

First Sahar Conference™ - Pleb and Vis' Notes

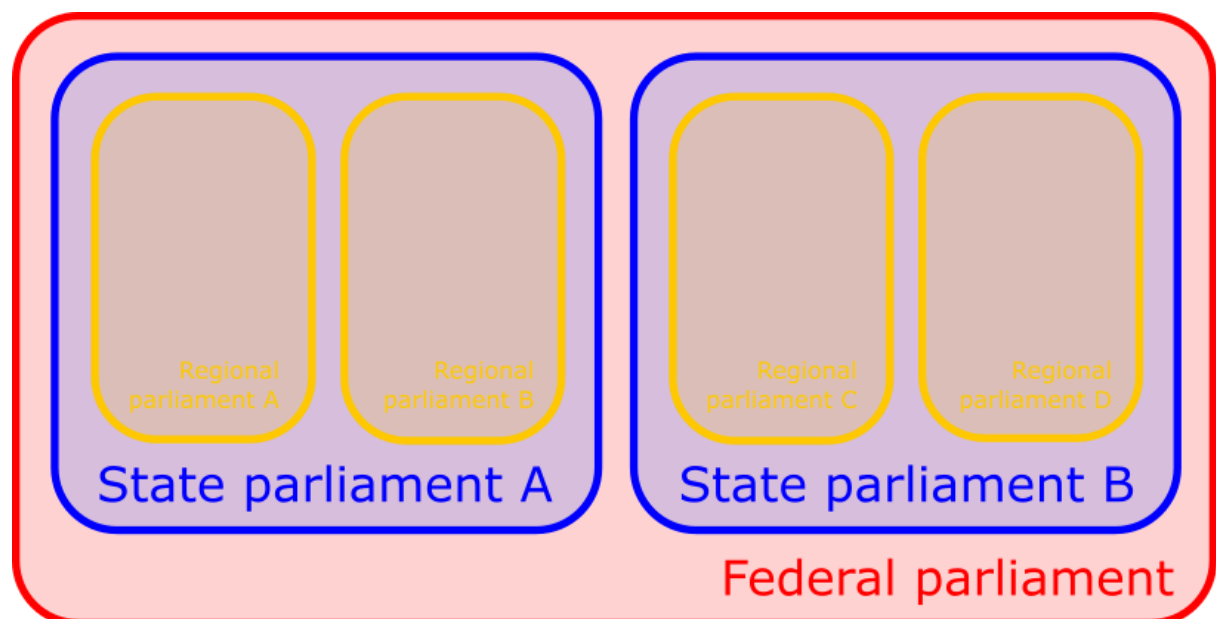
Topic 1: The Terminian Parliamentary System

What is the Terminian system?

Lower house

The lower house in a Terminian parliament is organised using **Terminian federalism**. This refers to the compartmentalised nature of the parliament. There are not independent lower-level legislatures, only smaller subdivisions of the national parliament. These smaller subdivisions are usually constitutionally given responsibility for certain areas of local government (eg. healthcare, policing, other devolved issues).

The consequence of Terminian federalism is typically a large lower house, made up of all the lowest-level representatives (some form of constituency representative, or proportional representation organised on a regional level)



Upper house

Generally, the upper house is not compartmentalised in the same way as the lower house. Each parliament, including the federal parliament, chooses an individual (often a President, but terminology varies) to represent the region/state in the upper house.

The upper house also has other members, traditionally including the executive branch, ie. the head of government and their ministers.

Some members may also be elected proportionally, or appointed through various other means (eg. clerical representatives, union leaders, party officials).

Terminian parliaments can vary wildly in terms of:

- Which house is more powerful / holds legislative initiative
- Pure parliamentary, semi-presidential or presidential setup (exactly who is considered the head of government/head of state can be difficult to define)
- How large the lower house is (Cerman's house is particularly enormous with ~2500 members, but this is an extreme)
- Nomenclature
- How the members of each house are elected / appointed
- How presidents are elected
- Seat layout
- Whether the government sits in the upper house
- How the judiciary works (originally in Terminia the judiciary was entirely religious, and totally separate from the parliamentary system)

How did it develop in Terminia?

