growing power of the Númenóreans, chooses Mordor as a land to make into a stronghold. He begins the building of Barad-dûr. The Men of Harnen become hostile to Númenóreans.
1075	Tar-Aldarion abdicates to his daughter, Tar-Ancalimë. He probably travels to Middle-earth to meet Gil-galad again.
1098	Death of Aldarion. Soronto succeeds him as Master of the Guild. The Guild of the Venturers is denied support from the Númenórean crown.
1200	Sauron endeavours to seduce the Eldar as Annatar. Gil-galad refuses to treat with him; but the smiths of Eregion are won over. The Venturers start to establish permanent havens shortly afterwards, and to develop close relations with their allies.
c. 1300	The Guild develops a sustainable trade between Middle-earth and Númenor. Thanks to their income, they are able to complete the defences and the shipyards of Vinyalondë, which is renamed Lond Daer.
c. 1375	The Gwaith-i-Mírdain, under counsel of Annatar, rebels to Celeborn and Galadriel and takes power in Eregion. Galadriel moves to Lórinand to become its Queen.
c. 1450	The Guild builds roads along the Gwathló and displaces many Gwathlódain far into future Enedwaith and Dunland. First explorations of the lands around the Inner Seas, with greater revenues for the Guild.
1500	The Elven-smiths instructed by Annatar reach the height of their skill. They begin the forging of the Rings of Power. Shortly afterwards Annatar leaves Eregion.
c. 1550	The Venturers drive inland and cause devastations to the forests around the Gwathló, displacing the local Mannish population. Tharbad grows in size.
1590	The Rings of Power are completed.
1600	Sauron forges the One Ring in Orodruin. He completes the Barad-dûr. Celebrimbor perceives the designs of Sauron. Sauron unleashes his power in Middle-earth, causing wars between Men. Rise of the Empire of the Tower-kings in Upper Harnen; the northern coasts of the Nen Celedril are overrun by a Camel-folk from across the Yellow Mountains.
1693	War of the Elves and Sauron begins. The Three Rings are hidden.
1695	Sauron's forces invade Eriador. Gil-galad sends Elrond to Eregion. A force of Venturers join him, others fortify in Lond Daer. Gil-galad sends pleas of help to Tar-Telperien and the Regent in Númenor.
1697	Eregion laid waste. Death of Celebrimbor. The gates of Moria are shut. Elrond retreats with remnant of the Noldor, and founds the refuge of Imladris.
1699	Sauron overruns Eriador. The Free Peoples resist in Imladris, Lond Daer and fortify on the line of Lhûn.
1700	The Regent sends a great navy from Númenor to Lindon. Sauron is defeated.
1701	Sauron is driven out of Eriador. The Westlands have peace for a long while.
1701-1731	The son of the Regent and many other Númenórean takes interest in Middle-earth. The prestige and power of the Venturers reach their peak. Ships with ambassadors are sent all over the known world.
1731	Tar-Minastir King of Númenor.
1731-1869	The crown prince founds the Royal Fleet and travels to Middle-earth looking for her riches. The Inner Seas are more thoroughly explored and relations are established with local Men. First competition between the Guild of the Venturers and the Royal Fleet. The Númenóreans develop a yearning for the Immortal Lands and suffer from their mortal condition.
1869	Tar-Ciryatan takes the sceptre. He increases the Royal Fleet.
1869-2029	The Royal Fleet founds dominions in Middle-earth, as permanent havens or protectorates over Endorian Men, receiving tribute in return. The Númenóreans start to resent the Ban of the Valar and openly speak against it. They reach the eastern coast of Middle-earth. Sauron extends his power eastwards.
2029	Tar-Atanamir takes the sceptre. The Valar send Messengers to him to warn him against ill words against their Ban.
2029-2221	Tar-Atanamir shuts the Guild of the Venturers. Division of Númenor begins between Faithful and King's Men. Sauron grants the Rings of Dwarves and Men, and the Nine Lords of Men rise to attack the Númenóreans. Emergence of the

Year	Event
	Black Númenóreans. The Númenóreans circumnavigate Middle-earth.
2280	Umbar is made into a great fortress of Númenor.
2350	Pelargir is built. It becomes the chief haven of the Faithful Númenóreans.
c. 2400	Tar-Telemmaitë establishes relations with Dwarves, though not always friendly. His explorers make maps of inland territories.
c. 2500	Life in Númenor becomes more and more luxurious, needing to be financed by tributes from Middle-earth.
2537-2657	Tar-Aduncal spreads Númenórean civilisations imposing its basics to the Men of Darkness.
2657-2737	Tar-Alcarin and his son, future Tar-Calmacil, fight back at Sauron's forces and secure the frontier. Sauron retires inland.
2899 – 2962	Ar-Adûnakhôr is crowned with an Adûnaic name and persecutes the Faithful with bans on their traditions. The division in Númenor and the colonies deepens.
3033 – 3102	Ar-Sakalthôr strengthens the Royal Fleet and communications in the Empire.
3102 – 3177	Under Ar-Gimilzôr new persecution of the Faithful.
3177 – 3255	Under Tar-Palantir the Faithful come to power, but the division of Númenor deepens. Many changes happen in the ruling class of Númenor, less in the colonies.
3243	Death of Gimilkhâd, his son returns to Middle-earth.
3255	Death of Tar-Palantir. Ar-Pharazôn the Golden seizes the sceptre. Sauron attacks the Númenórean dominions.
3261	Ar-Pharazôn sets sail and lands Umbar.
3262	Sauron is taken as prisoner to Númenor as vassal of the King. Revolts start in his Empire.
3262-3310	Sauron seduces the King and corrupts the Númenóreans. The King converts to the worship of Morgoth, the Black Númenóreans come to power everywhere and increase in numbers. The Faithful are persecuted.
3310	Ar-Pharazôn begins the building of the Great Armament.
3319	Ar-Pharazôn assails Valinor. Downfall of Númenor. Elendil and his sons escape.
3320	Foundations of the Realms in Exile: Arnor and Gondor. Sauron returns to Mordor.
3429	Sauron attacks Gondor, allied to Umbar, and takes Minas Ithil and burns the White Tree. Isildur escapes down Anduin and goes to Elendil in the North. Anárion defends Minas Anor and Osgiliath.
3430	The Last Alliance of Elves and Men is formed.
3434	The host of the Alliance crosses the Misty Mountains. Battle of Dagorlad and defeat of Sauron.
3441	Isildur gathers Men from southern Gondor and lay curse upon the Eredrim, who broke the Oath of Karmach. Sauron finally overthrown by Elendil and Gil-galad, who perish. Isildur takes the One Ring. Sauron passes away and the Ringwraiths go into the shadows. Umbar conquered by Gondor. The Second Age ends.

Númenórean Maritime Technology

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OPTIONAL   HOUSE

This essay provides some useful data for GM's to get a better picture of the development of Númenórean shipbuilding technology during the Second and Third Ages. The question concerning the maritime technology available to the Númenóreans and Dúnedain is often heard. Unfortunately it is rather difficult to answer. Tolkien constantly uses such vague terms as "great ships", "high prows" etc. Fortunately, with thorough research it is possible to find some insightful hints which may be used for an extrapolation.

This essay also addresses some issues from the article "The Ships of Belfalas Bay" in Other Hands #14 (July 1996),[2] thereby further developing and expanding them.

A local library is a good place to find literature about sailing vessels and their technical data. In addition, Columbia Games' RPG supplement Pilots' Almanac or Iron Crown Enterprises' Sea Law are both of great help for every GM wishing to incorporate maritime action in his campaign.[3] For example, both feature a system for ship-combat and other data necessary for simulating ships in a RPG.

Note: I use the general abbreviation "HoME" for a volume of the History of Middle-earth series published by Christopher Tolkien. This is followed by the number of the volume in roman numerals.

Note: The terms "Númenóreans" and "Dúnedain" (and their respective singulars) are used synonymously in this essay, because these are equal terms in different languages (Quenya and Sindarin respectively).

Dreadnoughts?

Some early drafts of the *Akallabêth* in the "Lost Road" (HoME 5) from the mid-1930s show an extremely "industrial" outlook for the late Númenórean naval technology:

> *"Our ships go now without the wind, and many are made of metal that sheareth rocks, and they sink not in calm or storm; but they are no longer fair to look upon. … But our shields are impenetrable, our swords cannot be withstood, our darts are like thunder and pass over leagues unerring."*
> **HoMe V.The Lost Road, (ii) The Númenórean chapters**

This statement invokes images of dreadnoughts, armored with thick belts of steel,[4] powered by coal-fired boilers and armaments of – at least – 12-inch guns[5] that fire ("like thunder") their shells ("darts") with deadly accuracy ("unerring") over many miles ("over leagues"). Compared to Tolkien's own feelings about industrialization, this picture of steaming and soot-stained dreadnoughts is indeed a fitting image for "evil industrialization" compared to graceful wooden ships, and appropriate for the "Sauronic" Númenor.

Tolkien later radically changed his intentions though, and in the *Akallabêth* (written around 1958) there appears a text (already existent in the *Drowning of Anadûnê* from the late 1940's) where even the late Númenóreans at the time of Ar-Pharazôn's invasion of Aman only had muscle- and sail-power to propel their ships:

> *"…, and they [the fleets of the Númenóreans] were like an archipelago of a thousand isles; their masts were as a forest upon the mountains, and their sails like a brooding cloud; … Then Ar-Pharazôn hardened his heart, and he went aboard his mighty ship, Alcarondas, Castle of the Sea. Many-oared it was and many-masted, golden and sable; … "*
> **The Silmarillion.Akallabêth**

All phrases that point towards some kind of modern industrialization are gone. Masts and sails are now the terms through which the power and magnitude of the fleet are expressed. It seems clear that Tolkien had abandoned the vision of the "industrialized" Númenóreans in dreadnoughts and instead favored the picture of a culture instructed in sorcery and efficient pre-gunpowder technology.[6] It seems extremely unlikely that the king of the Númenóreans would not have used the best and most powerful ship available – and a WW1-dreadnought is certainly more powerful than any wooden vessel by several magnitudes!

It seems that oars and sails were the sole propulsion technologies available to the invasion fleet for Valinor, barring any artificial form of power like steam-engines or turbines as in earlier versions (s.a.):

> *"…; and there was little wind, but they had many oars and many strong slaves to row beneath the lash … For a wind arose in the east and it wafted them away; and they broke the Ban of the Valar, and sailed into forbidden seas,…"*
> **The Silmarillion.Akallabêth**

This statement serves two purposes: First it describes the means by which the fleet is moved to Aman (at least in the beginning). Second, it emphasizes the philosophical downfall of Númenor through slavery(!): In Arda slavery was practiced only by adherents of Melkor or Sauron,[7] and therefore the use of slaves by the Númenóreans shows the depth of their corruption. The use of slaves as oarsmen is reminiscent of Renaissance-era galleys where slaves were used extensively.[8] It is interesting to note that galley slaves were never used in antiquity and therefore the Renaissance galleys might have been the model that Tolkien had in mind for the corrupt Númenóreans and the galleys of Arda in general.

In essence, I propose to follow the *Akallabêth* version that is much more in concordance with the *Lord of the Rings* and hence to omit the steam- and coal- image of the Númenórean technology in earlier versions of the legendarium. In addition, it represents Tolkien's final thoughts on the matter and therefore bears a great weight.

The ships of the Dúnedain over time

The Second Age

The beginning of the Númenórean seafaring tradition lies in the first millennium of the Second Age:

> From the fisherfolk were mostly drawn the Mariners, who as the years passed grew greatly in importance and esteem. It is said that when the Edain first set sail upon the Great Sea, following the Star to Númenor, the Elvish ships that bore them were each steered and captained by one of the Eldar deputed by Círdan; and after the Elvish steersmen departed and took with them the most part of their ships it was long before the Númenóreans themselves ventured far to sea. But there were shipwrights among them who had been instructed by the Eldar; and by their own study and devices they improved their art until they dared to sail ever further into the deep waters. When six hundred years had passed from the beginning of the Second Age Vëantur, Captain of King's Ships under Tar-Elendil, first achieved the voyage to Middle-earth. He brought his ship Entulessë (which signifies "Return") into Mithlond on the spring winds blowing from the west; and he returned in the autumn of the following year.
>
> Thereafter seafaring became the chief enterprise for daring and hardihood among the men of Númenor; and Aldarion son of Meneldur, whose wife was Vëantur's daughter, formed the Guild of Venturers, in which were joined all the tried mariners of Númenor; as is told in the tale that follows here.
>
> **Unfinished Tales. A description of the island of Númenor**

It seems that the original ship designs imparted by the Eldar were not regarded as being capable to make a safe trip to Middle-earth and back without the special circumstances of Númenor's colonization (the protection of the Valar; see also note 8). It is also interesting to note that the great maritime boom set in only after the first successful voyage across Belegaer was achieved.

Unfortunately there are no clear specifications about Númenórean ships. There are only a handful of quotes which come closest to what one might call an indication. The first is found in the Akallabêth and quoted in the section above, while the others are found in the *History of Middle-earth, Vol. 12 – The Peoples of Middle-earth* and *Unfinished Tales*. The first gives some details about the ships that were used to carry the Edain to Númenor.

> "Since the boats that were used were of elvish model, fleet but small, … ,it would have taken a great navy to transport all the people and goods that were eventually brought from Middle-earth to Númenor… The fleet of Elros is said to have contained many ships (according to some a hundred and fifty vessels, to others two or three hundred) and to have brought 'thousands' of the men, women, and children of the Edain: probably between five thousand or at the most ten thousand."
>
> **HoMe 12. The History of the Akallabêth**

The numbers from the quote above leave us with a minimum of ca. 16 to a maximum of about 66 persons per ship. Using average numbers (225 ships and 7.500 people) we get ca. 33 persons per ship. Since the ships are probably of Teleri/Falathrim design, and Tolkien's descriptions and pictures for elven ships suggest a ship similar to a *knorr* or *drakkar*,[9] it is very likely that the emigrating Edain used such ships. A transport capacity of ca. 33 people per vessel is absolutely in order for a *knorr*.[10] It should also be noted that Tolkien speaks of **boats** – indicating the relatively small size of the vessels. This is indeed true for the – average – *knorr* as well as the *drakkar*.

The essay *Aldarion and Erendis – The Mariner's Wife* in *Unfinished Tales* provides us with some scattered hints about Númenórean ships and maritime traditions around SA 750-1100, even though the details are notoriously vague and we have to use a good deal of imagination and real-world research to piece together a suitable picture. First we have a description of Aldarion's return after his first voyage. All the following quotes are from the above mentioned essay.

> Thus it came to pass that on a morning of fair sun and white wind, in the bright spring of the seven hundred and twenty-fifth year of the Second Age, the son of the King's Heir of Númenor sailed from the land; … There was joy in Rómenna and Armenelos when men saw the great ship Númerrámar (which signifies "West-wings") coming up from the sea [e.g. returning home], her golden sails reddened in the sunset.

The essential passage is found in the last sentence: Aldarion's ship had sail**s** (e.g. plural) drawn up at the same time. This indicates a development of shipbuilding technology, since the *drakkar* and *knorr*-style ships of Elros' time very likely had only a single sail each. Perhaps the type of ship used by Aldarion can be envisioned

as the smaller ships of Columbus' 1492 voyage – the *caravels* Niña and Pinta.

Until the time of Aldarion it seems that coastal trade and transport was prevalent in Númenor as seen in the following quote:

> Therefore the roads of Númenor were for the most part unpaved, made and tended for riding, since coaches and carriages were little used in the earlier centuries, and heavy cargoes were borne by sea.

Since Númenor was limited in size and the overall weather fair and without freak storms or treacherous coasts, there was no need for very maneuverable craft here. Ships of the *cog* type should be very useful here. Its efficient ratio of cost and cargo capacity would be perfect for a coastal trader which was not under economic pressure for a rapid delivery and had only safe waters to traverse.

In the course of the story, the further development of shipbuilding techniques is testified by Tolkien:

> … and in those days he [Aldarion] put to use the knowledge he had gained of Círdan concerning the making of ships, devising much anew of his own thought, and he began also to set men to the improvement of the havens and the quays, for he was ever eager to build greater vessels.

This is one of the few instances where Tolkien grants his "good" races a drive for technological development, which is absent in so many other areas (e.g. the famous "mail armour" issue). In this context the real-world ship type of the caravel must be mentioned especially. It was optimally suited for the needs of the voyages into the unknown: It was seaworthy enough to master the ocean, and yet so small and maneuverable to evade unexpected dangers like reefs or undeeps. In addition, its lateen rig[11] was well suited to tack against the wind;[12] something that the more cumbersome carracks with their mainly square rigging were not able to do. The first peak of the Númenórean maritime technology seems to be reached under Aldarion's supervision:

> The ships of the Númenóreans became ever larger and of greater draught in those days [when Aldarion and Meneldur became estranged; before SA 800], until they could make far voyages, carrying many men and great cargoes; and Aldarion was often long gone from Númenor.

This quote is the more interesting in that it implies the ships of the previous expeditions of Aldarion and his predecessors (e.g. Vëantur) were quite limited in size (probably the above

mentioned caravels of the first explorers). The claim that these new ships could make "far voyages" and "carry many men and great cargoes" points at types of ships similar to those that were used by the Europeans for regular contact with the newly discovered colonies from the 16th to 17th centuries (especially carracks and galleons). It also hints that the Númenóreans now had sufficient knowledge of the wind and currents along the coasts of Middle-earth to use the more cumbersome vessels here.

We are also told of a maritime tradition that was given to all departing ships:

> *Here must be told of the custom that when a ship departed from Númenor over the Great Sea to Middle-earth a woman, most often of the captain's kin, should set upon the vessel's prow the Green Bough of Return; and that was cut from the tree oiolairë, that signifies "Ever-summer," which the Eldar gave to the Númenóreans, saying that they set it upon their own ships in token of friendship with Ossë and Uinen. The leaves of that tree were evergreen, glossy and fragrant; and it throve upon sea-air.*

That the ships of Aldarion's voyages already had reached a considerable size can be extrapolated from the following passage:

> *Five years passed; and Aldarion returned with nine ships, for two had been built in Vinyalondë, and they were laden with fine timber from the forests of the coasts of Middle-earth.*

To be able to carry a substantial and economic cargo of timber across the ocean, a ship cannot be too small, and a ship <u>at least</u> the size of a medium carrack seems highly probable.

Even in Aldarion's time, the size of ships seems to have reached a very great size (even if the vessel described below was only a prototype whose size remained long unmatched):

> *So it was that ere long he turned again from forestry to the building of ships, and a vision came to him of a mighty vessel like a castle with tall masts and great sails like clouds, bearing men and stores enough for a town. Then in the yards of Rómenna the saws and hammers were busy, while among many lesser craft a great ribbed hull took shape; at which men wondered. Turuphanto, the Wooden Whale, they called it, but that was not its name.*
> *…*
> *It is recorded that on the prow of Hirilondë he set no bough of oiolairë, but the image of an eagle with golden beak and jewelled eyes, which was the gift of Círdan.*

This quote tells of many masts and very great sails and a complement large enough to populate a town. This invokes the image of a very large carrack or galleon-type ship. A further detail is the omission of the *oiolairë* twig and its replacement by a figurehead – a piece of adornment we are well-acquainted with from real-world history.

