

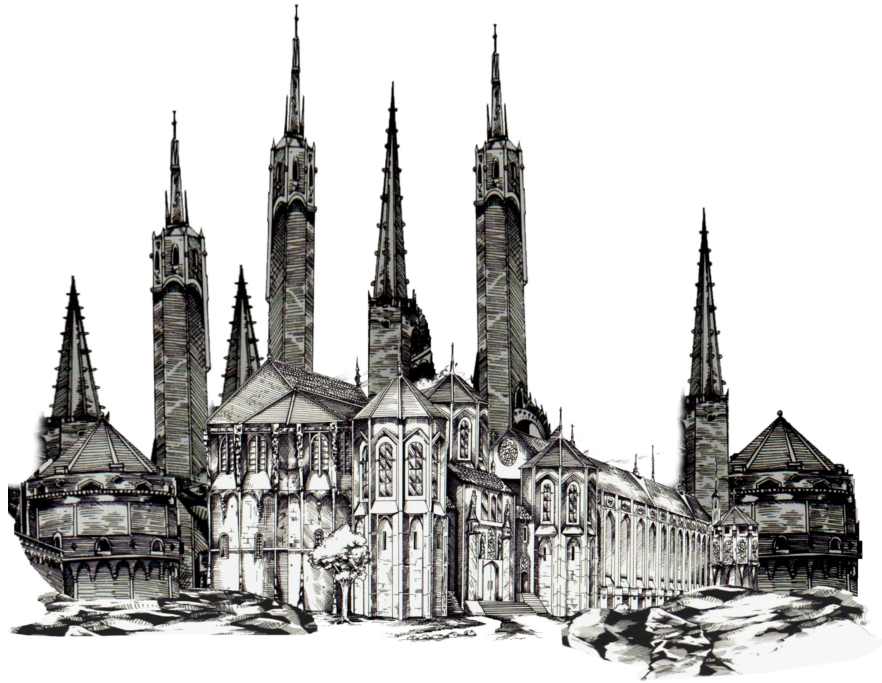
## Taeful's memories of Caer Olerion, the Gundian Imperial Palace

“The castle Olerion floats above Gund City on a monstrous rock formation. According to the loremasters of the Gundian Imperial Observatory, the secret weirds that hold the castle aloft were given to the current Emperor's great-grandmother, Meriastis IX, by the Queen of the Elves of the Crescent, who legend has it also holds court in a floating castle. In fact, the same loremasters claim there were once three such floating castles - prisons created long ago- but the secrets of their making were puzzled out by the elves of the Crescent.’

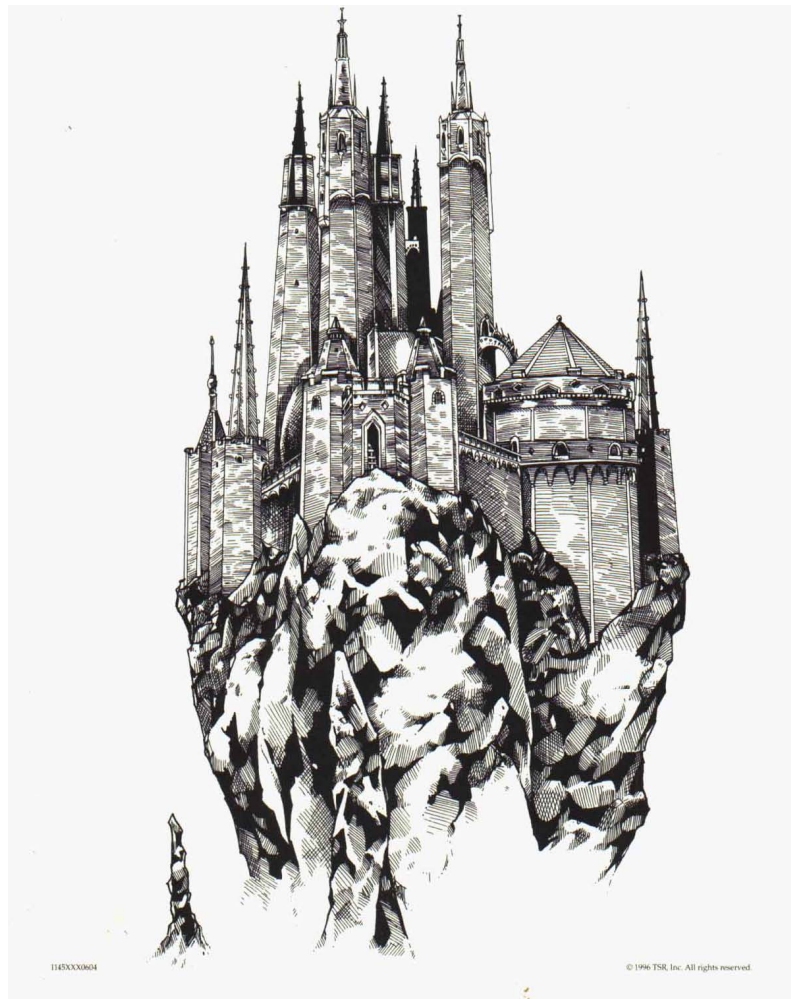
“The castle itself is labyrinthine, having been enlarged many times by the various descendants of Meriastis. Dozens of towers, domes and battlements rise to various heights in many styles, colors and stones. The Malachite Throne sits somewhere in the center, in an edifice called the Apex; it is a cathedral of sorts, dating back some two thousand years or more. The Apex was once on solid land, where the Emperors of Gund held court in the capital. The Apex is surrounded by towers, walls and gates of different kinds and is said to be riddled with dungeons tunneled deep into the floating rock.’

“Besides the Apex, other areas of note include the Gundian Imperial Observatory; the Collegium Ars; the Motherhouse of the Order of the Malachite Throne; the Elegium Cathedral and Choir; and the famous Library of a Thousand Years. The layout of Olerion is a closely guarded secret; it is said that some strange arrangement of the buildings is essential to its flying magic.’

“While the Gundian capital city below is home to somewhere between 40,000 and 50,000 people depending on the season, Caer Olerion itself is home to 2000 - 3000 knights, priests, nobles, courtiers, wizards and loremasters -as well as their various henchmen, creations and servants.’



A view of the **Apex**, in the center above, which is located deep in the center of **Caer Olerion**, below.





Layout of the **Apex** and its surrounding gardens. Reconstructed from the dreams of Meleas and the memories of Taeful. The Malachite Throne sits on a raised platform ( 5, above ). The platform is surrounded by golden bars - the Imperial Cage. In Gundian lore, the Imperial or Golden Cage symbolizes both the protection that must be afforded the Emperor and the trap that is kingship. The Cage is surrounded on the inside by a perpetual honor guard of 24 Snow Elves in ceremonial garb ( below ). It is also said that many wards, weirds, sigils, and hidden creatures guard the Throne, the Emperor and the Court. The Emperor faces East (to the right on the map) when he holds court, symbolizing his drawing of wisdom and insight from ancient Darnicia (the mythical Gundian homeland) during the dispensation of justice. The Emperor holds court once every few days, but the Apex is always filled with dozens of noble petitioners and courtiers vying for the attention of the Emperor's many ministers.

