



Compendium

*Being a Collection of New and Revised Information
of Especial Interest to Players and Game Masters
of the Seventh Sea Role-Playing Game*





7th Sea

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<http://www.swashbucklingadv.com>

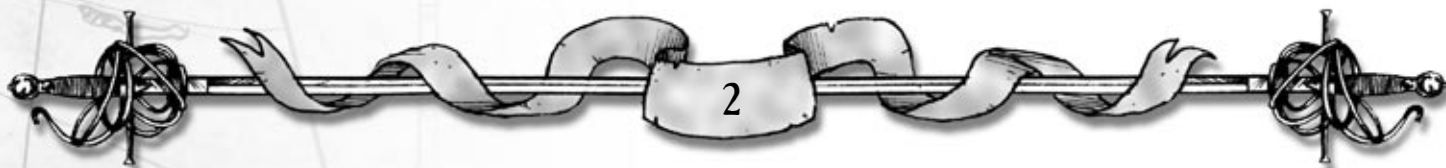




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Introduction

Welcome to the *7th Sea Compendium*, a companion volume to the *7th Sea* basic rules. This book sums up a few modifications we've made to the game so that *7th Sea* players can make the most of the product.

You might be asking yourself why a compendium is needed or even desired. During *7th Sea's* initial publication, time constraints and space factors prohibited us from doing everything we would have liked. Certain sections needed developing, while others could have been more smoothly integrated with the rest of the game. While we weren't happy with these gaps, we simply didn't have the option to address them as well as we would like.

Fortunately, the gaming public loved *7th Sea* enough to overlook the shortcomings. The game became a big hit and the rulebooks quickly sold out, which necessitated a second print run. As we sat down to prepare the printing, we realized that we had a chance to improve upon what we had done – correct some of the oversights, develop certain background sections, and make the product better. It was not a “second edition”: our problems were fairly minor, and we didn't want to make any wholesale changes to such a new world. It was merely a tidying up of certain loose ends – adjusting the books more to our satisfaction.

The problem was that so many players had already bought the first printing, and none of them would be able to use the changes without buying another set of books. We didn't want to gouge the readers who helped make *7th Sea* a

success in the first place, but we couldn't just reprint the same oversights without doing something to correct them.

After debating the problem, we decided to compile all the changes, refinements and cuts made between the first publication and the second into a single volume. Any player who asked for it would receive it for free; that way, everyone would have access to the complete *7th Sea* rules without have to purchase two copies of the basic books. What you hold in your hands is the result of that decision: a “version 1.5” covering all of the changes we have made. It includes revised material on the world of Théah, rules modifications, and material only found on the *7th Sea* website.

The first section notes all of the minor rules which have been changed or modified between the first and second printing. It also cites the textual changes which have been made, such as additional world development and sections which have been moved.

The next section is designed for players and GMs alike. It contains all of the text added to the second printing, subtracted from the first, or otherwise unavailable in either edition. With them, experienced players won't have to purchase another copy of the basic rules, regardless of which one you have. It also includes information on the mysterious Syrne which first appeared in portions of the *Erebus Cross* adventure series.

The third section contains information for GMs only. It includes a brief discussion of the Inquisition and a pair of Secret Societies, and an in-depth look at the Syrne and their powerful artifacts. The Syrne section contains a comprehensive chart for creating your own artifacts, as well as some suggestions on how to give them a personal touch.

Finally, we've included some extra odds and ends: sailor slang cut from the Player's Guide, images of Lærdom runes, and a fast-start Hero creation section, including lists of all the Swordsman Schools, Sorcery types, Skills, Knacks, Advantages, and Backgrounds – all compiled in one location.

The *Compendium* is not a “stand alone” product. You still need the *7th Sea* basic books to play the game. But for

What's Changed

completists who wish to have every aspect of the game – and first edition players who want to know more about Théah and its people – it gives you everything you need for no additional charge. We hope you find it useful during your adventures in the world of *7th Sea*.

- You are surprised for one entire Round, not one Phase.