The final quote about Númenórean ships of the Second Age turns back to the closing years of the island:

> *" Therefore he [Ar-Pharazôn] began to prepare a vast armament for the assault upon Valinor, that should surpass the one with which he had come to Umbar even as a great **galleon** of Númenor surpassed a fisherman's boat."*
> **HoMe 12. The Tale of Years of the Second Age** *(my emphasis)*

Therefore, summarizing from all the quotes, one can extrapolate that a great burst of progress in maritime technology took place during the time of (Tar-)Aldarion from *drakkar / knorr*, *cog* and *caravel* types to the big carracks and even galleons. Since this time, there seems to be little development or improvement in shipbuilding techniques since galleons seem to be the mainstay of Númenórean maritime types even in Ar-Pharazôn's time. In the real world it was invented in the late-15th century and for about 200 years it served as one of the most reliable and widely-used ship designs in Europe.

In addition, the *galleon* is a fitting ship for the Númenóreans since the type is quite seaworthy and in the real world it was developed to ensure a secure and reliable line of communication with Europe's oversea possessions (and transport the colonial plunder back home!). Since Númenor was in a similar position as a colonial power, it faced similar necessities in establishing regular contact across the open ocean with its Middle-earth colonies and its solutions might be comparable.

So we have two short descriptions of late Númenórean styles. The first (of Ar-Pharazôn's flagship *Alcarondas*; s.a.) is the perfect description for a large *galleass*: A big ship with oars as well as masts (plural!) and sails. This type is a hybrid ship between a pure sailing vessel and the earlier and less seaworthy *galleys*, that combines (to some extent) the galley's maneuverability in combat and the sailing ship's seaworthiness. It is perfectly fitting as a flagship and therefore the *galleass* would be the most powerful warship available in the Númenórean arsenal. In the case of the Númenóreans, one can safely assume that their *galleasses* were even larger than the real-world types. Since the *galleass*

and *galleon* co-existed at least for a time,[13] it seems very fitting to view these types as the epitome of Númenórean naval technology.

The Third Age

During the history of the Realms-in-Exile, we have a number of events where naval might is mentioned, especially in the course of the South-kingdom's maritime expansion during the 9th to 12th century of the Third Age under the Ship-kings. The fleets and their interests were also a major factor in the Kin-strife where they supported Castamir in his bid for the throne against Eldacar.

Concrete descriptions of ship types are very scarce though. The only instance where more details of ship types are described is in the *Lord of the Rings* (and correspondingly pertaining to the late Third Age) when Gimli and Legolas report from the battle at Pelargir:

> *There at Pelargir lay the main fleet of Umbar, fifty great ships and smaller vessels beyond count …"To every ship they [the Oathbreakers] came that was drawn up, and they passed over the water to those that were anchored; and all the mariners were filled with a madness of terror and leaped overboard, save the slaves chained to the oars."*
> **The Return of the King. The Last Debate**

The quote does not specify of what type the fifty "great ships" were. It is very possible that these were the Corsairs' battleships – wargalleys – and therefore the core of their fleet.[14] The use of slaves at the oars hints at medieval/renaissance-style *galleys* as the model for the Corsair ships, since in antiquity oarsmen were never slaves but well-paid free men.[15] Even in the Mediterranean, where *galleys* were used for millennia, they were mostly warships due to their limited range, seaworthiness and cargo capacity. Transport ships for carrying troops for more than two or three days were nearly always sailing ships due to their efficiency. It is interesting to note that where there are ship types described in at least some detail in the LotR, they are galleys (and perhaps *galleasses*):

> *"…; for black against the glittering stream they beheld a fleet borne up on the wind: dromunds [sic!], and ships of great draught with many oars, and with black sails bellying in the breeze."*
> **The Return of the King. The Battle of the Pelennor Fields**

Dromunds were predecessors of the medieval *galleys* (and therefore more archaic) and used by the Byzantines in the early Middle Ages until

galleys began to replace them. The second part of the quote seems to fit perfectly to *galleasses* with their oars, enhanced sailing capability and enlarged draft. So, even at the end of the Third Age, the military naval technology seem to be roughly the same as in Númenor's time with *galley*-types (here *dromunds*) and perhaps *galleasses* representing the most powerful warships. That Tolkien uses the term *dromund* here might indicate that he had a more archaic version of a galley in mind.

The *dromund* (*dromon* in greek) was a development from the ancient warships (e.g. *triremes*) and still had a ram as a weapon to pierce an enemy ship's hull. In contrast to this, late medieval and Renaissance *galleys* featured also a protrusion at the bow, but this was located above the water and functioned as a bridge to board an enemy vessel. This development is one of the chief differences between ancient and medieval (and Renaissance-era) galley warfare: the former tried to ram their opponents, using the whole ship as a weapon. The latter emphasized the boarding[16] and not the fight of ship vs. ship in the literal sense. The *dromon* was something in between – it still had a smaller (compared to ancient *triremes*) ram and already sported a greater contingent of marines to fight from the ship. So, there are differences between a true *dromon* (*dromund* in LotR) and a Renaissance galley, but the basic type is fairly similar; accordingly these are categorized together. It is important though, that a *dromon* does not fit the description of the *galleass* types (see above), which necessitate a higher development of shipbuilding capability. In addition, *dromons* (and their ancient ancestor, the *trireme*) were quite different in design:

- ancient *triremes* and *dromons* had several tiers of rowers and oars, while Renaissance *galleys* had only one
- the ancient *galleys'* mast and sail were auxiliary and stowed away before battle, while in Renaissance *galleys*, the sailing rig was fixed and far more stable.

It might be imaginable that the *dromunds* were from another region rather than Umbar proper, and still used these older designs (that might be better suited to their own waters perhaps). Thus they might be viewed as allied ships in the Corsairs' fleet.

In the early Third Age, the Dúnadan kings were eager for news about the fate of Númenor and possibly accoutered several expeditions in search of possible remains of Númenor and the changes that took place since the Akallabêth. Therefore, a certain enterprising spirit seems to have remained at least in the first millennium of the Third Age. Especially the sea-oriented Shipkings were likely to have invested in such ventures. So with the loss of Númenor the need for big ships capable of reliably crossing oceans was not instantly lost:

> Thus it was that great mariners among them would still search the empty seas, hoping to come upon the Isle of Meneltarma, and there to see a vision of things that were. But they found it not. And those that sailed far came only to the new lands, and found them like to the old lands, and subject to death. And those that sailed furthest set but a girdle about the Earth and returned weary at last to the place of their beginning; and they said:
>
> 'All roads are now bent.'
>
> Thus in after days, what by the voyages of ships, what by lore and star-craft, the kings of Men knew that the world was indeed made round, …
>
> **The Silmarillion.Akallabêth**
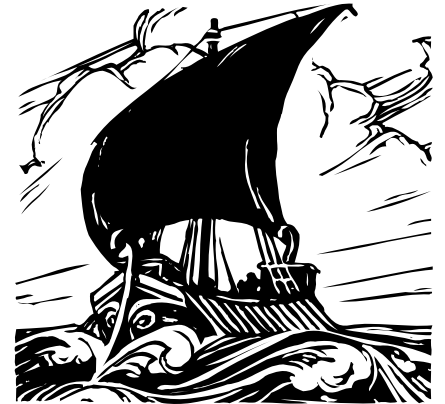
Later, especially with the decline of Gondor and its attention turning from the sea, the need for far-ranging ships drastically declined and the maritime technology probably decreased proportionally.

Conclusion

As seen above, a few types of ships can be extrapolated from Tolkien's scarce hints regarding ship types. These are:

- *drakkar* and *knorr* types at the beginning of the Second Age
- *caravel* and *cog* types at ca. SA 700
- small *carracks* and *galleons* since SA 900 Larger versions may become commonplace since SA 1000 or 1100.
- big *galleons* might become common around SA 1900 (Tar-Ciryatan "the Shipbuilder")
- *galleys* come into use since ca. SA 2400 as warships to secure colonial possessions in Middle-earth
- *galleassess* are present from about since SA 2600 as the most powerful warships for sheltered waters.

The following sections detail the extrapolations from the insights derived above for use in a RPG.

Steerage

One technical issue from the real world is worth mentioning: Some of the above mentioned types (*drakkar*, *knorr* and *dromon*) had a steering oar, while the majority (*caravel*, *cog*, *carrack* and *galleon*) possessed a stern rudder – which is far more advanced, efficient and practical for the maneuverability of a ship. Please note that the elven ship depicted by Tolkien (*J.R.R. Tolkien – Artist and Illustrator*, image #52) also possesses a steering oar. Early *galleys* had a steering oar, while later types possessed a rudder. The *galleass* was a late development, and so it almost exclusively had a rudder. Historically, the – western[17] – stern rudder was invented in northern Europe at the end of the 12th century and by the beginning of the 16th century had completely replaced the steering oar. In between there were varying degrees of co-existence of both types. Especially in the Mediterranean the steering oars were popular for a long time. For example, the big ships from the merchant fleets of the Italian cities who largely held contact and supplied the Crusader states from the 11th to 13th century AD were typically equipped with steering oars.

For other regions and ship types, the steering oar may persist longer, never exist at all or may never be supplanted by the rudder. A prominent example are the already mentioned genoese and venetian merchantmen who carried bulk cargoes reliably throughout the Mediterranean. Similar types may have also been employed along some coasts of Middle-earth.

It all depends on the regional culture and their contact with more advanced ideas. But for the regions with Númenórean influence, the rudder should have established itself as the most prominent and important steering mechanism with the advent of the second millennium of the Second Age.

Reliability and safety

From the above mentioned quote in UT it seems that the early Númenóreans were reluctant to foray far into the deep sea, and that ocean-crossing voyages were still considered a hazard. Even in Aldarion's time, shipping was no easy business, as is testified in UT:

> *"If I am to have no welcome in Númenor, and no work for my hands to do, and if my ships may not be repaired in its havens, then I will go again and soon; for the winds have been rough,…"*
> **Unfinished Tales. Aldarion and Erendis – The Mariner's Wife**

Here Aldarion hints at the hardships of being a sailor, not surprising from the rich evidence of the real world. That Númenórean

ships were jeopardized by the elements can be found in UT as well:

> *But after four years more Aldarion at last returned, and his ships were battered and broken by the seas. He had sailed first to the haven of Vinyalondë, and thence he had made a great coastwise journey southwards, far beyond any place yet reached by the ships of the Númenóreans; but returning northwards he had met contrary winds and great storms, and scarce escaping shipwreck in the Harad found Vinyalondë overthrown by great seas and plundered by hostile men. Three times he was driven back from the crossing of the Great Sea by high winds out of the West, and his own ship was struck by lightning and dismasted; and only with labour and hardship in the deep waters did he come at last to haven in Númenor.*
> **Unfinished Tales. Aldarion and Erendis – The Mariner's Wife**

Of great interest is a final passage though which tells of the final years of Númenor, with Sauron's influence spreading through the land. Here a short description is given of contemporary maritime affairs:

> *But all this was now changed; for the sky itself was darkened, and there were storms of rain and hail in those days, and violent winds; and ever and anon a great ship of the Númenóreans would founder and return not to haven, though such a grief had not till then befallen them since the rising of the Star.*
> **Silmarillion. Akallabêth**

The most striking passage is the reference that the Númenóreans never experienced a shipwreck before this time – shortly before the Downfall. Thus even though ships may have experienced situations with the snapping of masts or dangerous storms, no ship had been lost to adverse weather before. Partly this may be attributed to the skill of the Númenórean sailors, but considering the special favour of Uinen as outlined in the *Silmarillion*, it may well be that she spared the Númenóreans from the worst effects of the elements and prevented any shipwreck before the above specified time.

> *The Númenóreans lived long in her protection, and held her in reverence equal to the Valar.*
> **Silmarillion. Valaquenta**

It seems likely though, that this protection was only given because the Númenórean mariners always gave their best to save themselves

from such misfortunes; e.g. the protection was not lightly given.

Ship descriptions

Other Hands #14 featured an essay about Gondorian ships and their appropriate Sindarin labels. It is an excellent base for the depiction of Dúnadan ships over time, though in my opinion it featured a prominent mistake: The author discards the use of galleys and similar ships altogether for the Bay of Belfalas. As we have seen, many texts where Tolkien explicitly describes a concrete type of ship, these are (at least partly) oared ships, and in one instance he names the concrete type of *dromunds* (s.a.) that actually **appear** in the *Lord of the Rings*. In this context it should be noted and remembered that oared ships were an integral part of the maritime arsenal of real-world navies and should be used for the whole of the Second and Third Age of Middle-earth. The author is correct when he explains the galley's uselessness in the open waters of the Bay of Belfalas, but these oared ships **are** an important part of the navies in the region because they appear in the *Lord of the Rings* as a prominent ship type in the navy of Umbar. Therefore their integration into a believable reconstruction of Númenórean, as well as its successor states' and Umbarian, shipping technology is mandatory.[18]

The following table details all the basic ship designs used by the Dúnedain during the Second and Third Age. For example, in the real world, the *holk* and *carrack*[19] were ships of very similar design. Therefore it seems not justified to list them separately here.[20] The ship's Sindarin designation of "Coast Runner"[21] is therefore transferred to the *knorr* which seems logical due to the smaller size and correspondingly its primary use in coastal ventures.

In addition to the types listed there exist a number of smaller vessels used as kedging boats, tenders for shore parties, small fisherboats etc. These range mostly between 3.5 and 6 metres in length and use a basic design similar to those used until the 21st century in the real world. Such generic small boats are not described specifically here.

For all those not familiar with the *Other Hands* essay, the names and expanded descriptions of the ships are detailed below.

Important Note: Please note that there exist smaller and larger versions of each design, e.g. from the *galley* where the real-world versions even used specific designations.

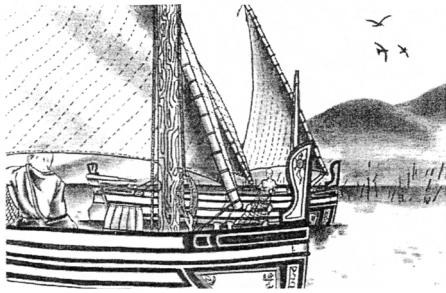| real-world name	Sindarin name
Caravel	Rochros ("Foam Horse")
Carrack	Belegir ("Great Ship")
Cog	Celbar ("Home Runner")
Drakkar	Celros ("Foam Runner")
Galeass	Aerrynon ("Great Sea Hound")
Galleon	Aerbarad ("Sea Tower")
Galley	Aerryn ("Sea Hound")
Knorr	Cair Falathren ("Coastal Ship")
Shebek	Turwing ("Master of the Sea-Spray")

Caravel (Rochros)

Image by Quentin Westcott

The *Rochros* is a sturdy ship often used as a scout ship. Since it is quite agile and relatively fast, it is also used in naval service. This latter applies only of course in an environment with two or more hostile parties, such as the mid- to late Third Age with Gondor against Umbar and its allies. When necessary, it can stay at sea a considerable time. These characteristics make it an ideal vessel for exploratory voyages into unknown waters. The basic design of the caravel incorporates only lateen rigging (s.a.), but newer developments include also square rigging. The ship possesses a rudder.

Carrack (Belegir)
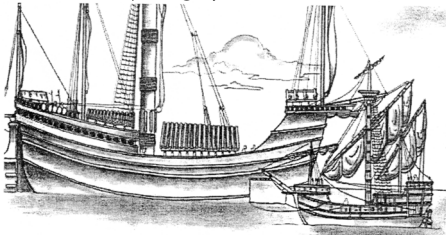
Image by Quentin Westcott

The larger carracks are used nearly exclusively by very wealthy owners, since their size make them profitable only for larger trade ventures. The smaller versions of the *carrack* are a bit more common and serve as reliable, albeit slow and less maneuverable (compared to the *galleon* or *caravel*), ships in naval and merchant service. As a warship it is also uncommon, due to its sizable construction cost. The larger versions are mainly used as a flagship for a large group of smaller ships. Since these have three or four masts, they are also more maneuverable than the cog for example. The smaller and me-

dium real-world versions of the carrack were sometimes also called *holk*.

Carracks tend to be larger than contemporary *galleons*, making them more profitable for a merchant. This advantage is offset though by its lesser seaworthiness and maneuverability. Therefore, when *galleons* are available, the *carracks* generally are limited to shipping lanes and waters without the chance of ocean-going trips. The geographic position of the later Realms-in-Exile makes the seaworthiness less of an issue though.

Cog (Celbar)

Image by Quentin Westcott

The *Celbar* is a sturdy ship possessing one mast. It is commonly used for trade in well-known waters. Due to its primary purpose as a trader, a large cargo capacity is of paramount importance. It is quite easy to sail and needs only a small crew. This efficiency makes it a favorite for many smaller merchants. On the other hand it is slow and sluggish in maneuvering, and its usefulness in naval service is quite limited. When serving as a trader, a *cog* does not have a forecastle (as is customary when used as a warship).

Drakkar (Celros)

The *drakkar* is an old design, used by the Númenóreans when they first returned to Middle-earth. It has a small cargo capacity but a large crew which serves as traders and explorers (and warriors if needed). It is derived from the elven designs which were the model for the *knorr* too. In contrast to the *knorr* it is more maneuverable and better suited for exploration missions, but less for trade and fishing.

Galleass (Aerrynnon)

The *galeass* is the most powerful warship in the Bay of Belfalas in the Third Age (at least in the coastal waters). It was seen on all coasts where the Númenórean held positions in Middle-earth in the Second Age as well. It is a mixture of the smaller and less seaworthy *galley* and a sailing vessel. Due to its size, the *galeass* represents the upper limit of oar propulsion. It is much more seaworthy than the *galley* and able to maneuver without wind (though considerably more cumbersome than a *galley*), giv-

ing it a tactical advantage in a calm. Like all oared ships, it has to rely on a secure chain of friendly ports for re-provisioning.

Galleon (Aerbarad)
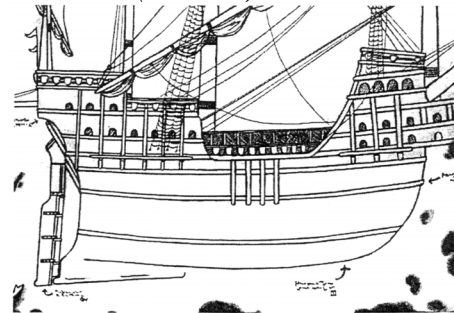
Image by Quentin Westcott

The *aerbarad* or *galleon* is the epitome of Dúnadan maritime achievements. It may have three or four masts. Due to its better streamlining it is faster than a *carrack* of the same size, has about the same endurance (and less displacement) and is more seaworthy, but carries fewer soldiers. The *galleon* is mostly used in the late period of Númenor and the early Third Age. With the passing of years in the Third Age it becomes less common due to lack of need for a ship able to reliably cross the oceans.

Galley (Aerryn)

The *galley* is the most common warship in the coastal areas of the Northwest during the Second and Third Ages. It relies on oars for propulsion. It has one or two masts, but despite this its sailing performance is relatively poor and the limited seaworthiness does not allow extended trips in rough water (such as the Belegaer or the outer Bay of Belfalas). In addition, the large crew of soldiers, seamen and oarsmen combined with limited storage capacity for food and water limits the range of a galley considerably and makes it dependent on a string of friendly ports for provisioning.

