

History of Equestria

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July 22, 2011

1 Rise of the Mistajat and Feudal Houses

Originally chartered by the Tuust, a council of monarchs, as an arbitrating body to settle disputes between trade Houses, the Mistajat eventually grew to become the ultimate political entity in Ancient Equestria. The Mistajat reached the height of its power in the aftermath of Pankati Revolution, during which numerous monarchies were deposed in favor of House plutocracies. While leadership of the Mistajat continually shifted between various coalitions of trade House masters and lords, it remained an effective governing body for several thousand years, shaping not only the culture of modern day Equestria, but even the phenotypic makeup of its constituents. The key to the success of the Mistajat was that it enabled the formation of highly specialized Feudal trade Houses, who then in turn relied upon the managed market and distribution system that the Mistajat directly controlled. Over time, regions which had once been self-reliant, providing their own food, craftsponies, and governments, made way for numerous city-states, each governed by a minor trade House and specialized in the production of a limited range of products. Control of land was granted to Minor trade Houses via fiefs from the few remaining Monarchies or more commonly from four Major Trade houses: House Atila, House Lisuus, House Salais, and House Kentaj. House Muut, originally a Major House focused on transportation and shipping, was dissolved early on, even before the Pankati Revolution, and its resources absorbed by the Mistajat.

1.1 Nobility in the Mistajat

While hereditary nobility originally controlled much of Ancient Equestria, many were deposed and stripped of land and title in the Pankati Revolution. Those who remained after the revolution, typically lords with small agrarian manors, held little individual power. Over time, however, through mergers, interbreeding, and some cunning political maneuvers a few of these noble lines earned some influence in the Mistajat. Collectively, these powerful nobility were known as the Joonch. While holding no where near the monetary power of the major trade houses, the Joonch exerted their influence through the land they leased. In order to compete with the Major houses, Joonch land was typically cheaper than what Major houses offered and carried no usage restrictions. The lack of

land usage restrictions attracted the more artistic or scholarly inclined ponies, ultimately placing the Joonch at the center of cultural and intellectual innovation in Ancient Equestria.

1.2 House Atila

In the old tongue Atila meant farm and indeed farming is a primary focus of House Atila. Food production and later food processing of all varieties eventually came under House Atila's control. While foodstuffs are a commodity, Atila's success depended largely on their tight control of supply and exports of processed food goods to non-equine races. House Atila also commanded the largest share of land within Ancient Equestria, which they exploited to collect additional revenue by taxing transportation of goods across Atila land. Despite their wealth and land, House Atila was frequently regarded as the weakest major house.

1.3 House Lisuus

The modern day question "Is it Lis-marked," meaning "Is it of good quality", stems from the dominance and superiority of House Lisuus manufactured goods in Ancient Equestria. Pioneering the combined use of magic and engineering, Lisuus became reknowned for their ability to produce intricate and standardized equipment. Unfortunately, many of the methods Lisuus employed have been lost to time because of their nearly paranoid devotion to secrecy. One may argue, however, that the House Lisuus could attribute their market dominance to their secrecy. Lisuus owned the least land of any Major House and had few fiefs, but their wealth was rivaled only by the Mistajat's Muuti (the shipping guild subservient to the Mistajat).

1.4 House Salais

The house of secrets as it was known, Salais was arguably the most influential house throughout history, although they rarely took overt control of the Mistajat, preferring to work behind the scenes. Salais specialized in magic and made its fortunes by selling information. Information of all types was collect through a network of informants, spies, and the use of clairvoyant magic. It was common belief at the time that Salais seers were able to predict the future, although it is uncertain whether this was true. Apart from manipulating the other Houses by controlling the flow of secrets, the most famous legacy of House Salais, albeit now controversial and secret at the time, was their pony breeding program. The great Salais wizard Gnosis is largely attributed with the breeding of the first Alicorn, from which the Regal Sisters, Celestia and Luna ultimately descended.

1.5 House Kentaj

The first instances of conscientious weather control can be attributed to House Kentaj, although this was actually only a side-effect of their operations. Kentaj focused on extracting raw materials from the land, specifically rock for construction, gems, timber, and metal ore. The diversity of commodities that Kentaj controlled is what initially made this Major house powerful. Kentaji methods, particularly the working conditions of their mines, were controversial and to control peasant revolts, House Kentaj maintained a disproportionately large militia from very early on. Later the Kentaj militia grew into a full fledged army, which was supported through the Mistajat via taxes on other Houses to satisfy Ancient Equestria's need for a unified defense against non-equine species. This latter role as "Defender of the Realm", is what secured House Kentaj's dominant position throughout the millenia.