

The Xanthian Empire



Symbol

A platinum griffin on a field of Mars-red. The composite animal represents how the empire is composed of different parts, making up something that is both old and new, of air, sea and land. Surrounding it are the golden letters spelling out 'Eternity' in Xanthian.



The letters are to be read counter clockwise beginning in the upper right corner, and spell out the word *nàobèi xánthè*. Grammatically, *nào* derives a noun from an adjective, *bèi* derives an adjective from a noun, and *xánthè* is the word for eternal time. *Nàobèi xánthè* has the subtle connotation of being both a word for eternity and a statement about the symbol of the flag, i.e. that the flag (Xanthe) will itself last forever.

Language

Xanthian, a descendant from Martian English and Stargazer Pidgin. Xanthian pidgin is very common in the western hemisphere. It has combined a roughly English grammar with several Chinese elements.

History

Xanthe Terra has long been a populous region; a breadbasket slightly dryer and flatter than the Margaritifer. The technobility has always been strong, dating back to many small terraforming sub-projects of the Red Era centred on New Chryse. During the Stargazer Era they were nominally involved, but did not support the great push outwards as strongly as other fractions. This proved beneficial during the Fimbulwinter and second dark era, as they were better prepared to hunker down in the bunker cities. It also reinforced the collectivist and feudal traits of Xanthian society.

The Xanthe Empire was founded by a group of noble families of Xanthe. The nobles had become convinced, influenced by the visions of the charismatic techno-historian Exner ov Vicuna that by banding together they could achieve what the Stargazers had failed to do. By forming a larger group they could dominate their region, setting up the trade federation they sought (and had earlier failed due to the reluctance of the Margaritifer nobility to join), create a larger and more diverse society and use it to bootstrap increasingly advanced technology without risking a collapse like the one that had struck the Stargazers. Many nobles were likely more interested in their own power than the historical schemes of ov Vicuna, but they also gave the plan a guiding vision. An Empire that would withstand time and entropy, to reach to the heavens and across the seas.

The founding date of the Empire is commonly regarded as the Council of Myriostos, a gathering of the Xanthe Nobility and their allies from the Infomerchants. The Council marks year 0 in the imperial calendar (2664 in the old calendar).

The Empire expanded cautiously but efficiently, never committing to battle when diplomacy, guile or trade could achieve what was wanted. The Exnerists of the Strategy Commission applied Grossberg-Mendoza theory to the expansion of the empire. Each step in foreign policy was calculated to maximize returns for the empire.

At first the Xanthe alliance conquered the remaining city-states and noble houses of Xanthe, consolidating the land into a single efficient nation. The next step was the construction of a fleet (combined with early planes and zeps) to piecemeal expand the power into the Margaritifer region. Over the span of 70 years region after region either voluntarily joined the empire, were forced to join or conquered. Once Margaritifer was finished the empire expanded into Marineris and along the Accidental coast. Finally the splintered nations of Arabia were brought to heel, and the empire reached its current size.

Over the last 150 years it has not expanded. There are simply no new lands to conquer – East Arabia would be a logistical nightmare, the Noachian uplands hold nothing valuable and the Uzbaï Federation is more profitable as an ally/client. The fleet has been reduced to patrolling and long-range exploration, helping to open the trade to the Elysian hemisphere. The airfleet maintains control over Marineris and overland fast transport, while the army handles local conflicts rather than conquest. A comfortable sense of peace has settled over the Empire, lauded by planners as a sign that it will now truly embark on its technological/social ascent. Some conservatives worry that it has become decadent and indecisive, usually proposing a healthy war against someone or harsher laws in order to stimulate the national dedication of the young.

It should be noted that the Xanthian term “empire” does not mean an empire led by an emperor, but rather a great nation or power seeking to expand itself. The word has very positive connotations of self-assertion, shared striving and destiny.