

UBTAO'S PRIDE AND THE CITY OF MEZRO

Mezro is widely regarded as the largest civilized population center in Chult before its destruction. It was a holy place to the Tabaxi and legend held it was founded by their god, Ubtao.

Mezro is bordered on two sides by the River Olung, with thick, nearly impenetrable jungle guarding the remaining two borders. At the city's heart was the Temple of Ubtao. The temple, created by Ubtao, is an ancient, nine-story, golden domed temple found at the center of the city. It was used as both a Hall of Champions and the King's audience hall.

As a theocracy, Mezro was ruled by the barae, the chosen of Ubtao. Each barae is said to live forever and was granted unique powers by Ubtao. There were seven of them.

To uphold the law, Tabaxi warriors patrolled the city streets. Lawbreakers were branded with a blue triangle on their forehead for the first offense. Subsequent offenses could warrant execution, but most crimes resulted in just compensation.

In the Year of the Blue Flame, 1385 DR, the city was destroyed. The ruins of the once grand city are now a monster-infested site devoid of its former grandeur.

RISE AND FALL OF RAS NSI



Ras (or Duke) Nsi was one of the seven original barae. After his ascension, he quickly gained a reputation for seeking bloody and violent revenge against many of the tribes of Chult. He is also credited with the creation of the majority of the undead that roam the land.

Portraits of Nsi often depict him in Cormyrean noble clothing wearing a haint-blue cloak and wielding a rapier. Some images depict him with glowing red eyes to convey his irritation at or zeal for Mezro. Despite his dandy-like appearance, he was anything but weak-willed.

At the end of the civil war between the Tabaxi and Eshowe tribes, Nsi began a secret crusade to slaughter every last member of the Eshowe in punishment for their attack on Mezro. The other barae tried and failed to convince him to stop the attacks, but he refused to listen, and for that, he was exiled.

The exile only served to fan the flames of his madness to new heights. Nsi created and controlled a massive army of undead which served as his slaves, often sent to collect taxes from the isolated villages to fund his crusade. He was also known to take and sell slaves to other countries in Faerun. He would also

trick adventurers into raiding Dwarven mines for gems and precious metals and then kill the adventurers and take the stolen wealth to fund his campaigns.

It is widely believed that Nsi truly believed that his undead army would serve to protect Mezro, a city he still professed to love despite his banishment from it. When they still refused to acknowledge all he had done, he tried to invade the city and force their hand. His attack was eventually repelled, but not before great losses were incurred on all sides.

Nsi perished in the same disaster that destroyed Mezro. Upon his death, the undead army at his command rampaged through the jungle. The remnants of this army still infest the jungle today, making travel through certain regions especially dangerous.

UNDEAD AND HAIN'T BLUE THEORIES

Haint is a bastardization of the ancient Cormyrean word “haunt.” A haint is a ghost, apparition, or lost soul. Haint Blue is often used to ward off spirits and prevent the owner from being taken or influenced by haints.

Superstitions say that ghosts and evil spirits cannot cross running water, nor can they stand the light of day. Haint Blue is a peculiar mix of blue and green, reminiscent of both the daylight sky and running water. The mixing of colors is meant to remind the dead of both daylight and running water, tricking them into believing they cannot enter or cross the colored boundary.



It is also supposed to serve as an insect repellent, although there is no evidence to support this claim.

Ras Nsi is known to have favored haint blue in his attire, but whether it was for protection or the mocking of that tradition is unknown. What is certain is that he was the architect behind the branding of lawbreakers in Mezro with a haint blue triangle. The majority of his undead army also sported haint blue triangles on their foreheads, the meaning of which is also open for interpretation.

Although no longer as popular as it was in past centuries, some Chultans keep the tradition alive by using the haint blue color on the roof of their porches, their ceilings, and around their window and door frames to protect against evil spirits.