A small *galley* used primarily for scouting or other supporting duties is called *Aerrynion* (e.g. the historical *galiot*)

Knorr (Cair Falathren)

The *Cair Falathren* is a very old design; dating back to the founding days of Númenor. This type of ship is a development from the elven designs that carried the bulk of the Edain to their new home. Later it was replaced by bigger and more advanced designs, but played some rôle in coastal shipping until the mid-Second Age.

The *Cair Falathren* is a clinker-built ship and possesses a full orlop,[22] but no main deck, though some may have one – usually at the expense of cargo capacity. Cargo and men are protected from the elements by tarpaulins and

canopies. A single square sail is the only source of propulsion, and there is a single steering gear on the starboard quarter. When employed in a military rôle, small raised platforms called castles may be added at the bow and stern. These structures are only temporary, easily added or removed, as the *Cair Falathren* makes a poor warship in any case.

Shebek (Turwing)
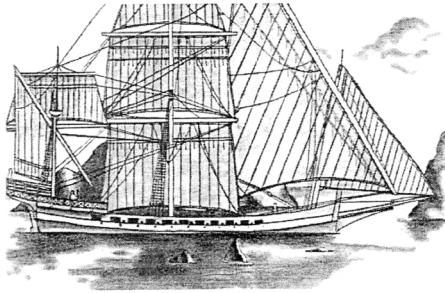
Image by Quentin Westcott

The *Turwing* or raider (the real-world type known as a *shebek*), is a typical raiding ship and appears first at the dawn of the Third Age. It represents a further development from the *galley* design. Its primary propulsion is the sail while it may be rowed if the need arises. This oared propulsion is auxiliary however and not as refined or extensive as those of the galley. On the other hand, the seaworthiness of the *shebek* is much better than the *galley's*. Due to its slim design, it is fast, but less resistant to rough weather. On brief trips, it may hold quite a big crew and marine contingent, but the cargo capacity is relative small. Because of this, the raider is often found among Umbarean raiding forces (after T.A. 1447). The Gondorian navy possesses some for similar purposes, and as a patrol ship for its open coastline. Its *galley* ancestry makes it less suited for attacks on ships with a great freeboard. It must either try to overpower these with numbers or outrun them if this is not possible. Umbarean raiders are commonly called *Drogaer* (S. "Sea Wolf") by the Gondorians.

The development of Númenórean ship types over time

The following table gives a rough overview of the ship types used by the Dúnedain over the Second and Third Age.

How to read the table: The light grey areas indicate a time of less use of the indicated vessel either because it is still new, it already fell out of favor (due to more modern types) or there is generally little need for it. The middle grey areas indicate a moderate use of the type in question, while the dark grey areas indicate a predominant type of ship.

In the Third Age, some ships have two columns, indicating a different use by the remaining Arûwanâi (and their descendants and successors) on the western coasts in the first column and the Elendili for the second column.

The following list explains very briefly the reasoning behind each entry.

Knorr: The basic design of the founding years of Númenor. It was primarily used in the early Second Age. Since the beginning of the second millennium of the Second Age it was gradually replaced by newer types, but still remained popular with the Númenórean fishers and for coastal trade, and its time of use was longer than seems logical. The last vessels disappeared around the middle of the third millennium of the Second Age.

Drakkar: Mostly contemporary with the *knorr*, these vessels were the primary type for the early Númenórean ventures back across the ocean. The first vessel to cross the ocean back to Middle-earth was of this type. It served in this exploratory rôle until ca. SA 1000 when it was widely succeeded by the more seaworthy and longer-ranging *caravels*. The relative long use of these rather primitive vessels (both the *knorr* and *drakkar*) must be credited to the conservative stance of the Númenóreans who were slow to accept changes in their views.

Galley: The *galley* began to appear in the Númenórean arsenal when there was the need for a warship that could protect the colonial possessions. Due to its nature, this type relies heavily on a well organized coastal support line, but it has its advantages due to maneuverability even in a calm or within confined waters. It became ever more popular with the growth of the Númenórean colonial empire. After Númenor's downfall, especially the southern colonies retained this type; mostly to secure their own possessions against the other sister-states. Arnor and Gondor

were more on the fringe of the former Númenórean sphere of rule and their need for ship-types like the *galley* was small. It remained an important type in the wars with Umbar until the end of the kings however. After that and the shrinking of Gondor's influence, the *galley* fleet became smaller but never disappeared altogether until the end of the Third Age.

Cog: This slow and sluggish, yet efficient, ship provided much of the transport needs in the late era of the *knorr* and before the introduction of more advanced vessels in the Second Age. It saw somewhat of a renaissance from the mid-Third Age onward with the waning of the advanced skills and when the – limited – need for an efficient and cheap carrier surfaced.

Caravel: At the time of Tar-Aldarion, the development of this ship type was increased and it became the mainstay of the expeditionary fleets sent from Númenor into the world. Afterwards, when the need for far voyages into the unknown decreased, this type was less heavily used. Its sturdy construction and seaworthiness ensured its steady use despite newer developments. In Gondor, a heavy renaissance set in during the era of the ship-kings, when *caravels* set out to explore the new shape of the world and seek for the remnants of Númenor. A brief renaissance since the reign of Teluhmetar was followed by a renewed loss of popularity. The massive decrease in ship-building lore during the era of the stewards with the associated decrease of *galleons* and *carracks* led to a resurgence of this versatile type in the late centuries of this age.

Carrack: This was the first and foremost epitome of the Númenórean maritime achievements. Its – often – massive size and great carrying capacity made it the first candidate for contact with Endorian colonies in the Second Age. Later it was superseded in popularity by the *galleon*, but still it served in multiple rôles even until the end of the Third Age.

Galleass: This highly specialized "super-*galley*" only appeared later in the Second Age and remained an uncommon sight even in its heyday, mostly due to its massive need for the infrastructure to support it. Therefore, its heyday lay in the days of the great Númenórean colonial empire and the first century of the Third Age in the Arûwanâ realms and the Ship-kings of Gondor. Only in the last decades of the Third Age, the Sauronic-led successor-states of the Arûwanâi on the Belegaer began to build

again these great warships to some greater extent.

Galleon: This fine ship saw its development and most extensive use in the final third of the Second Age when Númenor relied on a steady and reliable line of communication with its oversea possessions. This era ended with the Akallabêth, after which these fine but expensive ships slowly began to fall out of favour; mostly because there was no oversea Númenor anymore. A renaissance took place during the reign of the Ship-kings when Gondor again came in contact with trans-oceanic lands (now the new lands accessible after the Akallabêth). After interests herein lessened again, the extent of using this type gradually resembled that of the Arûwanâ realms until by the end of the Third Age, the time of these ships was over (at least in this age).

Shebek: This agile and versatile type came into use after the Akallabêth when the naval engineers sought for ways to offset the disadvantages of the galley (short range and dependency on ports) while retaining to some degree, a semblance of their advantages (mainly the oared propulsion in calm or confined waters and its great speed). The result was the *shebek*. Its nearly perfect compromise – for the needs of the western coasts – led to the type's ever increasing popularity until by the end of the Third Age it had become the predominant ship type on the western coasts.

Age	Years	Knorr	Drakkar	Galley		Cog		Caravel		Carrack	Galleass		Galleon		Shebek
				A	E	A	E	A	E		A	E	A	E	
Second	1-200														
	200-400														
	400-600														
	600-800														
	800-1000														
	1000-1200														
	1200-1400														
	1400-1600														
	1600-1800														
	1800-2000														
	2000-2200														
	2200-2400														
	2400-2600														
	2600-2800														
	2800-3000														
	3000-3200														
	3200-3441														
Third	1-200														
	200-400														
	400-600														
	600-800														
	800-1000														
	1000-1200														
	1200-1400														
	1400-1600														
	1600-1800														
	1800-2000														
	2000-2200														
	2200-2400														
	2400-2600														
	2600-2800														
	2800-3021														

Ship data

This section gives an overview for the key specifications of the discussed Númenórean ship types. Included is data on the ship's length, beam and depth (keel to deck) in metres. There is also a number for tonnage. Every ship type is listed in four variants: small, medium, large and very large. As already stated, these numbers must not be taken as always correct, but rather as a guideline to give you a feel what should be right. Please note that the Númenórean ship types are slightly larger than their real-world counterparts. This is due to the fact that the Númenóreans as a people were on average noticeably taller than the real men of the Renaissance or medieval eras.[23] To accommodate this larger people in the same manner, the dimensions of the ships had to be adapted as well.

That the body size of the crew is a decisive factor for an oared ship was experienced with the *Olympias*, a reconstruction of an Athenian *trireme* commissioned by the Hellenic Navy in 1987. Extensive trials followed, and it was found that the ship could not reach the top speed reported by ancient authors. This is probably caused by the fact that the ship was built as a 1:1 replica of an ancient ship. Ancient rowers were on average considerably smaller than their modern counterparts. Thus they were able to utilize the oars with full efficiency in the confined space of the benches. For modern men, these ancient dimensions are too constricted, thus leading to a less efficient rowing with a greater stress on the physical condition of the rowers.

Note: Remember that the ship categorizations in this essay are necessary simplifications. In the real world, the distinctions between various ship types were very often blurred: One type evolved from another with all the resulting mixed forms in between. A big cog for example might possess aspects of a carrack and so the boundary is very often fleeting and ill-defined. Therefore the numbers below should not be viewed as a 100% correct real situation but as usable and workable guidelines for RPG purposes.

	Type	Length	Beam	Depth	Draft	Freeboard	Burthen	Tonnage	# of Masts
Rochros	Caravel (small)	17,0	4,3	2,2	1,3	0,9	55,9	69,9	1
	Caravel (medium)	22,7	5,7	2,8	1,7	1,1	129,1	161,4	2
	Caravel (large)	28,4	7,2	3,6	2,2	1,5	260,2	325,3	2
	Caravel (very large)	34,1	8,5	4,3	2,6	1,7	441,5	551,9	3
Belegir	Carrack (small)	28,4	8,5	4,3	2,6	1,7	367,9	459,9	2
	Carrack (medium)	34,1	10,2	5,1	3,1	2,0	627,4	784,3	2
	Carrack (large)	43,1	12,9	6,5	3,9	2,6	1275,0	1593,8	3
	Carrack (very large)	51,1	15,3	7,7	4,6	3,1	2133,0	2666,3	4
Celbar	Cog (small)	17,0	6,5	3,5	2,1	1,4	136,9	171,1	1
	Cog (medium)	20,4	7,7	4,2	2,5	1,7	233,8	292,3	1
	Cog (large)	26,1	9,9	5,4	3,3	2,2	495,9	619,9	1
	Cog (very large)	30,6	11,7	6,5	3,9	2,6	818,5	1023,1	1
Celros	Drakkar (small)	20,4	4,1	1,6	1,0	0,6	46,8	58,5	1
	Drakkar (medium)	27,2	5,4	2,2	1,3	0,9	113,0	141,3	1
	Drakkar (large)	34,1	6,8	2,7	1,6	1,1	223,1	278,9	1
	Drakkar (very large)	40,9	8,2	3,3	2,0	1,3	388,1	485,1	1
Aerrynnon	Galeass (small)	56,8	13,1	5,6	3,3	2,2	1454,8	1818,5	2
	Galeass (medium)	60,2	13,8	5,9	3,5	2,4	1736,1	2170,1	3
	Galeass (large)	63,6	14,6	6,2	3,7	2,5	2051,6	2564,5	3
	Galeass (very large)	68,1	15,7	6,7	4,0	2,7	2522,5	3153,1	3
Aerbarad	Galleon (small)	34,1	8,5	4,0	2,4	1,6	406,6	508,3	3
	Galleon (medium)	39,7	10,0	4,7	2,8	1,9	652,0	815,0	3
	Galleon (large)	45,4	11,4	5,3	3,2	2,1	970,7	1213,4	4
	Galleon (very large)	51,1	12,8	6,0	3,6	2,4	1391,6	1739,5	4
Aerryn	Galley (small)	20,4	4,1	1,6	1,0	0,6	46,8	58,5	1
	Galley (medium)	30,6	6,1	2,5	1,5	1,0	165,6	207,0	2
	Galley (large)	40,9	8,2	3,3	2,0	1,3	388,1	485,1	2
	Galley (very large)	52,2	10,4	4,2	2,5	1,7	808,5	1010,6	3
Cair Falathren	Knorr (small)	8,2	2,7	1,4	0,8	0,5	10,7	13,4	1
	Knorr (medium)	12,5	4,1	2,0	1,2	0,8	36,8	46,0	1
	Knorr (large)	17,0	5,7	2,8	1,7	1,1	96,8	121,0	1
	Knorr (very large)	20,4	6,7	3,4	2,0	1,4	164,5	205,6	1
Turwing	Shebek (small)	20,4	4,1	1,8	1,1	0,7	53,5	66,9	1
	Shebek (medium)	29,5	5,9	2,6	1,6	1,0	160,6	200,8	1
	Shebek (large)	38,6	7,7	3,5	2,1	1,4	370,1	462,6	1
	Shebek (very large)	45,4	9,1	4,1	2,5	1,6	594,8	743,5	2

Length is the ltotal etngth of the vessel (without bowsprit), **Beam** its greatest width, **Depth** the depth from keel to main deck, **Draft** the draught of the vessel at full load, **Freeboard** the distance from main deck to waterline at full load. **Burthen** is the cargpo capacity in tuns and **Tonnage** the displacement of the ship in tons
Note: all dimensions in metres
Note: Tonnage is more an abstract value enabling us to compare the vessels. It is not really a tonnage in metric tons.

References

Beyond the well-known works of Tolkien which are mentioned in the text above, I used some other sources for this essay. I found the following books quite useful when researching the subject of this article. If you are looking for precise lineart drawings, color pictures and measurements, I highly recommend the book of Verez and Woodman.

Wikipedia is a good source as well for some issues.

J.R.R. Tolkien, Artist and Illustrator by Wayne C. Hammond & Christina Scull; HarperCollins, London 1995

Die Galeonen – Große Segelschiffe um 1600 by Peter Kirsch; Bernard & Graefe Verlag (in german)

The Story of Sail by László Verez & Richard Woodman; Chatham Publishing & Co Ltd., London 1999

Renaissance War Galley by Angus Konstam; Osprey Publishing 2002

Spanish Galleon by Angus Konstam; Osprey Publishing 2004

Lepanto 1571 by Angus Konstam; Osprey Publishing 2003

Ancient Greek Warship 500-322 BC by Nic Fields; Osprey Publishing 2007

http://en.wikipedia.org (accessed on January 17th, 2008)

Notes

[1] http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/

[2] See http://otherhands.merp.com/ for electronic versions of issues of *Other Hands*.

[3] Though I deem *Pilot's Almanac* more useful, since it also delves into the many "mundane" tasks of designing and equipping ships. It also features extensive tables for the maritime infrastructure of its region. Though not Middle-earth, this might ease the design of similar data for any coastal region of Middle-earth.

[4] Or an even better metal.

[5] 30,5 cm

[6] Perhaps even improved or strengthened by "magic" – but not by "modern" technology.

[7] Or – at best – by people ignorant of either the Valar and their enemies. This cannot be taken into account for the "enlightened" Númenóreans of course. In Letter #155 (*The Letters of J.R.R. Tolkien*) Tolkien points – indirectly – to slavery as being the hallmark of the Enemy and practiced exclusively by him or those who have become like him.

[8] The use of slaves as oarsmen was not widespread from the beginning in the Renais-

sance. Especially the Venetians long favored the use of paid oarsmen (*alla sensile* system) since this resulted in a more efficient rowing. Only the steady growth of fleets (and hence need for rowers all over the Mediterranean) and bigger ships necessitated the use of slaves (*alla scaloccio* system).

[9] See *J.R.R. Tolkien, Artist and Illustrator*, image #52

[10] The perfect weather conditions of the voyage favor a great passenger capacity, since there was no danger of adverse weather that might hinder the crossing:

> *"Then the Edain set sail upon the deep waters, following the Star; and the Valar laid a peace upon the sea for many days, and sent sunlight and a sailing wind, so that the waters glittered before the eyes of the Edain like rippling glass, and the foam flew like snow before the stems of their ships."*
> **The Silmarillion.Akallabêth**

[11] Of course there existed *caravels* with square rigging as well – especially in later times.

[12] Something that square rigging (e.g. the one seen on the first two masts of most windjammers) is not very well suited for.

[13] Until the beginning of the 17th century, when the galeasses began to fall out of favor from the navies.

[14] It might be interesting to note that the contingent of mighty Venice at Lepanto (the greatest galley battle of time) was only slightly bigger (63 ships) than these "fifty great ships" of the Corsairs. This is a useful hint for the interpretation for these vessels as the Corsairs' galley battleships.

[15] Though Tolkien might have thought that slaves were also used in ancient times. See the famous "galley slave" episode in *Ben Hur* which is historically definitely wrong but spawned a long-lasting popular belief concerning its authenticity.

[16] And later, their ordnance.

[17] In the Far East the stern rudder had been developed far earlier (oldest depictions from 1st century AD), though its construction was completely different from the european one.

[18] In my opinion, it was the major flaw of the essay in OH 14 to totally disregard these passages from Tolkien.

[19] And the portugese *nao*.

[20] As was done in the article in OH14.

[21] See OH14

[22] The lowest deck on a ship, usually below the waterline.

[23] 1,93m for the Númenóreans compared to the ca. 1,70m for Renaissance-era humans. This is a difference of about 13,5%.

EÄ (D20)

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. Eä d20 is the adaptation of the Open D20 role playing gaming system to more accurately fit the "feel" of Tolkien's Middle-earth.

Find details and downloads at: www.ead20.com

A Response to 'Mapping Arda'

by Eric Dubourg
(edubourg@club-internet.fr) © 2007-2008
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OPTIONAL   HOUSE

Developing maps for Middle-earth beyond the Northwest described and mapped (at least on a basic level) by Tolkien is not easy. Mapping Arda *from issue 1 of* Other Minds *strove to achieve this. It also got a lot of comments – some of them positive, some more critical.*

The following essay presents the reader with an alternative view on such large-scale mapping issues. Especially the canon of ICE's MERP plays a significant rôle, as it strives to further promote it and many fan-made products based on it (and a map from Othzer Hands *magazine) too. It is hoped that this differing view will spark discussion on this subject for the betterment of all.*

The first issue of Other Minds (OM1) proposed a new approach to the mapping of Arda.[2] The new maps were made with several aims in mind:

- Being very close to Tolkien's final ideas concerning the shape of the world of Middle- earth,
- Correcting the shortcomings of previous attempts of Arda map making,
- Retaining as much of Pete Fenlon's continent as possible.

It is true that some of the existing maps[2] are not fully satisfying with respect to their consistency with the *Ambarkanta*. This is the case with the map produced for Iron Crown Enterprises (ICE) by Peter C. Fenlon. In this map, for instance, there is no "Pseudo-Africa", Dark Harad peninsula or continent, or Dark Lands. Another map was published in *Other Hands*. This features a continent that is too large (about 11,000 km in width). (The continent on the ICE map is about 8,500 km in width.)

The OM1 mapping essay gives reasons for the choices made in the creation of the new maps (several sets of maps are proposed for the First, Second and Third Ages). Though some good questions are raised in the essay, not all the responses appear to this writer to be convincing and/or sufficient, particularly on the following three very important points:

- **Where exactly should Utumno be placed?**
- **The disappearance of the Sea of Helcar throughout the Second Age;**
- **and the consequences of the downfall of Númenor.**

It is to these three elements in particular that I now turn, as they are crucial to the discussion about mapping Middle-earth. While these will be the main foci of my discussion, it is worth noting that some other complex problems were discussed in the OM1 essay - such as whether the pre-Akallabêth world was globed or flat, the locations of Beleriand, the

Grey Mountains and of Númenor, as well as the general shape of Mordor.

