



## CHAPTER THREE:

# IMPERIAL TIMELINE

Prehistory	<p>The land is a collection of scattered tribal chiefdoms. These chiefdoms expand as warlords ally with or conquer neighbours, until they develop into large feudal kingdoms. These are roughly equivalent to the current provinces, but some smaller kingdoms exist, including a few that gradually disappear when they are later conquered.</p> <p>The language of scholars, and therefore the main written language, is Bregumi. The Bregumi language uses an unusual semi-symbolic alphabet and has been in existence for many centuries.</p>
0	Introduction of new calendar. The Supreme Patriarch brings in the calendar after some divine instructions to mark the entry into the pantheon of several new gods. The new entrants are the major gods worshipped by kingdoms recently converted to the Old Gods pantheon.
92	The ancient language of Bregumi begins to be usurped as the old ways are abandoned. The kingdoms instead use their own language, though many scholars continue to study Bregumi in order to unlock the secrets of the ancients.
123	Using a dispute over a failed marriage as an excuse, King Efred of Kasselingstedt invades its western neighbour, Polettia. Polettia is absorbed into the kingdom of Kasselingstedt.
543	The eastern mages, Scalantes and Heiodelus, battle for reasons unknown. Their sorcerous war draws in other mages who are looking for opportunities to improve their own power. The resultant wars blight entire districts and eventually move out to beyond the Dwarf Kingdoms where the magical flux is stronger. The once fertile lands are devastated and soaked in sorcerous magic.

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545	The last of the scattered population in the area now known as the Chaos Wastes either leave or are destroyed. The land is permanently scarred beyond hope of resettlement by the magical energy unleashed upon it. All that remains are bizarre creatures created by the warring mages, and the mages themselves who construct magical and physical strongholds.
546	Some cataclysm envelops the whole of the area now called the Chaos Wastes. A magical backlash is suspected, but no survivors capable of explaining what has happened remain. From this day on, the Chaos Wastes are left to the sorcerers' monstrous creations and other forces drawn to the area by the magical energy.
893	Ruse tribes invade South Rörerheim. The villages are plundered and the towns sacked.
895	The Ruse tribes leave South Rörerheim for home. Some take Rörerheim women back to Ruse as brides or slaves, others stay and settle in South Rörerheim.
1021	A huge orc army descends from the badlands. Kasselingstedt's population is under siege and many villages are deserted. The small Kasselingstedt army is not capable of defeating the orcs and so it limits itself to trying to protect the towns and larger villages.
1023	Tomas Brightaxe, a warlord from central Kasselingstedt, gathers an army of deposed villagers and itinerant sell-swords. He moves to liberate those villages nearest to him, but ends up driving most of the orcs back into the Badlands. It is possible that the orc army was losing its coherency anyway, but Tomas is nevertheless credited with saving Kasselingstedt and the nobility elect him as King of Kasselingstedt. The deposed king goes into exile to Bragan.
1024	Duisenburg invades Kasselingstedt, hoping to take advantage of her neighbour's weakened state. The new army of Kasselingstedt manage to slow and delay the larger Duisenburg army, and gives itself time to find and recruit the mage, Esemandrax. Esemandrax's sorcery emphatically sways the next large battle in favour of Kasselingstedt, and Duisenburg retreats and signs a peace treaty.
1025	Emboldened by the spectacular success of Esemandrax's sorcery, Kasselingstedt mounts an invasion of North Rörerheim. Spells rain death and destruction on the North Rörerheim troops, but then a magical backlash calls into being a demon, which systematically begins to tear apart the soldiers of both sides. Esemandrax is never seen again, but later rumours say that he

