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1 The Brass Coast



?Life is short ? let it never be dull!?

The Freeborn of the Brass Coast are travellers, traders, lovers and poets. They are exuberant and flamboyant; when they laugh their humour is infectious and without spite, when they love they do so with a passion that is without guile and when they?re angry, their wrath is like a summer storm ? terrible to behold but swift in passing. To be Freeborn is to be driven by a hunger for life, to see the world, to taste every delicacy, sample every wine and tell every tale. Success is measured in wealth, family and influence, not out of greed, but for the joy success brings.

Founded by exiles from ancient Highguard, the families of the Brass Coast organise themselves into three tribes, each inspired by the example of one of the Founders of their nation. They prize individual freedom and responsibility and although they are capable of serving a cause, they have little respect for authority. Pompous or self-important individuals, especially those who think that titles and positions have made them important, are ridiculed on the Coast. Respect is earned, it cannot be bought or appointed.

While others see them as outspoken and brazen, their honesty is without arrogance, for to aggrandise the self is vulgar, while to praise the deeds of another is an art. Their tales are bawdy enough for a common tavern and grand enough for a lordly court alike and can fill a room with laughter, tears or gasps of horror.

Their wagons and ships cross the world bringing exotic goods that command the finest prices. They are particularly renowned for their corsairs, who operate out of the Bay of Catazar. These daring privateers risk everything ensuring that the Empire's enemies are unable to threaten her shores and

earning a fortune in gold in the process. It is a dangerous life but one that perfectly suits the Freeborn passion for high adventure.

1.1 Five things to know about the Freeborn

- **They are notoriously candid.** Brazen in person, and disarmingly frank in negotiation, they are never afraid to speak their mind when they want to.
- **All things *can* have a price.** The Freeborn believe the fairest way to reckon the worth of something is to put a price on it.
- **They prize freedom and responsibility and disdain arrogance.** The Freeborn philosophy is that society is best served when every individual is responsible for themselves and to themselves.
- **They crave adventure and excitement.** None more so than their corsairs who are the terror of the high seas.
- **They like agreements to be explicit.** The Freeborn like everybody to know exactly what has been agreed to.

1.2 What the Freeborn are not

- **Desert dwellers.** Grassy plains, rocky mountains and shipboard on the ocean are where the Freeborn live.
- **Dodgy camel sellers or slave traders.** Freeborn traders are upfront and scrupulously honest - the very opposite of the stereotype of the obsequious, wheedling trader. There are no harems or seraglios in the Empire.



1.3 Further Reading

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2 The Brass Coast people



The Freeborn are proud and forthright people.

2.1 Overview

The people of the Brass Coast are divided into three great tribes descended from the families of the three founders, named the Erigo, the Riqueza and the Guerra. Freeborn citizens choose which founder best fits their character and ideals, joining the tribe named for that founder accordingly. Each tribe is composed of a great number of extended families. The smallest families have only a few dozen members, the largest can have hundreds or thousands of people sharing a family name and a common purpose.

The archetypal Freeborn is forthright, honest about their actions, and unashamed of their motives. The Freeborn do not feel they owe the world anything, but neither do they feel the world owes them. They can be charitable, but only when they choose; they can be selfish, but never with their family. They are direct, notoriously frank and gloriously unabashed.

The Freeborn give freely to family and expect the same in return. But with everyone else they would rather define a debt and know what is owed and to whom, instead of being left with an undefined obligation. They detest unspecified favours and obligations, even between friends or lovers, because there is no certainty to what is owed. An honest interaction is one where people know what they are offering, what they are getting and what it will cost them.



They are exuberant as their clothes are bright.
To the Freeborn, all things can have a price. Most Freeborn do not earn their living as a merchant, but almost all seek out opportunities to turn a profit. Even in social situations, they are comfortable seeing their interactions with others in monetary terms. Freeborn hosts are not insulted by a guests' offer to pay for a meal, nor by a request to purchase an ancient family heirloom. They are no greedier than other people -- there are plenty of things they wouldn't contemplate selling -- but they won't be angry at you for asking, provided you accept their refusal.

The Freeborn are notoriously candid. Transactions that in other nations would be conducted discreetly in private are carried out openly on the Brass Coast without shame. They are perfectly comfortable with someone paying to influence a political decision, but they expect those making the decision to be unabashed of their actions. The Freeborn are fully aware that other nations do not share their values. They don't expect frankness from other nations but they don't allow others to impose their values on them.

The Freeborn are passionate people who love dancing, story-telling and performance. The best dances are energetic and exuberant, and those who aren?t dancing are encouraged to join in by making music to cheer the dancers on. The best stories are bold, often bawdy and are delivered as a performance designed to involve and energise the audience. It is considered rude to boast; telling the tales of your own deeds is vulgar and if it must be done, events should always be described as if they happened to a friend. To tell the tale of another?s deeds does them great honour. The Freeborn love to include the earthy parts of a story, but are always clear when they are embellishing the tale, for instance, "I don't know what happened next, but I like to imagine it was like this..." The art of a Freeborn story-teller is to make even the most mundane tale become engaging or hilarious by the delivery. They particularly like to include their audience, getting them to act out the parts described or cheer and sing along at appropriate moments.



The Freeborn love dancing, story-telling and performance.

2.2 Archetypes

Brass Coast Archetypes	
Corsair	Kohan
Dhomiro	Scrivener
Hakima	Sutannir

There are magicians, priests, warriors, and traders of every stripe in every nation in the Empire. An archetype represents a specific attitude or approach to a given role that reflects cultural values and common ambitions of a nation. Choosing an archetype helps to define your character; it provides roleplaying hooks and ready-made character goals, but it also places demands on your character in terms of how you portray them. Selecting an archetype is optional, and it's better not to pick one if none of them appeal to you.

The Freeborn are not the strongest military in the Empire, but there is one area where their strength is uncontested ? on the open seas. Entire families make their living as corsairs, sea-borne raiders who prey on barbarian shipping passing through the Bay of Catazar. The Freeborn detest piracy, but they regard privateering as a perfectly legitimate form of warfare, which has the added advantage of also being highly profitable! Corsairs are not just privateers, and many routinely engage in foreign trade. In some parts of the Brass Coast there is a common saying which suggests that the only real difference between a privateer and a merchant is that the privateers get their goods cheaper.

By tradition, each Freeborn family is represented by a dhomiro, whose role it is to represent their interests to those who seek to deal with the family as a whole. Most families simply select the most suitable individual to take the role, picking the person with the best ability to organise or communicate. They tend to have great influence, but little formal power; they certainly don't rule over their family members. Any dhomiro that put on airs or graces would be ridiculed and dhomiro that are not effective in furthering their family's interests are quickly replaced.

The more powerful and organised magicians in Freeborn society are the hakima. These politically active covens view other Freeborn magicians as unsophisticated dabblers at best, and ignorant meddlers at worst. The hakima are highly skilled practitioners of ritual magic and custodians of magical lore handed down to them by Erigo, Guerra, and Riqueza. They are dedicated to preserving the integrity of the nation as a whole and regularly look to

recruit competent ritual magicians from the tribes into their own circles. The hakima are traditionally held to be wise, able to perceive the larger picture more effectively than most Freeborn who are anchored in more mundane activities. They may be consulted when important decisions need to be made within a family, or when magical assistance is sought. They rarely wait to be consulted, however ? a hakima is likely to be poking around any important business ready to offer a suggestion as to what to do next.

Centuries ago, the hakima began to gather Freeborn who had been disowned and turned them into a fighting force called kohan, a name that means without family. By serving their tribe the Freeborn were able to find a way to redeem themselves, or create a new place for themselves in society. Although they still accept those who have been cast out, today most kohan are volunteers, individuals who find such joy in battle that they cannot give it up. They fight for the joy of battle, flinging themselves into combat with a blood-thirsty relish that can easily dispirit an enemy. Kohan often adopt flamboyant costume and grotesque body paint, the better to unnerve their enemies. When they are not fighting they are usually found celebrating their continued survival with that same intensity.

When it comes to making financial agreements more complex than a direct exchange of goods, Freeborn are most comfortable dealing through contracts. As a consequence, Freeborn merchants usually seek out the services of a professional scrivener to formalise their agreements. A discreet, neutral scrivener can work out and witness a contract that satisfies both parties, and they are very much in demand. Combining the skill to express ideas simply and clearly in writing with a talent for arbitrating between individuals to help them express what they actually want, these scriveners are the backbone of Freeborn economic life.

Freeborn religious ceremonies tend to place their emphasis on celebration rather than sermons. Many families include a devout priest or spiritual family member who can be relied on to oversee these indulgences, but for the largest and most important festivities the Freeborn seek out the services of a sutannir. A cross between a professional priest and a party organiser, sutannir conduct important ceremonies such as the coming of age or a wedding, and see to the spiritual needs of the Freeborn as a whole. They are known for painting their skin with stylised flames in bright colours, and dressing in flamboyant costumes. They embrace the idea of embodying virtue - that their audiences prefer to be inspired to virtue rather than lectured.



2.3 Names

Freeborn names are primarily Spanish/Mexican in flavour, with Moorish influence.

Freeborn typically have three names. The first is their given name as decided by their parents and can be as creative or as bland as their imagination. The second is their family name and the last name is that of the tribe - one of the Erigo, the Riqueza or the Guerra.

Freeborn names follow the pattern ?firstname? *i* ?family? *i* ?tribe?. Hakima and kohan often drop the family name and use just their tribal name.

Children do not have a tribe name until they pass their Test of Citizenship. Their family name is generally that of their parents. Where the parents have different family names, the relationship contract commonly stipulates which family name offspring will take. The child chooses their tribe after they complete their test - often with guidance from a hakima or the egregore. This is usually seen as an excuse for a family celebration.

A very few Freeborn - specifically those evacuated from the Isle of Zemress - append "i Zemress" to the end of their family name, giving them four names.

2.3.1 Sample names

- Ahraz i Contero i Riqueza
- Iñes i Guerra (for a hakima or kohan of the Guerra tribe)
- Edina i Ezmara i Zemress i Erigo (for a Zemress islander of the Erigo tribe)

N.B. Whilst some names are inspired by real-world names which may be given to specific genders, Empire is a gender blind setting and people of any gender choose any name they like that is appropriate to their nation.

2.3.2 Naming resources

- Spanish names

2.4 Further Reading

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3 The Brass Coast culture and customs



3.1 Family

Family is important to the Freeborn. They live in extended family groups covering several generations with a strong emphasis on helping and supporting each other. Occasionally Freeborn will extend the privilege of family membership to valued friends, long-term employees or waifs and strays - these adoptees are whole-heartedly welcomed and are treated no different from blood relations. To the Freeborn, betraying your family is unforgivable.

The responsibility that the Freeborn feel for family members does not extend to others. The Freeborn make a point of disclaiming any responsibility for the wellbeing of others. They do not regard themselves as obliged to help the poor or the sick, the dispossessed or the homeless. They may be as charitable as they please, but they refuse to accept that it is their responsibility to care for others.

3.2 Hospitality

On the Coast, food and drink are only offered freely to family. Since most Freeborn habitually avoid favours and social debts but all Freeborn enjoy hospitality, both giving and receiving, the custom is always to offer to pay before receiving refreshments. A Freeborn approaching a tent of revelry might ask the price for a seat at the table. A token price of a ring or two indicates that they are very welcome to join, a price in crowns indicates that the meeting is private and the Freeborn should look elsewhere, but an exorbitant price in thrones is a deliberate insult.

Despite the ritualised nature of the exchange, actual payment is required. To the Freeborn mind, it is the payment that ensures that no further obligation exists on the part of either party. For close friends or clearly impoverished a Freeborn might offer a fine meal for help with the dishes or even an afternoon's work. It is easy to be itinerant in Freeborn society, so long as you don't mind working for your supper.

3.3 Syrah

Syrah is the ritualised drink of the Freeborn, habitually offered to guests, business associates and drunk during family affairs. Each family carefully guards their own recipe for syrah, and there is a common belief that to give away its secret is to give some of your good luck to another. Syrah can be almost anything, a brew of coffee or tea sweetened with honey or sugar, a fruit juice or a fine wine, but should be pleasant and appealing. It is not strongly alcoholic since it is intended to be drunk as a family and when business is being discussed. Offering syrah before the opening of trade negotiations is considered not only polite but beneficial to the coming talks.



Freeborn scriveners are often cambions.

3.4 Contracts

Written contracts are exceptionally important in Freeborn culture. The best contracts are short and succinct but clearly identify the obligations of both parties. To the Freeborn mind, making an agreement commits the integrity of their soul to the deal. If they contract to do something their reputation is at stake if they cannot carry out the letter of the contract. For this reason, almost all enduring contracts include fiscal clauses for default. This is not meant as a lack of commitment, but simply to avoid being a hostage to fortune should circumstances change and make it impossible for the parties to complete the deal. The Freeborn see no shame in going back on contracts provided the default bonds are paid - since such defaults are, of course, a part of the letter of the contract.

A scrivener is often employed to help make sure that a contract is clear and that both sides understand their obligations. These professionals also serve as witnesses who can help confirm the validity of a contract. Many scriveners are cambions, and there is a superstition that the blood of a cambion (usually a thumbprint) upon a document of trade will bring good fortune to the signatories - or dire circumstance to one who breaks the contract.

Contracts are also a common hearth magic on the Brass Coast.



Music and dance form the heart of any Freeborn celebration.

3.5 Marriages and relationships

All Freeborn marriages ? and indeed most extended attachments ? are formalised with a contract in which each participant lays down the parameters of the relationship. A marriage or relationship contract commonly covers matters such as the duration of the relationship, the rights and responsibilities of the participants, the expectation of fidelity and the options for marriage and relationship contracts with others, the division of shared wealth both during and after the relationship ends, and at least one clause covering how the relationship may be ended prematurely by either party. This rather cold-blooded practicality around matters of the heart is just another manifestation of the Freeborn's fiscal approach to life. These contracts ensure that both parties know the value the other places on the attachment. Not all attachments require a contract, but if a relationship is going to last for more than a few months, it is considered a sensible precaution against misunderstandings.

The contract also lays out the details of how the marriage will work with to regards to family. There is no default assumption in the Brass Coast; sometimes the spouses become part of one family or the other; sometimes they remain members of their former families; sometimes they start a new family altogether. These stipulations usually make clear the family name that any children will take. If one spouse is joining the other's family it is considered sensible to get the blessing of the dhomiro of that family, but this is a tradition rather than a legal requirement.

Marriage outside the Brass Coast is relatively rare, and when it does take place the contract is generally even more clear as to the expectations of each party. Likewise, while most marriages are between two individuals, more complex arrangements are not unheard of. More common than a formal marriage is for Freeborn lovers to form temporary attachments. Regardless of whether these attachments are romantic or physical in nature, there is rarely an assumption that they will last for life. In fact, with some pairings there is no assumption that they will last more than a night. Despite this, it is not uncommon for a contract to be drawn up to cover ever a relatively short-term romantic liaison.



Some mourners wear black cloaks over their brightest clothing

The calm nature of the merrow is at odds with the fiery Freeborn way of life. Merrow rarely find themselves comfortable in Freeborn society and there are few to be found. Many Freeborn parents of a merrow child will take that child to a spire in Urizen, where the child will find a better life - indeed such a stipulation is often explicit in the parts of a marriage contract dealing with children. There is no shame in this; the Freeborn recognise that a merrow will struggle to find a life in the tribes and encourage the parents to make a decision that is seen as being in the best interests of the child. The parting song Without You is traditionally associated with this custom.

3.6 Funerals

Freeborn dead are wrapped in spice-infused wraps of black cloth and then burned. The resulting ashes are scattered on the sea, or on the winds of the plain, depending on the family's wishes.

A funeral is rarely a sombre affair. The Freeborn take joy in a life well-lived and they consider it an insult to mourn its passing. Attendees wear brightly coloured robes and focus on celebrating the life of the deceased. It is normal for the will to be read by a sutannir at the height of the party. The will is the last chance to share a joke with loved ones and it is traditional for it to be as humorous as possible, akin to a best man's speech at a wedding. On the rare occasion when grief is appropriate, such as with the death of a child, the grieving is much shorter but just as open and intense.

