

# Chapter 6

## Lands of Al-Dakan

### Anutaklis Land of Angels

**Ruler:** Thema Nabaakah Ashdancer

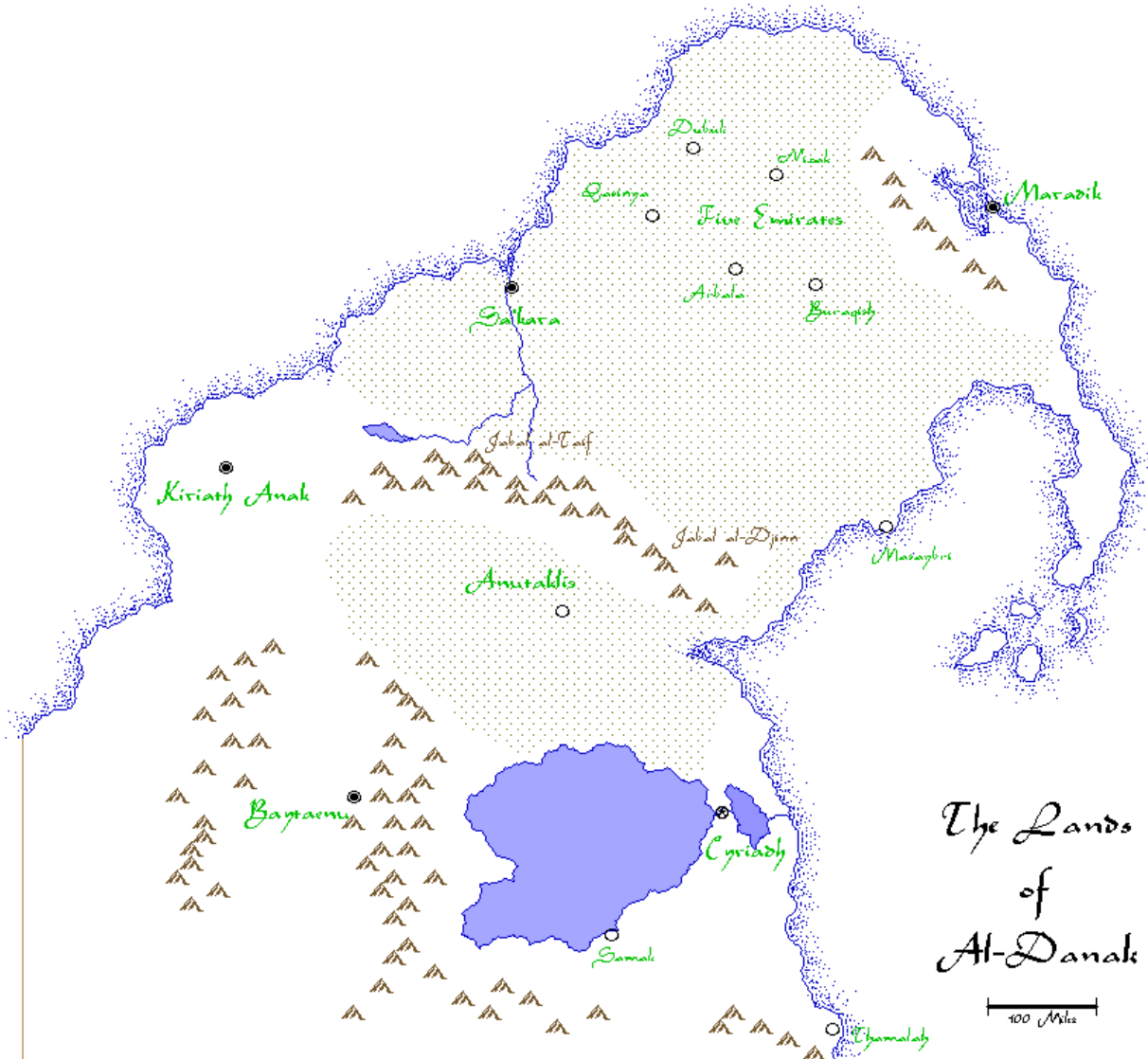
**Government:** Monarchy (Matriarchal)

**Population:** 10,000 (100% seraph)

**Overview:** In the depths of the Zahra Desert lies the seraphim capital of Anutaklis. Excepting merchants, very few members of other races have ever seen the city, though it is central to the seraphim culture. The city itself consists mainly of ancient stone

buildings open to the sky, with great columns, statues, and obelisks all common. Surrounding this is a sea of tents and other temporary structures, housing the various clans who are in the city for a short while. Anutaklis is ruled over by Thema Nabaakah, who keeps a close eye on any strangers who come into the city. Nabaakah is young by seraph standards, and will likely rule for a hundred years more.

**History:** Anutaklis is an old city, having existed for thousands of years before the rise of the human Padishah Ishaq bin Asad, and will likely continue to



exist far into the future. Its origins are lost, but it is easily the oldest city on the continent. However, for the most part the seraphim have stayed out of human politics, preferring to keep to themselves. Although the empire claimed dominion over this city, the seraphim sharply disagree.

**Conflicts:** Thema Nabaakah is watching Maradik with interest. The latter's recent incursions into the desert have greatly alarmed the clans.

## Baytaenu

### Fa'ar Refuge

**Ruler:** Sultan Arion ben Dav

**Government:** Limited Monarchy

**Population:** 20,000 (100% fa'ar)

**Overview:** Far away from the rest of the world, the fa'arim maintain the city of Baytaenu. The city exists as a haven for the people from a world where they have been maltreated for centuries.

