

The Time of Nightmares Begins

Historical Event · The Time of Nightmares

Date: ~-300 TN

Summary

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The name was given retrospectively, by historians writing in the early FW period who were attempting to characterize an era from which they had almost no primary sources. What they had was physical evidence -- burn patterns in excavated ruins, burial sites with unusual demographic profiles, settlement abandonment layers that showed no sign of organized departure -- and the accounts of institutions that had survived the period: primarily the early Orders of Wizardry, whose founding records are the most complete documentation of the Time of Nightmares that exists, and which are primarily concerned with the Orders themselves rather than with the broader collapse.

The darkness was not absolute. Communities survived. Institutions formed. The Orders of Wizardry coalesced during this period, which required enough organizational stability to be possible. But the scale of what was lost -- in population, in accumulated knowledge, in the physical infrastructure of civilization -- was not recovered for centuries, and some of it was not recovered at all. The Thwarch as a distinct civilization effectively disappear from the historical record during the Time of Nightmares. Whether they were absorbed, destroyed, or transformed into something the later records do not recognize is not known.