An old tradition says that those lost at sea take new form as dolphins who will guide and guard lost ships. While no-one really believes it these days, it is a stock element in many stories involving sea travel.

A personification of death sometimes appears in Freeborn stories, and is especially popular in plays and as a dramaturgic archetype. As a character, Death is usually mocked as a figure of fun, a bumbling idiot and a clown who can easily be outwitted through courage and cunning. The counterpart of death is Fortune, who personifies ideas of luck and chance as well as fate or destiny. These literary tropes have a deeper philosophical context; such stories often explore the idea that death may come suddenly and without warning, as a result of happenstance or bad luck. This is especially important to a people as dedicated to getting as much out of life as the Freeborn are.



The Freeborn dance is passionate rather than practiced; exuberant rather than refined.

3.7 Icons and Artistry

The Freeborn enjoy bright colours, especially colours reminiscent of fire; bold reds, vibrant oranges, rich golds, and bright yellows. Stylised flames are a common feature of banners and flags and Freeborn art often includes a fire or flame in the image. Iconic imagery associated with the nation usually references the three Founders and the tribes they inspired, usually in a symbolic fashion. For example, the banner that hangs in the Imperial Senate building depicts three comets or falling stars, but three dancing flames are also a common symbol of the Brass Coast.

Regardless of the medium, the Freeborn love detailed ornamentation and complex designs. This love of decoration extends to their writing as well; Freeborn prize flamboyant calligraphy and ornate seals. To the Freeborn, any aspect of writing can be an artistic statement. The language used should be articulate and possess a lyrical quality; the letters and words should be written with bold ink strokes on beautiful paper or parchment that is then decorated and illuminated. The most important contracts will often be meticulously inked, beautifully illuminated, and displayed as works of art in their own right. They display the best on the walls of their homes, especially ones that have great sentimental or fiscal value.

Music and dance form the heart of nearly any Freeborn celebration. Passion and enthusiasm are valued over technical precision, and it is common for any musical performance to include well-known songs with which the entire audience can join in.

3.8 Further Reading

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4 The Brass Coast look and feel



4.1 Overview

Free, flowing, headstrong, sumptuous, practical, exuberant, hedonistic, colourful, rich, joyful.
The Freeborn look is one of bright colours, silks, jewels, and sumptuousness. They admire ornate or bejewelled items. To the Freeborn, a brilliant craftsman is one who can make something elegant as well as sturdy. Their weapons and armour are often engraved or adorned, but they are not fatuous and do not compromise utility for the sake of appearance. Jewellery is very common with the best pieces, like necklaces, crowns or tiaras, designed to frame the wearer's hands or face.

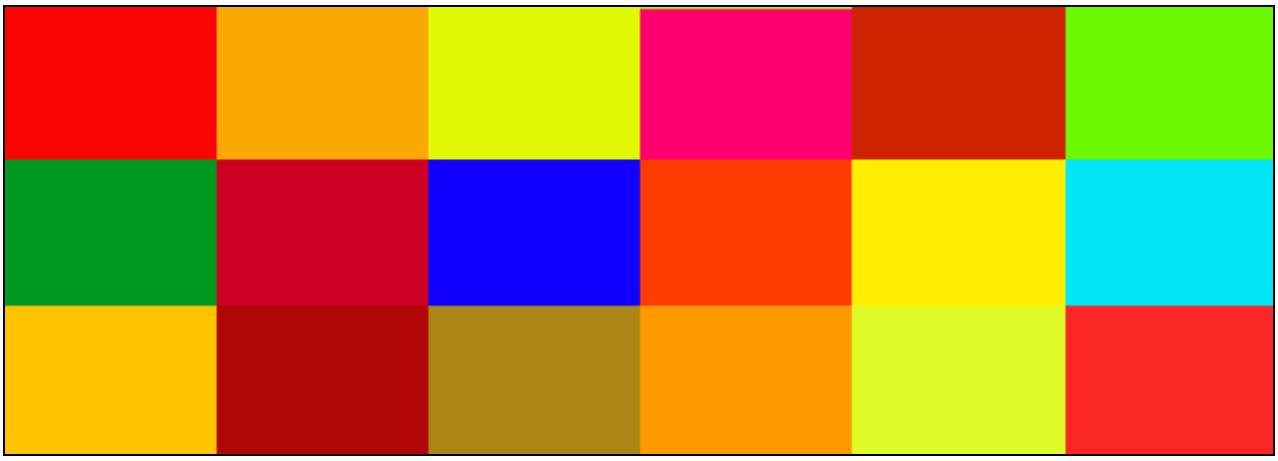
The image of the flame is central to the Freeborn culture; they believe it represents their spirit: wild, powerful and unchained.

Also see The Brass Coast costumes.

4.2 Breakdown

Influences
The traditional looks of Moorish Spain, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia.

Colours
The Freeborn value bright, vibrant colours, especially the colours of flames: strong bright yellows, brilliant oranges and every conceivable shade of red as well as gold and silver. Peacock blue, magenta and turquoise often appear for contrast. Expensive clothing is made in brightly coloured layers to convey the impression of the fire within.



Black is considered severe and used for shrouds to wrap the dead. White is the colour of the poor, those too impoverished to afford exotic dyes.

Materials

Lightweight fabrics such as voiles and chiffons, either silk or synthetic. Also silks, brocades and other rich fabrics. Leather is considered unappealing for most clothing, it is a heavy material mainly reserved for boots and armour. Gold is prized over silver when available. When working in colder climes, such as at sea, a warmer layer of fleece or wool is worn as a base layer. Gold, bronze and brass are much-prized, as are carved wooden objects (which are often imported, given the lack of wood on the Coast).

Weapons

Curved swords are less common than straight swords and axes which are the preferred weapons. The bhuj, a large heavy single-bladed spear, is the ideal polearm. The best quality weapons are intricately etched and engraved with complex designs. The hakima often have their rods, wands and staves made of finely carved wood. These featuring flame designs and are topped with red, orange or gold crystals.

4.3 Clothing

Veils, scarves, head-wraps, pantaloons, loose shirts and kaftans, are all part of Freeborn garb. Clothing is usually worn loose with layers of draped material slashed through to show a wealth of colour, and secured with sashes rather than belts. Outfits will often be decorated with shiny jewellery, bells, coins showing wealth in the glint of metal in the sun and the sound of metal as the wearer moves. Scabbards or pouches tend to hang at the waist by a silk cord that goes over the shoulder. Many Freeborn favour sandals as footwear, lacing up over the foot or higher up the leg, but slipper shoes are also common. Leather boots to mid-calf or the knee are favoured particularly on the battlefield.

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4.3.1 Headscarves

The ideal headgear is the tagelmust (preferably in bright red, orange or yellow rather than blue).

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4.3.2 Corsairs

Corsairs epitomise Freeborn daring and adventure. Javelins and bows are common but the Catazarri crossbow is also used. Many are lightly armoured decorated with flaming reds and oranges, but the boldest show off their success with ornately gilded plate. They may dress more simply than other Freeborn in trousers and tunic using Bright colours and patterned fabrics, but their flair for wealth tends to show through with jewellery worn at wrist and neck.

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4.3.3 Kohan

As with any Freeborn, kohan usually dress as extravagantly as possible. What really sets them apart from other Brass Coast warriors however is their use of facepaint. Vivid colours are used, often in threatening designs, the better to unnerve their enemies. There is a wide variety of designs across the faces of the Coast, some kohan groups keeping their masks of war the same over decades of battle with others changing it day by day as their feelings take them.

A kohan band may cultivate a uniform look to their costume - generally through the use of colour. A given band is likely to pick one or two shades and encourage its members to wear clothing in these colours, leaving it up to the individual to determine the exact cut and style.

Some kohan take valuable trinkets from particularly impressive fallen enemies, generally pieces of jewellery. The more striking these items are, the more opportunities they give to tell stories about how they were acquired. .

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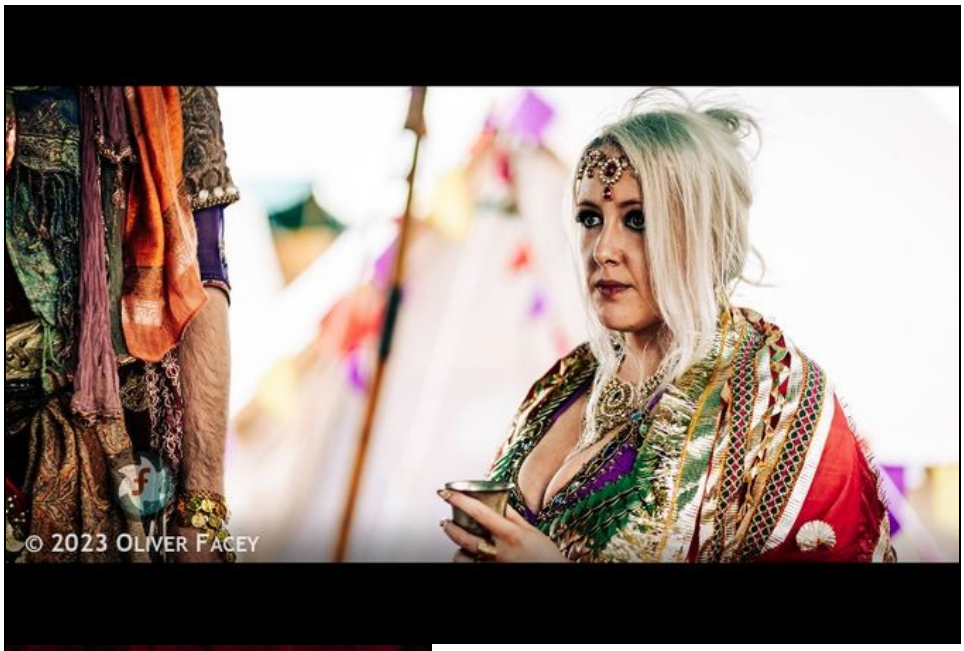
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4.3.4 Jewellery and Decoration

Jewellery is commonly used either as part of the clothes themselves or to frame the face or hands to draw attention to them. Veils are fashionable for those who wish to appear mysterious and alluring. Those who go tattooed tend to favour intricate henna-style designs.

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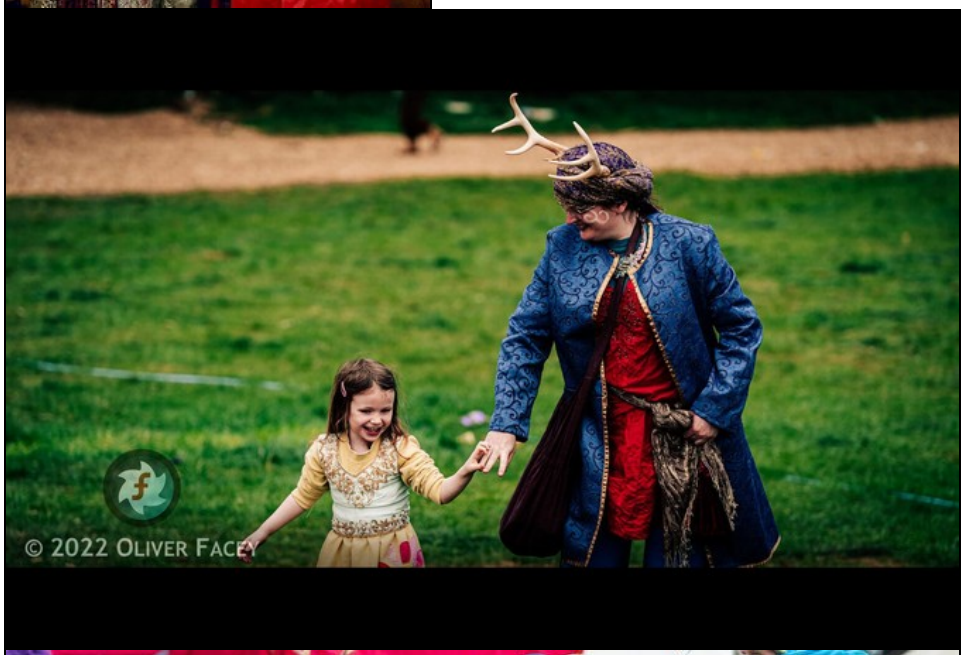
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4.3.5 Children

Children are an opportunity for parents to show off their wealth, dressing their offspring in traditional Freeborn styles.

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4.4 Armour

4.4.1 Scale

Scale is the armour many Freeborn aspire to, ideally in a bright golden colour, worn like mail or else secured with leather. Where mail is worn, it is usually likewise a bright golden colour, or worn under or over a brightly coloured tunic.

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4.4.2 Mail

Mail in the janissary style, particularly the chain helmets, is also commonly seen. Small pieces of plate or breastplates are popular especially if ornate and inlaid. Armour, whether metal or leather, usually has embellished edges and rich decoration, with calligraphy and ornate designs.

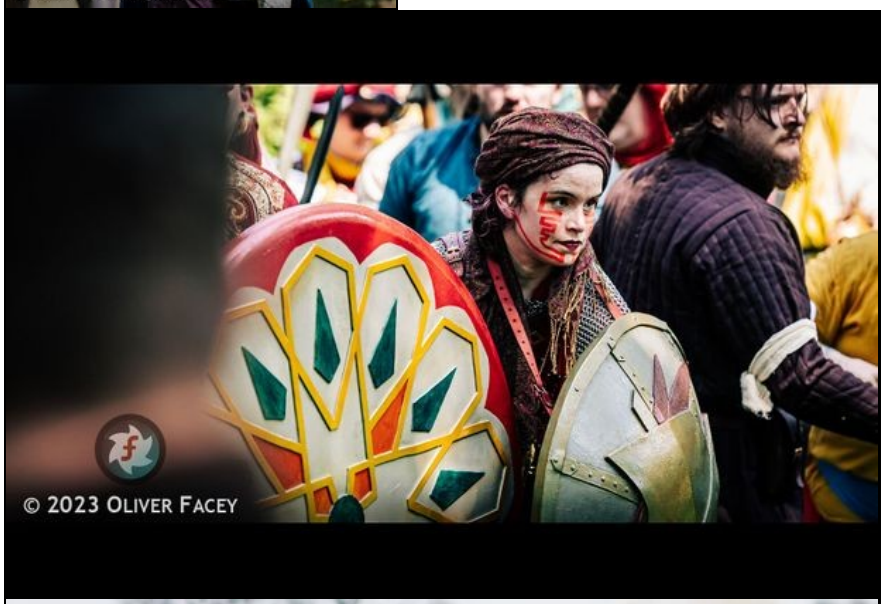
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4.4.3 Shields

The Freeborn favour round (ideally domed) metal shields, highly decorated if possible. Gold inlay and engraving are both particularly popular.

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4.4.4 Mage Armour

Freeborn battlemages favour mage armour that elicits the same themes as other armour; scales, brightly dyed leathers, and other materials in rich colours.

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4.5 Camp

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4.6 Less Appropriate

To define the ideal look and feel for the Brass Coast we have deliberately chosen to exclude some themes. This is important because it helps to create a clear visual aesthetic for the nation. The goal is to make members of the nation visually distinct from the other nations in play and to ensure that the costume guidelines don't become diluted by including ideas for costume from similar sources. We explicitly define some costume ideas and inspirations as not part of the brief for the Brass Coast to make what definitely does fit the brief clearer and more distinct.

Most things that are not part of a nation's brief are considered to be less appropriate as they are not not strictly part of the costume brief. This means that you can still use them if you need to but they are not something that you should actively aim for when you are creating or buying something for your the Brass Coast character. Creating a costume is always a compromise as time and money are limited, so it is sensible to use a garment or prop that is less appropriate if you already own it, if that allows you to focus on improving other parts of your costume.

A few things are explicitly defined as inappropriate. These are things that you should not use when you are in-character at an event, because of the real-world connotations or imagery associated with them. We have deliberately omitted these elements because they are so striking and memorable that it is impossible to see them without thinking of the themes associated with them.