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	was seen wandering in rags in the Badlands accompanied by a strange-looking companion. The demon devastates both armies and is only defeated when the two sides unite against it. The invasion is called off and both exhausted kingdoms sign a peace treaty.
1103	Sadur invades its western neighbour, Beschtenheim. The campaign is a bloody one, but Sadur manages to capture the Beschtenheim royal family and the king surrenders his kingdom. Beschtenheim becomes absorbed into Sadur and the name disappears. The king of Maxovony quickly proposes a treaty of friendship with Sadur, and the infant crown princess of Maxovony is promised in marriage to the young heir to the Sadur throne.
1109	The marriage of the crown prince of Sadur to the eldest daughter of the king of Maxovony cements the ties between the two kingdoms. Sadur priests manage to intercept and defeat an attempt by necromantic forces to disrupt the wedding. Duisenburg is suspected of being behind the attempt.
1156	A deep raid by Duisenburg forces sacks several Sadur villages. The raiders manage to gain entry to the town of Hungelbaum (rumour says by the treachery of a traitor within the town), and the town is subjected to two days of looting and pillaging. The population is decimated. During the raid, the Duisenburg forces claim to have uncovered evidence of a sect of Devil worshippers readying to use dark sorcery against Duisenburg with the help of the Hungelbaum authorities.
1238	King Frederick of Sadur starts trade with the dwarves of the Dwarf Mountains. In return for food and cloth goods, the dwarves give Sadur superb quality steel and new metallurgist techniques. Sadur armourers and metallurgists develop superb new weapons and armour.
1240	Armed with her new technology, Sadur starts a campaign of conquest over her neighbours. South R�erheim falls to the Sadur army. Its king is slain in battle. The kingdom of Maxovony, historically friendly to Sadur, allies with her and is allowed to retain its independence. A small Maxovony contingent joins the Sadur army, but is mainly employed in camp and pioneer duties.
1241	North R�erheim uses mercenary Ruse barbarians to supplement its army but is nevertheless conquered and united with the south under its new governor.
1242	Duisenburg fights bitterly, and even mounts a diversionary invasion of Sadur itself. It is eventually conquered after a daring amphibious landing threatens its capital and forces the army to

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	retreat.
1243	Kasselingstedt is conquered after an easy campaign defeats its small army, and the Sadurian Empire is created. King Frederick of Sadur is proclaimed Frederick I, the first Emperor of the new Empire of Saduria.
1248	Political rivals assassinate Frederick I. With no obvious heir, a struggle ensues which will last for the next five years. Emperors come and go as different factions gain power and lose it. The period is known as “the Time of the Hundred Emperors”; an exaggeration but one that reflects the mood of the time.
1253	Adolphus I is proclaimed the new Emperor, immediately ordering the arrest and executions both the individuals and families of the rival factions who threatened his accession. The brutality of the sentences, combined with the political fatigue caused by previous five years, finally ended “the Time of the Hundred Emperors”.
1255	Battle of the Two Rivers: A large raid by the Rusic “Husarker” tribe is defeated by Imperial troops in Rörerheim. The mounted knights of the Empire smashed into the centre of the main Husarker body and rode down its chief.
1257	Battle of Baskars Fate: The Rusic “Baskar” tribe sends a large raid deep into Kasselingstedt. After sacking several villages and laying siege to Messelberg, the tribe is defeated by Imperial troops with sorcerous help.
1258	Battle of Blue Ribbon: The combined militias and foresters of eastern Rörerheim defeat a large raid on the area by the Ruse “Husarker” tribe. The Rörerheim troops wear a blue band as a recognition symbol. Rumours say that the militia are helped by witchcraft, but the official history denies this.
1260	After several years trying to defend against huge raids from neighbouring Ruse, Adolphus I instead follows a course of political negotiation with the more powerful tribes on his borders.
1263	The negotiations with the Rusic tribes soon develops into a policy of interference as the diplomats realise that the tribes are more suspicious of each other than they are of Saduria. By playing the tribes off against each other, the Sadurian diplomats ensure that they are too busy to organise large raids against the Empire. This policy is still secretly in effect in present-day Saduria, though most of the population would be shocked to learn it.
1265	Adolphus I dies in bed. His son, Wilhelm becomes Wilhelm I and immediately organises an invasion of the Derkenthian peninsula.

