

GM'S HISTORY OF ÆRCHUS

BACKGROUND

Ærchus is a world roughly similar in size and shape to that of our own Earth. In fact, it is our own Earth, though several millennia in the future.

GEOGRAPHY

Geographically, the land forms of Ærchus have changed significantly from their Earthen counterparts, though several similarities remain. These landforms have altered their cartographical appearance due to the decrease in the globe's water level (recall that the hydrography of Ærchus is 60%) and seismic activity, brought on in some cases by human intervention (q.v., The Shivering, below). The general continental correspondence is detailed below:

ÆRCHUS	EARTH
Azamon	North and Central America
Süd Ocean	Pacific Ocean
Tårn Balår	South Pacific volcanic upheaval
Aquitane	British Isles
Ærchelon	Europe
Mueretania	Africa
Calamir Archepelago	South America
Gilded Archepelago	India and South-central Asia
Ocealea	Eastern and South-east Asia
Salba	Indian Ocean volcanic upheaval
Hebridane	Indian Ocean volcanic upheaval
Oceanus Fluvio	Atlantic Ocean
Sea of Aquitane	North Sea
Terra sine Vivendi	Antarctic/Australian upheavals

CALENDAR

According to the Tårnic calendar, Ærchus' timeline reveals a number of Ages:

Age of Creation--

This age predates all currently recorded history, and is believed to have seen the creation of the multiverse, the heavens, and the world. At this time, the Elder Powers of the multiverse held sway, and chief among them was a deity known only as the Pancreator. Various servants of this greater god are assumed to have existed, and each of these lesser deities represented basic elemental or emotional aspects within the multiverse.

In relative terms, this age is equivalent to Earth's beginnings, and is most aptly encapsulated within the creation mythos of virtually every mortal culture. Human evolution and culture gained its foundations during this time, and the classical era of Earth is included in this age. The Age of Creation ends with the birth of Christ in the Judeo-Christian mythology.

Despite the above, elusive and highly vague written records regarding this age may be found in certain places across the globe--these exist as ancient accords of prehistory written during the Age of Dreams (see below). In game terms, none of the ancient writings of The Age of Creation remain in original form.

Age of Dreams--

The abbreviation of this age is not co-incidental; AD in this case is synonymous with the AD of modern global society (the name of this age was probably reasoned by some First Era scholar who had managed to decipher rudimentary portions of our modern alphabet and (erroneously) transferred the results).

It is during this age that our own modern era on Earth occurred. According to the Tårnic calendar, this age lasted some 3,000 years, so it is correct to posit that this period lasted until approximately the year 3000 AD, by our own reckonings.

Therefore, this age saw all of the ancient and modern developments known to our contemporary historians, scholars, and archaeologists: the fall of Rome; the rise of Christianity; the mediaeval dark ages; the ascension of feudalism and the rise of the middle class; the renaissance; the industrial revolution; and, of course, all events known to us that occurred during the 20th century of Earth's own modern era.

Beyond our known history (CE 1997), mankind developed space travel and was able to colonize Earth's moon, Mars, and several large

asteroids just beyond the orbit of Jupiter. As outposts and vital communities developed within the solar system, further scientific discoveries made travel to nearby star systems possible. By 2367 AD, colonies were firmly entrenched within the M31 system (Andromeda, the largest spiral galaxy nearest to Earth in the Milky Way).

On Earth, organised governments grew oppressive and gave rise to myriad terrorist activity. By the close of the 2d millennium, several terrorist factions set the globe afire with no less than one dozen simultaneous attacks on high-density population centres. The immediate after-effect was for the GCN (Global Council of Nations) to impose sanctions against the allegedly responsible parties; as time progressed, these measures proved ineffective. Simultaneously, many members of those nations victim to terrorist attacks called for decisive offensive strikes against those countries known to sponsor terrorist activity.

At the same time, vast numbers of people sequestered themselves in underground strongholds, awaiting with dread what they feared was an inevitable nuclear war. By the 14th month of ineffective sanctions, these erstwhile radicals proved sagacious in their predictions. As official avenues had proved fruitless against terrorist nations (which continued to plague the free world with their wonton carnage), large and wealthy governments (the North American Federation and the European Triumvirate in particular) initiated conventional counter-offensives against the suspected offending nations, designed to end the threat of terrorism across the globe with finality.

These efforts set off a spark of global conflict. Because of the high-tech offensive nature of the countries involved, terrorist factions halted their enemies by launching nuclear-based offensives; within minutes of the first satellite strikes, nearly all nuclear-capable powers struck at one another. In the space of twelve minutes, vast portions of the Earth were immersed in a quasi-nuclear winter, and the Age of Dreams came to a close.

Age of Ignorance--

So-called by the Tarn because of the lack of development enjoyed by humanity, the Age of Ignorance was in many ways similar to the mediæval dark ages in terms of stagnation and barbarism. Centuries after the close of the Age of Dreams, the "radical survivalists" of the previous age crept out of their subterranean lairs to meet a world that had begun to heal itself of nuclear poison. As might be predicted, survival was tremendously difficult, but some lived to usher in a new era of human (and demi-human) development.

In the chaos of survivalist Earth, feudal kingdoms arose, and the tough stock of those who lived managed to carve out pockets of civilisation across the globe. But the effort was bloody. Virtually no remnants of the previous age survived, and the fledging societies of the new world had to build anew, not only live, but to conquer hostile neighbours.

Petty warlords fought against any perceived threat, either from within or beyond the boundries of their sphere of influence. Like their ancient forebears of the Age of Creation, these peoples began their new lives in barbarism, and the majority of those living were forced to rely on rudimentary tools and weapons made of stone, copper, or iron for their continued survival.