Whilst this look and feel page provides the ideal costume for the nation, it is important for players to familiarise themselves with the general costume rules for further guidelines, including those for inappropriate costume.

4.6.1 Avoid: Shemagh

Some of the costume inspiration for the Brass Coast comes from cultures with strong Arabic influences, but the focus was Moorish Spain and North Africa. The shemagh or keffiyeh, the traditional headscarf that is white or patterned is more typical of the Middle East and often looks very modern. We recommend the tagelmust as the ideal head covering for the Brass Coast.



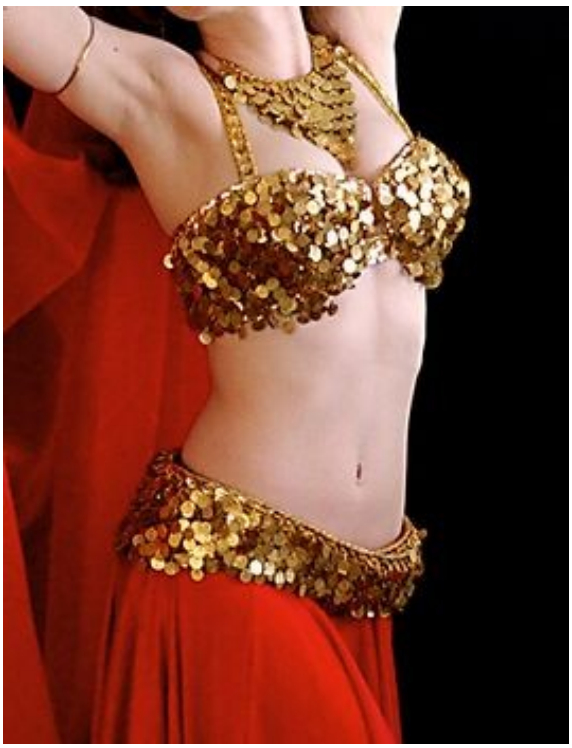
4.6.2 Avoid: Sartorial Hijab

All items of clothing associated with sartorial hijab are excluded from the look and feel for the nation. They are inappropriate as costume for Empire. They should not be worn in-character by anyone, unless you would normally do so in real life.



4.6.3 Avoid: Belly Dancing Costumes

Although there are no particular modesty taboos, dancers tend to be far more interested in showing off how they can make fabrics flare and move than displaying their own flesh. Wild passionate dancing is a common Freeborn pursuit for people of any gender, but the perfect Freeborn costume features long flowing colourful garments. Roxanne's dance from the movie Alexander is a great inspiration for Freeborn dancing and costume.



4.7 Further Reading

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5 The Brass Coast hearth magic

5.1 Overview

In the world of Empire, formal magic is the application of learning and willpower to create supernatural effects. There is another form of magic, however which does not require the user to be a magician. Hearth magic employs the innate natural magic of the world to produce subtle but significant effects in much the same way that a compass needle always points true north. The magic is not based on the abilities of a magician, but relies on the innate mystical properties of the world. Hearth magic is usually subtle rather than potent, and where formal magic is predictable and reliable, hearth magic is none of these things.

While the principles that underlie hearth magic are common throughout the world, in the Brass Coast, there are certain specific practices, customs, or traditions that draw on the power of the world's innate magic. Often these proud customs are nothing more than traditions - but sometimes their practice taps into some facet of the world resulting in a truly magical effect.

You can read more about hearth magic, what it is, and how it works, here.

5.2 Clothing

The Freeborn appreciate flamboyant clothing and like to express themselves through the garments they wear. Many believe that any clothing that is worn for a few years can become invested with part of a person's soul, reflecting their identity. Regardless of the truth of this belief, it is known that clothing can take on elements of the personality of its wearer, and influence other people who wear the garment. Usually these effects are subtle and nuanced, but occasionally the hearth magic is so powerful that it is obvious to everyone as soon as they touch a garment. Similar hearth magic is recognised in many places, such as the Imperial Orc idea of worth, or the League understanding of masks and rings.

When a Freeborn citizen dies, their family usually keep their most precious veil or richest robe so that their memory can be preserved. The garment will be given to a favoured relative or a close friend of the deceased, so that they can benefit from any magic the apparel has acquired. These prized garments are kept safe - as they become too worn for everyday use they are increasingly brought out only on special occasions to ensure that new owner can call on its assistance when needed for as long as possible. When these items have finally reached the point where they no longer be worn, they are often burned with great respect by the family they have served.



Another way to evoke the hearth magic of clothing is with a *black gift*. Black cloth is the garment of the dead in Freeborn society; bodies are wrapped in black shrouds when they are burned. As a consequence, black cloth can be dangerous to the living. A gift of clothing made with such fabric is sometimes sent as a calculated insult or curse. Some people who truly offend Freeborn sensibilities find black ribbons - often the remains of burned shrouds - nailed to their door. Even worse, such ribbons may be attached to their clothes, a sure sign that others wish them dead. Black ribbons are often delivered to merchants who have transgressed Freeborn honesty; when nailed to the door of a business they are said to bring misfortune not only to the dishonest owner but to anyone who chooses to deal with them. Disposing of a black gift can be expensive. The traditional way to dispense with the curse is to put the ribbon or cloth in a box, cover it completely in money, and then give the box to an orphan. If the child keeps the money, then they

can burn the cloth without anyone coming to further harm.

Clothing in Play

You can use this hearth magic by choosing a piece of your clothing or costume to be a family heirloom. When you define your character's personality, you could decide that part of their outlook is based on their own experiences and part is based on the garment they wear. Sharing a story about the provenance of such an iconic piece of costume can provide plenty of opportunity to roleplay. If another character - of any nation - has a particularly fine item of clothing, you might ask them what the history of the garment is. They might brush you off, but they might be ready with a story of their own.

A more challenging approach would be to have a specific piece of costume that you wear only in special circumstances, giving you the perfect justification to change how you roleplay your character. The item of clothing gives you license to slip between two different characterisations when the need arises, such as switching from a fun-loving Freeborn to a shrewdly calculating merchant by donning your grandmother's money belt.

Delivering black ribbons to someone is a serious matter in Freeborn society - akin to sending them a threatening letter. It is an iconic Freeborn way of showing personal enmity - of telling the world that you wish another character ill. If you're making a black ribbon to give to someone, then any strip of black cloth will do, but the best ribbons would be one that is ragged and burned at the edges. If you receive the *black gift* then it's up to you to decide how the curse affects you, but as a minimum we recommend blaming anything that does go wrong for you on the curse. If a friend or member of your group is cursed in this manner, it can fun to do this as well - as we point out this is one of those rare occasions where a curse might prove to be contagious.

5.3 Coins

In most lands coins are reused without a thought, but many Freeborn like to set aside a coin earned as part of a lucky or particularly important deal or transaction. A portion of the luck and prosperity of the deal rubs off on the coins that exchange hands this way. A coin may be kept in perpetuity and handed down as an heirloom, and many Freeborn enjoy telling stories of how they acquired certain coins. Others prefer to hand a lucky coin on after a time, passing a little of its fortunate power to another. Giving a coin of note or significance to a person who is down on their luck will help to improve their fortunes. *Loaning* such a coin is not effective however; the lucky ring, crown, or throne must be unequivocally someone's property if it is to have any impact on their prosperity.

There are other ways that coins can be used to bring good fortune. Some parents will sew a crown into the hem of a garment for a child who is leaving home for the first time, with instruction not to remove it unless they have no other choice. Relations often give their nephews and nieces a gift of a four crown piece when they come of age with the intention that the coin may serve as a charm against misfortune. A Freeborn citizen who never needs to spend their last coin is truly blessed by fortune, and may transfer a little of that good luck to their descendants by passing on to them the first coin they were given by their parents.

Several stories exist of dire misfortune befalling anyone wicked enough to *steal* a lucky coin. When a coin is stolen, all the good fortune bound up in it immediately turns to bad luck and falls on the head of the one who stole it. If they spend the coin, whatever they purchase is likely to be lost, to break, or to fail them at the worst possible moment. The only reliable way to lose the curse is to identify the lucky coin and return it to the person it was stolen from. Given that identifying the specific coin is often impossible, a thief may have to return all the coins they stole if they are to shake off their bad luck.

Coins in Play

If you set aside a "lucky coin" or two, each with their own story of good fortune, they give you something to roleplay with other Freeborn in quiet moments. Refusing to spend such a coin, or reluctantly parting with it in dire need, can both add significance to an interaction as can passing such a coin to a friend. If someone is going into a dangerous situation, handing over a coin with the hope that it might protect them can be a dramatic roleplaying moment.

One important thing to remember with this hearth magic is that the worth of a lucky coin lies in the story attached to it - not the coins monetary value. Every Imperial coin has an explicit connection to a specific virtue. Emphasising that you are hoping to encourage someone's Ambition with a gift of a one-ring coin, can help add drama to any exchange.

The coins also have have slogans stamped on them - rings say *"virtue's reward"* and are best employed to reward virtue... or to remind someone that they need to be virtuous. The crowns say *"nation's steel"* and make good gifts when you want someone to fight for their nation - either on the battlefield or in the political arena at Anvil. Thrones say *"freedom's cost"* - they're ideal when you want someone to make a sacrifice or a difficult decision.

5.4 Contracts

A contract is a binding agreement between two or more individuals. Properly prepared, they are a physical symbol of a promise, akin to an oath. When making a deal, Freeborn citizens often employ a capable scrivener to ensure that a permanent record is made of the agreement. The most powerful

contracts are those that are written in clear language, meticulously inked, beautifully illuminated and then displayed publicly - all steps that are known to add to the potency of the agreement.

Tampering with a contract or knowingly breaking it risks terrible misfortune. Freeborn stories are full of examples of villains who cheated a contract and suffered an ironic fate as a consequence. Intent is crucial to this however, contracts that are broken through misunderstanding do not give rise to magical retribution. Because of this, it is widely accepted that the best contracts use simple plain English that everyone can easily understand. Most contracts commonly include a get-out clause with appropriate penalties since few people wish to see their business partners ruined if they were genuinely unable to complete a bargain.

Some citizens of the Brass Coast who intend to swear an oath will have a scrivener prepare a contract laying out the terms of the vow. Like the Navarr marking their oaths with tattoos, the oath will usually be a beautiful document which is proudly displayed for all to see, once it has been signed. Freeborn philosophers and poets argue that the "other party" is the spirit of the nation, or perhaps even Creation itself.

Contracts in Play

Any Freeborn character should feel free to insist on a formal, written contract before engaging in an important transaction. Getting a scrivener involved brings another player into the roleplaying and underlines how important the deal is to everyone. Contracts shouldn't be convoluted legalese - the Freeborn prize candour and honest speaking - a straightforward contract that is easy to understand is ideal.

Taking pains to illuminate the contract - to decorate it with cursive script or ornamentation to make the actual document attractive - will make for a wonderful prop, and further demonstrate how important the agreement is. It's great if it can be done at the time, but you could create a beautiful document between events if you wished - provided you don't change the wording. You can explain this as having paid a skilled scrivener to produce a beautiful copy of the contract to better reflect its importance.

Most Freeborn will go to extraordinary lengths to keep to the terms of a contract they have signed to preserve their reputation for honesty and avoid any potential curse. That might not always be in your character's best interests, but going to inordinate lengths to keep your side of the deal can provide a huge amount of roleplaying fun for everyone, especially if it's to your character's detriment. If you do choose to break a contract, even if you are forced to default by circumstances not of your choosing, then you should roleplay that any misfortune that you subsequently experience is a result of the curse that has befallen you. The more you embrace that curse, the more fun you'll have with it.

5.5 Syrah

On the Brass Coast the most common form of hospitality is Syrah, the ritualised drink of the Freeborn, that is habitually provided at every opportunity. Syrah encourages those who partake to deal with each other more honesty so it is commonly offered to all parties before any negotiation begins to improve the chances of success. It is not a truth serum, but people who intentionally deceive one another after partaking of Syrah often experience feelings of nausea. In rare cases particularly perfidious lies can result in crippling stomach cramps.

The more unusual the recipe, the greater the beneficial effects, so each family strives to create a unique recipe. One might use a sweet fruity syrup, while another might employ a strong brew of coffee or tea as a base. Some families are even known to trade with foreigners or even heralds for rare and exotic ingredients. It's not common for a Syrah recipe to include strong alcohol, but families often add some spirits to the mix for an appropriate audience. Regardless, the intent is to create something that is tasty and enjoyable to drink with rich flavours and a pleasing appearance.

Syrah in Play

Practically any drink can be presented as Syrah. Perhaps your Syrah is hot chocolate, or a mixture of fruit juices, or simply white coffee with tiny marshmallows in it. The best recipe is something unusual and delicious - you want people to come to your camp to drink your Syrah!

There can be more to Syrah than just providing a drink. Your Syrah might involve a special way of preparing or serving it - mixing the fruit juices immediately before the drink is served for example. There might be a simple ceremony involved in drinking it - perhaps you ask someone to close their eyes before they take their first sip so they can appreciate the flavours without distraction. Any interaction with your guest makes the experience of partaking of Syrah more involved - you could even challenge your guest to try and guess the ingredients after they're had time to savour the flavour.

The need to be honest when drinking Syrah is entirely up to the person who drinks it. Syrah only works as part of genuine hospitality anyway - there are no circumstances where you can trick people or force them to drink it to drag the truth out of them. It's entirely up to the player how they respond - they will only roleplay squirming in their seat with nausea or cramps when lying or exaggerating if they decide to do that because it makes the scene more fun for them to roleplay.

As this hearth magic involves drinking something unusual, it is *not* appropriate to present someone with something unpalatable or noxious in any way. It's better to avoid strong alcohol by default, but it can be included as an option on request. Some guests will have allergies, so you should always tell

anyone what the drink contains if you are asked. Whatever the situation, it is acceptable to roleplay your character drinking the syrah by putting the cup to their lips but not actually consuming any.

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6 The Brass Coast history



6.1 Three Sisters of Highguard

Long before the formation of the Empire, three Highborn sisters - Riqueza, Erigo, and Guerra - lived in the city of Pharos. Sisters in spirit if not in blood, each was the head of a patrician family, part of the elite council that ruled the nation of Highguard then. Despite their power and status, the three idealists grew weary of the restrictive nature of Highborn life and resented the venal corruption of that age. Their nation was entering a period of political and spiritual turmoil as it became clear that open conflict between the corrupt Patrician Council and the virtuous chapters was inevitable. The sisters were sickened by the nepotism and malfeasance of their fellow patricians, but found the austere isolationism of the chapters equally unappealing.

Instead they dreamed of founding a new nation, one based on ideals where people would be free to live honest lives. They would set sail from Pharos and find a new land to conquer, just as Atuman and their forebears had done. Far from the decay of Pharos they would be born again, free to chart a new destiny.

6.2 The Exodus from Highguard

Interest in the plans of the Founders drew many like-minded Highborn to their side, and initial plans to purchase ships and sail across the Bay of Catazar became unworkable as the numbers grew. Instead, the three sisters, their households and their supporters set off on foot from Pharos. Their ultimate destination was the western coast of the Bay, a land that their divinations had revealed would make the perfect place for their new beginning. Purchasing many caravans and oxen, their great caravan moved slowly west until it reached the city of Sarvos.

Ruled in theory by the Highborn Saravos family, but in practice governed by a council of wealthy merchants, Sarvos welcomed the pilgrims with open arms. With winter on the horizon, the caravan weathered the winter outside the jewelled city and renewed their supplies while the Founders drew up plans for the conquest of Madruga. They hired Sarvosan mercenaries and bargained with Patrician Benedict forming an alliance with the city to attack the Naguerro orc stronghold of what today is the town of Trivento. The port was a major thorn in the side of Sarvos as it was home to a significant

number of Naguerro vessels, including some notorious pirate ships that regularly attacked Sarvosan shipping. After a decisive battle, the Freeborn and their allies seized the port, capturing almost the entire fleet.