Where exactly should Utumno be placed?

The *OM1* essay proposes to place the ruins of Utumno in the 'Bay of Utum' shown on the *OM1* map.

Several passages can be found about Utumno in the HoMe series:

> *"In the North of the world Melkor reared Ered-engrin the Iron Mountains; and they stood upon the regions of ever-lasting cold, in a **great curve** from East to West, but falling short of the sea upon either side. These Melkor had built in ages past as a fence to his citadel, Utumno, and this lay at the **midmost of his northern realm**."*
> **LQ2 with later emendations after 1958 and my emphases, HoMe V.258-9, with XI.191-2, 196**

> *"But Melko fortified the North and built there the Northern Towers, which are also called the Iron Mountains, and they look southward."*
> **HoMe IV.239, 1936**

> *"§20 Now Melkor began the delving and building of a vast fortress deep under the Earth, far from the light of Illuin; and he raised great mountains above his halls. That stronghold was after called Utumno the Deep-hidden; …"*
> **'The Annals of Aman', Manuscript AAm*; 1950, HoMe X.67**

Correspondingly, in the Ambarkanta (map V) a great curve is clearly seen. Pete Fenlon of ICE had included remnants of this great curve of the Ered Engrin (or Iron Mountains) in the position supported by the above passages in his map. They are clearly seen, from Forodwaith to Uax and Ôm. In the ICE map, the land at the "midmost" is more or less the Barl Syrnac mountains. The combination that should be made as a result is to place Utumno in the Barl Syrnac mountains instead of in the Bay of Utum. (I would note that 'Bay of Utum' would be an inappropriate word to define that bay should this proposal be accepted). The suggestion, at any rate, is not incompatible with the OM1 essay's proposed origin of the Bay.

Placing Utumno in the Barl Syrnac mountains means that it or some part of it may perhaps not have been destroyed completely and perhaps is still accessible or can become again accessible, following an earthquake or mining

activities led by Dwarves or Orcs in the area. Perhaps the evil of Utumno still waits to be revealed?

Furthermore, a reference to the Illuin and Ormal lamps should have been made in this context. Though these have little or no impact on the Second and Third Age maps, their downfall has an important impact on the shape of Middle Earth in the First Age. This is especially the case given the proximity of Utumno and Illuin:

> *One lamp they raised near to the north of Middle-earth, and it was named Illuin; and the other was raised in the south, and it was named Ormal; and the light of the Lamps of the Valar flowed out over the Earth.*
> **The Silmarillion, 'Of the Beginning of Days', p. 40**

> *The lands of the far north were all made desolate in those days; for there Utumno was delved exceeding deep, and its pits were filled with fires and with great hosts of the servants of Melkor. But at the last the gates of Utumno were broken and the halls unroofed, and Melkor took refuge in the uttermost pit.*
> **The Silmarillion, 'Of the Coming of the Elves and the Captivity of Melkor', p. 59**

> *Now Melkor began the delving and building of a vast fortress, deep under Earth, beneath dark mountains where the beams of Illuin were cold and dim. That stronghold was named Utumno.*
> **The Silmarillion, 'Of the Beginning of Days', p.41 , my emphasis**

If we accept that the fortress of Utumno was probably near where the Barl Syrnac mountains stood in the Third Age, then where should the position of the pillar of Illuin be expected in the First Age? When drawing the ICE map, Pete Fenlon placed it in the Far East, near or around Urtlagga, which seems a strange choice, especially if we consult the Ambarkanta (map IV), and the image to the right, where the Illuin and Ormal pillars replace the Inner Seas of Helkar and Ringil:

As a consequence, the remnant of the Illuin pillar should be north of the equator, and equidistant to the Blue and Red Mountains. The later Talathrant river is exactly where had been the sea of Helkar, created by the fall of the Illuin pillar. As a consequence, the Illuin pillar should be placed near or around the future region of **Kykurian Kyn**, and not elsewhere.

The disappearance of the Sea of Helcar throughout the Second Age

> *But it is said among the Elves that it [Cuiviénen] lay far off in the east of Middle-earth, and northward, and it was a bay in the Inland Sea of Helcar; and that sea stood where aforetime the roots of the mountain of Illuin had been before Melkor overthrew it.*
> **The Silmarillion, 'Of the Coming of the Elves and the Captivity of Melkor', p. 56**

The shrinking and near-total disappearance of the Sea of Helkar throughout the Second Age is explained in the OM1 essay due to a general warming in climate, caused by the absence of Morgoth in the North. This explanation is correct and may appear sufficient, although other causes exist, both natural and supernatural. While these other explanations may not be accepted by all, they may nonetheless be propitious to interesting adventures.

In her *Atlas of Middle-earth*, Karen Wynn Fonstad considered that Mordor was a result of tectonic activity during the War of Wrath. Though in agreement with the statement of Mordor created as early as the First Age, this idea can be retained as another explanation of the disappearance of the Sea of Helkar:

- While Morgoth is cast into the void at the end of the First Age, this is not the case for his numerous servants, who can be assumed to sometimes fight each other. There can therefore be at least two other possible explanations for the disappearance of the Sea of Helkar: subterranean earthquakes, infighting between forces of the Shadow, perhaps involving and affecting other peoples. Perhaps there is desperate
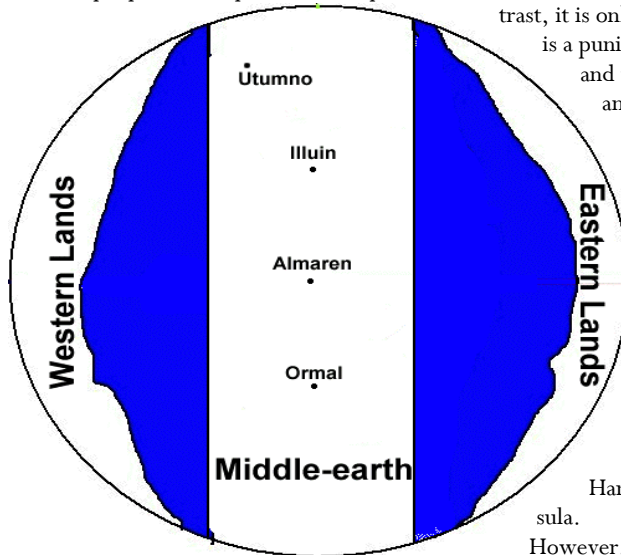
opposition between Spirits of the Sea and Dragons and Balrogs, Spirits of the Fire? Perhaps some want the Sea to be removed to facilitate the corruption of the land? Perhaps there is a link with the volcano of Ulk Chey Sart? Perhaps the shrinking of the sea is a divine act to prevent any mortal from getting access to the legendary cavern of life in Almaren? How did the Mirror of Fire come into existence and why was most of Harad turned into a desert?[3]

The consequences of the Downfall of Númenor

The fact is that all Tolkien says about the drowning of Númenor is contained in this passage:

> *And all the coasts and seaward regions of the western world suffered great change and ruin in that time; for the seas invaded the lands, and shores foundered, and ancient isles were drowned, and new isles were uplifted; and hills crumbled and rivers were turned into strange courses.*
> **The Silmarillion, 'Akallabêth', p. 280**

We have to interpret this for the general map of Middle-earth.

According to the maps in *OM1*, between the Second Age and the Third Age, a coastal region between 800 and 1,600 kilometers wide is drowned along the southern shores of Endor, and a similarly dramatic event along the bay of Ormal. The authors of the map probably considered this was a consequence of the War of Wrath and the power of Ilúvatar, but this is *impossible*.

And, even if it was, why would Ilúvatar try to punish the Middle Men of Endor? By contrast, it is only the drowning of Númenor that is a punishment, of the fallen High Men, and the devastation along the coasts an important consequence, as shown by the passage quoted above.

I recognise that large coastal areas should be inundated, that there should be devastation on the shores, like the destruction of cities, caused by earthquakes and storms, that the courses of rivers are changed, and that wide lands disappear into the sea. Many marshes should likewise be created, and Dark Harad is turned into a large peninsula.

However, it is neither necessary to add the

collapse into the sea of a region 800-1,600 kilometers in width, nor to surmise that the collapse last for perhaps a century, enabling the locals to evacuate the coasts. The wrath of the sea is immediate, with little hope of survival for coastal dwellers, as demonstrated in our real history. It is adequate for being faithful to Tolkien if the cataclysm affects perhaps lands 20-50 kilometers inland.

Then, if we adhere to the Ambarkanta map in the First Age, we have to explain that another important devastation occurred earlier, perhaps as an indirect consequence of the fall of Beleriand, or as the result of an unknown war between servants of Morgoth and servants of the Valar.

A new map of Middle-earth?

With these points in mind, it is possible to define how a Middle-earth map close to the canon should be framed. It has be consistent with two important criteria:

- It must correspond closely to the information of *Ambarkanta* Map V concerning the First Age, and
- it must conform to Tolkien's thoughts as expressed in his Letter to Rhona Beare (*Letters* 283-284) on the close relationship with the Eurasia-Africa continent of the primary world:

> *I have, I suppose, constructed an imaginary time, but kept my feet on my own mother-earth for place. I prefer that to the contemporary mode of seeking remote globes in 'space'. However curious, they are alien, and not lovable with the love of blood-kin. Middle-earth is (by the way & if such a note is necessary) not my own invention. It is a modernization, or an alteration (N[ew] E[nglish] D[ictionary] 'a perversion') of an old word for the inhabited world of Men, the oikoumen: middle because thought of vaguely as set amidst the Encircling Seas and (in the northern-imagination) between ice of the North and the fire of the South. […] Many reviewers seem to assume that Middle-earth is another planet!*
> **Letters , p. 283-284**

This confirms the hypothesis of Arda as the past of Earth (cf. Jeff Erwin's brilliant essay "From England unto Eglamar").[4] If we consider in addition that Northwestern Endor is distantly reminiscent of Northern Europe, then it can be supposed that the entire continent of Endor (including the Dark Harad peninsula) is reminiscent of Eurasia and Africa. We cannot draw the same conclusion about the other continents, or follow the theory of the Havens beyond the Ice-Age.

There are some other clear references to Arda being our Earth in a long distant past:

> *The action of the story takes place in the North-west of 'Middle-earth', equivalent in latitude to the coastlands of Europe and the north shores of the Mediterranean. […] If Hobbiton and Rivendell are taken (as intended) to be at about the latitude of Oxford, then Minas Tirith, 600 miles south, is about the latitude of Florence. The Mouths of Anduin and the ancient city of Pelargir are at about the latitude of ancient Troy.*
> **Letters, p.376**

Further, there are the following references about the insertion of New Lands after the downfall of Númenor:

> *§8 But Ilúvatar gave power to the Gods, and they bent back the edges of the Middle-earth, and they made into a globe, […] Thus New Lands came into being beneath the Old World, and all were equally distant from the centre of the round earth; and there was flood and great confusion of waters, and seas covered what was once the dry, and lands appeared where there had been deep seas.*
>
> *§12 But they came only to the lands of the New World, and found them to be as those of the Old; and they reported that the world was round.[…] And these ships flying came also to the lands of the New World and to the East of the Old World; and they reported that the world was round.*
> **First and Second version of the 'Fall of Númenor', HoMe V.16, 17-8**

In the primary world, 'New World' refers to the continents of America. But in Middle-earth, it is not possible to identify with certainty these New Lands as an ancestor of America or some Old Lands not easily reachable before. What is certain is that, apart from the main continent, there exist the Dark Lands (or Mórenorë), the remains of the Lands of the Sun.

The following revision of §8, written after the version given above, gives additional information about these changes. Does this passage support the hypothesis of some New Lands being an ancestor of America?

> *Then Ilúvatar cast back the Great Sea west of Middle-earth, and the Empty Land east of it, and new lands and new seas were made; and the world was diminished."*
> **Typescript Fall of Númenor revision of §8, HoMe V.32**

In his commentary on this passage, Christopher Tolkien states that the 'Empty Land' must be the Burnt Land of the Sun of Ambarkanta map V.

Conclusion : Proposal for a better map

All of these factors mean that an accurate map of Middle-earth has to be **much closer to the Ambarkanta map for the First Age**, and **closer to the continents of the primary world for the Third Age**.

The *Other Minds 1* maps more or less satisfy these two important criteria.

The most crucial areas for amendments are the consequences of the downfall of Númenor and changes arising from a revised location of Utumno.

A third problem is the failure to integrate the modules set in this area that were created by contributors to the fan-modules mailing list, especially in the Ormal region — the Chyan Empire, Codya, Sakal an-Khâr … Their adaptation may be very difficult, if not impossible.

These issues can be resolved by means of a revised *Other Minds* map (as seen in the appendix to this article), with the following guidelines in mind:

- The eastern Dark Harad peninsula needs to be redrawn so as to make possible geographical features described in the Ormal modules already developed (mainly Harshandatt, the Chyan Empire and Sakal-an-Khâr).
- The Southern Archipelago has to be reinstated: part of it was removed in the *Other Minds 1* map, with no real justification.
- The impact of the downfall of Númenor is considerable in the western lands (to the extent described above), but much less so in the East. The devastation in the Ormal lands occurs much sooner, after the War of Wrath at the end of the First Age. While the changes after the fall of Númenor are felt, this occurs to a much lesser degree.

Notes

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

2   There are several general maps available that depict the Middle-earth in its entirety:

- The ICE map designed by Pete Fenlon in 1982;
- the extended Middle-earth map published by Thomas Morwinsky in *Other Hands* 29/30 and the version derived from it and incorporating corrections;
- the map designed by Haerangil;
- the map designed by Karen Wynn Fonstad in her Atlas of Middle-earth;
- the maps for use with this article, as given in the appendix.

3   It is worth taking a look at the adventure 'Eyes of the Blind Night' and the playing aid 'The cult of Benish Armon' in *OH*6/7 for more ideas on this subject.

4   For more insight into the relationship between our world and Middle-earth, see 'From England unto Eglamar', by Jeff J. Erwin, *OH*20, January 1998. Also: 'New Middle-earth: Exploring beyond the Mountains' by Martin Baker, for a possible timeline between the Fourth Age and ours, in *OH*13, April 1993.
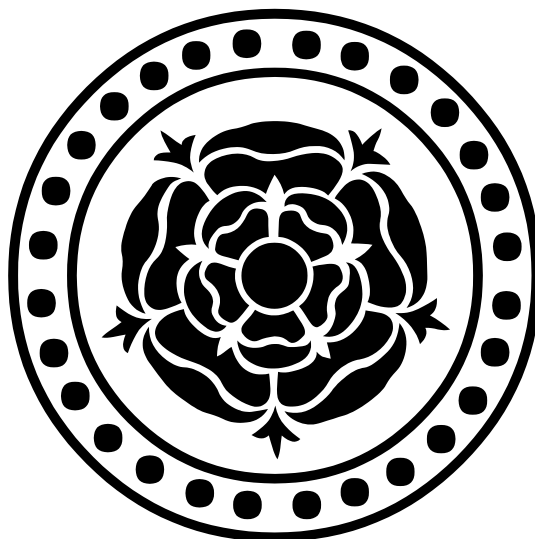
Mapping Arda – Reloaded

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OPTIONAL

This follow-up essay is a further development based upon the "Mapping Arda" essay and maps found in issue #1 of Other Minds. It deals with the inconsistencies and ambiguities we noticed after publishing said essay. Furthermore, the feedback we received showed us that some aspects of the current maps still had potential for improvement. This kind of positive criticism is exactly what such an endeavour needs. The intellectual benefit of such cordial academic debate betters the whole project — which, through its "open" nature is not "set in stone" forever when solid arguments are brought forth.

Especially Eric Dubourg's comments (see the separate article from him on this topic in this issue) pointed toward some deficiencies which we have eliminated with this follow-up article. Thanks to Eric for the issues he has brought up. These points led to our effort of making the maps even more compatible with the original sources. At Thomas Morwinsky's guest speaker event at MERPCON III (http://www.merpcon.org), several people (including Chris Seeman and Michael Martinez) pointed towards some useful improvements as well. Thanks go also to William Cauthron for his expertise on river dynamics.

In addition, there are several addenda for the original article in Other Minds 1. These are also included in this successive essay.

Note

As in Mapping Arda, we use the general abbreviation "HoMe" for a volume of the History of Middle-earth series published by Christopher Tolkien. This is followed by the number of the volume in roman numerals

Overview of changes

Several features have been changed in this map; mostly according to input and constructive criticism from readers. Each of these changes are discussed in detail. To ease the identification of some of these places, who mostly do not have "official" names, an overview map is attached. each area in question is numbered from 1 to 9, and the numbers can be found on the maps as well:

- re-defining the size of the globe before and after the Akallabêth
- re-evaluation of possible damage after the Akallabêth
- shape of the eastern part of the Ered Engrin; or remnants thereof (1)
- re-defining the remnants of the south-eastern archipelago from the Fenlon map (2)
- shape of Morenorë after the Akallabêth
- western coastline of Middle-earth and Morenorë after the Akallabêth (3 and 3a)
- coastline of eastern Middle-earth (4, 5 and 6)
- the bay reminiscent of the real-world Red Sea (7)
- the ICE islands of "Uiven" and adjactent islands (8)
- the Empty Lands/Burnt Lands of the Sun
- the great Inland Sea in southern Middle-earth (9)
- the course of a Third Age – river in Morenorë that took a course nearly impossible in the real world

The two overview sketches below illustrate these changes. The first one is found below on this page, the second on the next page. The numbers on them correspond to those given in the text.

Prospects

To present a complete set of Arda maps, the earlier periods of the First Age (e.g. before the building of Thangorodrim and the Battle of the Powers) are needed as well. Due to constraints in time and importance (which RPG campaign would be set in that time?) we postpone this project for a later issue of *Other Minds*. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions on this matter.

Changes

Re-defining the globe of Arda: A close inspection of the distance between the northern and southernmost parts of Arda revealed that the extent of the continents from "Pole to Pole" in *Mapping Arda* did not fit for both the pre- and post-Akallabêth Arda. When measuring the maximum north-south extent on the current First Age map, we end up with a distance clearly not compatible with a Terra-sized Arda.[2] This latter is of course our assumption for the status after the Downfall of Númenor.

For the post-Akallabêth-era this is no problem, as there might be extensive polar seas beyond the furthest land north- and southward.[3] For the pre-Akallabêth Ages, this poses a significant problem though.

We chose a solution where pre-Akallabêth Arda was already globed (as in *Mapping Arda*), but this globe was smaller than the post-Akallabêth one. The continents of Middle-earth and Morenore on this smaller globe reach the poles.[4] After the Downfall of Númenor, the northern and southern enlargement of the globe is covered by polar oceans.[5]

For concrete numbers, have a look at the table below.