NPC Wounds

- Henchmen can take a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to their Resolve before being Knocked Out.

Rules for Perception Checks

The GM will call for a Perception Check whenever he wants to see if your Heroes spot something that isn't readily visible, such as a hidden catch, a far-off ship, or a dust-obscured hieroglyph. A Perception Check is a straight Wits roll, only adding dice for Advantages such as Keen Senses which specifically add to Perception Checks.

The Repartee System

If you successfully Intimidate your target, he or she has a penalty when acting directly against you of one unkept die + one additional die for each Raise you made. This penalty lasts until the end of the Scene.

What's Changed

Rules Changes

The following changes have been made to the *7th Sea* system. They are all minor and do not affect the overall mechanics of the game. As with all the rules, you may keep, change, or discard them as you see fit. The GM has the final say as to which rules he or she will use.

System Rules

- Free Raises now add 5 to your roll, instead of subtracting from your TN.
- When you take a number of Dramatic Wounds equal to your Resolve, instead of suffering a -2 penalty to all rolls, none of your dice (except Drama dice) explode.
- Missile Weapon Ranges are in yards, not feet.
- Firearms suffer no Short Range Modifier when fired at a target less than 10 feet away.





Wealth

- Every Hero who doesn't have a ready means of income begins the game with one die of Guilders.

Servant Rules

For every Rank in their highest Servant Basic Knack, Servants receive one Guilder per month. During character creation they receive ten times their monthly income instead of the usual three times monthly income, since they don't have much to spend their money on.

Swordsman Schools

- All Swordsman Schools now give 1 free Rank in all four Swordsman Knacks when purchased.

Mastery Level

When mastery level is referred to, the following conversion to dice should be used:

- Apprentice = 1
- Journeyman = 2
- Master = 3

Aldana School

Apprentice: The Apprentice may roll one unkept die for Initiative for each Mastery level you have in Aldana (Apprentice = 1, Journeyman = 2, Master = 3).

Ambrogia School

Apprentice: Learning the Ambrogia style of fighting negates the off-hand penalty when using a dagger or main gauche, and gives the Hero the Left-Handed Advantage for free. Apprentices among Veronica's Boys are also trained to think quickly and take advantage of every opportunity they get. You may twist your dagger or fencing weapon slightly when you hit, which automatically adds 2 to the damage you inflict (increasing a Damage Roll of 18 to 20, for instance).

Swordsman Knacks

Beat Knack: Roll Finesse + Beat, not Attack Roll as usual.

Feint Knack: Roll Finesse + Feint not Attack Roll as usual.

Double-parry Knack: You do not need to make two Raises.

Skills

Criminal and *Doctor:* Quack is an Advanced Knack.

Buckler Attack Knack: A buckler's Damage Rating is 1k1 when used as a weapon.

Dirty Fighting – Kick Knack: A Kick inflicts 0k2.

Athlete: The Throwing Knack may not be used to attack.

Advantages

Toughness

All of your Wound Checks have an extra Kept die, not an unkept die.

Hubrises

Loyal

Your GM can activate your Hubris in order to get you to go back for (or stay with) a fallen comrade, or to prevent you from betraying an employer.

Experience

- 1 HP is worth 3 XP, not 18.

- With your GM's permission, you may join a new Swordsman School. You must already possess both Skills in its Basic Curriculum and find a Master of the style who's willing to teach you. Then you must pay an additional 50 XP. Your GM may also demand other payments, such as time and money spent training.





What's Changed

Sorcery

• You cannot purchase additional Sorcery Points during Hero creation, but you can purchase them during game play with Experience Points.

Mastery Level

When mastery level is referred to, the following conversion to dice should be used:

Apprentice = 1
Journeyman = 2
Master = 3

Pyeryem

Hold Breath Boon: Roll your Resolve instead of your Brawn.

Text Changes

The following sections of text have been changed or modified. All of the changed text is included in this compendium.

Players` Guide

• The introduction to Théah in the **Primer** Chapter has been revised. The sample Heroes have been cut and the Equipment list has moved to the **Hero** chapter.