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	immediately organises an invasion of the Darkanthian peninsula but is heavily defeated and the Imperial army scattered.
1267	Wilhelm I raises taxes to starvation levels to raise funds for a new army.
1274	With his newly raised army, Wilhelm I attempts to move on the Darkanthian Peninsula once more. Again his army is soundly defeated and Wilhelm is forced into a humiliating peace treaty.
1276	Wilhelm I attempts to recruit the mage, Klementius the Wise, for another attempt on the peninsula. The Emperor is found in his bed in his Sadur palace with his throat torn out, despite his guards not having seen a thing. His brother becomes Adolphus II.
1280	Mannfred the Red, the merchant adventurer, opens trade with the desert lands of Salta. The imported Saltan spices bring about a revolution in Sadurian cooking, and assassins and alchemists eagerly adopt the venom of the poisonous creatures discovered.
1295	Adolphus II dies of an infection brought on by a mysterious puncture wound to the leg. His son is crowned Adolphus III.
1297	Adolphus III, wary of the growing power of mages in the Empire, moves to have them rooted out and executed. Imperial forces are soon involved in extensive witch-hunts, many of which prove costly in terms of time and lives.
1300	To reinforce his beleaguered witch-hunters, Adolphus III grants the church of Pandour the right to administer justice in his name.
1303	Despite his magical protection, Adolphus III falls victim to vengeful mages when he suddenly becomes a mindless idiot. His chancellor, Rudolph, acts as regent for the stricken Emperor.
1305	The mindless Adolphus III finally dies and is succeeded by his son, Maximillian, though not without a power struggle with Rudolph. Maximillian I meets with leading mages and establishes a compromise, where mages agree to bide by local laws concerning the use of sorcery.
1312	Maximillian I tries to conquer the Darkanthian Peninsula but is heavily defeated.
1325	Maximillian I employs a largely mercenary army to move against the Darkanthian Peninsula. The resulting battle ends in a stalemate. A peace treaty is signed, where the Lords of the Peninsula agree to stay in their lands and not interfere with the Empire, and the Empire agreed not to attempt another invasion.

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1326	An unknown assassin poisons Maximillian I. His daughter, Mathilde, takes the title of Empress. Widespread dissent amongst the nobility follows, most of whom want a male Emperor and refuse to accept the Empress who attempts to negotiate with them.
1327	Disgruntled nobles refuse to recognise the Empress's authority. Civil war erupts. Mercenary armies multiply as employment opportunities suddenly burgeon.
1329	The civil war comes to an end as Mathilde is poisoned and her armies disperse when they are not paid. The cousin of the late Maximillian I is crowned Wilhelm II. His first task is to subdue the numerous unemployed mercenary bands, which have turned to brigandage.
1338	Wilhelm II dies after a fall from his horse. His grandson becomes Maximillian II.
1341	Maximillian II recognises the New Gods as an official pantheon. Religious uprisings follow, with battles and riots paralysing the Empire. Some nobles try to use the opportunity to depose the Emperor.
1342	The uprisings are finally quelled. Many nobles are executed or exiled for their part in the attempted coup.
1345	Religious fanatics assassinate Maximillian II. His brother becomes Wilhelm III.
1358	Wilhelm III dies from an accidental injury whilst sparring with sharpened weapons. His son is crowned Otto I; his first act is to pardon and clear of blame his father's inadvertent killer.
1360	Otto I establishes friendly relations with far Meressia when he marries, Ilynisia, daughter of the Meressian king.
1380	Otto I dies from a tumour. His son becomes Otto II and immediately raises taxes to swell his own coffers. Otto II proves a pleasure-seeking hedonist and effectively turns control of the Empire over to his officials.
1382	Uprisings and internal disputes turn into civil war as power fragments. Local lords retreat to their manors and central authority collapses. The war continues for many years.
1386	Otto II dies when an avanc attacks his pleasure barge. His son-in-law becomes Wilhelm IV, but he struggles to reunite the Empire with armed bands causing havoc and disrupting trade and travel.