For most of the Second Terminian Empire, Terminia functioned more or less as an absolute monarchy, with a small group of Viziers being appointed by the Emperor to run an expansive bureaucracy. Though significant changes occurred between the Empire's founding in the 5th century up until the 1400s, these are mostly out of the scope of this document.

As the Empire began to lose its moral authority in the latter half of the 15th century, Terminian nobles began to jostle for expanded powers and influence. By the time of the Terminian fracture in 1558, the Council of Viziers was a chaotic organism which comprised nearly the entire Terminian minor nobility, numbering more than 10,000 men. As the Terminian Isles were slowly reconsolidated by the Olboros in the 17th century, the establishment of unified Kingdoms in Terminia, Amerhan and Utol was dependent on keeping powerful dukes and burghers in check. As such, to keep the large Parliaments with hundreds of nobles in order, a national upper house was established to approximate the original consolidated power of the Council of Viziers. While nobles had the theoretical right to overturn the King's and the Viziers' legislation, this rarely happened because it was nearly impossible to get the various voices of the nobility to agree on anything.

In 1743, to further stem the number of nobles flooding the lower house,

Each Kingdom in Terminia between 1696 and 1925 had a

The Helsonian Union did not abolish the old parliamentary system entirely on the national level, and in turn the system was retained more or less intact after the transition to democracy in 2005, although the specifics such as how representatives were allocated did change. Thus, there is a continuity in the system spanning from Olboros Terminia to the present day, with the Grand Vizier's powers corresponding to those of the Helsonian Premier, and the President's to the Helsonian Chairman's.

The system as used in modern Cerman

According to the Constitution of Cerman, the nation is a federation and parliamentary republic, wherein the Grand Vizier is the head of government and the Federal President is the head of state. The republic is fundamentally structured as a multi-party representative democracy, with legislative power vested in the bicameral Federal Parliament. The Federal Parliament consists of two chambers: the lower **Federal House**, and the upper **Democratic Viziers' Council**.

The Federal House, when in full session, comprises 2582 Members of Parliament; each member represents one constituency of approximately 50,000 people. Constituencies are redrawn every 18 Pashaist years to account for population shift. The Federal House only regularly sits in full session twice a year, and occasionally during emergencies. Instead, MPs spend most of the year meeting on the regional or national scale, where the size of the legislatures is generally much more manageable. The House is given the final vote on all legislation which passes into law in Cerman, though these votes are typically conducted during regional assemblies, with the results later amalgamated by the Viziers.

The Democratic Viziers' Council is a much smaller body, made up of 60 Viziers who are appointed or elected in three different ways. There are 23 Viziers President, who represent the various regional and national groupings of MPs: 18 are elected by MPs in a certain region, 4 by MPs from each of the four nations, and one (the President of Cerman) by the entire Federal House. An additional 12 are Government Viziers, including the Grand Vizier, who each have a ministerial portfolio and are chosen by the governing coalition in the Federal House. The remaining 25 are Viziers Appointed, who are allocated from a party list based on the cumulative number of votes received by each party, in an attempt to render the Council representative of the popular vote. The Council of Viziers is the sole body entrusted with legislative initiative, and much everyday governance and executive decision-making takes place solely among the Viziers. A change to the Cermani constitution requires unanimous consensus among Viziers.

Elections must be held exactly 6 Pashaist years after the previous election, according to the terms of the Cermani constitution. Voters cast their ballots for a political party, who may present one candidate each in every constituency. If an MP dies, resigns, or is removed from office, a replacement is selected by the party. A snap general election may be scheduled at any point if there is a unanimous consensus among the Viziers: this last happened in 2007.

Process for passing federal legislation in Cerman

1. Legislation is proposed by any Vizier in the Council.
2. An initial vote is held in the Council, with three options: *Approved*, *Rejected*, or *Requires amendment*.
3. Until a majority is reached for either *Approved* or *Rejected*, amendments are proposed and voted upon. Viziers must either approve or reject the proposed legislation by the fourth vote.
4. If the proposal is approved by the Viziers, it becomes a Bill. The Bill is then sent to the House.