Size of Arda		
	circumference (km)	radius (km)
pre-Akallabêth	31,785.011	5,058.741
post-Akallabêth	40,075.004	6,378.135

This solution offers another advantage besides the mere mapping/cartography issues: The enlargement of the globe after the Downfall of Númenor is an incisive geological event, a bit reminiscent of the globing of the world in the old "flat earth" myth. Similar to the old "globing myth", it surely is an event not in accordance with the "scientific laws" of Arda, and only possible for an omnipotent god. Had the Valar[6] caused such a change, tremors and cataclysms of unknown magnitudes would have befallen all of the physical world; possibly leading to the near-eradication of all life; including the Children of Ilúvatar. In the best case, all cultures and realms would have been shaken beyond repair – but with at least some survivors.

The fact that there are no reports by Tolkien of massive culture-shaking events in the Northwest following the Downfall of Númenor, it is likely that this initial event was nearly unnoticed on the coasts of Middle-earth. In some areas near the epicentre of destruction (Númenor), there might have been Tsunami-like events (see below), but the majority of changes in the western coastline seem to have been more gradual over a couple of decades, rather than one catastrophic event within a few minutes or hours.

As mentioned above, a **re-evaluation of possible post-Akallabêth damage** was necessary. In *Mapping Arda,* we only briefly went into the reasoning for the widespread destruction wrought by the Akallabêth. The primary reason is, of course, the Downfall of Númenor into the rift created by Eru in the Great Sea. All the other drownings in Middle-

earth at this time probably are the result of two factors, mixed to varying degrees:
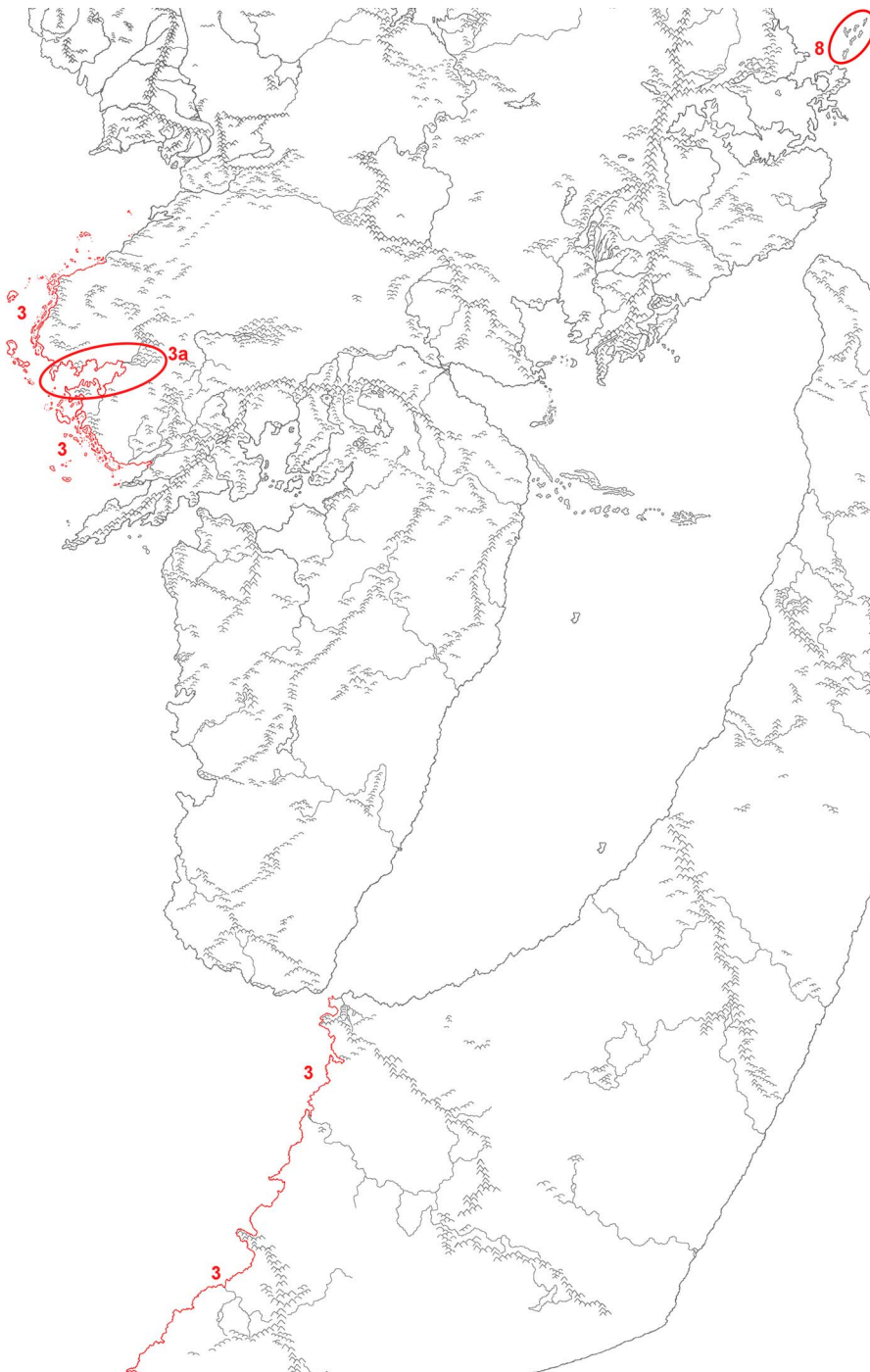
1. direct punishment for the Númenóreans as in the drowning of the island itself
2. "collateral damage" because of the physical laws of Arda with tectonic repercussions elsewhere when another major part is severely damaged or even destroyed.

We see varying degrees of coastal damage in western Middle-earth, the most obvious in that part of western Dark Harad that sinks below the waves as well. For a good assessment of the damage the case of Lindon is pivotal: Tolkien points out that Lindon suffers heavy damage on its coasts (see *Other Minds*, p. 16 for the exact quote). So, even those least responsible for Númenor's corruption[7] suffered dearly from its fall. Even if they might not had great loss of life, their home was sorely shaken. Thus we would deem this as an example for the least possible "collateral damage" on the western coasts following the Akallabêth.

The case of western Dark Harad might be seen similarly, with at least a majority of these Arûwânai following Ar-Pharazôn's folly. Thus the destruction of their land might be seen as a mix of collateral damage and intentional damage for their crimes. We have to be careful with intentional "punishment" beyond Númenor and Aman though. These were the epicentre of hubris and forbidden land respectively. Thus direct punishment here is what was intended. Direct punishment in Middle-earth, the home of mankind, should be handled with much more care though. Accordingly, we propose that the vast majority of damage to Middle-earth is "collateral damage" and not intentional.

The Belegaer coast is likely to be hit by one or more tsunamis; obliterating some coastal strips[8] – and perhaps one or more cities at or near the coast. The subsequent slow sinking of the major areas is a result of tectonic activity, hastened by this great surge of power from the "secondary world".[9] Because of this, the geological processes which normally take millenia to be even noticeable, are vastly increased in speed. As in *Mapping Arda*, we suppose a timeframe of up to ca. 100 years for all changes in the map to take effect.

For the cataclysm following the War of Wrath, we ruled out any massive changes on this continental-scale map beyond the area of Beleriand and the Northlands because of the pivotal passage from the *History of Middle-earth* quoted below (on p. 45 right bottom). One might see the changes in the Sea of Helcar as such changes, but this is in fact not destruc-tion, but rather creation of new land for Eru's Children. Thus it does not qualify as "damage" caused by the War of Wrath.

In *Mapping Arda*, a lot of changes in the East (e.g. ICE's "Womaw" or "Urd" region; #1 and 4 on overview map) were attributed to the Akallabêth. At first glance such a monumental incision in the history of Arda might justify equally dramatic changes in the shape of distant coastal regions as well. This is supported by several passages where Tolkien elaborates upon the consequences of the Akallabêth:

The first is from the third version of the "Fall of Númenor". The text is associated with the "Lost Road" from the 1930s (so, in essence about halfway in the development of the mythology):

> *"Then Ilúvatar cast back the Great Sea west of Middle-earth and the Empty Lands east of it, … There was flood and great confusion of waters in that time, and **sea covered much** that in the Elder Days had been dry, **both in the West and East** of Middle-earth."*
> **HoMe 9.The Drowning of Anadûnê (pre-February 1942; our emphasis)**

The second fitting quote is from the "Drowning of Anadûnê" from 1946 and printed in the HoMe9 as well. Version 2, §52 of this text (according to Christopher looking very "finalized") has the relevant passage as follows:

> *"And **all the coasts and seaward regions of the world** suffered great ruin and change in that time [following the Akallabêth]; for the Earth was sorely shaken , and the seas climbed over the lands, and shores foundered, and ancient isles were drowned, and new isles were uplifted; and hills crumbled, and rivers were turned into strange courses."*
> **HoMe 9.The Drowning of Anadûnê (our emphasis)**

That might seem to settle the matter. Both quotes speak of worldwide cataclysms in the wake of Númenor's downfall. Thus massive changes in the coastlines seem to be justified. There is however, also a quote from the published Silmarillion which is different in a small but important part:

> *And **all the coasts and seaward regions of the western world** suffered great change and ruin in that time; for the seas invaded the lands, and shores foundered, and ancient isles were drowned, and new isles were uplifted; and hills crumbled and rivers were turned into strange courses.*
> **Silmarillion.Akallabêth (our emphasis)**

It is crucial to note how Tolkien at first had a worldwide cataclysm in mind when developing the consequences of Númenor's Downfall and used precise descriptions ("both in the West and East"). Later he became more general in wording ("all the coasts of the world"). The latest stage in the development was more precise again, in this case to exactly differentiate that only the **western** coasts were devastated. One might object that the content of the Silmarillion is not always reliable. A check with the HoMe12, where the history of the *Akallabêth* is detailed, shows that the relevant paragraph (§80) was deliberately written by Tolkien with this wording. According to Christopher Tolkien, this final typescript for the *Akallabêth* was probably written around 1958 by his father.

The only possible explanation for this is Tolkien's own change of mind in the nature of Arda before and after the Akallabêth: First it was a flat earth turned into a globe while later Tolkien had Arda be a globe from the beginning. The former of course would have greater consequences for the whole world, while the latter would naturally limit its damaging influence to the areas near the source of change (Númenor) – exactly the named **western** coasts of Middle-earth (and not all the coasts anymore; especially as the eastward regions and "Inner Seas" were well-protected by their geography from major catastrophes in the West).

That the Akallabêth-caused destruction was limited to the western coasts alone, is a fact that is to be taken into account when mapping Middle-earth in general. We have applied this principle consequently, and acccordingly there are no coastline changes caused by the Akallabêth in the Inner Seas or the East anymore.

The shape of the eastern Ered Engrin and the western coastline of the Bay of Utûm (#1 on overview map) is a major issue that was not as thoroughly addressed in *Mapping Arda* as we had hoped.

The most important change in the First Age is the different shape of the eastern Ered Engrin when compared with our map from *Other Minds 1*. This became necessary when Eric
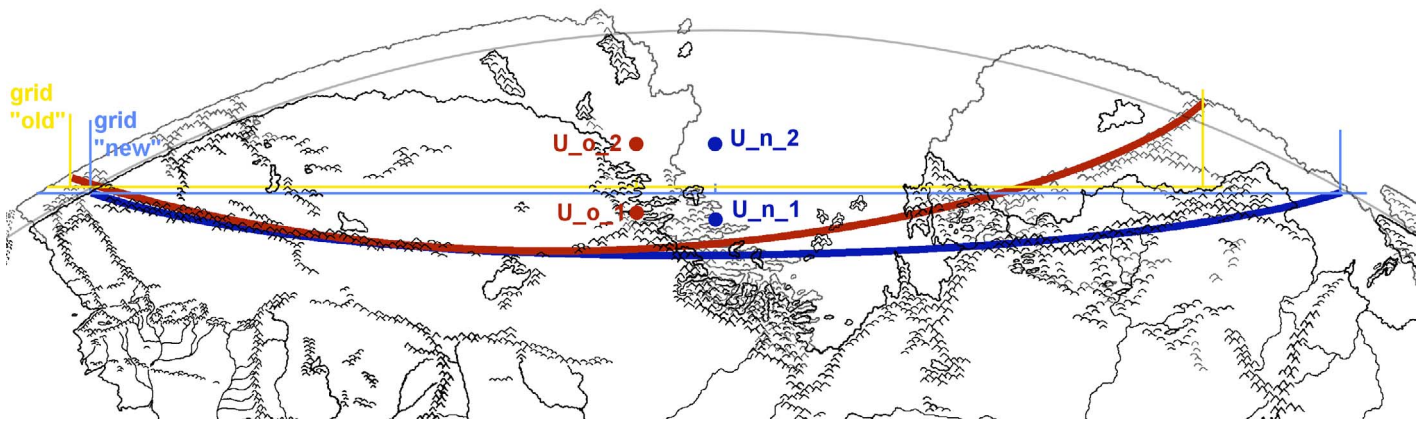
Dubourg pointed out that this does not fit well with the supposed location of Utumno. Some research showed that this objection was justified. Thus we had to do something about it.

The First Age map as published in *Other Minds 1* assumed the eastern range of the Ered Engrin to follow the mountain chain as shown on the Fenlon map for the area of ICE's "Urd" and adjacent territories. The idea was to preserve as much as possible from the Fenlon map. Unfortunately however, this does not fit very well with the info provided by Tolkien. In our map of the First Age in *Other Minds 1*, the eastern part of the mountain chain is bent northward considerably when compared to the general curvature as found on the Map 5 of the *Ambarkanta* in the *History of Middle-earth, Vol. 4*. It is important that in the first stages of its existence, Arda was symmetrical. This changed for the first time when Melkor threw down Illuin and Ormal. This symmetry is an integral part of the legendarium, already present in early versions as in the *Ambarkanta*:

> *"But the* **symmetry of the ancient Earth** *was changed and broken in the first Battle of the gods, when Valinor went out against Utumno,(8) which was Melko's stronghold, and Melko was chained."*
> **HoMe 4.Ambarkanta** (our emphasis)

This symmetry is continued even in the later versions:

> *"And the shape of Arda and the* **symmetry of its waters and its lands** *was marred in that time, so that the first designs of the Valar were never after restored."*
> **HoMe 10.The Annals of Aman** (our emphasis)

This last passage was used in the published *Silmarillion* as well. The symmetry of the "old" Arda can also be seen in Map IV of the *Ambarkanta*. Since the Ered Engrin were built before this break in the symmetry, they were symmetrical as well, as in the aforementioned Map IV. This symmetry is expressed in an East-West symmetry, e.g. the western and eastern endpoints of this mountain range lie at nearly the same latitude. For the version from *Mapping Arda*, this is clearly not the case. For these reasons, the line of the Iron Mountains as in *Mapping Arda* is not possible. The possible explanation that the eastern part was bent northward after the the Battle of the Powers is invalidated by the Map V of the *Ambarkanta*, where even **after** this event, the symmetry of the range has not changed significantly.

So, obviously our original solution for the placement of Utumno also did not fit to Tolkien's vision where it is clearly stated that this fortress lay in the "midst" of Melkor's realm:

> *"In the North of the world Melkor reared Ered-engrin the Iron Mountains; and they stood upon the regions of ever-lasting cold, in a great curve from East to West, but falling short of the sea upon either side. These Melkor built in the elder days as a fence to his citadel, Utumno, and this lay at the midmost of his northern realm."*
> **HoMe 11: LQ2**

Please note that it is not said that Utumno was located "under" or "in" the mountains itself. Rather, it is located in the "midmost of his northern realm". This realm of Morgoth

includes the Ered Engrin itself as well as all the lands northward. This is supported by the statement, that these mountains were but the "fence" to his citadel. This puts Utumno surely not directly in the mountains, but probably at least a bit northward from it.[10] See the sketch above for a suggested **possible** location of Utumno. See also the final paragraph on this page.

The dark grey lines on this map represent the coastline as in our original conception, while the new one is depicted in black. You can clearly see that not only the coastline in ICE's "Bay of Utûm" has changed, but also the northern boundary of (accessible) Arda. This border is the light grey circular arc. You see also that the the northern boundary has moved a bit southward. This is caused by a re-calculation of the globe's size.[11] The change is minimal and not of great consequence. We deem it important to be exact though.

The yellow lines are auxiliary lines to clarify the positioning of Utumno in the "old" map, while the light blue ones fill the same function for the "new" map. In the East the light blue line lies eastward in the Sea. This is intentional, since the map is linked to the era after the Battle of Powers. We presume that this conflict had its main consequences in the north-central and north-eastern parts of Middle-earth. Thus the mountains would have reached the black border when they were created by Melkor. Because of this, the shape is calculated according to this – seemingly irrational – reference point in the East.

In the middle of both auxiliary lines you can see a mark for the middle (east-west direction) of the respective curve. Based on this position, we have made two suggestions for each map version for the positioning of Utumno. The one labelled with #2 lies in the middle between the curve of the (respective) Ered Engrin and the upper rim of (accessible) Arda. The one labelled with #1 lies only a bit northward of the respective curve of the mountains.

Drawing an arc from the western to the eastern intersection of the auxiliary lines with the rim of "old" (pre-Battle of the Powers) coast and following the line of the mountains leads to the two thick general curvatures for the Ered Engrin. The red one follows the mountains as in *Mapping Arda*, while the blue one represents the "new" version presented in this essay.

As you can see in the "red" version, the line of the mountains is heavily skewed northward on the eastern side and Utumno would lie far inland even in the Third Age; in the region even west (or north; according to the supposed position of the fortress) of ICE's "Barl Syrnac".[12] As we showed in *Mapping Arda*, it is highly likely that Utumno was drowned in the wake of the Battle of the Powers. All these issues make the line of the Ered Engrin as shown in *Mapping Arda* impossible. A correction was really necessary. Thanks again to everyone's active involvement, research and suggestions.

Since Tolkien explicitly said that Utumno lies "in the midmost of his [Melkor's] northern realm" (see quote above), position #2 seems more probable than #1. We would like to enter into discussion on this topic though; since this would be needed for any maps in earlier Ages of Arda.

The blue dots mark the two supposed locations of Utumno for the corrected version. This made a re-drawing of ICE's "Barl Syrnac" coast necessary to ensure that Utumno would really be submerged after its destruction by the Valar. The reasons for Utumno being drowned can be found in *Mapping Arda* (p. 11/12). The red dots and lines are only for clarification though; in the future we will only use the corrected "blue" version.

Please note that Utumno was not located in the center of the newly-emerging "Bay of Utûm". We explain this skewed position[13] by more intensive combat in this area during the Battle of Powers that led to this extensive damage. The Valar probably wished to put their main force between the Quendi and the Enemy, so that no stragglers or secondary forces would slip around the host of the Valar towards the Firstborn. Though the Valar set a guard about Cuiviènen, they would be reluctant to take the risk and put this guard to the test. Thus the majority of the major battles are supposed to have been fought in this area southeast of Utumno that became submerged afterwards.This focus of the main combat – and destruction – is also represented by the more extensive damage to the northeastern areas of Middle-earth compared to those in the Northwest of Utumno.

The remnants of the Southeastern Archipelago (#2 on overview map) were already addressed in *Mapping Arda*. Pete Fenlon drew an extensive southeastern archipelago in his 1982 map. This was largely deleted in *Mapping Arda* by the addition of the southern portion of Middle-earth ("Dark Harad"). A few islands remained however in a changed form. Since we had these islands already existent before the Akallabêth (albeit in a slightly diverging shape from that drawn by Pete Fenlon), and achieving the final state (as on the Fenlon map) after this cataclysm, we deemed this configuration not unlikely at the time of the writing of *Mapping Arda*.