• The History section on pages 52-57 has been revised and streamlined.

• The description of the Vendel League has been folded into the Vendel nation section.

• A Théan calendar has been added to the Sourcebook section.

• The Most Recent Discoveries section on pages 90-91 has been folded into the Knowledge section. A Natural Philosophy entry has been added.

• Additions have been made to the Pirates and Privateers section, including a discussion of ships and shipping in Théah and a list of different types of sailors.

• The sailor slang section has been cut. You can find it in this book.

• The Guild Chairs box on page 72 has been eliminated. You can find another copy of the box in the *Game Masters` Guide*, page 95.

• The Sophia's Daughters and Los Vagos have been added to the Secret Societies section.

• The Vaticine Church: The Big Questions section has been moved to the *Game Masters` Guide*. An Inquisition section has been added, and Objectionism has been expanded and explained. The tenets and organization of Objectionism are defined.


• The **Hero** chapter has been completely reorganized. Several tables and charts have been added to help you find the information you need.

• A Ship Construction section has been added to the **Drama** chapter.

Game Masters` Guide

• The Church Organization section on pages 121-123 has been moved to the *Players` Guide*, the Heresies section has been eliminated, and small sections have been added on the Inquisition and Objectionism.

• Small sections have been added on the Invisible College and Sophia's Daughters.



Player's Section

Théah

Théah is the continent where all the action of 7th Sea takes place – a continent with many similarities to 17th century Europe. She's ruled by a series of nation-states, which bear cultural and historical similarities to particular European nations on Earth. While she isn't Europe's twin sister, she is certainly a distant cousin, which should make Théah more familiar and learning about her culture and history easier. There are some important differences, however.

Sorcery

Sorcery is a very real power in Théah. Almost every noble family has the dark gift running in its veins, although two nations – Castille and Eisen – are exceptions to the rule. Their sorcery is powerful and dangerous, each type demanding its own unique cost. It is a discipline that not all can, or should, attempt to master, but when its power is harnessed, it can change the fate of nations.

The Vaticine Church

Théah's principal religion – the Church of the Prophets, or Vaticine Church – has many elements similar to European Catholicism, but also some key philosophical differences. Aside from a slightly different iconography, the Church embraces science as a means of understanding the Creator's

world, and encourages the proliferation of knowledge through schools and universities. Because of its efforts, Théans have made several scientific breakthroughs that would not occur on Earth until centuries later.


Unfortunately, the Church has a darker side as well. Théah has only just emerged from the thirty year long “War of the Cross,” a struggle between traditional Vaticines and a reform movement known as Objectionism. The war involved every nation on the continent, and left the country of Eisen in shattered pieces. As if this weren't bad enough, a sinister Inquisition has recently seized power within the Church, threatening to transform it into an instrument of terror. Only time will tell if they succeed.

The Seventh Sea

There are six seas surrounding Théah. The mythical “seventh sea” is considered little more than a sailor's story, a tale to frighten cabin boys on their first voyage. It is said that when a ship enters the seventh sea, the stars move backwards, the sun and moon share the same horizon and strange cries can be heard from beneath the waves. While scholars dispute the veracity of the sailors' stories, too many have surfaced to be ignored.

The Syrneath

The ruins of a society far older than man's lie scattered across Théah. Some sit in ruined cities beneath the earth, while others lie on an extensive string of islands in the western seas. The race which built them – known as the Syrne – has remained unknown, but it is clear that they were not human. While their origins remain a mystery, the ruins are a treasure haven for daring men and women. Strange artifacts and wondrous inventions have been pulled from their depths, resulting in a great amount of puzzling... and an even greater amount of wealth.



Player's Section

Nations

The current nations of Théah – seven in all – represent the whole of the known civilized world. A more detailed description of each can be found in the **Théah** chapter of the two core books.

Avalon: Green and enchanted, this union of three kingdoms has recently risen to the forefront of Théah politics.

Castille: Headquarters of the Vaticine church, this fertile nation has recently fallen under attack from the Montaigne to the north.