If the Federal House is in session (twice a year, or if unanimously summoned by the Viziers):

5. An initial vote is held in the house, with three options: *Approved*, *Rejected*, or *Requires amendment*.
6. Unless a majority is reached for either *Approved* or *Rejected*, the floor is opened for amendments to be submitted. Amendments must be sponsored by at least 150 MPs, or by a majority of MPs from one region.
7. Any amendments are voted upon, with two options: *Approved*, or *Rejected*.
8. After the amendment stage, the house votes again on the bill, with two options: *Approved*, or *Rejected*.
9. If the bill is approved at this stage, it is sent back to the Council of Viziers.
10. If the House rejects the bill, it is thrown out of Parliament.

If the Federal House is not in session (rest of the year):

This process applies both to National Houses (in session the last week of every month) and Regional Houses (generally avoided, but in session for the rest of the year)

5. An initial vote is held in each house, with three options: *Approved*, *Rejected*, or *Requires amendment*.
6. Unless a house reaches a majority for *Approved*, the floor is opened for amendments. The exact requirements for submitting amendments varies by nation/region.
7. Any amendments are voted upon, with two options: *Approved*, or *Rejected*. Approved amendments are sent to all other houses.
8. A second amendment session is held the following day, with each house voting to approve or reject the amendments sent by other houses.
9. Each house's President brings the results of his house's votes to the Council of Viziers. Here, the Vizier Computer (traditionally the Minister of Finance) tallies the number of votes received by the bill, and by each amendment.
10. As a result of the calculation, either
 - a. The bill is rejected and thrown out, because a majority of MPs initially voted to reject the bill, or,
 - b. The text of the amended bill is finalised, and sent back to the Houses. Another vote is held, with two options: *Approved* or *Rejected*. The result is again tabulated by the Vizier Computer, and the bill is either thrown out or passed back to the Viziers.

Once the House has returned an approved bill to the Council of Viziers:

11. If a bill is returned without amendments, the bill receives assent automatically. The Grand Vizier signs the bill into law.
12. If an amended bill is returned, a vote on the amended bill is held in the Council, with two options: *Approved*, or *Rejected*.
 - a. If an amended bill is rejected a further vote is held, with Viziers voting either to send the bill back to the House, or to throw the bill out.
 - b. If accepted, the amended bill receives assent and is signed into law by the Grand Vizier.
13. If the bill is sent back to the House, all amendments previously made by the house are removed, and the House must either approve or reject the bill as presented.
14. Approved bills are signed into law by the Grand Vizier, rejected bills are thrown out of parliament. All bills thrown out may not be reintroduced by a Vizier for seven months.

Spread and development outside of Terminia

Case study: Balakia

The modern Federal Assembly of the Balak Federation operates using a variant of the Terminian system. The country is organised using a variant of the Terminian federal structure, with states as the primary administrative subdivision. The Federal Assembly is divided into the Common Council (the lower house) and the Council of Elders (the upper house). Although the Federal Assembly has little control over the judiciary, the Common Council elects judges to the Constitutional Tribunal, the constitutional court of Balakia, to which a bill may be referred should the President have any concerns about its constitutionality. The cabinet is independent from, but accountable to, the Common Council; Councillors approved as members of the cabinet must give up their position as the former. This in turn means the bureaucracy is independent of the Common Council, as it is run by the cabinet.

The Common Council, much like Cerman's Federal House, is comprised of a large number of directly elected regional representatives, collectively known as Councillors, of which there are 1,345 (with roughly 50,000 people represented per Councillor). As in Cerman there is no distinction between the Common Council and the (unicameral) state legislatures; the Common Council is comprised of all state parliament representatives, and likewise state legislatures consist of members of the Common Council representing constituencies in a given state. Each state is allocated a set amount of Councillors by the federal government based on population, and is required by federal law to use a voting system that is in some way proportional, though so long as this rule is followed each state has the freedom to determine how its Councillors are elected. Some states use STV, while others use an additional member system; the small city-state of Ayalshemir is the only state to use full party-list proportional representation. Councillors are elected in a general election every 5 Sayanic (Zarasaist) years.