Their Founders refused the entreaties of their League allies to remain in Trivento. Sarvos was still part of Highguard at that time, and even this far from home they would still have been subject to the rule of the Patrician Council. So as agreed, they left Trivento and its riches in the hands of their allies, and instead they took command of the Naguerro fleet. There were many slaves held at Trivento who the Founders insisted on freeing. Some returned to grateful friends and family in Sarvos, but many chose to join the Founders as they sailed south to the island of Atalaya to began the conquest of their new homeland.

6.3 The Conquest of the Coast

Their first destination was Free Landing, specifically the island that is now home to the town of Atalaya. The waters in this area are notoriously treacherous, especially on the approach to what is now Atalaya, and as a result the island was uninhabited at that time. The Founders used powerful magic to divine a safe route through the difficult waters and brought all but one of the ships safely to their new home. They named the island Free Landing and announced that this would be the Freeborn's new home. The dangerous seas and the captured fleets would make the island a safe haven that would protect them from any harm. From here they would build their strength and eventually conquer the entire Brass Coast.

From Atalaya, Erigo led those who had a thirst for battle in a series of daring raids against the orcs, attacking settlements up and down the length of the Brass Coast, and capturing any ships plying their trade in the waters. The resources were brought back to Free Landing, along with something more valuable. Where the Freeborn attacked, they freed any slaves they found. Those who wished to join them were brought back to Free Landing along with any wealth they could carry off, to start a new life as a farmer or to join the swelling ranks of the corsairs who sailed with Erigo.

Over the next decade, they conquered the islands off the coast of what is today Madruga and Feroz and once their position was secure, they took the fight directly to the Naguerro stronghold that stood on the site of modern-day Quzar. From there, they eventually spread out to claim all of Madruga and Feroz, driving the orcs west and south into the hills of Kahraman and Kalino.

6.4 The Kindling of the Flame

Each of the three sisters was an idealist. While they broadly agreed with one another, they each had their own ideas about what was most important. Riqueza wanted a nation where individuals could celebrate life, and explore their personal connection with the divine. Erigo wanted a secure homeland where everyone would be free to pursue their own prosperity. Guerra wanted a just society, free from authoritarianism and slavery. As the Freeborn established themselves, they began to divide into three distinct groups, each supporting one of the Founders and viewing their new freedom in terms of that sister's ideals. Over time three tribes were formed, each named for one of the sisters. While most peoples' first loyalty was to their extended family, they all looked to the inspiration of the Founders for what it meant to be Freeborn and to guide them toward living a moral, prosperous life.

While the Freeborn were conquering the Brass Coast, the Patricians murdered the Last Navigator, and plunged Highguard into civil war. Eventually the chapters were triumphant, but in the wake of the tragic conflict another wave of emigrants fleeing the turmoil came to the Brass Coast. This same conflict saw the cities of Sarvos and Tassato likewise declare their independence from Highguard. In the decades that followed, the virtuous assembly of Highguard made several overtures to the Freeborn, some seeking to encourage them to return home while others suggested that they accept the rule (and the protection) of Highguard. These requests were quickly rebuffed by the Freeborn; they had turned their back on Highguard and forged a new nation for themselves. Few had any interest in returning and none had any desire to submit to Highborn rule. The responses were blunt and made it plain that Highguard should not regard the Brass Coast as part of its dominion.

Individual Highborn missionaries received a warmer welcome however. The Founders and the families had carried some knowledge of the Virtues with them. As the years passed, the Way steadily gained traction in the Brass Coast, though it never took the position of authority it enjoyed in other nations. The Freeborn were fiercely independent, their spiritual beliefs shaped by their ideals and a deep suspicion of authority and they resisted efforts to allow the virtue assembly of Highguard to dominate their understanding of the spirit, reincarnation, and the Virtues.

6.5 The Empire

By the time the Empress began her crusade to unite humanity beneath her banner, the Freeborn were much as they are today ? a disparate people of sprawling, extended families spread over three tribes, with each tribe seeing themselves as descendants of one of the three founders - whether literally via birthright - or spiritually for those who choose to join the tribe whose Founder's ideals most align with their own. While each family and each tribe treasured their individual freedoms, they were bound together into a loose nation by the Founder's ideals and by carefully negotiated contracts and treaties.

Initially, the tribes were suspicious of the Empress and hostile to the interests of the powerful Highborn priests who backed her. After a long negotiation between the Empress and prominent tribal leaders, they agreed to join the nascent Empire. The Freeborn had demands, however. Their negotiators

were instrumental in slavery being outlawed, at least for humans. It was at their insistence that each nation would set the means to select their own senators, rather than a single method being applied to everyone. Perhaps their best-known contribution, however, was the creation of the egregores, spirits created by magic to ensure that every nation was able to preserve its traditions. To this day, the Freeborn are enormously proud that their influence ensured that their ideas of individual liberty and responsibility became a central part of the Empire's identity.

They also influenced the formation of the Imperial Synod. While they were unable to convince the priests of other nations to acknowledge the central role of honesty in a virtuous life, they worked with priests from Navarr, Wintermark, and the Marches to ensure that the nascent Synod would not simply be an extension of the Highborn assembly of virtue. They helped to ensure that the Imperial Constitution granted each nation an assembly of equal authority, and that only the General Assembly would wield the most impactful powers of the faith.

6.6 Imperial History

Through the last four centuries, the Brass Coast has been at the forefront of any Imperial project that has involved ships or the Bay of Catazar. Modern corsairs continue to protect the southern coast of the Empire from the Grendel, as they have done since the earliest days of the Empire. During the reign of Empress Deanne in particular, the sailors of the Brass Coast were instrumental in breaking the Grendel invasion of the southern nations. More recently, they played key roles in mapping the bay, evacuating the Isle of Zemress, and protecting the southern fishing fleet from the depredations of orc pirates.

The Freeborn are a mercantile people - on land no less than at sea. Since the beginning of the Empire, the Freeborn have been able to present themselves as traders backed by the full weight of the Empire. It is something they use, sometimes shamelessly, to their advantage when dealing with foreign powers. The stability provided by the Empire has allowed the Freeborn to reach far beyond their native territory, bringing in great wealth to all the nations. At the same time, they presented a pleasant, honest face to the Empire's neighbours and more distant rivals establishing themselves not only as traders but also as diplomats. Close to home, the Freeborn established reasonably good relations with both the Faraden and the Iron Confederacy - and even today the bulk of all trade with these two nations passes through the Brass Coast.

The Freeborn enjoyed a renaissance of a kind during the reign of Emperor Barabbas. The ship-obsessed Throne worked closely with the corsair families to build his armada, and the Brass Coast's ill-fated Golden Fleet was the first navy ever commissioned. While several families accrued great wealth under the Highborn Emperor - others lost everything during his ill-starred plan to invade Attar that claimed the three navies of the Barabbine Fleet. Not until 379YE would the Empire build another navy - and again it was the Freeborn who took the lead with the tragic Freeborn Storm.

All too often, historians to overlook the role the Brass Coast has played in maintaining the ideals that led to the creation of the Empire. Throughout its history, Freeborn senators, generals, archmages and priests have worked behind the scenes to preserve the freedom, dignity, and prosperity of Imperial citizens regardless of which nations they hail from. Their influence waxes and wanes, but whenever the Empire has begun to stray down paths of excessive dogmatism or slip into authoritarianism, the Freeborn have rallied, found allies, and tirelessly worked to ensure that the Empire continues to serve its citizens, rather than striving to rule them. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the role Emperor Ahraz - the only Freeborn Throne to date - played in bringing the Orc rebellion to an end, and strengthening the Empire with its first new nation in over three centuries. While Ahraz is often overlooked by Imperial scholars, his reign also brought the ideals of Guerra to the forefront and arguably helped lay the groundwork for the modern abolitionist movement.

6.7 Freeborn on the Throne

There has only ever been one Freeborn Emperor, **Ahraz i Contero i Guerra**, who freed the orc slaves and was instrumental in bringing them into the Empire. The Freeborn believe that it is in the Senate that true power lies and that the best Emperors have accepted this and served as figureheads and administrators rather than policy makers. Popular prejudice paints the Freeborn as poor politicians ? a slur that several of them embrace. Their blunt frankness combined with a tendency to want to get to the point of any argument does not endear them to their political opponents, but they make up for this directness with a tendency to produce powerful and impassioned orators.

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7 The Brass Coast leadership



Traditionally, every Freeborn family is represented by a dhomiro.

7.1 Overview

The Freeborn are traditionally cautious when it comes to the idea of authority and control. They value loyalty and even discipline, but they are an informal people who have little regard for titles and status and even less for those who think such positions make them more important than their fellows.

The Brass Coast is a loose-weave community of towns and villages, each of which is effectively governed by the wealthiest, most influential family that dwells there. This can lead to fluid but infrequent shifts of power as familial fortunes wax and wane. The settlements are tied together by the trade wagons belonging, constantly on the move, transporting goods, news, and people with equal facility. When more formal agreements between families or settlements are needed, the dhomiro of each family involved will negotiate a formal contract.

Freeborn society is not so much controlled as ?nudged in a beneficial direction? by the families with the most power and influence. There is little leadership beyond the dhomiro. There is a presumption of cooperation between different families that are part of the same tribe, but this presumption only makes the inevitable rivalries more fierce. When this rivalry threatens to get out of hand, it often falls to the hakima ? the magical custodians of the Freeborn tribal legacy ? to step in and try to mediate some sort of peaceful conclusion. While the hakima have no formal authority over the dhomiro, their advice and magical support can help turn a strong family into a truly great family. The hakima stand outside the traditional Freeborn family structure, placing the nation above all other loyalties; their official role is to help ensure Freeborn prosperity and security. This neutrality makes them an essential part of the political structure and most are highly respected.

To outsiders, it is a chaotic and unstructured form of governance, but to the Freeborn it is as natural as breathing. When an outsider finds themselves frustrated trying to work out who is in charge, the traditional Freeborn response is ?the wind?. A less metaphorical response might be to ask ?why does someone always have to be in charge?? When a decision needs making that affects a number of families, the hakima and the families gather to ?discuss? the issue. To outsiders this is a wild affair of drink and revelry, but the informal atmosphere of the gathering in no way undermines the severity of the discussions. The exchange of coin, scripts of trade and goods eventually leads to a common opinion and subsequent decision, usually formalised through a contract.

7.2 Dhomiro

By tradition, each Freeborn family is represented by a dhomiro. Their role is to represent their family's interests to those who seek to deal with the family as a whole. Choosing a dhomiro is not a political decision, most families simply select the most suitable individual. They are usually chosen on account of their ability to organise or communicate, and they have great influence but little formal power. Any dhomiro that put on airs or graces would be ridiculed and dhomiro that are not effective in furthering their family's interests are quickly replaced.



The Freeborn encourage scriveners to track wealth.

7.3 Leading a territory

Despite this, Imperial rule requires that the Freeborn select senators. The Freeborn solution is simple; wealth and influence dictate many things in Freeborn life and they see no reason why senatorial seats should be any different. As a result, when a senatorial seat becomes vacant, the Brass Coast hold an open auction at which any dhomiro can participate. Whoever presents the highest purse wins the right to appoint the senator. Only someone who is recognized as a dhomiro may bid in the auction. Dhomiro is not an Imperial title so there is no concept of a legal proxy being appointed, but this does not often become an issue - it is rarely the business of another family how a dhomiro is chosen, or how they serve their people. The winning family may choose any Freeborn citizen to take the title, including a dhomiro or a hakima.

Those who are not successful in claiming a seat reclaim their purse. The money paid by the winner is given into the care of the egregore, who is charged to use that money for the good of the nation. If the purse is significant in value, then the egregore will go to the hakima for advice on how to distribute the money. Though they are not bound to follow this advice (and is quite rare for all the hakima to agree on anything) - it is often the best way to identify where the money might do the most good.

If a senator is later revoked, the dhomiro does not receive any automatic recompense. Although it should be borne in mind that the egregore has control of the purse, and might choose to offer the dhomiro who appointed a revoked senator some measure of reimbursement, depending on the advice of the hakima.

While outsiders may be offended by the way in which the Freeborn auction their senatorial titles, it is a matter of pride that there is comparatively little duplicity in the political achievement of the Freeborn senators. To the Freeborn way of thinking their approach is honest - while the politics of other nations can be devious and underhanded, the Freeborn are forthright and open in the methods employed.

The senators for each Imperial territory are re-elected at specific equinox and solstices during the year. The Senator for Segura is elected at the Spring Squinox, the Senator for Feroz is elected at the Summer Solstice, the Senator for Kahraman is elected at the Autumn Equinox, and the Senator for Madruga is elected at the Winter Solstice. In the event that more than one Senate seat is empty at a time, auctions are run consecutively starting with the seat that should be elected in the current summit and moving on chronologically.

You can read much more detail about the ideas and the approach used for the unique Freeborn approach to their senators here.

7.3.1 Incumbent

The current Freeborn senators are listed below - see the individual territory pages for a full election history for each position.

- Feroz - Garviel i Abrira i Erigo
- Madruga - Eulàlia i Phovas i Riqueza
- Kahraman - Velasco i Guerra
- Segura - Ana i Taziel i Riqueza

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8 The Brass Coast economic interests



8.1 Overview

Money is the most versatile tool in existence. Every Freeborn is to one degree or another looking to ?make their fortune? because wealth brings status and luxury and it gives you a freedom that is denied to the poor.

Freeborn traders go beyond the frankness that is normal for everyday Freeborn and strive for a degree of honesty that would shame a priest. They regard it as a matter of skill to obtain the best possible price while being utterly open about the goods they sell. This probity is not driven solely by moral concerns, but also practical ones. The Freeborn have achieved an extraordinary reputation for not cheating their customers - a reputation that drives business to their door. Any Freeborn trader who stoops to lying about their merchandise for the sake of a better deal puts the prosperity of all Freeborn at risk. As a result, they protect this reputation very aggressively. Freeborn traders who do seek to twist a deal or sell a light load are dealt with without mercy.

About the only things the Freeborn do not buy or sell are slaves. Slavery of Imperial Citizens is illegal in the Empire, and the Freeborn take no part in the trade even when overseas. While the Freeborn do not hold with slavery, they approve of the idea of hard work as punishment, treating the wages a criminal might have earned doing a job honestly as payment towards the resolution of their crime.



Freeborn scriveners draw up contracts?for a price.

8.2 Scriveners

When it comes to making financial agreements more complex than a direct exchange of goods, Freeborn are most comfortable dealing through contracts. As a consequence, Freeborn merchants usually seek out the services of a professional scrivener to formalise their agreements. A discreet, neutral scrivener can work out and witness a contract that satisfies both parties, and they are very much in demand. Combining the skill to express ideas simply and clearly in writing with a talent for arbitrating between individuals to help them express what they actually want, these scriveners are the backbone of Freeborn economic life.

The Freeborn prefer to abide by the letter of a contract, rather than the ?spirit". Arguments about what was ?meant? by the contract are inevitably circular and unhelpful. Where the meaning of a contract must be discussed or clarified, it is again to the professional scrivener that the Freeborn merchant turns. The best scriveners are also artists or employ someone capable of making their contracts look attractive and professional with fine calligraphy and colourful flourishes. A disproportionate number of scriveners are of the cambion lineage. Common superstition suggests that their connection to the Autumn realm helps them to instinctively understand how to frame a contract, and their blood marked on a document is traditionally held to grant good fortune to the enterprise involved.



Cambions have a special place in Freeborn society, a tradition that dates back to the murky prehistory of the Freeborn. According to legend, a particularly clever cambion (whose origin is usually tied to the teller in some way) convinced the founders to sign a cleverly worded trade agreement. This binding oath is allegedly what has kept the Freeborn together as a people. This story has created a superstition that the blood of a cambion (usually a thumbprint) upon a document of trade will bring good fortune to the signatories. As a result, Freeborn cambion often study to become scriveners.

8.3 Paradors

When an outsider thinks of a Freeborn trader, they are often thinking of the proprietor of a parador. Brass Coast towns always have at least one parador, a communal social house of music, story-telling, drinking and dance. At the end of a hard day of work, the people of the Freeborn can often be found here discussing their latest ventures or telling extravagant and grand tales of their ancestors, friends and relatives.