Eisen: A once-proud country now struggling to recover from the War of the Cross.

Montaigne: One of Théah's most powerful nations, leading the world in art and culture even as its Emperor crushes the populace beneath his thumb.

Ussura: A vast and wild country, whose people still live as their ancestors did centuries ago.

Vendel / Vestenmannavnjar: This collection of islands is divided between wealthy Guilds seeking to dominate Théah's economy and the fierce raiders who refuse to surrender their heritage.

Vodacce: The former cradle of civilization, now split between seven merchant Princes whose complex schemes reach every corner of the world.

Two other nation-states exist as well – The Empire of the Crescent Moon and the land of Cathay – but they are isolated from the rest of Théah by a combination of cultural differences and physical barriers. Other continents may exist, far beyond the western oceans, but no Théan has yet discovered them.

Secret Societies

The Nations are not the only powers influencing Théah. There are many more clandestine organizations – not beholden to nationality or religion – that move Théah politics, some unnoticed by even the most observant scholars and statesmen. More details on these groups can be found in the **Théah** chapter.

The Explorer's Society: One of the most prominent “gentleman's clubs” in Théah, a multinational organization dedicated to studying the past and discovering her geography.

The Invisible College: A secretive band of academics who work to protect scientific progress from the fires of the Inquisition.

The Knights of the Rose and Cross: An ancient order of adventurers, seeking to bring justice to the unjust and to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

Die Kreuzritter: A group of holy Vaticine Knights, wiped out centuries ago by a traitorous political ruler.

Los Vagos: Led by a mysterious masked man, these hidden crusaders protect the people of Castille from enemies both within and without.

The Rilasciare: Best known as the Free Thinkers, the Rilasciare promote free will and self-determination through a range of extremely unorthodox tactics.

Sophia's Daughters: A union of Vodacce women seeking equality and political power by covert means.

History

This small treatise is by no means complete, but it does give you a brief look at Théah's history, from the founding of its first great Empire to the current year. "AUC" and "AV" are abbreviations for Théan phrases meaning "The Year of the Founding of the First City" and "The Year of Truth", respectively. AUC dates are before the appearance of the First Prophet (the founder of the Vaticine Church) and AV dates are those after.

Rise of the Old Republic (AUC 1 – AUC 340)

Théan recorded history originally dated from the founding of the First City, called Numa, in the lands now known as Vodacce. In the Early Age, a republic rose from Numa which grew to encompass most of Théah, For centuries, the republic thrived, creating a golden age of heroes, philosophy and science that would inspire Théan scholars for the rest of time. Ruled by a Senate elected from noble families, the Old Republic also gave Théah its first formal religion, a pantheistic faith inspired by the visible planets.

Republic's Fall, Empire's Rise (700 AUC – 724 AUC)

But the Republic grew old and corrupt and eventually it was reborn as an Empire. Emperor Gaius Philippus Macer, nephew of a popular Senator, took control through a military coup. In an attempt to wrest power back from him, the Senators used knowledge gained from Synchron artifacts to become the world's first sorcerers. The power base shifted once again and the Emperor became nothing more than a puppet ruler. The Empire expanded its influence and the Senators claimed the fertile border lands.

The First Prophet (1 AV – 200 AV)

The beginning of the "modern age" (Anno Veritas) began with the appearance of the First Prophet. Fifty years after the Senators took control of the Empire, a stranger appeared in the Senate. He claimed to be the prophet of a god called "Theus" and spoke against those who had taken up sorcery, claiming it was an abomination in the eyes of the Creator. He asserted that mankind's highest virtues were his intelligence and his free will, two gifts that no other creature in Creation had. It was humanity's duty to use

these tools and to encourage and educate others in their use. The Prophet had gained a cult following in the Empire before his appearance on the Senate floor and the Senators recognized him as a threat to their authority. Almost as soon as he had left the chambers, they declared him a criminal and a traitor. As the Book of the Prophets records, the night before his arrest warrant was signed, the Prophet turned himself in to the authorities for punishment. Before he was put to death, however, he predicted that three Prophets would follow him, each with his own message and duty.