After the publication of *Mapping Arda*, several issues surfaced, one of them the suggestion to retain the whole Fenlon archipelago.

This would have only been possible if the entire archipelago was present its original position from an early Age on. This would have necessitated a narrow isthmus to keep Dark Harad attached to the rest of Middle-earth. This was discarded for several reasons:

- such a massive change (raising mountains, submerging hills) in this area cannot be explained by the Akallabêth. Before that, it is impossible for it to exist due to its heavy discrepancy with Map V in the *Ambarkanta*.[14] The "Bay of Ormal" might be viewed as an example for exactly that (massive change in the East due to the Akallabêth), and accordingly we discarded this ICE creation as well.[15]
- This isthmus would have looked somewhat artificial, e.g. "designed" to achieve exactly the desired coastline which would have enabled us to retain the original archipelago.

Combined, these two issues were strong enough to deter us from including the whole archipelago in the revised map.

We also had the idea of moving the entire archipelago east into the Inner Sea. This would have necessitated a distinct removal south-southeastward – and the easternmost islands would have already been lying in Morenorë then!

We retained however, the easternmost isles that lay in the Inner Seas. Some were re-positioned, but the majority of the "survivors" remains as drawn in 1982.

The **course of a river in Third-Age Morenorë** was another issue. Gratefully we were pointed to an unlikely course for an unnamed river in Third Age – Morenorë. This river ran straight from the mountains before forking out at about 90° and each separate stream flowing into the sea (north and south respectively). This is a nearly impossible oc-

currence for a river[16] and thus we first fixed it by making the stream into two different rivers.

Later, however, the explanation for the breaking-up of Morenorë was invalidated (see above), and so we chose to retain the old, pre-Akallabêth shape, only altered by damage to the coastline on the Belegaer coast.

The Belegaer coasts after the Akallabêth (#3 and 3a on overview map) needed a lot of "correcting" attention. As outlined above, the damage caused by the Akallabêth is extensive, but confined to the western coasts facing the Belegaer. We followed this principle more consequently than in *Mapping Arda*, with applying alterations to nearly all the coasts (as per the already mentioned quote). You can see some changes to the previous map of the Third Age in the northern coasts of Dark Harad south of Umbar (#3 on overview map; coastline in red). In the previous version, we had more or less the whole western protrusion be destroyed after the Downfall of Númenor. This was done chiefly to achieve a transition from the old, Map V – based, geography towards the Fenlon geography. The only solution was to inundate this vast area.

This was maybe a too radical solution though.[17] It is indeed not justified to place such radical changes in an area not primarily affected by the intervention of ERU, but only indirectly through the tectonic dislocations associated with the Akallabêth.

Accordingly we changed the geography, so that a considerable part of the coast is submerged, but not nearly as much as in the previous version. To achieve this, we moved part of the western coast of the Fenlon map westward. This leads to the area of ICE's Far Harad ("Bozisha-Miraz") relocated westward too (#3a on the overview map). In our opinion, the resulting new coastline of the Third Age is much more believable than the "old" one.

A lot of work was necessary for **the eastern coasts** (#4-6 on the overview map). It is paramount to give attention to the eastern coasts as well. We had to be careful however, since neither the War of Wrath nor the Akallabêth are eligible as causes for major changes. For the Akallabêth, the relevant quote has been given above. For the War of Wrath, in the *History of Middle-earth, Vol. X* Tolkien provides us with information concerning this event:

> *The war [War of Wrath] was successful, and ruin was limited to the small (if beautiful) region of Beleriand.*
> **HoMe10.Myths Transformed**

In the context of this quote Tolkien explains that the decision of the Valar when they would strike against Morgoth was precisely timed and not incidental. In this way they ensured that Morgoth had expended most of his own being into his servants and creations, weakening him personally and enabling his overthrow with the least possible damage to Arda.[18] A more powerful Morgoth (e.g. on his Utumno-power level) might have wreaked enough damage to the already cracked fabric of Arda to make it uninhabitable for the Children of Ilúvatar.

Because of this, we deem it not suitable to assume any significant changes to Arda caused by this event beyond the Northwest.

Therefore, all major deviations from the coastline shown in our map of the First Age in *Mapping Arda*, have already been achieved before the building of the Thangorodrim. As already pointed out above, this is rationalized by the destruction caused by the Battle of the Powers.

Part of the coastline of ICE's "Womawas Drus" (#4 on overview map) and "Lochas Drus" to "Arg-Sîmorig" (#5 on overview map) have been preserved, as they fit reasonably well into the general coastline sketched out by Map V in the *Ambarkanta*. The big bay in "Womawas Drus" has only a narrow outlet into the sea, bringing it a near enough to a closed coastline to be acceptable.

The area of ICE's "Bay of Shoals" between "JoJoJopo", "Ibav" and "Shay" (#6 on overview map) has been partly preserved by breaking this coastline up and re-modelling it to fit the general coastline of the Map V in this area.

The next issue is the **ICE-created islands of "Uiven" and adjacent isles** (#8 on overview map). These islands were added to the eastern coasts north of ICE's "Womawas Drus". We interpret them as small splinters of the Lands of the Sun that remained more or less in their original position while the majority of these lands were "cast back" and perhaps removed from the mortal lands like Aman. Alternatively, they might have simply been pushed further eastward — beyond the area touched by our mapping. In this manner, these lands might have even become (in altered form) part of the "New Lands". We leave this decision open, however so that you might decide which of this explanations fits you best.

As we allowed the possibility of a part of Aman to break off (and becoming Oiomúrë), something similar happening in the East seems not unreasonable. As outlined already in *Mapping Arda*, these islands may be either genuine "New Lands" or really splinters of the old 'Empty Lands'. The other islands (not shown on the overview sketch) are equally remnants of this northern part of the 'Empty Lands'. The issue of the 'Empty Lands' is addressed in the following part as well:

The fate of the Empty Lands is a tricky one. In *Mapping Arda*, we showed a chain of big islands that could be interpreted as the broken remnants of the eastern continent (*Other Minds* #1, p. 19). It seems that this continent underwent a change of name. In the *Ambarkanta*, we find the name of the *Burnt Lands of the Sun*, while Tolkien later – probably – refers to these lands as the *Empty Lands*:

> *In this form my father then copied it onto the typescript, with change of Empty Land to Empty Lands. (If this region, called in the first version the Barren Land, is to be related to the Ambarkanta map V (IV. 251) it must be what is there called the Burnt Land of the Sun; perhaps also the Dark Land, which is there shown as a new continent, formed from the southern part of Pelmar or Middle-earth (map IV) after the vast extension of the former inland sea of Ringil at the time of the breaking of Utumno).*
> **HoMe 5.(IV) The further development of The Fall of Númenor**

In the Akallabêth we see the following passage, that can be seen as evidence that both Aman and the Empty Lands shared the same fate – though this is far from clear:

> *For Ilúvatar cast back the Great Seas west of Middle-earth, and the Empty Lands east of it, and new lands and new seas were made; and the world was diminished, for Valinor and Eressëa were taken from it into the realm of hidden things.*
> **Silmarillion.Akallabêth**

According to Christopher Tolkien, two changes were made here in this 'Silmarillion Akallabêth' version as an editorial note by him. In the *HoMe 12*, he says:

> *The original text has 'were taken away and removed from the circles of the world beyond the reach of Men for ever', and 'there is not now within the circles of the world any place abiding …'.*
> **HoMe 12.The History of the Akallabêth**

Thus, the original one emphasized the unreachable new state of these old lands. Concerning the fate of the *Empty Lands*, we chose a different path than in *Mapping Arda*. Since a cataclysm that would break the eastern continent was not possible anymore (see above),

we omitted it entirely in the new maps. It is either removed like Aman (and therefore no longer within the reach of mortal men) or cast back so far eastwards, that it is no longer on this map. Both options are possible, and we leave it to each reader how he interprets the ambiguous sources.

The great Inner Sea in southern Middle-earth (#9 on the overview map) had to be re-evaluated as well. Originally, we had this appear during the early Second Age as an indirect consequence of the War of Wrath. Since such a major catastrophe (inundating vast areas) is not possible as a consequence of this event (see above), we chose to make it already a feature of the First Age map provided in this essay.

The bay reminiscent of real-world Red Sea (in placement; #7 on overview map) has been slightly increased in size for our First-Age map. This allowed us to implement slight changes by natural processes (e.g. silting up), like the ones noticeable in real-world Mesopotamia where the coastline has changed quite noticeably since antiquity due to the silting-up of the Euphrates and Tigris mouths.

This effect is also present in this bay, and the shoreline slowly is pushed seaward over the milennia. By the Third Age however, the process stops, since we assume that the water has become so deep, that this silting is no longer possible before the silt is deposited in the deeper areas of the sea (e.g. beyond the continental shelf) or washed away by deep currents.

Addendum to *Mapping Arda*

In *Mapping Arda*, we had brought forth some issues that were only supported by educated guessing at the time of the essay's writing. There is, however, evidence for these claims. You can find these supporting passages below.

The placement of the Ered Engrin and Angband has been discussed in Mapping Arda. We wrote about the problem of the problematic location of the latitude for the Ered Engrin and Angband in relation to Beleriand (*Other Minds, issue #1*, p. 11):

"However, the fact that the Ered Engrin and Thangorodrim are not featured on the Silmarillion map can be seen as a hint that Christopher Tolkien was quite aware of the textual discrepancies concerning their locations and avoided a clear statement by excluding any Thangorodrim features from the map in the published Silmarillion."

Now, in the *History of Middle-earth, Vol. 11* we can find the following passage which supports this earlier guess:

> *"The distance given here of 150 leagues (450 miles) from Menegroth to Angband's gate, more than doubling that shown on the second map, seems to imply a great extension of the northern plain. The geography of the far North is discussed in V.270-2; but since it is impossible to say how my father came to conceive it I discreetly omitted all indication of the Iron Mountains and Thangorodrim from the map drawn for the published Silmarillion."*
> **HoMe11, commentary to §36 of the Grey Annals**

The geology of Middle-earth and its relation to the real world. In *Mapping Arda*, we already addressed the problems associated with the equation of Middle-earth/Arda with the real world in "historical" way (e.g. that it is only a temporal gap between Aragorn's time and ours). This can be found on page 9 of *Other Minds #1* (chapter 'Foundations and aims'). Especially the famous letter (#211; see below) that ascribes about 6,000 years from the fall of Barad-dûr to our time is often cited when the attempt is made to make the transition from "Middle-earth" to "Terra" merely a temporal issue within the same geological frame (e.g. by merely shifting a few landmasses to fit to our present-day shape).

Using only the "6,000 years from the fall of Barad-dûr" – quote alone (see below) is misleading, since reading the whole passage with this quote gives it a slightly but important change of direction. This whole passage is as follows:

> *All I can say is that, if it were 'history', it would be difficult to fit the lands and events (or 'cultures') into such evidence as we possess, archaeological or geological, concerning the nearer or remoter part of what is now called Europe; though the Shire, for instance, is expressly stated to have been in this region (I p. 12). I could have fitted things in with greater versimilitude, if the story had not become too far developed, before the question ever occurred to me. I doubt if there would have been much gain; and I hope the, evidently long but undefined, gap* in time between the Fall of Barad-dûr and our Days is sufficient for 'literary credibility', even for readers acquainted with what is known or surmised of 'prehistory'.*
> ** I imagine the gap to be about 6000 years : that is we are now at the end of the Fifth Age, if the Ages were of about the same length as S.A. and T.A. But they have, I think, quickened; and I*

imagine we are actually at the end of the Sixth Age, or in the Seventh
> **Letters.211, 1958**

It becomes clear that Tolkien uses these "6,000 years" not as a geological or historical fact, but as a trick by the author to put a certain distance between his readers and the events in the book, that it is vaguely acceptable in the way of "myths". As Tolkien laid out in this passage, the geographies of Middle-earth and that of the real world are not really compatible. Thus one should not try to make a geological transition from Middle-earth to our world. Tolkien recognized this as fruitless and we are of the opinion that it should be left that way.

The temporal gap is essential of course, to remove these events far away from the modern reader. That the issue of the radical geography/geology was quite present for Tolkien himself, is testified in an earlier letter to a reader who had a question about *Númenor* and *Numinor* (a name used by C.S. Lewis):

> *As for the shape of the world of the Third Age, I am afraid that was devised 'dramatically' rather than geologically, or paleontologically. I do sometimes wish that I had made some sort of agreement between the imaginations or theories of the geologists and my map a little more possible. But that would only have made more trouble with human history.*
> **Letters.169, 1955**

The notion that his geography was not drawn for a compatibility with the shape of landmasses, but for the dramaturgic impact is very important for the understanding of the construction of this part of the *legendarium*.

It is quite interesting and essential to note that there is not only a significant temporal gap (see *Letters*, #211), but also a geological one that is not explainable by this – relatively brief in geological terms – time. It also shows that Tolkien was aware of these scientific issues to some extent, but that he made them a second priority due to the necessities of his storytelling. In another letter, Tolkien further testifies that his legends are placed on Earth (e.g. the habitation of man), but placed in an *imaginary* time. All of these passages illustrate quite clearly the image Tolkien had of this place. It is on Earth, but in no "real" historical time that could be reached or explored through archaelogy for example. Its imaginary time and place is one of dramatic design, not of one compatible with scientific geological or archaeological evidence.

> *Mine is not an 'imaginary' world, but an imaginary historical moment on 'Middle-earth' – which is our habitation.*
> **Letters.183, 1956**

On the issue of the **Ban of the Valar** and its relation to any part of Númenor to be seen, we wrote on page 15:

"Considering the circumstances, it is not unreasonable to assume that the meaning of the law is that the Valar forbade the Númenóreans to sail further west than any part of Númenor (any part thereof) can no longer be seen."

Now, exactly this can be found in the LotR:

> *"… but one command had been laid upon the Númenóreans, the 'Ban of the Valar': they were forbidden to sail west out of sight of their own shores…"*
> **LotR.Appendix A**

The seas between Númenor and Eressëa have only fleetingly been addressed in *Mapping Arda*. About the issue of the distance between these two places and the time it took for Ar-Pharazôn to get from western Númenor to Aman was not explicitly stated, though it is of some importance. Some approximate distances to the Undying Lands based on our Second Age map are listed in the table below. Due to the speculative courses of the fleet, please view them as estimates or guidelines and not exact numbers.

Starting point – destination	distance in	
	miles	km
Eldalondë – Avallonë	450	725
Andúnië – Avallonë	400	645
Eldalondë – Aman coast beneath Túna	760	1225
Andúnië – Aman coast beneath Túna	710	1140

The famous quote about the crossing of Ar-Pharazôn's armada is as follows.

> *In an hour unlooked for by Men this doom befell, on the nine and thirtieth day since the passing of the fleets.*
> **Silmarillion.Akallabêth**

Please note that there is no direct statement that the doom of Númenor came in exactly that hour when Ar-Pharazôn landed in Aman, though the context of the whole passage suggests this strongly. Thus the 39 days is a good guess for the time needed by the fleet to cross the distance to Aman. Applying this time to the estimated distances above, the fleet must have moved about 17 nautical miles per day which translates into an average speed of 0.7 knots. Of course, even considering some calm days this is a ridiculously small speed.[19] One might argue, that the fleet had to

row all the way, thus reaching only this slow average speed. That this is not so, and they sailed later when the initial calm subsided, is testified as well:

> ***For a wind arose in the east and it wafted them away***; *and they broke the Ban of the Valar, and sailed into forbidden seas, going up with war against the Deathless, to wrest from them everlasting life within the Circles of the World.*
> **Silmarillion.Akallabêth** *(our emphasis)*

A handy explanation for this low average speed is the continued existence of the Enchanted Isles, whose shadows and illusions decisively slowed down the progress of the fleet, thus reducing the overall average speed drastically. The actual speed in open water would be considerably higher though. This barrier could have been finally penetrated by sorcerries learned from Sauron, a nice symbol for the corruption of the Númenóreans and their active fight against the Valar.

The following passage from *Letters* fits to this explanation, pointing to the continued perilousness of the seas between Númenor and the Undying Lands even after the War of Wrath.

> *But the immediate point is that before the Downfall there lay beyond the sea and the west-shores of Middle-earth an earthly Elvish paradise Eressëa, and Valinor the land of the Valar (the Powers, the Lords of the West), places that could be reached physically by ordinary sailing-ships, though the Seas were perilous.*
> **Letter #154 to Naomi Mitchison**

Notes

[1] http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/

[2] This was one of the comments that were already voiced at MerpCon III.

[3] Or even extensive landmasses like real-world Antarctica

[4] Or nearly did so in the case of northern Middle-earth before the Battle of the Powers. See also the maps in the HoMe 5.

[5] And/or the already mentioned "Antarctica"

[6] Whose actions that influence the physical world, are bound to the physical laws of it.

[7] In fact, the Eldar were among the primary victims of the Númenóreans' hubris.

[8] Remember the Tsunami of Dec. 26th, 2004. Its titanic force swept "only" about 5km or so inland. As noted in *Mapping Arda*, this would not even be noticeable on our map (the line alone being already about 9-10km thick).

[9] Something similar (though the other way round) may be found in the continual rising of Scandinavia. During the last Ice Age, a tremendous sheet of ice lay on Scandinavia, depressing the surface material. The melting of the ice caused a slow rise of the land, which continues to this day. It is speculated that the ancient trading center of Birka in Sweden was abandoned due to it being cut off from the sea by this rise. A similar depression is observed in Greenland today.

[10] Or even much more northward. We chose a more conservative location, where the Ered Engrin would be a better shield against the light of Illuin.

[11] Calculated on the basis that the globe of Arda in the Third Age is equivalent to our Earth's. We used a circumference of 40,075.004 km as if Arda were a perfect globe (which is not true for our Earth, but the difference is neglible for our cause).

[12] Assuming the corresponding (light grey) map from OM1 of course.

[13] One might expect Utumno to lie at the epicentre of all the destruction wrought

[14] And it cannot have been created due to the War of Wrath (see also quote below)

[15] Though we have to admit that this was not an easy decision, due to the adventuruing potential there.

[16] Thanks to William Cauthron for pointing this out.

[17] The credit for bringing this issue forth goes to Eric Dubourg.

[18] Please note the smaller area that was destroyed/submerged in the War of Wrath compared to the losses of land after the Battle of the Powers.

[19] This can easily be reached even by a swimmer – though not over long distances of course.