As with most Freeborn businesses, a parador is traditionally owned by an extended family which may maintain more than one structure, or operate a ?travelling parador? akin to a circus or fair. In addition to the services and entertainments they provide, the best paradors are places of trade. While a lot

of formal business takes place at the bazaar, the parador is where merchants go to relax and it is often where the real business of complex trade takes place. The parador is where merchants can informally come to an agreement concerning more risky ventures, bulk deals and investment opportunities over chilled fruit and wine.

8.4 Corsairs

The Freeborn are not the strongest military in the Empire, but there is one area where their strength is uncontested ? on the open seas. Each Freeborn tribe includes dozens of families who make their living as corsairs, sea-borne raiders who prey on barbarian shipping passing through the Bay of Catazar. The Freeborn detest piracy, but they regard privateering as a perfectly legitimate form of warfare, albeit a highly profitable one. Corsair groups are usually Freeborn families who own one or more seaworthy vessels. Corsairs are not just privateers, they commonly engage in foreign trade. A common saying suggests that the only difference between a privateer and a merchant is that the privateers get their goods cheaper.

In the early days of the Empire, the Freeborn often vied with the League to be the first to forge trade links with the foreign nations who are not hostile to the Empire - and the corsairs regularly acted as guards and escorts to Imperial merchant ships of all nations.

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9 The Brass Coast military concerns



Most Freeborn families remember a time when each was responsible for their own defence and try to remain prepared should such times come again.

9.1 Overview

Most Freeborn families encourage their children to practice some martial skills. The Freeborn remember a time when the families were responsible for their own defence and they try to remain prepared in case that day should come again. Those Freeborn who are not career soldiers are by day traders, farmers and labourers, only turning to martial matters when required, though all are ready to do so.

Many families maintain a small dedicated fighting force, usually family members who have shown a capacity for martial excellence. These warriors protect Freeborn caravans and settlements from bands of raiding orcs or adventurous bandits. Families take pride in equipping their warriors with the best equipment they can afford. These family warriors often train to fight in heavy armour in close formation.

9.2 Kohan

Centuries ago, the hakima began to gather Freeborn who had been disowned and turned them into a fighting force. By serving their tribe the Freeborn were able to find a way to redeem themselves. These groups were called kohan, meaning without family, and their number has grown considerably over the years. Although they still accept those who have been cast out, most kohan are volunteers, individuals who find such joy in battle that they cannot give it up. They fight for the joy of battle, flinging themselves into combat with a blood-thirsty relish that can easily dispirit an enemy. Kohan often adopt flamboyant costume and grotesque body paint, the better to unnerve their enemies. When they are not fighting they are usually found celebrating their continued survival with that same intensity.

9.3 Imperial Armies

The Brass Coast currently fields three armies: the *Red Wind Corsairs*, the *Fire of the South*, and the *Burning Falcon*.



9.3.1 The Red Wind Corsairs

- **Quality:** Daring

The core of this army is made up of corsairs and for centuries the Red Wind Corsairs were the closest thing the Empire had to a naval force. Many of the soldiers who serve with this army have experience serving as sailors, and the force is supported by a number of boats and ships. The army often takes advantage of this to reinforce and support difficult positions or move quickly to areas where it can do the most good. The experienced privateers who often serve as officers excel at foraging supplies and prior to the Winter Solstice 381YE, the army was known for its enthusiastic plundering of barbarian territory. After an opportunity to turn away from cruel tactics, Gonzalo i Riqueza was sent by the Freeborn assembly to encourage the corsairs to embrace the idea of ransoming their foes rather than simply robbing them - leading the army focusing less on robbery and more on daring raids.

The first Brass Coast general leads the Red Wind Corsairs, and is appointed (or re-appointed) at the Summer Solstice each year.



9.3.2 The Fire of the South

- **Quality:** Fast

The soldiers of this army are trained in tactics appropriate to flat, open land. Often recognised by their brightly polished armour, their warriors and supply lines are trained to be especially mobile and responsive to attacks from any direction. This gives them a marked advantage over less adaptive armies, allowing them to cover great distances very quickly.

The second Brass Coast general leads the Fire of the South, and is appointed (or re-appointed) at the Autumn Equinox each year.



9.3.3 The Burning Falcon

- **Quality:** True Conviction

The first army to bear the name of the Burning Falcon met their end whilst fighting to defend the academy at Ishal in Kallavesa from the Jotun in 248YE. In 384YE, the Imperial Senate commissioned the restoration of the army. It was completed shortly before the Winter Solstice 384YE. The core of the army is made up of passionate kohan willing to embrace an utter commitment to the act of war.

The third Brass Coast general leads the Burning Falcon, and is appointed (or re-appointed) at the Winter Solstice each year.



9.3.4 The Freeborn Storm (Destroyed)

This first navy since the reign of Emperor Barabbas was constructed at the Atalaya Shipways in Madruga over the course of 379YE. Enthusiasm for constructing the navy peaked during the celebrations surrounding the Imperial victory over the Lasambrian orcs in Segura, and the Synod capitalised on that enthusiasm to provide additional support to the project. The navy launched for the first time just before the Winter solstice 379YE.

The Freeborn Storm was destroyed just before the Winter Solstice 381YE during the Grendel attack on Madruga.



Freeborn warriors protect caravans and settlements.

9.4 Army Orders

Months of wrangling with the people of Varushka over the use of the Iron Helms led to a major rift between the armies of the two nations. The Varushkan people chose to stand with the Iron Helms, disregarding the concerns of both the Brass Coast and Wintermark. As a consequence, whenever a Freeborn army is involved in the same campaign as a Varushkan army, the Vaushkans provide a tenth fewer victory points. If armies from both Wintermark and the Brass Coast are present, the penalty increases to a fifth.

During the Spring Equinox 383YE, a motion to refound the Burning Falcons was raised. The Imperial Senate did not support it, but the Freeborn Assembly sent **Luis i Alamein i Guerra** to enact a mandate to encourage their armies to seize the mithril they would need to support it - presumably with the intention of trying again once they could prove they had the materials. Until the start of the Spring Equinox 384YE, the Freeborn armies were on the lookout for any opportunity to acquire mithril. During that period the general of the Fire of the South was able to issue the plunder order in addition to the normal orders they could issue.

9.4.1 Burn Brightly

- **For the next year, any Freeborn army can be given orders to burn brightly when defending a Freeborn territory**

The corsairs and kohan of the Freeborn armies have been inspired by the words of the Freeborn Assembly. There is little fear of death to be found of any individual person, but there is now the will to burn so bright that the thought of ever dimming it becomes inconceivable. For the next year, any Freeborn army can take the *Burn Brightly* defensive order in any Freeborn-held territory.

While not necessarily a sustainable long-term strategy, the Freeborn armies could throw their all into defending their homelands from any who would seek to take it from them. This ferocious and wild display might be enough to make any invaders think twice about attacking the Coast.

Burn Brightly

- **The ability of this army to defend territory is increased by three fifths**
- **Casualties inflicted by this army are increased by three fifths**
- **Casualties suffered by this army are doubled**

The Freeborn are attended to by their cousins in their homeland and whip themselves into a frenzy. Any who dare to attack the Brass Coast would find themselves drowned with soldiers determined to do whatever it takes to drive the enemy out with no thought for their own survival. The ferocity and

shock value is completely overwhelming to any who would seek to stand against it.

If a general issues an order to burn brightly in a non-Freeborn territory, the army will instead make a heroic stand.

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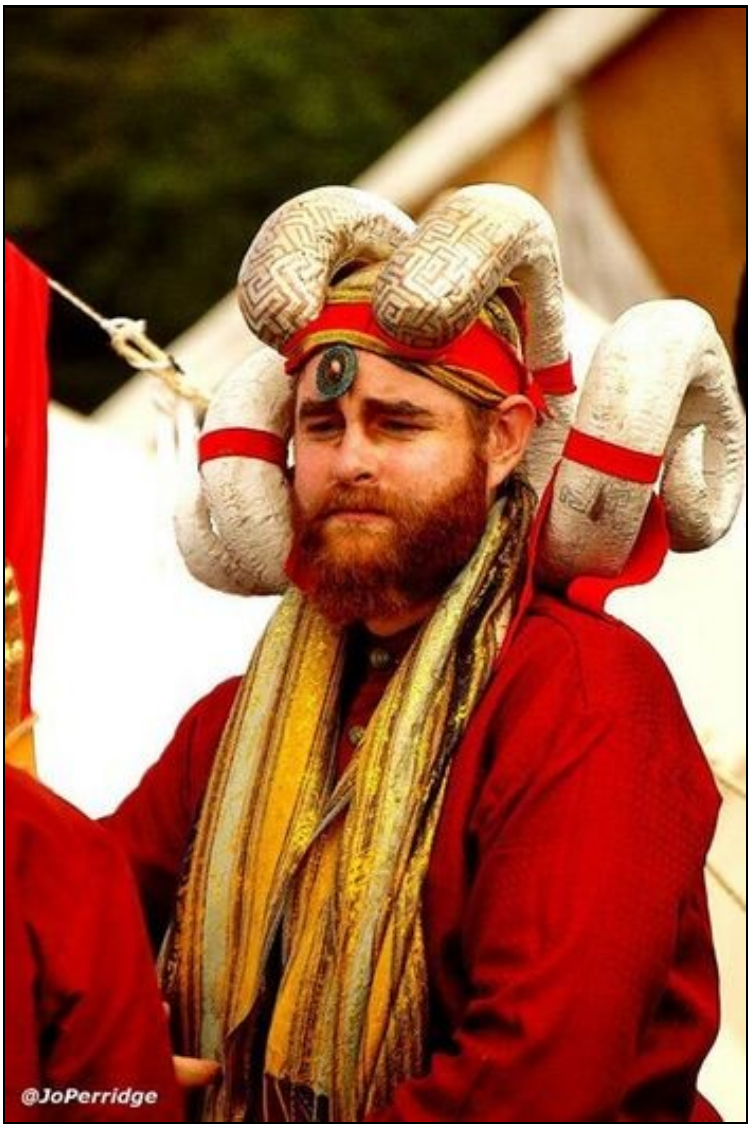
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Freeborn Armies

- Red Wind Corsairs
- Fire of the South
- Burning Falcon

10 The Brass Coast religious beliefs



Freeborn religious beliefs emphasis celebration rather than sermonising.

10.1 Overview

Organized religion, in the sense of a study of doctrine or the creation of sites of communal worship is not common in the Brass Coast. This reflects their history - the motivation for the exodus from Highguard was not just to escape from the venal corruption of the patricians but also to leave behind the confines of the ascetic religion being pushed by the Highborn chapters. The founders of the nation were passionate idealists; they rejected the austere religious practices of Highguard, believing that people should be free to celebrate all the joys of life.

Still, it is wrong to think that the Freeborn are neither devout nor virtuous. Rather than study or debate the virtues, they try instead to embody them in their lives. *"The Urizen think it, the Highborn believe it, we **live** it"* is a common Freeborn retort to those who mistake their impiety and irreverence for a lack of virtue. In particular the Freeborn prize honesty, the ideal of a life lived openly and without shame. Many see embracing a virtuous life as the essential prerequisite to achieving a state where you can be honest about the things you have striven for and the things you have accomplished.

10.2 Dust, Flame, and Glass

The Freeborn believe their people are shaped from the elements of dust, flame and glass. The eternal wind-blown dust of the plains is their history, the loyalty for family and continuity of their people. The ferocity of flame is their burning passion for life and their bright and unquenchable spirit. The purity of glass is their soul, the reflection of their transparency and once broken can never again be mended. Dishonesty and wickedness shatter your soul and pieces of it are lost with each act of deception.

This belief underpins a very personal relationship with matters of faith and the spirit, one that is rarely articulated directly outside of poetry or song. Much of the Freeborn understanding of spirituality and religion was shaped by the philosophy of the founder Riqueza, further honed by those who followed in her footsteps. As a result, Freeborn religious ceremonies place their emphasis on celebration rather than sermons. They celebrate sacred festivals with entertainment, feasting, parties and dancing. Coal-walking, fire breathing, fire dancing and other symbolic performances that represent the Freeborn passion for life are always popular. Priests keep their words short and evocative, knowing their audience wants to be inspired to act virtuously rather than lectured.

Many families include a devout priest or spiritual family member who can be relied on to oversee these indulgences, but for large or important festivities the Freeborn often seek out the services of a sutannir. These priests embody the Freeborn ideal that the way to follow the path of Virtue is not to preach it but to live it. Rather than deliver sermons on the virtues, they encourage others to *experience* them first hand and where some priests will affect a sombre or serious demeanour, sutannir are renowned for encouraging people to celebrate Virtue. In addition to leading important ceremonies such as a coming of age or a wedding, some sutannir make a living organizing spectacular celebrations and festivities that are designed to bring the whole community together to recognise some great accomplishment or other act of virtue.

Last night, Ramak invited me to what he said was a religious ceremony. This morning, my head is pounding and I will never eat again. We did not talk about Courage, but we danced on fire. We did not contemplate Prosperity, but we enjoyed the finest things from many lands. We did not read about Pride, but sang the songs of our homelands till our throats were hoarse. I can attest the Freeborn care deeply about the fate of their souls ? but they just do not speak of it as we do.

Elina the Wayfarer taken from Epistles to the Winds of Virtue, 24BE

10.3 Orthodoxy

The Freeborn have great respect for the paragons and the Way of Virtue, but they have little time for the priests and Synod that exist to mediate ? or dilute - their message. The Synod, with its doctrines and heresies, is often seen as being full of pomposity and self-importance, whereas a truly faithful person understands what is true and what is false in their soul. Rather than look to the Freeborn Assembly for edicts and guidance, people expect them to embody the ideals of virtue, to lead by example, and to inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

The view of most Freeborn is that following the Way is simple but challenging. Simple in the sense of being uncomplicated - few Freeborn believe the virtues need much in the way of explanation or commentary. The tenets can help identify what is truly virtuous, but attempts to seek deeper meaning or complexity are viewed with suspicion, especially if they appear to be self-serving. Such sophistry is seen as an attempt to obfuscate simple truths so as to justify a failure of virtue.

People fail to act virtuously, not because the Way is hard to comprehend, but because it is challenging to live up to the ideals it lays out. If you practice honesty, if you can be honest with yourself, then you already know what the virtuous path is, the difficulty is in having the moral fortitude to act on your beliefs. Thus the role of a priest is not to tell you what to do, but to help you find the strength to do what you already know to be right. The celebrations of the sutannir are not simply an expression of the virtue of Prosperity, they serve to reward the virtuous and thereby encourage others to emulate them.

10.4 Heterodoxy

More so than any other Imperial nation, the Freeborn tend to be open to the idea that as long as someone isn't hurting anyone, they should be free to believe what they want. This speaks to a problem that has dogged the priests of the Brass Coast since the foundation of the Empire. The Freeborn prize liberty above all things, it is the founding ideal of the nation. They often cite the line from the Imperial Constitution that guarantees *"dignity, freedom, and prosperity"* to all citizens - and they laud Emperor Ahraz as the greatest Throne of all for his emancipation of the Imperial Orcs.

As a result, the Coast has often struggled with outbreaks of the spiritual force known variously as Anarchy or Freedom. During the founding of the Empire, sutannir who embraced Freedom were among the vocal opponents of the First Empress and her grand vision. They saw the Empire as a machination of the Highborn priesthood, seeking to enforce their limited view of virtue on all humanity. Even the Freeborn who followed other virtues were concerned that the way of life they had established might be swept away. To address those fears, the hakima of the Brass Coast created the egregores and convinced the nascent Empire to adopt them. Support for Anarchy was largely suppressed in the Coast after the first Synod forbade it - but not without bloodshed.