Unfortunately for the Senators, the cult did not die with the Prophet, but rather grew in strength and numbers as the years went by. Two centuries later, in a political maneuver that would change the world forever, the Emperor declared the faith the Prophet taught to be the only true faith, making his teachings the official Church of the Empire. He declared that anyone who joined the Church would be a full citizen of the Empire. The Emperor's action stole power from the Senators and they fled from the Empire's core to border states, far from the Church of the Prophet.

East and West Empires (100 AV – 300 AV)

Over the next two hundred years, the Empire grew too large to manage and split into two distinct political entities: the Eastern Empire and the Western Empire. The two Empires suffered from barbarian attacks, political infighting and border skirmishes. Soon enough, the whole structure fell, throwing Théah into its "dark age." The descendants of the exiled Senators had become local rulers in the outlying territories, and they fought against each other in an effort to gain more power. Political boundaries blurred and petty conflict spread to every corner of the continent.

The Second Prophet (305 AV – 306 AV)

The Second Prophet, foretold by the First, arrived from the East, which was now called the Empire of the Crescent Moon. Like his predecessor, he spoke against sorcery, but instead of using words of peace, he used words of departure. He said that society had become too corrupt and the faithful needed to leave it behind them. He gathered a massive flock and moved them into the Eastern Empire on a great pilgrimage, leaving a small band of followers behind to spread his message.



Player's Section

Unfortunately, he and many of his followers were killed within the borders of the Crescent Empire, causing a series of crusades against the murderers of Theus' Prophet. The crusades lasted for years and continued across the Crescent borders. For a while, Théans held a large portion of Crescent territory, but were eventually thrown out by the combined might of the Empire's armies.

Imperator Corantine (312 AV – 376 AV)

After the Crusades, many kings sought to reunite Théah under a new Empire. The greatest of these men, Corantine, conquered most of western Théah, uniting hundreds of tiny kingdoms under his crown. Corantine's realm was the largest since the fall of the Old Empire. In 312 AV, he declared that the faith of the Prophets would be his Empire's official church, but there were so many Prophet cults that one faith could not be declared. Corantine ordered a single Credo be determined, thus creating the Vaticine Church. The home of the Church was to be the site where the First Prophet spoke – Numa – and a Hierophant was chosen to serve at its head. A council of Cardinals, representing every part of Corantine's kingdom, would elect the Hierophant who would then serve for life. The unprecedented move gave the Church great power, for even the Emperor could not dictate spiritual matters without their permission.

Corantine's empire was great, but it did not last long after his death. The Emperor divided the land between his three sons, none of whom possessed the political acumen of their father. Once more, everything fell apart, the world was thrown into chaos, and the only voice of authority for nearly three centuries was the Vaticine Church.

Imperator Carleman (600 AV)

In the seventh century, another conqueror arose and united almost all of Théah under a single crown. His name was Carleman, and his kingdom grew to stretch across the lands that would later become Montaigne, Eisen and Vodacce. He was declared the High Imperator of Théah by the Vaticine Church, which had gained incredible political power by that time. It had also become the stronghold of science and learning; almost all progress was due to the research and experimentation of Church scholars.

Again, Carleman's kingdom did not long outlast his death. However, the rough political boundaries he set within his realm grew in importance, planting the seeds of Théah's nations. For the first time, Montaigne, Eisen, and Vodacce thought of themselves as single states, not just a collection of tiny baronies bound by a common language.

For the next three hundred years, the Dark Ages continued. Bands of fierce raiders from the Vesten Isles preyed upon coastal communities, sending fear up and down the continent. A terrible disease called the "White Plague" arose in the tenth century, spread by rats and ultimately destroying nearly a third of its population. But through these nightmares, Théans persevered, looking to the Church for guidance and living their lives as best they could.