Ambar Aquenta

Tales of Fate in Middle-Earth

Ambarquenta is a roleplaying 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 roleplayers who desire a complex, yet intuitively comprehendible 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 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 roleplaying 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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Appendix A

Maps for '*A Response to Mapping Arda*'

Arda Second Age
around the year 2600

ACHROND

Sea of
White Mirrors
nITHLOND

LINDON

THURLORNAR

ULSHY

umbar

BELLAKAR

CHYAN
EMPIRE

BELLAKAR

HARSHANDATT

ANARIKE

SHAY

LOCHAS

BOZISHA-MIRAZ

CODYA

TULWANG

LYNERIAN
LEAGUE

INLAND SEA OF ORMAL

ANBALUKKHOR

TANTURAK

KHARADUNE

ZURGHOR

SAKAL
AN-KHÂR

ZIMRATHANI

Ahárazôrê

INLAND SEA
OF ORMAL

Môrathâni

HYARMENTIL

0   100 200   500 miles

Arda in the Third Age

Appendix B

Maps for '*Mapping Arda − Reloaded*'
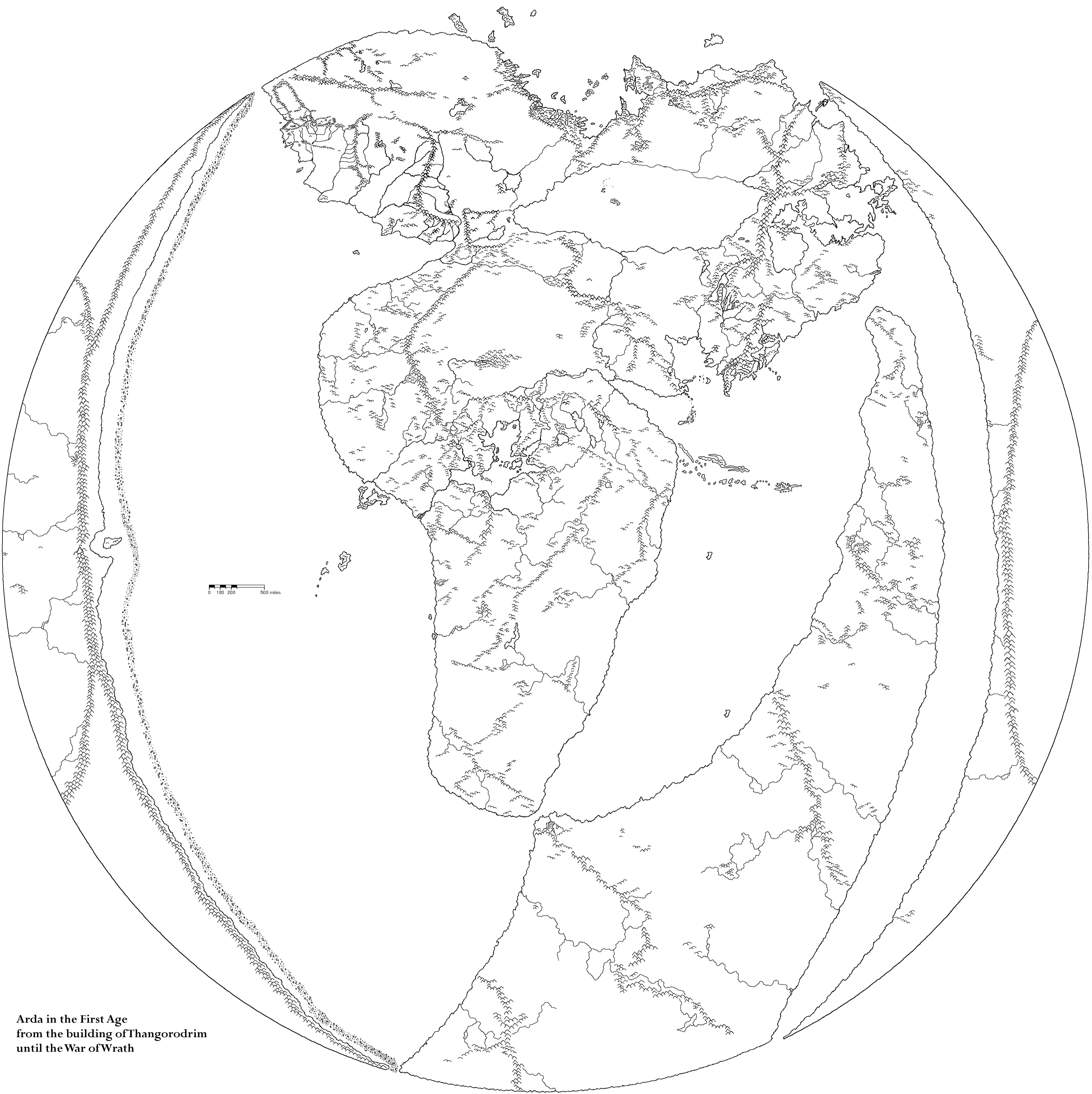
Arda in the First Age
from the building of Thangorodrim
until the War of Wrath
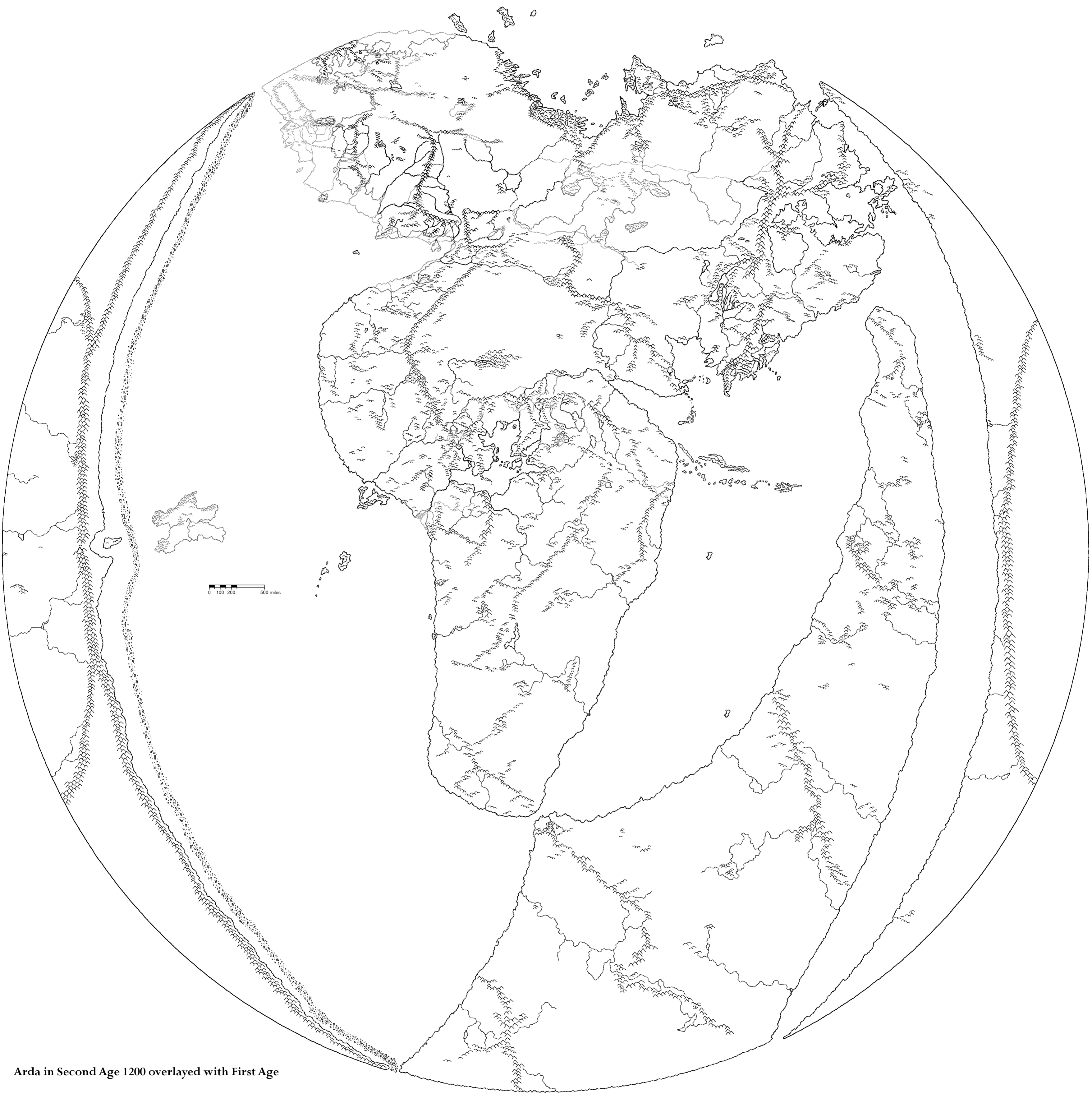
Arda in Second Age 1200 overlayed with First Age
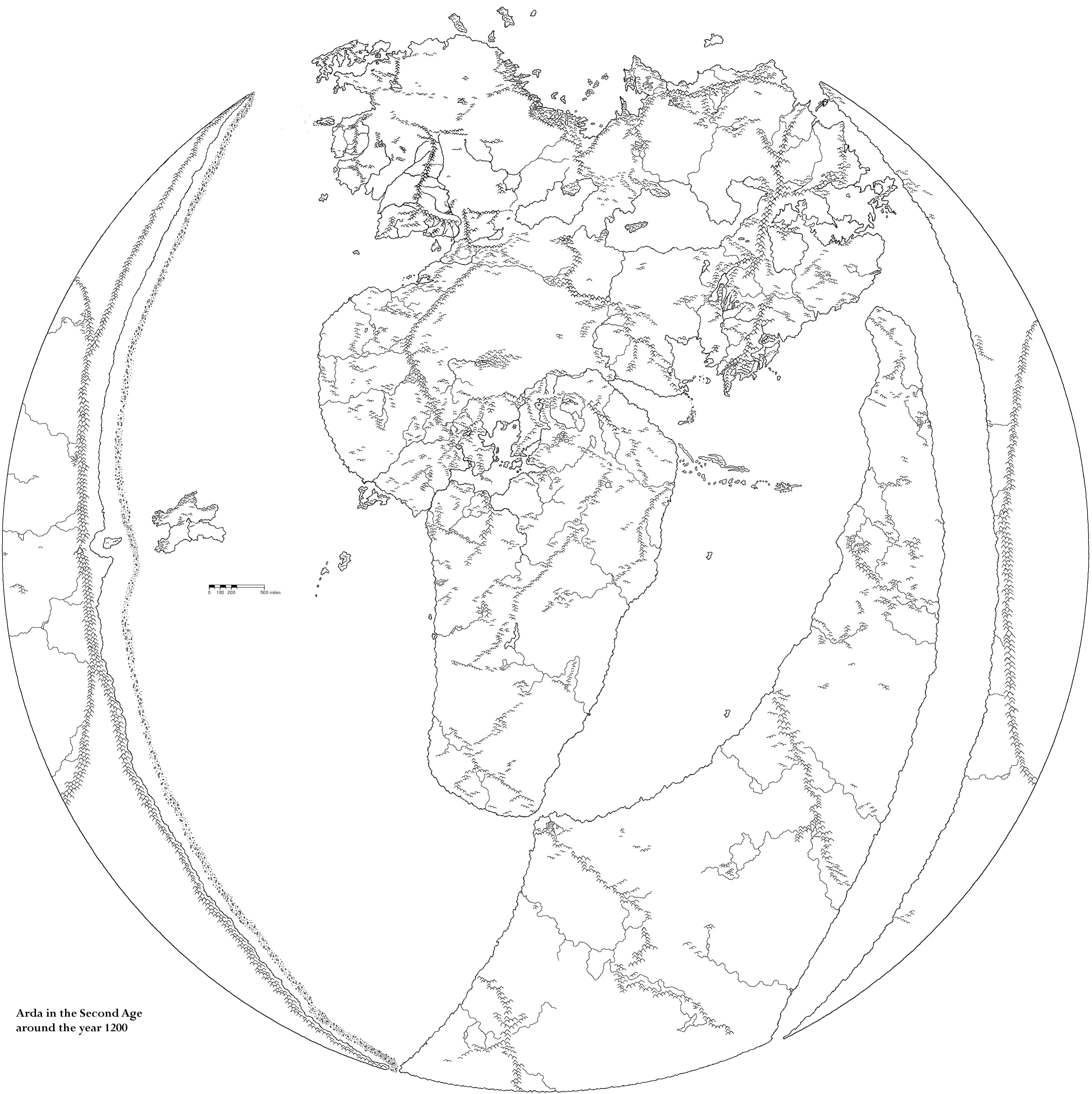
Arda in the Second Age
around the year 1200
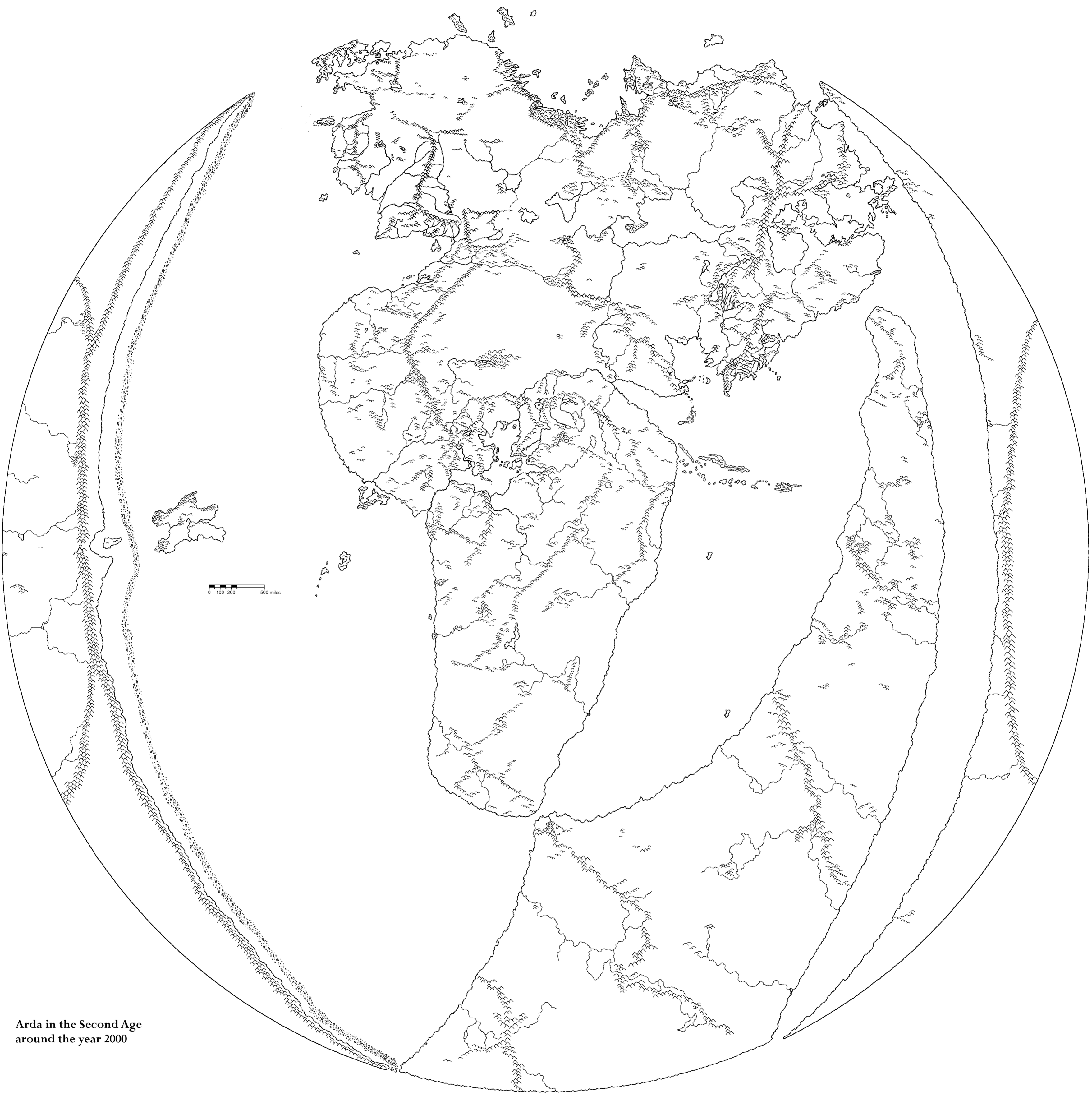
0 100 200   500 miles

Arda in the Second Age
around the year 2000

Arda in the Second Age
around the year 2600
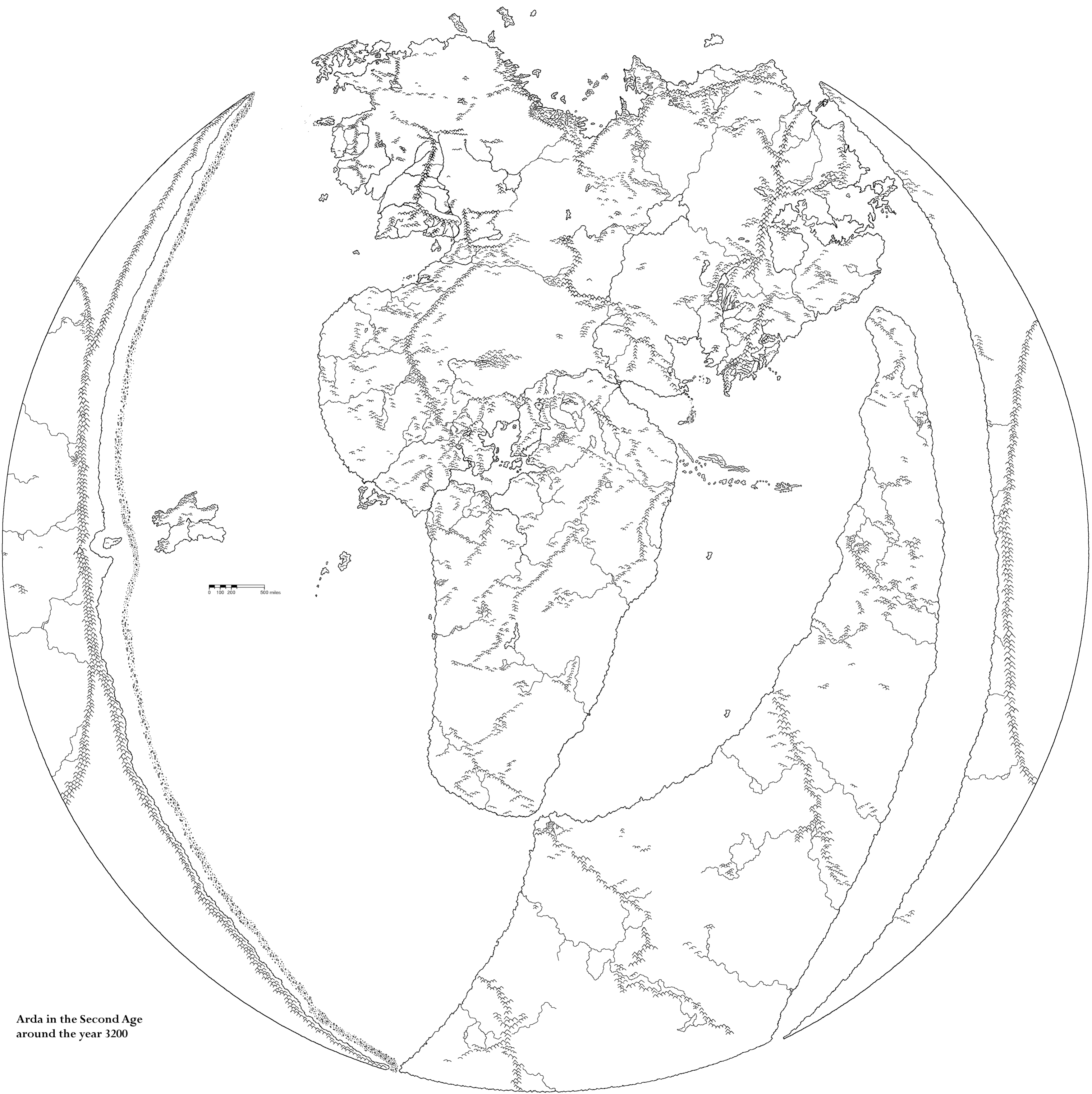
0 100 200   500 miles