It has resurfaced many times since then. For example, those priests who had never completely given up on the virtue of Freedom were buoyed by what they saw as the success of the Orc Rebellion. In 324YE this inspired Crescencia i Marusa i Riqueza, a sutannir of briar lineage, to begin openly urging her followers to live their free of the restraints of law and authority, without the need to be inhibited by the disapproval of others. She attracted large numbers of followers which ultimately led to the events of the Freedom Heresy. Her eventual capture and execution on charges of blasphemy was broadly supported by the Freeborn Assembly, though it was noted that they picked their words with great care, criticising Crescencia for the failures of Montane and the death of her followers, rather than dwelling on her heretical views.

To this day, a belief in the enduring ideal of liberty remains common throughout the Coast and many Freeborn have been passionate opponents of slavery. Janeia i Zaydan i Guerra was a regular foil to Emperor Frederick, a friendly rival who switched between heated debates on the need to free orc slaves and denouncing the Emperor in the Synod. Scholars point out that some of the arguments in the early chapters of *Anarchy and Liberty* are either founded on, or clear refutations of, Freeborn arguments about the need for a person to be "free to choose virtue" and that slavery as a consequence is an unforgivable crime against the soul. Unsurprisingly, Emperor Ahraz enjoyed the support of the abolitionists in the Brass Coast, especially among the priesthood, although he sometimes had to distance himself from their more zealous outbursts during the orc rebellion.

The last prominent Freeborn to be executed for blasphemy relating to Anarchy was Liliana i Hora i Riqueza who had been the Conscience of the Senate for a year in the time of Emperor Hugh. She admitted to her devotion to Freedom when confronted on it by the Gatekeeper of Vigilance on the steps of the Senate. When challenged at her inquisition as to why she had kept her beliefs hidden for so long she only laughed at the court and said *"If we were looking to hide our devotion, we wouldn't call ourselves the Freeborn"*. If any Freeborn priests are devoted to the malign presence of Anarchy today, then they are careful to keep it hidden well away from the prying eyes of the Synod's inquisitors.

10.5 Reincarnation

Many Freeborn take a relaxed view of the Doctrine of Reincarnation. A popular old tradition says that those lost at sea take new form as dolphins who will guide and guard lost ships. While few claim to really believe it these days, it is a stock element in many stories involving sea travel. When questioned on it, the Freeborn tend to shrug - does it really matter if it's true?

This response reflects their view of the Labyrinth more generally. The Freeborn accept that human souls reincarnate; but they often argue it is a mistake to obsess over it. The teachings of Riqueza - generally held to be the first sutannir - said that *"nobody is born virtuous"*. The inference is that what you did in your past lives is unimportant - all that counts is what you do in this life. One should focus on living an honest and laudable life, guided by the virtues, and let reincarnation look after itself. Freeborn might leap at a chance to experience a past life vision - who knows what such an experience will bring or what knowledge it will reveal? But few put much importance in who they were in a previous life - what matters most to the Freeborn is who you are now.

Perhaps as a result, most don't see death as a reason for sorrow. Death is usually mocked as a figure of fun and funerals are treated as the final opportunity to celebrate the life of the deceased.

10.6 Feast of the Broken Wheel

Pride conveyed by words alone is vain boasting; proclaim it by how you conduct every part of your life. Those who embrace the Festival of the Broken Wheel should demonstrate their Pride in this traditional festival by donning a white head scarf, robe or similar. We send Luca i Taziel i Riqueza with 25 doses of liao to urge Freeborn citizens to dress in such a way that everyone knows who is celebrating the Festival.

Luca i Taziel i Riqueza, Brass Coast Assembly, Summer 384YE, Upheld (184 - 0 Greater Majority).
Sutannir try to support as many celebrations in the Brass Coast as possible. However, there is one festival they do not endorse: the Feast of the Broken Wheel. Known by many as Fool's Day, during this festival the Freeborn turn virtue on its head and celebrate the contrary. The festival takes place on the second day of the Autumn Equinox, and starts at sunset and lasts until midnight. The proud become humble, ties of loyalty may be ignored, the prosperous become ascetic and the wise act as fools. It is a time of foolishness, pranks and trickery that begins with a symbolic chase, where effigies of the paragons are chased from the camp in a gleeful and chaotic parade. Everyone is encouraged to try harmless skills like juggling and music ? the more terrible the performance the more it is applauded. On Fool's Day, even the most moral Freeborn try their hand at telling untruths and lies - often with comical degrees of success.

The festival is considered blasphemous by some, but it has never been condemned. However during the Summer Solstice 384YE, the Freeborn National Assembly passed a mandate in response to the concerns of the Zemress Islanders and others. Since then everyone taking part in the Broken Wheel is strongly encouraged to wear a white piece of clothing for the duration, often a white headscarf, hood, or tagelmust, but in many ways the more white the better. White cloth is always avoided in the Brass Coast, wearing undyed cloth suggests the wearer cannot afford exotic dyes. It fits with the Festival of the Broken Wheel, since the point of the festival is to turn traditions on their head, and it also serves as a good way to distinguish those who enjoy the festival from other Freeborn who find it distasteful.



The Feast of the Broken Wheel is as exuberant as it is irreverent.

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11 The Brass Coast magical traditions



Freeborn magic is often bold, entertaining and dramatic.

11.1 Overview

Riqueza, Erigo, and Guerra, the founders of the Brass Coast, were known as accomplished ritual magicians, and magic is a source of wonder and pleasure to the Freeborn. They expect people performing magic to entertain, and many Freeborn magicians will enhance their rituals with stage magic tricks simply to please the crowd. Some Freeborn learn a handful of non-magical sleight-of-hand tricks or illusions while a few entertainers specialise enough to develop a whole act.

11.2 Traditions

Freeborn ritualists practice a tradition that says ritual magic is the act of building up power from the participants and creating a connection to the realms, rather than the more traditional assumption that the magician draws power down from the realms to the world. As such, all their rituals attempt to include their bystanders as participants whether that is chanting, clapping, or singing.

Magicians of each tribe bring a unique perspective to their magical arts:

- The Riqueza perform ritual magic using loud, rhythmic, energetic drumming. Riqueza commonly make extensive use of Night magic, especially rituals that grant intuition, or inspire passions.
- The Guerra prefer physical movement combined with fire and light. Guerra often specialise in Day magic, especially rituals that divine facts or reveal truth.
- The Erigo use a less energetic style, often accompanying their rituals with soothing, harmonious music. More so than the other tribes, the Erigo generally expect to be recompensed for the magic they work. As adepts of Summer magic that aids warriors, and Autumn magic that can grant powerful enchantments to fleets or businesses they are rarely short of customers.

Most Freeborn ritual groups prefer to work magic at night, in the open air, in the same way the founders did. The tradition of astronomancy is particularly popular with Freeborn magicians, although some older covens use an eclectic blend of beast magic and dramaturgy in their magic.

11.3 Hakima

While ritual magicians within a family are hardly unknown, the more powerful and organised magicians in Freeborn society are the hakima. These politically active covens view other Freeborn magicians as unsophisticated dabblers at best, and ignorant meddlers at worst. The hakima are highly skilled practitioners of ritual magic and custodians of magical lore handed down to them by the founders of the tribes. They are dedicated to preserving the integrity of the nation as a whole and regularly look to recruit competent ritual magicians from the tribes into their own circles.

More than being just magicians, the hakima exemplify a connection to the founders of the tribes and the history of the Freeborn. They are traditionally held to be wise, able to perceive the larger picture more effectively than most Freeborn who are anchored in more mundane activities. They may be consulted when important decisions need to be made within a family, or when magical assistance is sought. They rarely wait to be consulted, however ? a hakima is likely to be poking around any important business ready to offer a suggestion as to what to do next.

11.4 Family Magicians

Within a family, there is often at least one individual who has made a more serious study of magic. These individuals accept a responsibility for teaching relatives who are interested in learning a few magical knacks and use their magic to help their family and harm their enemies as well as try to scry the vagaries of fortune and fate. These magicians tend to be practical, and often combine their study of magic with crafting or medicinal lore.

It is much more common for a family magician to be an expert in spellcasting, rather than ritual magic. That said, some larger families maintain a coven of ritual magicians who concentrate on providing enchantments to aid their members. There is some rivalry between these family covens and the hakima.



Freeborn rituals often involve drumming,



dancing (sometimes with fire and light),



or soothing, harmonious music...



...but they should all involve the audience.

11.5 Further Reading

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12 The Brass Coast territories



Hardwood furniture is an extravagant luxury to the Freeborn, even the wealthiest are quite used to sitting on the floor.
The Brass Coast is wealthy in vineyards and orchards that produce fortified wines and flowers from which they make rich dyes. The people enjoy strong trade links with foreign nations, allowing them to bring luxuries and commodities to all the people of the Empire (for a price of course!). Textiles, wines and ales from far-off places are prized treasures, but wood is a thing of beauty to the natives of the Coast. Theirs are lands of rolling plains, and fertile lowlands with lush vineyards. Although there are orchards of exotic fruit trees the land is devoid of large areas of forest. Early in the history of the Coast they cut down most of their hardwood to build ships and settlements, and the fruit trees that remain are more suited for burning than building. Since fine quality wood is a valuable commodity, dwellings tend to be piled high with rugs, cushions and furs.

The towns of the Coast are sprawling, disorganised affairs almost inevitably built around a bustling bazaar. Everything from steel to spices changes hands in these trading hubs and they are festooned with brightly coloured fabrics, gaudily painted signs and exotic wares. Contracts of trade, seals of endorsement, and bonds of marque are proudly displayed by vendors who hawk their goods to the people who fill the plazas and streets at all hours. In and around these cosmopolitan bazaars, the wealthiest families maintain sprawling estates. Often plain from the outside, Freeborn structures are alive with ostentation within and lined with ornate tapestries and finery. The most influential Freeborn thread their homes with running water and glittering fountains, sculptures and artefacts crafted from precious materials, beautiful rugs, carpets and hangings, the scents of incense and the sound of music. It is important that a home be beautiful, as well as secure. ?Your home,? as one ancient poet put it, ?should be a comfort to your body, and a balm to your soul.?

12.1 Territories

- Madruga
- Feroz
- Kahraman
- Segura

12.2 Further Reading

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13 The Brass Coast children



Family is the most important thing there is.
Children on the Coast are often given a piece of over-sized clothing that belonged to someone from an older generation, usually long since departed. The clothing, designed to be grown into, carries the memory of the lost relative and is believed to help the child develop wisdom, audacity and courage of their forebear. The clothing is usually tied up in some way, to ensure it does not drag in the mud.

Freeborn like children to learn the value of money. Those who are not poor give their children a Ring every morning, to carry with them during the day. The child is expected to give the Ring back at night, or to justify why they spent the money if it is gone. Any money that the child makes using their Ring is theirs to keep.

If a child loses their parents, they will always find a home somewhere among their extended family. However, because of the strength of Freeborn family bonds, if a child is truly orphaned without another family member to take them in, they may end up destitute and face a grim future unless taken in by another family, a Navarr striding, or the Church of the Little Mother.



13.1 Things every child should know

- **A little lie makes a lot of strife.** If you tell a lie, you lose a little bit of your soul. Be truthful to yourself and to others.
- **Your family is your greatest treasure.** Family is the most important thing there is. Always be there to help your family and they will be there to help you.
- **Words are fine jewels to be picked up and shown off.** Tell stories and find stories, and if you hear an interesting tale or rumour, make sure you tell it to your family.
- **Each small thing is worth a Ring.** Never do anything for free, unless it's for your family. You need not be paid in coin -- people often have more interesting things to trade.
- **Only sell your own goat.** You must never trade something which isn't yours.

13.2 Further Reading

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14 The Brass Coast music

14.1 The Music of The Brass Coast

14.1.1 Style summary

Like the Freeborn themselves, their music is rhythmic, vigorous and fiery. Waily reeded or brass instruments, rich vocal harmonies and the strumming of strings resound in counterpoint with the ever-present syncopation of drums, tambourines and claves. It is said a Freeborn will make an instrument out of anything - hands, cutlery, tables and crockery are all used to enthusiastically accompany performers. Their vocal tradition involves not only the singing of complex melodies and accompaniment but also encourages others to join in ululating harmonies, drones and chants. The overall impression is vibrant, noisy and enthusiastic - music, like everything in their lives, is to be savoured to the utmost.

Brass Coast music draws on the real world inspiration of Corsican music, Spanish Pilgrim songs, Italian lauda, and New World sea shanties. Although they are a seafaring nation, more traditional English shanties (such as Poor Tom Bowling, The Mermaid etc.) would be better suited to the musical tradition of the Marches.







14.1.2 Commonly known songs

- Riqueza's Dream - Telling one version of the tale of the founding of the Brass Coast this song is popular in taverns and Alcazars. It has sparked off several diplomatic incidents by 'accidentally' offending Highborn visitors.
- Sail Away Across the Sea - This popular song expresses the Freeborn's joy in a seafaring life.

14.1.2.1 A musical tradition

Various kinds of performance are inherent to the practice of magic in the Brass Coast. See Brass Coast Magical Traditions for more information.

14.1.3 Further examples

14.1.3.1 Songs

- Fire Maringo - easy call and response song
- Riqueza's Dream - medium call and response song
- Sail Away Across the Sea - medium call and response song
- Stella Nuova
- Inez y Guerra - medium call and response about a famous Captain
- Wagon song - medium difficulty travelling song with chorus accompaniment
- Without You - hard Corsican chant in 3 parts
- Lost Segura - plaintive lament for lost territory.
- Virtue Never Falter - rousing chorus song also widely sung in Highguard
- Farewell Farewell - rousing funeral song from Highguard but also popular in the Brass Coast due to boat references

14.1.3.2 Instrumentation and tunes

High percussion e.g. tambourines, shakers, clapping, high drums; reeded woodwind (especially if a bit waily and 'snake charmer' sounding); high metallic pipes/penny whistles; jangly bouzoukis or guitars.

14.1.3.3 Other performance traditions

- Dance/fire dance, a huge part of Brass Coast Magical Traditions.

14.1.4 How to adapt your repertoire

- Never perform without giving your audience a way to join in. Get them clapping or stomping, or tell them to cheer or repeat when they hear certain words. If you are ambitious teach them a simple ostinato to go under the song. It's all about the participation!
- Rhythms could be much lighter than other nations, keep them syncopated (off beat), and on tambourines, castanets, shakers, or light drums. Keep your playing light and bouncy!
- Don't be afraid to ornament when you are singing, have a listen to some waily Spanish or Arabic medieval music and copy the style into the songs you are choosing.

14.1.5 Our sources

- Instrumental: Susanna Seivane,
- Song: Severa Nazarkhan, Corsican chants (e.g. Corsica: Chants Polyphoniques (CD) on Harmonia Mundi label), Spanish Music of Travel and Discovery (CD), various pilgrim songs arranged by Katy Cooper of Glasgow Madrigirls, Martin Codax's Songs of Friendship, Marie Kerouz (Maronite liturgical music), Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan (urdu-pop), Arany Zoltan
- Good list of sea shanty lyrics (stick to the Spanishy sounding ones): http://www.boundingmain.com/Lyrics.htm

A Brass Coast youtube playlist to get you in the mood! To add to this get in touch with Daisy or post your own.

14.2 Further Reading

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15 Category:Archetype

15.1 The Brass Coast

Dhomiro	A dhomiro is a member of a Freeborn family who is chosen by the family to be their representative to the wider world; sometimes as a leader, sometimes as an emissary.
Kohan	Kohan are groups of volunteer and outcast warriors-without-family, who traditionally pledge loyalty to a group of hakima.
Sutannir	Sutannir perform inspiring religious ceremonies for the Freeborn, and encourage people to exemplify and celebrate Virtue.
Hakima	Hakima are highly-organised groups of magic-users whose loyalty is to the nation, not their family. They are taken to be wise.
Corsair	Freeborn corsairs are traders and privateers who deal with - and raid - barbarian shipping in the Bay of Catazar.
Scrivener	Scriveners are Freeborn contract-writers who help traders frame the terms of their deals, and then decorate them with artwork and calligraphy.