The Council of Elders is comprised of delegations from each of the state governments, these typically consisting of the State President and other selected cabinet ministers. As such, the Council is not directly elected on a national level, and delegations serve for as long as they are in power in their respective states. A state's delegation comprises as many members as the state has votes in the Council, with every state having a minimum of three votes and being awarded more based on population. Smaller states tend to be overrepresented by the merits of how the system works.

Initial adoption

The first adoption of a parliamentary model derived from the Terminian system in modern Balakia came with the founding of the Republic of Hamawan (now the Balak state of Hamavan) in the 18th Century. While the state would only exist as an independent polity until the foundation of the Balak Empire in 1866, as a subnational unit the state would continue to use the system more or less as-is.

However, this was not the ancestor of the modern Federal Assembly; the Maram Qakate would begin to industrialise in the 1830s(?), and with the resulting increase of influences

from Ekuosia, the Maram Assembly was reorganised and the imported Terminian model adopted. With Maram being the driving force behind Balak unification and the dominant regional power, its adapted Terminian system would become the basis for the parliament of a united Balak Empire in 1866. The upper house (thenceforth known as the Council of Kings) would consist of delegations from the formerly independent polities, as well as the Imperial Government itself.

The 1891 Constitution

As the Balak Empire was established and greatly expanded under the reign of Emperor Jimâşim I, the system as inherited from Maram became unwieldy and inconvenient. With unrest already needing to be addressed in the colonies (South Herayan chief among them), Jimâşim hoped to expand the federal system to grant representation to the colonies as constituents unto themselves. If the current federal system was to be expanded to include representation for the colonies as Jimâşim intended, however, it would be impractical, as it would be difficult for Councillors to legislate for both their colony and for the Empire as a whole as things stood. To address this, the 1891 Constitution included parliamentary reforms. For one, regional assemblies and their procedures were better codified, and any proposal from the Council of Kings would be simultaneously run through all regional assemblies (possible due to the lack of distinction between constituent legislatures and the Common Council), whereafter all the votes would be tallied up back in Qersheven. Furthermore, provisions were made for distinct upper houses for each constituent, meaning that Councillors approved legislation from both the Council of Kings and their own local upper houses.

Under the Union of Shomosvan

The Imperial Government effectively became a government in exile in 1952 due to the Kúúlist takeover of the mainland, with the Imperial Assembly operating from Sonka. Meanwhile, the newly established Balak Helsonian Republic, soon merged with Gushlia to form the Union of Shomosvan, also used a continuation of the Imperial model as a claimant to the rightful governorship of Balakia, having made the decision not to radically overhaul or abolish the system, much like in the Helsonian Union. Newer, (as of yet undefined?) communal Kúúlist systems of governance were adopted more broadly at regional and local levels of government.

Of course a number of reforms were made that brought the parliament closer to its modern iteration. For one, there was a dramatic shift in the balance of power from the upper house to the lower house; the lower house was given an equal right to legislative initiative, while the cabinet was excluded from the upper house, which came to house regional delegations exclusively. The cabinet would operate independently of either chamber, and primarily consisted of high-ranking party officials, but would be accountable to the lower house(?). Any lower house member appointed to the cabinet would be forced to resign as representative if applicable, although this was a rare occurrence. While the composition and appointment of the lower house would change (for example with the representation of certain interest groups), the core structure remained intact. Although the parliamentary system was approaching its modern form, proportional elements, such as the party seats in the Common Council and vote allocation in the Council of Elders, would not be introduced until after the collapse of Shomosvan and the founding of the modern Balak Federation.

Summary

- The Federal Assembly of Balakia has only limited control over the judiciary through the Constitutional Tribunal, and oversight (but not control) over the cabinet and bureaucracy
- The Terminian model was adopted by multiple Balak polities by the mid 18th Century more or less wholesale
- The upper house consisted of delegations from the formerly independent Balak polities upon the founding of the Balak Empire
- The 1891 Constitution established independent upper houses in the colonies; representatives would be responsible to both their local upper house and the Imperial Council of Kings
- To make representation of the colonies easier, local assemblies were more properly codified, with representatives giving their votes on Imperial bills here and sending them off to be tallied in Qersheven
- Power shifted to the lower house under the Union of Shomosvan, while the government was detached from the upper house
- Proportional elements were introduced after the founding of the modern Balak Federation

[insert other places here]

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Topic 2: Letsatian Governance, Provinces, etc.

