

Ark (Quantum 7)

This timeline is **not** a myth parallel where there was a literal Noah's Ark. Infinity Unlimited is almost certain of this. Instead, Ark is merely a world where virtually every species of animal is domesticable. Discovering the exact change point has not yet been achieved, but the results are real; animals from Ark both remain domesticable outside of that timeline, and their traits breed true.

Which is why the timeline is now the site of a particularly vicious war between Infinity and Centrum. Fortunately, or unfortunately, they can hide their fights inside one or other wars that crop up on Ark with distressing regularity. It turns out that being able to domesticate anything usually results in countries breeding their very own exotic animal cavalry.

Ark, 102 AD

Current Affairs

Various empires fight each other while Infinity and Centrum take extensive DNA samples. And, of course, fight each other.

Divergence Point

Uncertain: evidence suggests that the change happened before the rise of modern man.

Major Civilizations

Andean (Empire), Chinese (Empire with Rivals), Indic (Diffuse), Meso-American (Multipolar), Roman (Bipolar),

Great Powers

Qin (oligarchy, CR4), Tikal League (oligarchy, CR 3), Mochica Empire (dictatorship, CR4), Roma Boreas (oligarchy, CR 4), Roma Meridies (dictatorship, CR 3)

Worldline Data

TL: 2

Quantum: 7

Mana Level: None

Centrum Zone: Red

Infinity Level: P7

Cave paintings on Ark suggest that widespread animal domestication predated agriculture, and very possibly the use of fire. Certainly by the time of written records it was generally understood that virtually all animals could be fully domesticated. This did not significantly change the timeline in Eurasia for a remarkable amount of time; but in the Americas the indigenous megafauna was not wiped

out, which helped spur the development of bronze and iron-using kingdoms and empires by the second century BC.

Not that anybody in Eurasia knows this. In Europe, the continent is dominated by the northern Roman Republic, which is still recovering from its conquest of Germania (thanks to rhinoceros cavalry, as well as war mammoths and sabertooths). The Roman *Empire* founded by Mark Anthony has spread deep into sub-Saharan Africa, where there is a plethora of strange and useful beasts to tame. Between Rome and the Qin dynasty in the utter East is an endless variety of city-states, pocket empires, trade partners, and other countries who jockey and war with each other constantly.

And in the frozen North, various beastmasters are learning the intricacies of taming the greatest beasts of all: the mighty whales of the seas. This is not likely to be welcome news to their neighbors, once they succeed

Outworld Involvement

Infinity and Centrum both want the same thing: genetic samples of Ark's unique fauna. They're both willing to go through a lot of trouble to get it, too -- not to mention

willing to give the other side a lot of trouble, as well. There do remain rules in place, though. There's a general understanding that the actual fighting take place between each group's combat arms: Infinity will not target Centrum's Biology Service personnel if Centrum refrains from shooting at Homeline's corporate research teams. *Taking* each other's sample cases is fine, but killing noncombatants is frowned upon.

Then again, there's always the local wars. The two Romes take slaps at each other on a regular basis, and India is a Sanskrit-speaking crazy quilt of factions and fights; Centrum's retention of Classical languages allows them to work in those regions, as well as the still Greek-speaking Near East. Neither Infinity nor Centrum is very comfortable with operations in the Americas, as there are a variety of infectious domestic-animal diseases there that neither timeline is too familiar with). Still, there's a unique wealth of potentially useful animals there, and even a ruthlessly logical Centran can see the attraction of having a domesticated jaguar for a pet.

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