The Third Prophet (1000 AV)

The Third Prophet's arrival in Castille may be the most violent moment in the history of the Vaticine Church. He changed the tone and voice of the Church: he did not speak of peace or separation, but of fire and blood. He arranged a political coup that removed the sorcerous nobility from power, replacing them with families whose blood was pure and uncorrupted. For centuries, Castille and the Crescent Empire shared amicable trade relations, greatly influencing Castille's culture. The Castellians and Crescents had traded and mingled blood and culture, but the Third Prophet called the Crescents infidels and declared another crusade against the murderers of the Second Prophet.

At first, the crusades went well. The Crescents retreated from their borders into the desert and the Crusaders claimed great swaths of borderland for the Church. But as before, the Crescents counterattacked, driving the crusaders back. A long and bloody struggle ensued, ebbing and flowing for over three hundred years.

Following his declaration of the crusade, the Prophet announced that Castille was the new center of the faith, an assertion that spilled more blood over the Church's altars. A bloody war broke out between the Prophet in Castille and the Hierophant in Vodacce. "The Hierophant War" ended with Castille victorious and the Church's capital city moving west. However, almost all real Vaticine political power remained in Vodacce hands; Vodacce controlled the majority

of Cardinals and could still elect the Hierophant

With his power now based in Castille, the Third Prophet restructured the Church, emphasizing research above all else. “Our need to understand the Enemy,” he once said, “is second only to our need to understand Creation.” He also created an order of the Church called the Inquisition, answerable only to the Hierophant. The Inquisition’s duty was to seek and destroy all those who practiced the dark art of sorcery. The creation of such an order was a direct challenge to the nobility of Théah, putting the Church at odds with almost every nation. Consequently, sorcery was not openly practiced for over five hundred years.

The Invasion of Avalon (1028 AV)

The tiny island of Avalon had long remained out of Théan politics, living under the influence of a strange race called Sidhe. In 1028, however, the King of Montaigne sent an invasion fleet to conquer the island, along with its neighbors Inismore and the Highland Marches. The Sidhe fled Avalon, taking their peculiar form of magic with them and leaving the Montaigne as rulers. Eventually, the invaders assimilated with the local culture, allowing Avalon a quasi-independent status, but fierce enmity remained between the two countries. The occupation stoked the fires of nationalism among both peoples, catalyzing their sense of identity and slowly pushing Théah away from feudalism.

The Rise and Fall of the Crusaders (fl. 1100 AV – 1312 AV)

For centuries, the Church promoted a holy war against the Crescent Empire, pushing its influence further into the East. That came to an end when an order of knights – the Poor Knights of the Prophet – who had participated in the crusade were condemned as heretics. Their trial revealed evidence of unspeakable crimes, crimes blamed on their proximity to the Crescent infidels. The Poor Knights were executed, and the Church declared the Crescent borders closed to all faithful. A single Vodacce prince was permitted to maintain trade with them, but the Crusades themselves died with the Poor Knights. Three hundred years of conflict was finally at an end.

Renaissance (ca. 1300 AV – present)

From the fall of the Old Empire, the land of Vodacce had gradually developed into a consortium of merchant princes. Their proximity to the Crescent Empire, coupled with their devotion to the Vaticine (and its scientific development), allowed art and culture to slowly flourish there. Painters and other artists discovered new forms of expression, ‘while wondrous scientific inventions came from the Vaticine Universities. Through the Princes’ fleets, the renaissance spread across Théah, prompting a revitalization of knowledge and a gradual emergence from the long years of darkness. It also gave the Vodacce unquestioned, economic power, which the princes used mainly to compete against each other. Vodacce also become known not only as a beacon of culture, but also as a treacherous land of subtle, and deadly political games.


The Objectivist Movement (1517 AV – present)

For centuries, the Church held steady control of Théah’s destiny. Like its secular counterparts, it began to decay from within. Church officials took advantage of the power they held, condemning those who objected to their credo. That continued until 1517 when the actions of Mattias Lieber, an Eisen monk, created what has become known as “the Objectivist Movement.” He denounced Church authority and declared that only Theus Himself could intercede on behalf of a human soul. Those who had grown disenchanted with the Church’s excesses were quick to join the movement, and within the span of a decade the Vaticine Church lost almost a third of its flock. It responded with fire. For decades, Objectivists were burned all across Théah until the early 1600s, when Eisen declared that its borders were safe for “Lieber.” Tolerance grew, but tensions between Vaticines and Objectivists remain high to this day.

