

Hudristania

(*Paul Partington*)

From *A Brief History of Hudristania* by Marek Groza

Over a thousand years ago, the lands of what would become Hudristania were ruled by a number of fiercely independent tribes. The region's rugged terrain allowed them to resist being directly ruled by the powerful city states of Emphidor to the north or by the Kaikuhuran Empire to the south. All that ended when Selentium's legions swept through from the east, and Hudristania became part of the mighty empire – at least until the empire collapsed. The lands of Hudristania fractured into several different kingdoms, each ruled over separately by independent warlords. Although threats came from the south, the mountainous landscape of Hudristania, together with the ruthless efficiency and tenacious defence mounted by Hudristanian forces, prevented any successful invasions.

From *Paganism to the True Faith* by Miruna Lansten

Before the coming of the True Faith, the people of Hudristania worshipped several pagan gods. Dedicated students of history might still find shrines to these false idols around Hudristania.

The god of the sky and father of the gods was Isten, who lived amongst the branches of the Tree of Life. The goddess of the moon and fertility was Istenanya, who helped women during childbirth. The goddess of wind and rain was Szelanya. Szelanya lived in a cave at the top of the mountains and was worshipped particularly by Solomonars, the wizards of Hudristania who controlled the weather. The god of war, fire, and blacksmiths was Hadur, who wore armour of magically infused copper.

Hudristania converted to the True Faith when Saint Ladislau came to bring the word of God. The kings of Hudristania at first denied his teachings, but when King Mihail witnessed the priest defeat a vampire in single combat, they started to relent. As Saint Ladislau continued his work, bringing peace to areas blighted by creatures of the night, all the kingdoms eventually converted to the True Faith.

From *A Brief History of Hudristania* by Marek Groza

Hudristania became a united country in 937AS when the most powerful of the warlords, the voivode Radu, began a campaign that gradually subsumed the other kingdoms. He first invaded the neighbouring land of King Gyula, who had killed Radu's brother. As an example to others, Gyula and his family were nailed to trees and disembowelled. The kings of other lands could either surrender or die in a similar manner, and so Hudristania eventually came under the rule of King Radu.

The current king, Béla II, rules his fractious nobles through fear and might. Despite this, family ties, grudges and superstitions are strong, and each noble watches his neighbours for the first sign of weakness. Petty feuds and raids are common, often supported by claims of acting against witchcraft or devil worship.

From *Paganism to the True Faith* by Miruna Lansten

When Saint Waltar came to Hudristanina, he found that although the True Faith was widespread, there were still pockets of pagans who worshipped the old gods of Hudristania. On his travels, he found a temple to the war god Hadur and discovered it was a den of vileness and corruption. He entered the temple and spoke vehemently to the pagans about faith, and many wept to see such dedication.

The priest of Hadur was a violent sorcerer and would brook no such talk and so an epic battle broke out between Waltar and the priest. Such was the power wielded by the two that the earth shook and much of the temple collapsed. The priest was eventually defeated, but Waltar was grievously wounded. He died on the banks of the River Cortry, where an abbey was built to house his remains.

Excerpts from *Travels in Hudristania* by Sorina Taltos

I first entered Hudristania by traversing a mountain pass. It became bitterly cold as I ascended, which came as a shock after the warmer climes from the west. As the land opened up before me, I saw vast forests of conifers, bleak moorland, and scrubby fields in which grim-looking peasants toiled. As night fell, I heard the howling of wolves and made haste to the nearest hostelry.

Before me, I saw a hovel shrouded in mist. Its roof was sagging and the walls were mildewed and ran with a dark viscous liquid. Plants in the garden were diseased specimens with a vile miasma hanging around them. I turned away from the rotten edifice, but as I did so the door creaked open. In the doorway stood a kindly old lady, her appearance completely at odds with her abode. She called me over in a pleasant manner but I knew better than to linger here and escaped back the way I came¹⁾.

I set up camp in the remains of an old house, its roof long gone and its walls barely chest height. As I was tending the fire, I heard a low moan from the corner of the room. A vision of horror appeared before me: a dishevelled woman covered in blood. 'Where is my baby?' she whispered. Before I could collect my wits, she had vanished. I was too tired to move and so rested uneasily during the night. In the morning, while collecting my equipment, I found the bones of a very small child scattered about. I buried them and uttered a short prayer before moving on.

As night drew in, I came to an enchanted glade in the middle of the forest. In the glade were luminous figures: beautiful young women who danced naked in the moonlight. As enraptured as I was, I knew that if they saw me watching them that death would be my reward, so with great regret I slipped away. I still see them in my dreams²⁾.

I first met the Lady Katerina Holzt as I was travelling to Inistrare. She was the most beautiful creature I had ever seen. She invited me to dine with her in her home, and like a fool I accepted. During my stay with her, she gave me everything I desired, but took all that I valued. I only just escaped with my sanity but would give anything to gaze upon her face once more³⁾.

This article first appeared in [Casket of Fays Issue 10](#).

1)

Sorina might have encountered an [annis](#).

2)

These spirits are lele, who delight in dancing around lakes and in forests. However, if they are seen dancing (compare STEALTH with a PERCEPTION of 12), then they will cast a hex on those who watch them. Treat this as a MAGICAL ATTACK of 20, which if successful, results in the onlooker being cursed (use the rulebook p. 123 for the effects). Lele can only be harmed by exorcism.

3)

Lady Katerina Holzt and the town of Inistrare is detailed more fully in the solo gamebook [Lair of the Vampire](#).

From:
<https://redruin.org/wiki/> - **Red Ruin Wiki**

Permanent link:
<https://redruin.org/wiki/doku.php?id=atlas:hudristania>

Last update: **2023/12/31 14:00**