15.1.1 Dawn

Earl	The Earl of a Dawnish Noble House is the House's leader, who leads the House in all its great achievements and who sets its conditions of membership.
Knight-errant	Knights-Errant are engaged in their Test of Mettle. Still technically yeofolk they are expected - and are questing - to prove themselves glorious.
Questing knight	Questing Knights are those Knights who have proved themselves worthy in their Test of Mettle and have chosen to keep on questing for ever-greater glory.
Troubadour	A Troubadour is a priest who learns all the stories of their Noble House, past and present, and tells them in poetry and song to inspire their people to greatness.
Witch	Witches are Dawnish magic-users. In noble houses, they fight alongside the House's warriors. Most others belong to Weaver Cabals, independent groups of ritual witches which accept both yeofolk and noble members.
Guiser	Itinerant entertainers who often combine magic with their performances and practice dramaturgy. They are often (sometimes justly) accused of being spies, tricksters and mountebanks as well as performers.
Enchanter	Some Earls who have studied magic choose the title "Earl-Enchanter" or simply "Enchanter". Most learn ritual magic to benefit their people; some build relationships with powerful Summer Eternals.
Seneschal	A Noble House's Seneschal is a trusted yeofolk who oversees its financial affairs, arranging deals and trades and keeping the House solvent.
Advocate	Dawnish Advocates are yeofolk politicians who navigate the murky waters of Senate politics for their noble masters.
Retainer	A yeofolk Retainer is a Dawnish Noble's most trusted attendant, who works closely with a particular Noble, or sometimes for the whole House.

15.1.2 Highguard

Exarch	The Exarch, or Exarchs, are those who are appointed by a Highguard Chapter as their leader(s) as determined by the Chapter's creed, or by embodying its principles.
Guardian	Guardians form the core of Highborn military, taking on a range of roles in defence of their Chapters, and in prosecuting vigilant warfare.
Unconquered	The Unconquered are Highguard's elite guerrilla troops. They are prone to using ruthless tactics, even operating behind enemy lines, to destroy the enemy's capacity to make war.
Cataphract	Cataphracts are Highguard's elite heavy warriors, who once rode horses into battle but who, in modern times, represent a resolute and unbreakable wall of steel.
Wayfarer	Wayfarers are Highborn priests with a long-standing tradition of teaching the truth of The Way to the ignorant, and seeking out Exemplars and Paragons born in other lands.
Inquisitor	Highborn Inquisitors are zealous defenders of The Way from those that would threaten it, whether mortal or supernatural.
Steward of the Dead	Stewards of the Dead dedicate their lives to preserving the legacies of the worthy. This includes the interring of remains as well as the preservation of legacies and tales.
Magister	Magisters are the master magicians of Highguard, often with an affinity for Winter Magic. They shape magic using movement, sound and the chime of bells.
Benefactor	Benefactors are affluent Highborn merchants and tradesfolk who do not pursue wealth for its own sake, but who sponsor individuals, great works and endeavours.

Archivist	Archivists are a unique class of Highborn scholar dedicated to preserving the essence, or truth, of history, over and above accounts and evidence that may seek to undermine that truth.
Grey pilgrim	Grey pilgrims are a recent phenomenon. They walk the trods in a crusade to free the souls believed to be trapped between life and death by the vallorn, but they also oppose heresy and idolatry, convert foreigners to the Way, and seek to guide the other human nations of the Empire toward enlightenment.

15.1.3 Imperial Orcs

Warlord	Legions chose their own commanders, called warlords, with individuals chosen for their ability to provide clear effective leadership in battle, according to the traditions of the individual legion
Pitfighter	Professional fighters of the Pits in which the Orcs hone their combat skills; trading on the reputation for skill and strength that they have built up in previous fights, pitfighters build their careers until their notoriety means that other orcs begin to seek them out and actively challenge them.
Shaman	Most orcs only experience communion with the ancestors when battle is upon them but a few individuals - called shamans - are able to hear the voices more frequently; they are almost incessantly surrounded by the constant input of ancestral advice much of it bearing a contradictory or even hostile message.
Preacher	Those Imperial Orcs who embrace the Way and become priests.
Warcaster	The highly physical traditions of the Wintermark runesmiths has appealed to some orcs who adopt a similar approach and become Warcasters.
Oathwright	Oathwrights believe that the bond between an item and a person affects them both, items may gain worth by being owned and bonded to the right person and the right item affects an individual?s hopes of becoming an ancestor.
Bonesetter	Usually trained apothecaries, physicks or both, Bonesetters are expected to attend to the physical needs of the legion, but their remit runs well beyond this.
Thief-taker	Working closely with Imperial Magistrates, Thief-takers earn their income by collecting bounties on criminals who have fled the law and more rarely by taking payments from private individuals looking to identify perpetrators of crimes.
Reaver	Soldiers of the Legions who become dedicated to raiding and mercenary work.

15.1.4 The League

Merchant Prince	A Merchant Prince is the head of a Guild, the tight-knit mercantile organisations which define the shape of League society.
Bravo	Bravos are the members of the mercenary Free Companies, as rough and rowdy off the battlefield as they are disciplined and professional on it, and immensely proud of their Companies.
Bishop	The Bishops of the League are its high priests, who provide Virtuous guidance to any who can afford it, and who compete using the size and influence of their congregations.
Troupe Magician	Troupes are bands of actors who often go masked while performing, and when performing ritual magic. To them, magic is a commodity like any other.
Mountebank	Mountebanks are street magicians whose tricks may be sleight of hand or genuine magic, many of whom skirt the edges of the law playing short-cons and rigging street games.
Cicisbeo	A Cicisbeo is an expensive professional paramour, the only exception to League culture's absolute prohibition on extramarital relations.

15.1.5 The Marches

Steward	A steward is the chosen head of a Marcher household. However a steward leads their household only with the consent of the other yeoman.
Beater	Beaters are a roaming informal police force, learning every part of the land, watching for thieves, vagrants and other ne?er-do-wells. Beaters are often instrumental in settling land disputes between neighbours and they have a vital role in the tradition of beating the bounds. Most are skilled foresters or hunters.
Yeoman	The yeoman is to many the archetypal inhabitant of the Marches. They are a hard people, who own their own land and are well accustomed to a long day working it. Military service is a proud tradition in the Marches, and the majority of yeomen are also soldiers.
Monk	Monks minister to the spiritual welfare of the folk around their monastery, largely ignoring household boundaries. They divide their time between study of the Imperial Faith and working the farmlands claimed by the monastery.
Friar	Friars work their own land and provide spiritual advice and counsel to their fellow yeomen in their household. Many also serve as scholars for their community, acting as a chirurgeon, and teaching letters and history to young children.
Landskeeper	

	A landskeeper is a figure from the Marches magical tradition, who supports the territories or the nation as a whole. Landskeepers can use a variety of methods, from hearth magics and good practical advice to rituals.
Mummer	Itinerant entertainers who combine theatrical performance with magic using the techniques of dramaturgy. They attend fairs, markets and other regular gatherings performing plays and feats of skill but are often greeted with suspicion and (sometimes unfairly) accused of being tricksters and mountebanks.
Alder	Alders are the appointed leaders of market towns, and are the rough equivalent of the yeomen. In most cases these are wealthy merchants of the town, but often they include prominent town folk such as a friar or blacksmith who lives in the village.
Smith	A skilled crafter who has used a lifetime's experience selling their wares to become a canny trader and experienced negotiator.
Thresher	A thresher dedicates their life to tracking down those who use magic for nefarious purposes and finding ways to punish them.

15.1.6 Navarr

Brand	Navarri who have dedicated themselves to the service of the community, who work tirelessly to aid others without fee. They might be from any profession - Thorn, Vate, blacksmith, tanner, it doesn't matter. They are named for the brand burned into the skin on their left cheekbone.
Dreamspeaker	Philosophers, visionaries, and activists who aspire to make dreams into reality.
Thorn	A Navarri sworn to service in battle - usually, but not necessarily, a warrior. Always tattooed, they often wear warpaint into battle.
Guide	A Navarri who follows the path of the Virtues, and takes it upon themselves to ensure that members of the Empire have found the place in society that they are best suited to.
Broker	A Navarri who serves as an intermediary between a buyer and a seller, usually claiming some sort of payment from the deal.
Vate	The magical practitioners of Navarr. Often called upon to perform rituals in service of the nation and the Empire, they are the Navarri most trusted to meet with eternals or their heralds.
Vine	A Navarr who has dedicated themselves to healing the wounds caused by the vallorn.

15.1.7 Urizen

Arbiter	An arbiter is the elected leader of the spires, citadels, and temples of Urizen. They are often called on to resolve disputes within a community or to represent it to outsiders.
Architect	Architects are interested in economics and how money moves around and the influence it exerts on the world.
Illuminate	Illuminates use their understanding of the Net of the Heavens to perfect the world; focusing on building up the virtuous... and removing the unvirtuous from prominence.
Mage	Mages are magicians motivated by politics. Ambitious and potentially ruthless, a mage understands that all magic is inherently political.
Seer	Seers believe that perfect understanding is they key to unlocking the Net of the Heavens. They seek out opportunities to get the right information to the right people so they can make the right decisions.
Sentinel	Sentinels study the art of war with dedication and commitment that matches that of any magician.
Stargazer	Stargazers are scholars of magical lore who love magic in all its forms; they are the theoreticians and debaters who push knowledge to its limit.
Sword scholar	Sword scholars are warrior priests with a passionate commitment to reason and wisdom. They exhort others to test what they have learnt.
Torchbearer	Torchbearers are dedicated to ensuring that as many people as possible know the truth. They work to keep fellow citizens informed about current events and abhor falsehoods and secrets.
Questor	Questors consider the Way of Virtue to be an unfinished work and the Doctrines of the Faith as incomplete. Questors are radical priests who are willing to tear apart the Way in their quest for perfection.

15.1.8 Varushka

Boyar	A Varushkan Boyar is the hard heart of a Varushkan community, whose first duty is as a strong protector of their people. Second to that, they arbitrate and govern their vale in council with their Wise Ones.
Warden	The Warden brotherhoods are heroic warriors who employ magical protection along with their armour and weapons to hunt down the terrors of the Varushkan wilderness, and to uphold Imperial Law.
Schlacta	The Schlacta are Varushka's well-organised bands of soldiery, who provide defence to a place or an employer.
Wise One	Wise Ones are the true hearts of Varushkan communities. They are the thinkers who deal with those problems which cannot be dealt with by strength, and who look through the appearance of things to discover the threats lurking beneath.
Volhov	A Volhov is a Varushkan who studies magic, particularly warding magic (so necessary to Varushka's safety) and divination, to uncover threats before they grow too great to deal with. They often find it necessary to deal with Eternals, and sometimes even to pacify

	Varushka's deadly Sovereigns with rituals or bargains.
Cabalists	Cabals are teams of ritual magic users, who often act as individual groups, independent of their vales. Each Cabal is different from each other, but their magical might grants them considerable influence.
Storytellers	Varushkan Storytellers are the nation's ragged priests, often itinerant, around whom entire communities will gather to hear news, entertaining tales, and spiritual messages told well.
Stzena	The inheritors of a tradition of night sentries, Stzena are bands of musicians who perform at local events.
Wagon raider	Opportunists who seek their fortunes by launching forays into barbarian lands to grab whatever riches can be found.

15.1.9 Wintermark

Thane	The leader of a Hall in Wintermark, a Thane settles disputes that lie outside the law and provides civic and military leadership.
Banner-Bearer?	Warriors whose purpose is to raise the morale and fighting spirit of their companions. Banner-bearers often literally carry their warband's banner.
Stormcrow	The ragged priests of Wintermark, who act as guides, witnesses and confessors, and who provide spiritual and moral inspiration and guidance for the Winterfolk.
Runesmith	Artisans who specialise in the magic of the old runes of Wintermark, who create engraved weapons and armour, or scribe warding marks to protect people or places.
Icewalker	The cunning mages of the Suaq, who use their magical skills and their knowledge of the Ice as part of their hunting tradition.
Mediator	A Wintermark merchant who specialises in negotiating weregild between aggrieved parties.
Maggot	A scavenger, a looter on the battlefield; "Maggots" are seen as scum by most Winterfolk.
Mystic	Deeply spiritual Kallavesi who make predictions about the future and advise their fellows on the wisest course of action. Often a magician, but some do it with hearth magic and intellect.
Scop	The professional entertainers of Wintermark, Scops are known for their mastery of saga and song, and their skill with alliterative poetry. They are responsible for granting an adult name to a child coming to adulthood.
Grimnir	The battlefield doctors and healers of Wintermark, Grimnir swear an oath to stay clear of the front lines.

16 The Brass Coast groups

This is a placeholder page for content that PD are actively working on.

16.1 Overview

There are many important families and other groups in the Brass Coast. Despite the number, only a comparative handful are involved in the affairs of the Empire (that is, attend the seasonal summits at Anvil). Their influence can wax and wane, and involvement in Imperial affairs is not always a reflection of their prominence within the nation itself. This page presents in-character information about the groups that attend, or have attended, Anvil ? the kind of thing that someone who asked about them might uncover from talking to their peers. In each case, the information is provided by the players and edited before being put on the wiki.

The majority of groups listed here are made up of player-characters. You should not create a character who is part of a group, or has personal history with one, without first clearing it with the appropriate players. You should also check before including other players' groups in your background. The background team are unlikely to approve a background that significantly impacts or involves another player character group without their permission. There are also a handful of prominent NPC groups included for completeness, but they are not intended for use by player characters.

16.2 Families

16.2.1 House Kalamar

- **Location:** Madruga

House Kalamar was founded by two orphans, looking to make a name for themselves with displays of skill and a thirst for profit. They are always seeking new information or opportunities to show themselves off or make a prosperous deal, with magic, art, dancing, good coffee or trade. In recent years they have been firm holders of the Glass Parador, enjoying the trading benefits of the title. House Kalamar is the home of the Thrifty Squid, Anvil?s only daily price newsletter. Freshly scrivened every morning the Squid summarises prices gathered by the Houses' traders, reflecting the transactions they have witnessed. Its accompanying journal, the Inky Depths, covers matter political, economic and magical as well as containing a summary of historical prices.

House Kalamar is the home of Constanza y Kalamar y Guerra, first artist for the new Renaissance and judge of the Pride of Holberg. A priest of Pride, Constanza is a famous force within and without her nation, and is keen to see her House prosper. The House is a powerful Autumn coven which specialises in the Lure of Distant Shores to empower personal fleets for trade. All rituals performed by the coven are accompanied by music, dancing, or songs specially written for that ritual.



16.2.2 The Kemen Family

- **Location:** Madruga

The Kemen family are self-described as an odd bunch. To many outside the Brass Coast they have been seen as lunatics or fools who follow odd practises and engage in reckless endeavours. But those within the Coast who take the time to know them would say they are ambitious, courageous, and fiercely proud of their own ways. They are a modest family who follow a series of traditions and beliefs, not only those common to all Freeborn but

also those unique to the Kemen family.

The family spends its days having a good time and enjoying the short but bright lives they have as Freeborn. They partake in anything that would spark joy and they revel in adventure, while welcoming any who seek to join them in living life to the full.

16.2.3 House Sol-Devorador

- **Location:** Madruga
- **Tribe:** Erigo
- **Dhomiro:** Florina i Sol-Devorador i Erigo.

The Sol-Devorador family is made up primarily of corsairs, and was the founding family of the Krakenfire Armada. Once a large family, a large proportion of them were lost in the founding days of the Armada. They forge ahead with their determination to protect the Brass Coast and each other, despite suffering continual losses.

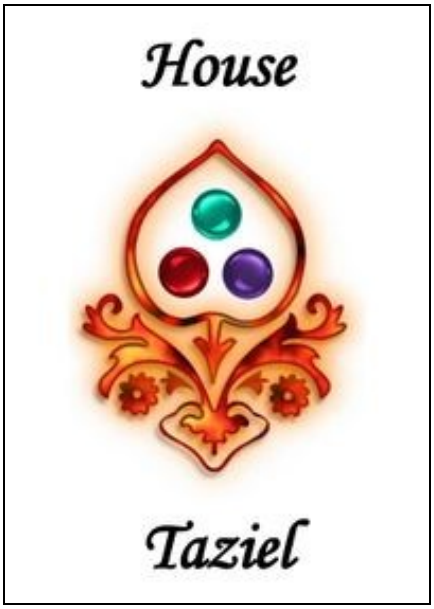
While almost all of the family take to the seas, there is a mixture of fighters, physicks, ritualists and more within the family. The family always welcomes friends and allies, and has been known to adopt those in dire need of a new family.