The War of the Cross (1636 AV – 1666 AV)

Eisen’s acceptance of Objectivism would ultimately cost it dearly. Eisen’s Emperor was an open-minded and tolerant man, but when he died in 1636, he was replaced by Reifentahl, a fanatical Vaticine. Tension between the two faiths would soon explode into war.

The new Emperor demanded all Objectivists renounce their faith and affirm their belief in the Credo of the Vaticine Church. It didn’t happen. Soon, Eisen Vaticines were



Player's Section

fighting Eisen Objectionists in the street, priests called for a holy war against the “infidels,” and devout believers on both sides were forming military units to destroy their enemies. Civil war ensued. Nearly every nation in Théah contributed forces to one side or the other, but Eisen bore the brunt of the fighting. The surrounding nations grew rich selling arms and supplies, while suffering none of the devastating damage the battles inflicted. The War of the Cross lasted thirty years and ended more through sheer exhaustion than anything else. Eisen was left bloody and broken, with nearly a third of its population dead and nothing to show for it. The surrounding nations swooped in to divide the spoils.

The war also stole power away from the Vaticine Church, severely damaging its influence. Thirty years of bloodshed was enough to turn the Théans away from proselytizing. More nations declared independence from the Church of the Prophets, and even faithful Vaticines took a tolerant view of Objectionism. For all the damage it caused, the War's lessons were not lost on Théah – cold comfort to the surviving Eisen, however.

Current Events

While the events above form the background of modern Théah, the last century has had a profound effect on current affairs. Listed below is a brief description of Théah's most recent – and sometimes tragic – events.

The Rise of Avalon and the Castillian Armada

The three Kingdoms of Avalon – including Inismore and the Highland Marches – have recently united under the crown of Queen Elaine in 1658. Throwing off all traces of the Montaigne occupation, the High Queen of Avalon has done much to gain power for her tiny kingdom. She declared religious independence from the Vaticine Church and created a new rung in the Avalon social structure: the sailor. All who sail in Avalon's navy are considered the same social rank as gentleman knights. These “gentleman sailors” have plundered from Castillian galleons, Vodacce merchantmen and Montaigne vessels. Elaine publicly condemns their actions, but it is no secret that Avalon's coffers bulge with loot from their actions.

In 1659, the King of Castille decided to make the upstart island nation pay for its insolence. He ordered the construction of a great fleet to sail against Avalon. It would prove to be an exercise in errors. Avalon spies discovered the construction and pirates sabotaged production from the beginning. The man placed in charge of the armada was completely unfit to command a navy. When the Armada finally set sail, it ran into a storm that sank a third of the ships. Off the coast of Avalon, the Castillians discovered their ships were too big to sail in such shallow waters. The smaller Avalon ships were not. After another third of her number were sunk by Avalon fire, the fleet turned back from Avalon's shores and Queen Elaine claimed a naval victory over the largest and most powerful fleet in Théah, an act that would propel her tiny union onto the world stage.

The Return of the White Plague (1665 AV – 1666 AV)

A few years ago, the White Plague – unseen since the Middle Ages – reared its ugly head once more in Avalon, Castille and parts of Montaigne. Richard Kailean (the scholar most responsible for what little knowledge the Church does have) meticulously observed and cataloged its symptoms and speculated on possible causes. As he was beginning to formulate a plan for fighting the disease, however, it disappeared as quickly as it began. There has been little chance for observation since, but scholars are now waiting with a mixture of anticipation and dread for another opportunity.