**History:** Baytaenu was probably established around 2000 years before the rule of the Padishah. It was the first city founded by the fa'arim as they fled Anutaklis in the north. Over the years many other fa'ar cities and villages have been established, but all owe at least nominal fealty to the Sultan of Baytaenu. Government is among the more enlightened on the continent. Although the monarchy is hereditary, all major decisions must be ratified by a council of elders, who in practice wield much of the power.

**Conflicts:** Baytaenu is too far away to be much involved in many of the current conflicts. However it remains vigilant against any incursions into its territory. The rulers are especially wary of Anutaklis.

## Cyriadh

### The Center of the World

**Ruler:** Caliph Rabbani bin Raad

**Government:** Monarchy

**Population:** 60,000 (85% human, 10% fa'ar, 5% other)

**Overview:** Cyriadh is the ancient seat of power of Padishah Ishaq bin Asad during the height of the empire. It still sees itself as the capital of the known world.

**History:** Cyriadh was a great city long before Ishaq bin Asad came to the throne. Under his rule, the city conquered most of the known world, and brought a new era of peace, prosperity, and learning to the entire continent. In the year 54 AE he disappeared, and his sons fought bitterly over the throne. Leil bin Ishaq eventually won out, but by that time most of the Empire was de facto independent. Today, the Caliph still claims to hold dominion over the known world,

but Cyriadh is far diminished from its days of greatness.

**Conflicts:** By and large, Cyriadh is blind to the happenings of the world today. The court tends to be insular and decadent. Nevertheless, Rabbani harbors dreams of once again uniting the Empire.

## The Five Emirates

### Jewels of the Ahmar Desert

**Rulers:** Arbala: Emir Maher Al-Sihr

Buraqish: Emir Anid Al-Ashab

Dubuk: Emir Zaim Al-Sakr

Nizak: Emir Taher Al-Nisr

Qasinya: Emir Tawil Al-Sharif

**Government:** Monarchy

**Population:** Arbala: 8,000 (100% human)

Buraqish: 15,000 (100% human)

Dubuk: 7,000 (100% human)

Nizak: 10,000 (100% human)

Qasinya: 12,000 (100% human)

**Overview:** The Five Emirates form a loose confederacy in the Ahmar Desert. Each was established at an old oasis or intersection of trade routes.

**History:** These cities were all small towns during the reign of the Padishah. When the Empire fell, each local ruler claimed local dominion. The cities fought a series of minor wars over land, with alliances continually shifting. In the year 536 AE, the five emirates signed a pact of mutual defense and friendship, establishing the Five Emirates.

**Conflicts:** Maradik has begun incursions westward. All the Emirates are extremely nervous, because none of them are capable of withstanding Maradik's military power.

## Kiriath Anak

### City of Giants

**Ruler:** Sultan Tahu bin Kadar

**Government:** Monarchy

**Population:** 40,000 (70% human, 30% giant)

**Overview:** Kiriath Anak is another northern monarchy with a strong rivalry with Sa'kara. It has the largest population of giants in the known world.

**History:** Kiriath Anak was literally built on the backs of the giants. Much of the laboring class and the military consists of these people, who are often mistreated and ostracized by their smaller cousins. However, more than once the giants have successfully defended the city against invasion from outside forces. In particular, Sa'kara would have long since conquered Kiriath Anak if it weren't for the massive and powerful

soldiers. These days though most of the rivalry is through trade or secret skirmishes.

**Conflicts:** Kiriath Anak distrusts Sa'kara more than any other city. The continuing feud has fueled the emergence of the Brotherhood of Assassins from nearby Jabal al-Taif. Meanwhile, the giants grow more and more resentful of their mistreatment by the smaller, weaker humans. It is probably only a matter of time before a slave revolt occurs.

## Maradik

### Mamluk Stronghold

**Ruler:** General Feyd abd Maradik

**Government:** Military Bureaucracy

**Population:** 70,000 (100% human)

**Overview:** Maradik is the home of the Mamluk order, a military bureaucracy of slaves that rule the city. Situated on the Bay al-Durra, it is a rich and prosperous city in its own right.

**History:** Maradik's history for the first four hundred years after the fall of the empire parallels that of its neighbors: interspersed wars, power plays, and trade agreements. However in the year 426 AE the Mamluk order first began. It started as a royal guard for the sultan: young slave boys would be bought and reared as an elite guard. The opportunities offered such a boy far exceeded the norm for such slaves. Soon, many wazirs began to emerge from their ranks. The order was expanded to include the city guard, and then the army. In the year 502 AE, the sultan abdicated power to them in a bloodless coup. Ironically, slaves now run the city state. All take the surname "abd Maradik," meaning "slave of Maradik."

**Conflicts:** Maradik is beginning a westward expansion. Much of the rest of the world is watching them nervously.

Sa'kara's army is bigger and better equipped, but Kiriath Anak's giants manage to level the playing field.

**Conflicts:** Sa'kara and Kiriath Anak maintain watchful vigilance over each other. These days most of the fighting is behind the scenes, often employing the assassins of Jabal al-Taif.

Other cities:

Thamalah

Masaybri

Samak

## Sa'kara

### Gem of the North

**Ruler:** Sultan Akil bin Yaqoub

**Government:** Monarchy (strongly influenced by merchant families)

**Population:** 100,000 (95% human, 5% other)

**Overview:** Sa'kara is the most populous city of the old empire. It is a thriving trade center located on the delta of the Al Silan River.

**History:** Sa'kara has always been a rich and populous city since long before the founding of the empire. Since the fall, it has maintained a large sphere of influence in the north, mostly due to its extensive trading connections. Over the centuries, its chief rival has been Kiriath Anak to the west. The two have fought several wars, mostly ending in stalemates.