16.2.4 House Souza

- **Location:** Feroz

The Souza maintain a long history of maritime warfare and gain most of their resources via constant raids upon their most hated enemy, the barbarian Grendel. The House Souza saying; ?No-one can bargain with the sea? reflects the family's position on the noble corsair lifestyle versus one of trade.

The magical tradition of the Island is very narrow. The family hosts a small Spring coven nearly entirely dedicated to enchanting their fleets to better hunt their prey.



16.2.5 House Taziel

- **Location:** Feroz

House Taziel i Riqueza is a family of corsairs from Oran in Feroz with a sizeable fleet, looking for fun, profit, and military standing in the Empire. They recently joined with the family Ruiloba i Guerra when the two dhomiro married. They are famous for hosting lavish parties, singing, music and dancing, as well as writing and performing plays. They also field a number of ferocious fighters to fight for their nation, under the banner of the Promiscuous Dodos.



16.2.6 The Tempest Flame

- **Location:** Madruga

The Tempest Flame have a deep connection to Zemress and her ship, the Kraken?s Bane. The Valiente family claim heritage from the crew of that ship, descending from those members who did not embark on the ship?s final voyage. They view Zemress as a spiritual grandmother figure to the family. They have a particularly strong association with the Summer realm, with the greatest of the Valiente captains usually exhibiting changeling or cambion lineage. Their ambition and exuberance is born out of the desire to be the best sailors, strongest corsairs, and emulate the storm they take as a name - above all, the Tempest Flame wishes to follow in the legacy of the Kraken's Bane. The Flame is currently one big inter-married family comprised of both a Summer coven and a banner, allowing each family to engage in trade or privateering as they deem necessary - and giving everyone an opportunity to increase their effectiveness through ritual magic. In all decisions the family comes first, and the contracts of marriage are resigned yearly to remind every partner of both their individual responsibilities and their wider support. No member of the Tempest Flame should ever have to act alone.

16.2.7 Casa Zabala

- **Location:** Feroz

"First to heal and first to fight. First to break the orcish might. First to drink until first light. We Zabala"

Once, the Zabala family, of the Erigo line, were large and sprawling, with travelling caravans, outposts and family holdings across Segura and beyond. When the Lasambrians invaded Segura many Zabala travelled from across the nation to hold Anduz until the end, but very few survived. After the liberation some of those who still lived - mostly those too young to fight at the time and the ones who aided the war effort in other ways - set out to Anduz to see what could be done to restore the family name. In time they decided to send a delegation to Anvil to represent the family at the highest level.

In Anvil the Zabala family are noted for being involved in external and religious politics, crafting items of the finest quality, representing the Coast on the battlefield, carrying out strong Autumn magic, and bringing song, music and joy to the Freeborn camp.

16.3 Corsairs



16.3.1 Bloodgold Jackals

- **Location:** Kahraman

The original Bloodgold Jackals banner served with the Red Wind Corsairs during the liberation of Segura. It disbanded but was reformed in Autumn 382YE by Iñez and Raza i Azul-Mar i Guerra after visiting Anvil for the first time and facing an uncomfortable shadow from their past. The Bloodgold Jackals don?t care about their member's pasts, only who they are now and who they want to be. A shady past doesn?t matter to them, as long as someone wants to move away from it. The name of the game is redemption, and they aim to win. They want to forge new paths for themselves and their banner mates, putting past misdeeds behind them, and help others in the process. They Jackals want to be better, more virtuous, and are ready to fight for it.

16.3.2 Burning Sails

- **Location:** Madruga

The Burning Sails Corsairs was formed by survivors of the destruction of the Freeborn Storm and the sacking of Atalaya in 381YE. Their main goals seem to be the establishment of the Empire as the dominant naval power in the Bay of Catazar and the total destruction of the Grendel. They are made up of several families and prominent individuals but are headed by the i Marusa i Riqueza family, venerable sea-farers who operate from one of the Jewelled Isles off of Atalaya in Free Landing. At Anvil the Burning Sails operate a strong Spring coven and also offer the services of well-regarded calligraphers and scriveners. Over the seasons they focus on countering Grendel raiding, piracy and slaving.

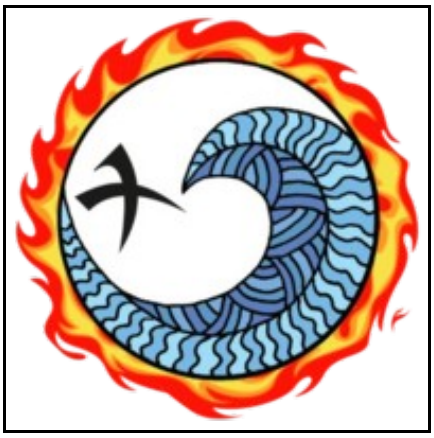
16.3.3 Sea Drake Cartel

- **Location:** Madruga
- **Motto:** *Faster alone, further together*

United in loyalty and vigilance the Sea Drake Cartel support the Freeborn people exclusively: Freeborn first, last and always. Each a member of the Erigo tribe, the focus of the siblings of the cartel is to protect the Brass Coast and build on its strength. Known by their familiar Sea Drake imagery and rings, they offer safe harbour for those who share in their ambitions. Whilst pursuing the ultimate goal of protecting the Freeborn people at any cost, with no deed being too unsavoury, they have had regular run-ins with Imperial Law as they pursue the goal for a brighter future. Embracing life's pleasures, as all Freeborn are wont to do, they aim to ensure the betterment of the coast they cherish along the way.

Home to several businesses, including Amador's Parador, bringing exotic foods and drinks from across the known world and the trade of unique goods liberated from the enemies of the Empire.

16.3.4 The Blazing Tide

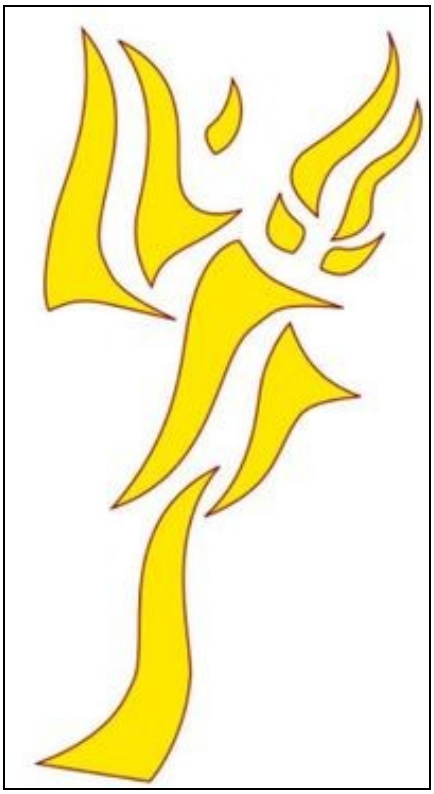


- **Location:** Madruga
- **Motto:** *Fortune and fury*

Leaving their home in Kahraman, two sons of Corterra answered the call to defend their nation. Along with a magician, they founded the Blazing Tide. Like the Three Sisters led the nation, this crew is led by three captains. Seeking out a new place to call home, they found an island off the coast of Madruga.

From there, they called upon other corsairs to join them and build an armada. Dedicating themselves to bringing flame to slavers and seeing those in captivity freed, the Blazing Tide sweep across land and sea, with fire in their hearts and salt on their brow.

16.4 Hakima



16.4.1 Fires at Midnight

- **Location:** Segura
- **Tribe:** Erigo

The Fires at Midnight are a militant order of hakima believed to have been founded roughly a generation after the exodus of the sisters, in a response to banditry and other threats to the tribes? new home. Throughout its long history in Segura, the coven has been primarily made up of battlemages who

were well versed in Winter magic. The Fires accepted that the great power of the chill realm comes at a steep cost, which they have been prepared to pay for the Coast?s protection. The coven was massacred in battle alongside Empress Britta when the coven's leader, Anne i Erigo, sought to gain the Empress' attention in the interests of bringing Imperial armies to Segura. They were reduced to a handful of apprentices that had stayed behind, each of whom had differing views on how to best serve the Coast. They went their separate ways but were no less dedicated to the defence of the coast, its magical lore, and its stability. Now as 381YE is drawing to its end there are whispers that the Fires at Midnight may rekindle their bonds and come together once more.

16.5 Other Groups

16.5.1 Flames of the Coast

Flames of the Coast were founded at Anvil for all kohan and hakima who wish to join it.

It was made to be a common banner to enable those Freeborn without family banners to take full advantage of group enchantments, and to offer support for the causes of its members. The main focus is on preserving the old ways and traditions of the hakima and kohan. Many, both within the Coast and among other nations, have seen those ways decline since the death of Britta when many who followed them perished. This banner is a symbol of that those ways aren?t lost and to show strength in whom they are.

The banner has little presence outside of Anvil. At the end of each seasonal summit, the kohan and hakima of the banner often go back to their own homes and lives. In 381YE the banner started talks about building a garrison and small fort in Kahraman as a common meeting place outside of Anvil where all kohan and hakima will be welcome.

Several kohan cohorts make up the banner, including the Painted Ones, the Golden Harpies, Erigo's Masks, the Tides of Zemress, the Red Sun Scorpians, and the Tears of Flame.

16.5.2 Freeborn Flame Cartel

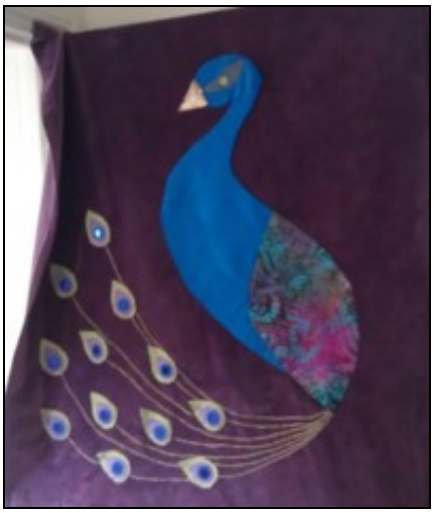


- **Location:** Madruga
- **Motto:** Our lives for the crown, our souls for the horizon

The Freeborn Flame Cartel is a group of families based out of Midport who spend their time relaxing, pursuing success, and promoting the victories and glory of the Brass Coast nation, as well as dedicating itself to the continuing strength of the Freeborn. There are several predominant families in the group namely the Radah i Guerra family and the Carno i Guerra family.

In battle, they fight as corsairs under the banner of the Flame of Anduz. Outside of battles, they operate a large Spring and Night coven, Sails of the First Flame, which specialises in enhancing the potency of their fleets and various fortification rituals.

16.5.3 New Promise Cartel



- **Location:** Feroz

The New Promise Cartel was founded in 342YE by two families with a long running trading relationship, the Zaydans and the Sharthas. The Zaydan i Riqueza family is a corsair family who operate out of Oran, transporting goods across the Bay of Catazar. The Shartha i Riqueza family is based in Joharra, and trade goods within the Empire and to its foreign neighbours. The Cartel has now grown with other members joining from outside the two core families, though they still make up the majority of Cartel members.

The Cartel is still based predominantly out of Oran, but they operate throughout Feroz trading by both land and sea. They maintain a strong corsair fleet which has won the Broken Shore Bounty a number of times in recent years. In Anvil they operate the New Promise Teahouse.

The Cartel?s organisation means its members are independent to follow their own Prosperity wherever it should (legally) take them, but with the support of the Cartel who are eager to invest in new ventures.

The Ambition of the Cartel remains to grow its name and reputation, and to build on the Prosperity of Oran, Feroz, and the Empire.



16.5.4 Saltborn Collective

- **Location:** Madruga

Formed by three close friends, each a notable member of their communities, the Saltborn Collective is a banner that provides business and services of all types to the Quzar The most notable of these services is the Saltborn Surgery, run by two of the Saltborn's founders. Though small and less influential, those who bear the symbol of the sun with seven rays setting over a sea with seven waves receive respect from citizens across the territory. Their focus is primarily on honing their own skills, growing their family and influence, and doing all they can to spread health and Virtue not only within their communities but all over the Empire. Alongside their community and family-focused mindset, any of those who have lost parents via any route or find themselves at a loose end with nothing to do and nobody to turn to will almost always be welcome amongst the Collective, whether they want to become a permanent member or not-- so long as they don't mind being made useful.

16.5.5 Scales of the Salt-Water

- **Location:** Madruga

Nestled amongst the white towers of Quzar lies the dock-side temple of the Scales of the Salt-Water. A place of learning and magic, but without a hint of bookishness. The front of the house operates much like a paradour, with merchants and captains discussing business over fine foods. The rear of the house is reserved for the coven members. Specialising in Autumn rituals of Ephisis and Estavus, the many bejewelled chests and boxes are frequently changing contents.

For those who leave the temple to visit Anvil, both trade and warfare are a pressing concern. Healers both magical and medicinal join the field, protected by the temple's fearsome guardians.

17 Brass Coast egregore



The egregore spirit of the Brass Coast is like the sea, passionate, honest, wise, and deadly by turn. Woe betide those who underestimate it.

17.1 Dust, Flame and Glass

The egregore of the Brass Coast was the first to be created and carries three names, **Dust**, **Glass**, or **Flame** - the three elements that the Freeborn believe shape their people. Which one it answers to at any given time depends on the mood of the host, the whims of the egregore, or the needs of the nation. A host may favour one of the three forms or change between them as mood and need arises. They can often be identified by the colour of their tagelmust.

- **Dust** dresses comfortably and luxuriantly and talks about the importance of family and plain honest speaking, often presenting the aspect of a dhomiro or corsair. Favours a sandy yellow tagelmust.
- **Glass** is a quiet philosopher, dressing practically, and likes to talk about the soul and what it means to be Freeborn. Glass occasionally takes on the mantle of the kohan and favours a rich blue or green tagelmust.
- **Flame** prefers the exuberant styling of a sutannir, encouraging parties and celebrations, and to inspire those going to war. Favours a deep red tagelmust.

On bonding with the egregore spirit, a Freeborn citizen invariably puts aside their family name, representing the fact that the entire nation is now their family. Regardless of their names, the egregore is always fond of dancing, of sharing tales, and encouraging their people to live life to the full.

17.2 Current Hosts

17.2.1 Mattias i Guerra

Mattias grew up in the region of Kahraman, his family specialising in paradors and wood working. He led a relatively sheltered life in comfortable wealth, until he visited Anvil and fell in love with the adventure and heroics. He finds his natural changeling temperament lends him well into sutannir affairs, loving to organise a party, dance, provide hospitality and to listen to people?s struggles with Virtue. Most often presenting as Flame, he embodies all that is passionate and tempestuous about the Coast, enjoying a fiery debate as much as a song. He is also known to commonly appear in his Dust form as a scrivener, taking great delight in weaving words into contracts.



Mattias i Guerra



Azuza i Riqueza

17.3 Former Hosts



Marcela i Erigo grew up among traders and corsairs, and was known to have spent time in the Sumaah Republic before returning to the Empire.



Jaime i Guerra, a corsair fascinated by sea and the Freeborn Storm. Tragically slain at the Winter Solstice 381YE.



Sol i Riqueza was a hakima from northern Kahraman who particularly supported those without families.



Maritza y Ruiloba y Guerra



Mazirua i Erigo

17.4 Further Reading

Core Brief

- Introduction
- The people
- Culture and customs
- Look and feel
- Hearth magic

Additional Information

- History
- Leadership
- Economic interests
- Military concerns
- Religious beliefs
- Magical traditions
- Territories
- Children
- Music
- Archetypes
- Groups
- Egregore