Philosophers and Strategic Thinkers

Summary

The philosophical landscape of the known world is shaped by a diverse array of thinkers, ranging from ancient teachers of self-knowledge to pragmatic modern political theorists. Their teachings are a core component of higher education in Dael Riata, influencing the leadership styles and spiritual lives of the nobility, military commanders, and scholars.

Major Philosophical Traditions

Elenchus: The Teacher of Self-Knowledge

Elenchus is an ancient figure originating from the early civilisations of the warmer regions surrounding the central sea. The fundamental basis of Elenchist thought is that absolute knowledge is impossible.

According to this school of thought, the only path toward truth begins with the acknowledgement of one's own ignorance. The core maxim of his followers remains: “The only thing I can be certain of is that I do not know anything.”

Link: Elenchus

Tatù: The Political Pragmatist

A more modern philosopher from the city-states of the central sea, Tatù focused on the practical maintenance of power within oligarchies. His work is often studied by those in the Royal Household and senior administrators.

His key positions include:

- **Ruthless Efficiency:** Maintaining that a leader should never leave a live enemy behind.
- **Political War:** Asserting that the sole purpose of warfare is to achieve a specific political advantage.
- **Armed Diplomacy:** Teaching that negotiation is most effective when backed by a “strong arm.”

Link: Tatù

Cliasophes: The Military General

Cliasophes was a legendary general of the Armain Empire who provided foundational advice for emperors and commanders. His teachings focus on the duty of command and the ethics of warfare.

Key tenets include:

- **Strategic Surrender:** Advising commanders to make it easier for an enemy to surrender than to continue fighting.
- **Servant Leadership:** A leader must be the first to enter danger and the last to seek safety or satisfaction.
- **Prioritisation:** A commander must look after their equipment and their men before themselves—specifically “weapon, horse, men” in that order.

Link: cliasophes

Mukul: The Clewgist Cartographer

A philosopher-adept from Estreham, Mukul is known for both his geographical work and his rigid tactical advice. He is credited with the famous maxim: “Planning and preparation prevents poor performance.”

He strongly advised that a strategist should always take and hold the high ground, regardless of the provocation offered by the enemy.

Link: Mukul

The Clewgists: Spiritual Perfection

The Clewgists represent a widespread belief system focusing on spiritual perfection and the nature of reality. They are divided into two primary branches:

The Estreham Branch

This branch focuses on communal discipline and finding one's intended place in the universe. They utilise intense communal scrutiny and “painful criticism” to attain self-mastery. Many followers come from military backgrounds, viewing martial arts and strategy as paths to perfection.

The Yendorian Branch

In contrast to the disciplined Estreham branch, Yendorians believe that “life is but a garment of illusion” and that true reality is nearly impossible to understand. They focus on working in harmony with nature rather than through rigid discipline.

Link: Clewgist Faith

Relationships

People

- Alasdair V, King of Dael Riata: The King was educated in these philosophies as part of his university training.
- Diarmid Murchadh: Holds a Master of Arts in Philosophy and Liberal Arts from the University of Dalreoch.
- Lady Senga Riata: A noblewoman highly educated in statecraft and the philosophers of the age.
- Sean Alpin: Earl of Ardmor, who ensured the young King received a thorough philosophical education.

Places

- University of Dalreoch: A centre for philosophical study, particularly in divinity and the core arts.
- University of Caer Riata: An institution founded by King Ruaridh III with a heavy focus on philosophies and divinity.
- University of Dalmuir: Known for studying the practical application of philosophical and scientific knowledge.

Skyss - Story Background	Characters	Skyss - Places	Pantheons of the World	Other Background

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