

My Lord Ursa,
Nobles of the Court

I have prepared the following essay to outline the discussion that took place between myself and the people known as the Hei Ravni. As you are aware the peoples of the Draken and the Narod Rodina have joined under an alliance of mutual support and friendship and have declared themselves one people; the Hei Ravni. They are seeking diplomatic recognition for their fledgling state, from the Kingdoms of the West. It is to that end that my discussion with them have taken place; to determine whether these peoples are worthy of recognition by the Kingdom of Teutonia.

In my initial discussion I sat with the Kobold, Tsunami and two of her compatriots. We discussed a number of topics; breeds and race, history, basic social structure, religion and matters of honour. In my second encounter I held a more formal meeting with the human Tsarina Vasilisa of the Narod Rodina and the Orc, Saru Sama san, Daimyo Halamoto of the Draken.

The history of the Draken I am sure most of you know to some degree. They claim to have once been part of the Eastern Empire but were opposed to the aggressive plans of the Emperor (or the power controlling the Empire at the time) and thus they were exiled or otherwise forced to flee from the Imperial domains.

The Narod Rodina originally claim to have held lands at the southern end of the Bashkir Mountains, along the lace route; lands which nominally could border onto Teutonia. They claim they were forced to flee these lands due to the actions of the Blood Queen. The badlands to the east have always been the domain of the Evil Sunz and their lesser affiliate tribes. These creatures are not known for their ability to interact diplomatically with their non-Teutonian neighbours. As such validating their claim from our own sources may be possible but is unlikely to yield tangible results.

At this time both peoples have been given land by the Jhereg and if their word is to be believed, the lands are extensive. I regret that my ability to read maps effectively is somewhat lacking and thus I cannot detail the location of their lands. I have also thus far been unable to ascertain the extent of these lands by corroborating their claim with the Jhereg but at this time I have no reason to doubt their word in this matter.

Matters were discussed on a number of topics as follows:

Religion – The Narod Rodina have numerous gods, these I would class more as spirits, spirits residing in the objects or concepts that they represent. A more complete study would be required to fully list and comprehend the nature of their gods.

The Draken have a main god, “Rilia” although this god does seem to have a number of manifestations, the primary ones being Night and Day. This belief structure underlies the Draken way of life, that of balance in all things. The Day represents the logical, reasonable side to the Draken way of life; the Night represents their passionate, emotional side. This is such a strong concept for the Draken, they have both a Day and Night leader, controlling or directing the Draken. I was unable to confirm this, but from the discussions that took place, it appears that there may be some internal discord within the Draken. Other gods exist, although the only one mentioned was their war god “Krit”.

Population – Both the Narod Rodina and the Draken claim that they have extensive populations in their territories. I must confess that I find this claim somewhat strange. The numbers that the Hei Ravni bring to the gatherings and expeditions of the Western Nations are limited, especially in comparison to the other nations present. Further investigation into this matter is required to ascertain the reasons why so few of their supposedly large population, are able to make these journeys.

This also extends to military matters. Upon questioning the leaders of the Hei-Ravni, I was informed that both the Narod Rodina and the Draken have large and well equipped armies in their homelands. Again the question must be asked; if so large an armed force is available, why has it not been used to more effect in our battle with the Swarm.

This issue of supposedly high population but limited visible numbers is the only area of our discussions that caused me some disquiet. I can understand no reason why this should be the case beyond potentially a desire to obfuscate the fact that their populations are not as large as they would like. More investigations in this matter will be performed at the next gathering.

Trade – The Kobolds of the Draken are exceptionally capable crafters, whose reputation is already well known throughout the Western Nations. I discussed matters of trade accordingly and inquired specifically on the topic of a preferential trade agreement with Teutonia, on the basis that we supported their claim for Nation Status. Daimyo Halamoto was concerned that I was asking them to “Buy our favour”, which

would likely have been a grave insult. I assured him that this is not the case, and that rather we would like to ensure that trade flowed freely between our two peoples, as trade is a prime factor which influences inter-nation relations.

Matters of War. – The Draken have an extremely formal and stylised approach to war. A formal declaration must be presented and the “terms of war” must be agreed. These terms would normally detail conduct of armies, treatment of prisoners etc. Their war with the Swarm is considered “Total War”, one of extermination, as no terms were agreed with the Swarm despite the Draken’s attempts at doing so. The Draken fight as a heavy skirmishing unit, very few shields are to be seen in their ranks. It is the Culjag Ogres that are most formidable in battle, a sub-group of the Draken, their strength and ferocity being a key

The Narod Rodina, whilst having their own form of warfare, seem to be adapting the formal ways of the Draken counterparts in matters pertaining to the conduct of war. Their fighting style is more in line with the Shield Wall tactics we employ, although their numbers preclude them from forming a true shield wall.

The Use of Undead – From the discussion I have had with some members of the Teutonian nobility, as well as citizens of the other Nations, I presumed that this topic would be the one that would cause most disquiet for the peoples of the Hei Ravni. It was the Narod Rodina that seemed most concerned, voicing what appears a common view, that undead in any form are an abomination to be destroyed. My counter argument is that Teutonia uses undead creatures as tools and nothing more. Some tools are used and discarded; others are retained for future use. They relieve the population from the more repetitive and mundane tasks that require little thought and strong limbs. I assured them that all undead creatures had, whilst alive, agreed to their fate and the ceremony of Deathwake.

The Narod Rodina seemed to understand this and whilst they would not accept the use of undead they were at least willing to accept our right to determine our course of action for ourselves.

In conclusion, I admire the honesty, nobility and courtesy that I was presented with by the Hei Ravni. The attention to detail in the etiquette displayed by the Draken was in keeping with the highest standards of the Teutonian court. It was all the more impressive in that this was a portrayal of their normal way of life; they conducted

themselves with absolute decorum in all matters, save that of battle. The Narod Rodina, whilst less obviously formal, were still courteous and honest in our discussions as best as I could ascertain.

I would therefore recommend the following course of action;

that the Kingdom of Teutonia, express to the Hei Ravní their most courteous respects and wish them well in their endeavour to be recognised as a soveriegh Nation State. To further this end we would invite the Hei Ravní to formally state their claim to the Teutonian Council of Nobles at the Spring Fayre next year.

Before this I ask leave to continue my discussions with the Hei Ravní in order to further understand the justification of their claim and to further the interests of Teutonia.

I remain your loyal servant,

Snarekius von Lupine du Moordinaí

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