Governance and legislation in Letsatia

(warning this section is like, really unfinished so big oof, hopefully we manage to get stuff worked on through through the conference)

[idk, the letsatian political system] _

Administrative divisions in Letsatia

From what I can gather, there isn't much set in stone when it comes to how the Letsatian Empire was organised, but what I've been told is that I can assume it was divided into provinces not dissimilar to those of the Roman Empire. ***If*** I'm not misinterpreting anything, and tbh I probably am, that would entail (Letsatian analogues pending)¹:

- Borders were drawn through charters following the successful conquest of a region; charters also listed towns and cities included under the province's jurisdiction, and the rights and privileges of the inhabitants.
- Governed by qualified bureaucrats:
 - During the Republic: a magistrate was appointed to rule as governor along with a quaestor and three lieutenants; this was ripe for abuse as governors

¹ Source: KhAnubis

had near-complete control over the provinces, leading to widespread extortion of residents

- During the Empire: two categories - senatorial and imperial:
 - Senatorial - led by proconsuls (former consuls/praetors, served year-long terms)
 - Imperial - ruled by propraetorian legates (representatives of the emperor, served indefinitely)
- Provinces generally ruled themselves due to the size of the empire; old ruling structures were generally maintained, subject to the province's loyalty and submission to the imperial government
- Cities often governed themselves and the countryside around them, but were organised into different categories based on the citizenship rights of the residents:
 - Coloniae - full citizenship rights
 - Municipia - non-Roman Latins (definition changed a lot)
 - Others - no citizenship rights, had to pay a tribute to Rome or had special treaties

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Spread and development outside of Letsatia

Case study: Kothlen Horde

Before the Kothlens

In Vaniua, the Letsatian model of government was first adopted by the Iovist Vucheshians, who had first converted to Iovism in the 3rd Century CE. The Vucheshian Red Horde was reorganised into the Movtuth Kingdom, whose administrative and cultural centre became the port city of Bandigus (modern Vonjuvân, southwestern Gushlia).

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The Kothlen adoption of Vucheshian governance

The Kothlen Horde under Balâhak, its founder, exhibited a form of military government, with conquests divided among top-ranking generals. However, after Balâhak's death, his successor, [name], looked to the recently conquered Vucheshians and their system of government. A governing council subordinate to the ruling Tamaghid dynasty, known as the Hamimá, was established, which [insert powers here]. Skilled Vucheshian bureaucrats were appointed to positions of provincial governorship across the empire, in the stead of the generals who had governed previously.

How the Tamaghids eventually ruined everything

As time progressed, mutual distrust began to grow between the ruling Tamaghid dynasty, the general population, and the Vucheshian political elite, which became increasingly known as the "cheese bureaucracy" due to supposed intemperance and luxury and a resulting indifference towards their duties. Thus in the early 11th Century Great Qak [name here] began the process of reallocating the governorships of the provinces to family members and

reducing the Hamimá's power. However, a great proportion of these Tamaghids were unqualified in administrative affairs, and as such mismanagement of the provinces skyrocketed, with the extortion of locals and resource mismanagement being particularly prevalent issues against the backdrop of more general corruption. Dissatisfaction with the political situation eventually culminated in the outbreak of a revolt spearheaded by the Bashteze tribe in 1066.

After the final quelling of the Bashteze insurrection in 1078(?), the central government of the Kothlen Horde was left with very little remaining power over the provinces. With this, the governors of the provinces (at this point almost exclusively Tamaghids) began to assert their own control as regional warlords, finalising the collapse of the empire and splitting the Tamaghid dynasty into a multitude of warring cadet branches. This collapse began the Warring Qakates period of Balak history, which would end in the 15th Century with the Great Horde's conquests of the Balak peninsula.

Summary

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- After Balâhak's death, a Vucheshian model of governance and administration was implemented, including the foundation of a governing council known as the Hamimá
- The Vucheshian "cheese bureaucracy" had fallen out of favour by the 11th Century, and was replaced in a blatantly nepotistic manner by the Tamaghids, who would pay the ultimate price for replacing the professionals with unqualified family members