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1389	Wilhelm IV reintroduces the Arena as popular entertainment. This, in part, helps to divert the population's bloodlust and Imperial authority is restored.
1415	Wilhelm IV is assassinated. His nephew becomes Frederick II.
1417	Frederick II's mother is torn apart by a demon, accidentally summoned by a local mage (who is its first victim). The demon is eventually banished by a group of adventurers, but not before many deaths and occult disturbances. The Emperor never recovers and his mental health rapidly deteriorates.
1420	Frederick II has all his personal guards, valets and servants arrested for spying upon him, and he becomes increasingly paranoid about supernatural interference. He gathers beggars and prostitutes from Sadur City to become his personal staff.
1421	Frederick II suspects that witches from the villages have cursed his food before it is sent to the city. In response he orders all the surrounding villages to be razed to the ground. His officers balk at the order and forcibly depose him. His nephew becomes Gregory I. The new Emperor's first edict is to pardon the officers who had deposed his uncle.
1425	Gregory I orders that the carrying of weapons in towns and cities is to be limited in order to help reduce crime. Local lords are not allowed to interpret the edict as they see fit, but must adhere to the laws as they are issued.
1428	In order to tighten his grip on the Empire, Gregory I bans the practice of lords issuing local laws and civic councils creating local civic laws. His increasing meddling in local matters leads to discontent amongst the nobility.
1429	After a failed attempt on his life, Gregory I tries to arrest a large number of nobles he suspects of plotting against him. Before his orders can be carried out, he is killed by a fall from an upper floor window of the palace. An official investigation cannot decide whether he was pushed or fell accidentally. His son is crowned Gregory II.
1442	After an uneventful reign, Gregory II dies of a chill caught whilst out hunting. His son, Wilhelm V, succeeds him. Wilhelm V tries to improve the respectability of the Empire's streets by issuing laws to govern prostitution. One of these laws states that all prostitutes must wear a yellow sash.
1445	Wilhelm V's wife, the Empress Caroline, dominates her husband and become the ruler of the Empire in all but name. Her practical and commonsense approach to rule means that no dissent is

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	heard from amongst the nobility.
1467	Empress Caroline dies of a tumour. Wilhelm V is distraught and promptly becomes a priest of Anguran. He is succeeded by his son, Frederick III, who is unready for power and soon surrounds himself with sycophantic ministers. The result is an increasingly blatant series of power struggles in which the Emperor is sidelined as a mere powerless figurehead.
1470	Power struggles amongst the court ministers eventually lead to a spate of assassinations and actual armed skirmishes in the provinces. The Imperial court all but ceases to function as everyone becomes more concerned with political and physical survival. The provinces start to increase their own power at the expense of central government.
1473	After three years of the Imperial court having no power outside Sadur City, the elderly king of Maxovony, Erlich, steps in to restore the Emperor's power. With cunning political deals and ruthless extermination of those refusing to comply with Imperial decrees, Erlich manages to bring the court to order. In gratitude, Frederick III travels with Erlich to Maxovony with a great treasure, the identity of which is never revealed. Unfortunately, the ship in which Emperor, king and treasure are travelling is lost at sea. Dark sorcery is suspected but never proved. Frederick's young cousin, at the time acting as a diplomat in Ruse, is crowned Anton I.
1474	Anton I causes uproar when he decides to marry the daughter of a powerful Ruse chieftain. Many are horrified that the new Empress will be a barbarian. The marriage goes ahead but the Empress dies in childbirth within a year. The heartbroken Anton refuses to marry again.
1486	Anton I dies choking on a fishbone. With no immediate or obvious heir, civil war threatens when two factions claim the right of succession. War is averted only when Maximillian, the first choice heir of one faction, meets and falls in love with Elizabeth, the sister of the first choice heir of the other faction. The two decide to marry and both factions decide that Maximillian should become Maximillian III.
1492	The mage, Helmut the Mighty, leads a convention of mages to help the dwarf king, Vasgalis, against an upsurge of demonic activity in the mountains. The cause is traced to an ancient tomb opened by meddling adventurers and the demons are driven back. In thanks, the dwarfs share with the Empire the secret of the ridged armour, thereafter known as Maximillian plate (after the Emperor).



1498	A huge sea serpent swims into the harbour of Sadur City and sinks three merchant ships and numerous small craft. The harbour defences eventually drive the beast off.
1504	A wild and evil nature spirit rises in the dense forests of the Eastern border. The spirit poisons the blood of humans while leaving animals unharmed. After many loggers and forest people are slain, the spirit is eventually driven off or appeased (nobody really know which) by a group of druids of the Nature Gods. Suspicions that the Nature God pantheon was responsible for summoning or awakening the spirit in the first place are officially denied.
1523	Maximillian III is poisoned by the Blue Hawk secret society, and his son becomes Maximillian IV. His first act is to make the post of Chancellor responsible for Intelligence. The wisdom of this action is immediately demonstrated when the Blue Hawks are rooted out and its leading members executed. As a follower of the New Gods, the new Emperor triggers an upsurge of support for this pantheon.
1530	The current year in Saduria.