**Arda in the Second Age
around the year 3200**

Arda in the Third Age overlayed with Second Age 3200
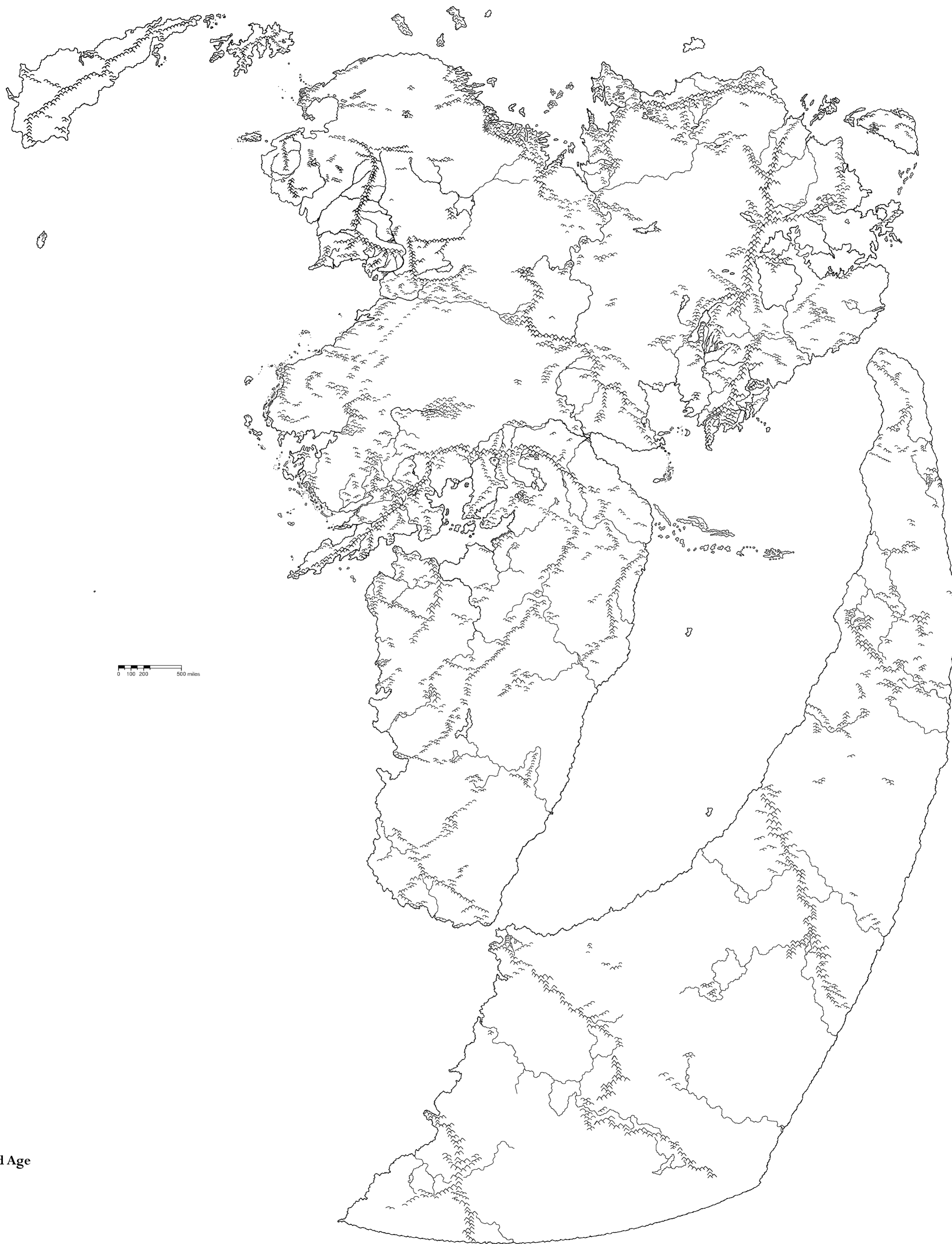
Arda in the Third Age

66,5° North
(Polar Circle)

23,5° North ("Tropic of Cancer")

0° (Equator)

0   100 200   500 miles

23,5° South ("Tropic of Capricorn")

Arda in the Third Age

66,5° South (Polar Circle)

90° South ("South Pole")
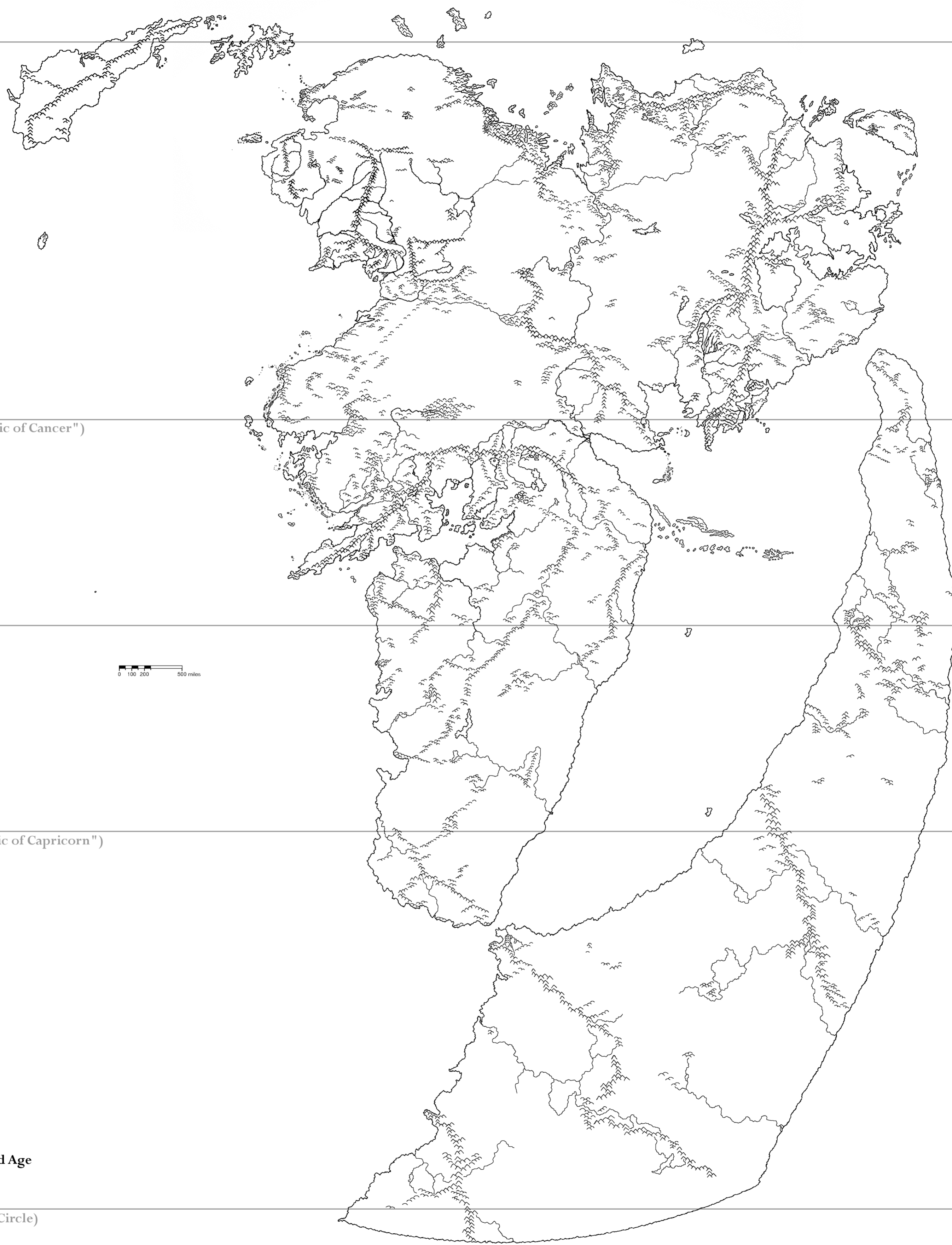
Appendix C

Maps for '*Númenóreans in Endor*'

Ekkaia *The Encircling Seas*

Númenórean Map of

the Known World

at the death of Tar-Aldarion

S. A. 1098

Northern Waste

Angulodh

Ice-bay of Forochel

Boat-makers
(Ice-men)

Elven-kingdom
of
Lindon

Mithlond

Men of
Eriador

Dark Elves
of Greenwood

Eriador

Cardolan

Tharbad

Dark Elves
of Lórinand

Dark Elves

Inland Sea
of Rhûn

Men of
Gwathló

Horse-people

Vinyalondë

The Unknown
East

Anórien

White Mountains

Mordor

Edhellond

Bay of
Belfalas

City-states of the
Lower Harnen

Sheep-herders

Upper Harnen

Sheep-herders

Waste of Thirst

Mûlolóbrim

Mûlolóbrim

Belegaer

The Lost Kingdom
of Pashúan

Camel-folk

Dark Colony

Morodtâ

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Maganobli

Mirror-water

Black Nomads

Valinor

Taniquetil

Avallonë

Valmar

Bay of
Eldamar

Númenor

0 100 200   500 miles

Empty Lands

The Unexplored
Inner Seas

Morenórë

Ekkaia *The Encircling Seas*

Númenórean Map of
the Known World
ca. S. A. 1700

Northern Waste

Ice-bay of Forochel

Road-makers
(Ice-men)

Elven-kingdom
of
Lindon

Men of
Eriador

Dark Elves
of Greenwood

Dark Elves

Mithland

Eriador

Dark Elves
of Lorinand

Island Sea
of Rhûn

Eregion

Tharbad

The Unknown
East

Men of
Gwathló

Vinyalondë

Forest of the
Wild Woodmen

Horse-people

Mordor

Edhellond

Nomads of
the Plains

Bay of
Belfalas

City-states of the
Great Harmen

Belegaer

Sheep-herders

Malalbrim

Malalbrim

Malalbrim

Camel-folk

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Dark Elves

Camel-folk

Nûn

Tûrkan

Nordajôn

Black Nomads

Megannûth

Black Nomads

Coloëril

Valinor

Avallónë

Taniquetil

Bay of
Eldamar

Valmar

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

0 100 200   500 miles

Empty Lands

The Unexplored
Inner Seas

Morenórë

Ekkaia The Encircling Seas

Northern Waste

Ice-bay of Forochel

Bead-makers (Ice-men)

Men of Eriador

Dark Elves of Greenwood

Elven-kingdom of Lindon

Mithlond

Eriador

Dark Elves

Inland Sea of Rhûn

Nomads of the Plains

Crogan

Tharbad

Dark Elves of Lorinand

Men of Gwathló

Horse-people

Vinyalondë

Barad-dûr

Mordor

Edhellond

Bay of Belfalas

The Unknown East

Empire of the Tower-kings

Sheep-herders

Nomads of the Plains

Malaskrim

Malaskrim

Belegaer

Malaskrim

Horse-people

Kingdom of Múrayn

Lochan Empire

Cedya

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Malaskrim Raiders

Camel-folk

Black Men

Lynarian Cities

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Non

Indhûr

Kanolgar

Black Nomads

Elephant-ren

Megannôth

Caladril

Black Men

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Valin Sheyaz

Island of the Sea-raiders

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Valinor

Taniquetil

Valmar

Avallónë

Bay of Eldamar

Númenor

0 100 200   500 miles

Empty Lands

Inner Sea

Morendor

Númenórean Map of
the Known World
at the end of the reign of
Tar-Ciryatan
S. A. 2029

Ekkaia The Encircling Seas

Bay of
Lingering Shadows

Northern Waste

Ice-bay of Forochel   Ice-men
Ice-men
Ice-men

Forodwaith

Elven-kingdom
of
Lindon

Men of
Carn Dûm
Angmar
Forodwaith

Mithlond
Eriador
Greenwood the Great

Fornost   East Bight

Weathertop
Tharbad   Men-men-people

Iron Hills
Island Sea
of Rhûn

Lond Daer

Barad-dûr
Mordor

Tol Fuin
Bay of   Moss Maeglin
Belfalas
Nûmen

Nomads of
the Plains

Empire of
the Tower-kings

Belegaer

Malabbeim
Malabbeim

Great

Desert

City Raiders

Mûraga

Well-Ponies
of Rhûnaeel

Lochau
Kingdom

Bay of
Shoals

Malabbeim
Camel-folk

Camel-folk
Merchant-lords of the Desert

Camel-folk
Cameyrim   Black Nomads

Ny   Nomads
Colael   Black Nomad

Elephant-towers

Olgas Kêas
Cobga

Lynorian
Gulf

Lynorian
Cities

Valinor

Taniquetil
Valmar

Avallónë
Bay of
Eldamar

Malabbeim
Camel-folk

Magranti

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Littli

Val-en-Shoqu

zzephir

Black
Nomads
Horsafalas

Island of the Dogs

Woman

Kingdom

Lands
of the
Sun

Númenor

0 100 200   500 miles

Black Harad

Black Nomads

Black
Nomads

Inner

Sea

Empty Lands

Morendor

Harmentil

Straits of Harmentil

Númenórean Map of

the Known World

at the end of the reign of

Tar-Ancalimon

S. A. 2386

Ekkaia *The Encircling Seas*

Bay of
Lingering Shadows

Northern Waste

Ice-bay of Forochel

Lossoth

Lossoth

Ardor

Forodwaith

Lands
of the
Sun

Elven-kingdom
of
Lindon

Eriador

Men of
the middle

Greenwood
the Great

Forlindon

Harlindon

Mordor

Lune Dúne

Tol Fuin

Eregion

Minas Morgul

Bay of
Belfalas

Men-people

Wild Nomads

Island Sea
of Rhûn

Wild Nomads

Barad-dûr

Wild Nomads

Kingdom of
the Tower-king

Great

Desert

Womawas

Drus

Choy Riders

Eastern
Sea

Belegaer

Malublūm

Mulublūm

Coralfilk

Coralfilk

Coralfilk

Mygnemel
Kingdom

Black Nomads

Kingdom of the Black Sorcerer

Canangen

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Choy

Mūrngo

Kingdom
of the
Mūmakanrim

Olgas Kriss

Lyonrian
Gulf

Lyonrian
Caus

zugolin

Kingdom
of Shay

Bay of
Shoals

Colya

Pirate-kingdom
of Khānarad

Pirate-kingdom
of Waiu

Morfolas

Valin Shegos

Utha

Valinor

Taniquetil

Valmar

Amillionë

Bay of
Eldamar

Númenor

0 100 200   500 miles

Inner

Sea

Empty Lands

Morendor

Hyarmentil

Hyarmentil

Straits of

Swamp of Rain

Lord Mountain

Straits of Southern Darkness

Númenórean Map of
the Known World
at the end of the reign of
Tar-Calmacil
S. A. 2825

Ekkaia The Encircling Seas

Bay of
Lingering Shadows

Northern Waste

Lands
of the
Sun

Ice-bay of Forochel

Ice-men

Ice-men

Ardû

Elven-kingdom
of
Lindon

Men of
Carn Dûm

Greenwood
the Great

Wild Nomads

Wild Nomads

Eriador

Womawas

Inland Sea
of Rhûn

Drûs

Wild Nomads

Mordor

Bay of
Belfalas

Barad-dûr

Kingdom of

the Inner-king

Eastern
Sea

Belegaer

Great
Desert

Chyan Kingdom

Pirate-kingdom
of Khanured

Morenan

Kingdom
of Sley

Camelfolk

Camelfolk

Bay of
Shoals

Wan
Isle of Sley Dogs

Camelfolk

Ossamim
Olyan Kriss

Colya

Camelfolk

Lynarian
Gulf

Camelfolk

Lynarian
Coast

Valinor

Kingdom
of the

Harfolas

Taniquetil

Arvalimar

Mûmakanrim

Valmar

Bay of
Eldamar

Númenor

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Silver Mines
of Celebdor

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Inner

Black Nomads

Sea

Morendor

Black Nomads

0 100 200   500 miles

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Empty Lands

Black Nomads

Hyarnustil

Hyarmentil

Straits of

Swamp of Rain

Lost Mountain

Straits of Southern Darkness

Númenórean Map of
the Known World
at the end of the reign of
Tar-Palantir
S. A. 3255

Ekkaia *The Encircling Seas*

Lands
of the
Sun

Northern Waste

Bay of
Lingering Shadows

Ice-bay of Forochel

Forodwaith

Lin-men

Lin-men

Arthir

Elven-kingdom
of
Lindon

Eriador

Men of
the white
mtns

Greenwood
the Great

Wild Nomads

Wild Nomads

Wood-men

Elostirion

Inland Sea
of Rhûn

Womawas

Wild Nomads

Drus

Tharbad

Edhellond

Lond Daer

Barad-dûr

Mordor

Tol Falas

Minas Morgul

Kingdom of

the Inner-king

Wild Nomads

Bay of
Belfalas

Great

Desert

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Chyan Kingdom

Rhûsurrel

Wild Men

Wild Men

Lochan

Belegaer

Camel-folk

King of
the Desert

Mhargo

Ambal

Olgan Krita

Colya

Bay of
Shoals

Wau
Isle of the Dogs

Eastern

Sea

Malakhôrn

Camel-folk

Camel-folk

Dor Eredrîs

Lynerian
Gulf

Malakhôrn

Camel-folk

Cittas

Lynerian
Cittas

Megauri

Nápirin

The Armada

Gwargon

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Kingdom

of the

Lûgh

Valinor

Aranúmë

Taniquetil

Bay of
Eldamar

Nú.menor

Valmar

Mûmakanrim

Men-folks

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

zenfola

Valin-Shoyse

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Inner

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Sea

Morendor

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Colobâs

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

0 100 200   500 miles

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Black Nomads

Hyarmentir

Hyarmentir

Straits of

Swamp of Rain

Lord Mountain

Straits of Southern Darkness

Ekkaia The Encircling Seas

Bay of
Lingering Shadows

Northern Waste

Ice-bay of Forochel

Men of...

Elven-kingdom of
Lindon

Eriador

Greenwood
the Great

Will Nomels

Will Nomels

Inland Sea
of Rhûn

Aralar

Womaimas

Lands
of the
Sun

Drus

Choy
Kingdom

Mordor

Kingdom of
the Inner-king

Will Nomels

Bay of
Balfalas

Tol Falas
Mini Harani

Camel folk

Camel folk

Camel folk

Great

Desert

Camel folk

King of
the Desert

Camel folk

Choey Kingdom

Will Men

Will Men

Bay of
Shoals

Rhosorel

Locher

Eastern
Sea

Belegaer

Dominion

Camel folk

Camel folk

Dominion

Camel folk

Camel folk

Dominion

Dan Endra

Sudan

Ardul

Lynerian
Gulf

Lynerian
Gates

Wan
Ile of the Dogs

Dominion of Mugg

Black Nomels

Dominion

Kingdom

of the

Mûmakanrim

Vale of Shape

Harfalas

Valinor

Aman
Avallónë
Bay of
Eldamar

Taniquetil

Valmar

Númenor

0 100 200 500 miles

Black Nomels

Dominion of Balen

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Inner

Sea

Morendor

Celebon

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Black Nomels

Dominion

Dominion

Dominion

Dominion of
Hyarnostil

Hyarmentil

Straits of

Swamp of Rain

Lord Mountain

Straits of Southern Darkness