The Vendel-Vodacce Merchant War

The Vestemnavnjar had long been thought of as bloodthirsty barbarians, but as Théah emerged from the Dark Ages, a new trend developed among its people. The farming caste grew into a merchant caste, developing political skills and displacing the warriors who were away from home for so long. They began using Vesten ships, which could move cargo quickly, to trade with other nations, which increased both their wealth and prestige. Within a few decades they had seized political control of their country, leaving the warriors in disenfranchised bands on the fringes of their country. Now calling themselves “Vendel,” they began building powerful economic empire. By 1600, they had established a league of Guilds to control their assets, which stretched across northern Théah; the league served as

the defacto rulers of the nation. The War of the Cross, only increased their influence, and when Eisen splintered, the Vendel quickly stepped in to fill the vacuum. In the space of a few decades, they had become one of the most powerful nations in the world.

The Vodacce, of course, did not take the threat lying down. As Vendel money – the Guilder – became a common currency and Vendel merchants began appearing in every port, the Vodacce began a quiet trading war against their rivals. They raised prices, closed ports, and used their trade monopoly with the Crescent Empire to drive the Vendel back. The outcome of this conflict is still unclear: as things currently stand, Vendel controls the north and Vodacce controls the south. Very soon, something is going to break.

Montegue's Stand and the Montaigne-Castille War

In 1664, the King of Montaigne broke five hundred years of silence by openly admitting his practice of sorcery. Other Montaigne nobles soon followed his example, sending the Church into an ecclesiastic rage. In 1666, High Inquisitor Verdugo raised an army composed mainly of Castillians to attack the kingdom's capital. The Inquisition demanded the King surrender himself to be tried for heresy. The King refused. Most of his army was diverted in the Montaigne countryside, but he threw what meager forces he had against the Church. They were no match for the Castillians; the Montaignes were decimated and only a handful of soldiers and the King's personal guard were left to face the Vaticine's might.

As the army advanced on the capital, the Montaigne command crumbled, leaving a young corporal named Montegue in charge. He moved the soldiers and musketeers to the palace walls and ordered them to line up before the gate. Then he ordered his two best sharpshooters to take flanking positions and shoot down any enemy officers they could see. As the army approached, the first row of Montaigne started firing, then fell back and reloaded as the second line stepped forward to fire. Meanwhile, the sharpshooters shot at any officer they saw. The Castillian advance broke down with alarming rapidity and Montegue's relentless musket line caught the Church army completely off guard. They retreated; Montegue followed and let no man escape alive.

Since that day, Montegue has been made High General of the Montaigne army and the King has declared himself Emperor. In retaliation for the attack, l'Empereur ordered his new General to invade Castille. Currently, the High General's armies are in the western half of that devout nation, increasing the Emperor's holdings and freeing the people from the tyranny of the Vaticine Church.

The Death of the Hierophant

Soon after Montegue's Stand, the Vaticine Hierophant went to Montaigne in an effort to repair relations with l'Empereur. During his stay, he suddenly grew ill and died in the space of a few days. The Montaigne claimed he died of the Plague and burned his body to keep the disease from spreading. While suspicious in the extreme, the Church has been unable to act his death has thrown the Vaticine into chaos.

According to Church tradition, another Hierophant must be unanimously chosen by the high council of cardinals. For two years the council has been unable to come to a unanimous decision, and so for two years there has been no Hierophant at the head of the Church.

The lack of leadership has caused great distress to the flock; more importantly, it has freed the hands of the Inquisition. The organization was answerable only to the Hierophant, and now there is nothing to hold it back. The most important change has been the swift reversal in the Church's attitude towards its scholars.

It began when an Avalon scholar named Jeremy Cook published a paper denouncing alchemy, the backbone of Church metaphysical theory since the time of the Third Prophet. Instead, he proposed a method of observation he called "Empiricism." Cook's paper caused so much controversy among his Contemporaries that it attracted the attention of the Inquisition. In a clerical court, he was found guilty of heresy and put to death. Since that day, scholarly research in the Church has come to a near standstill. Secular scholars continue to work, but for the first time in its history the Vaticine Church is no longer the spearhead of science in Théah.

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Calendar

All Théan months use the following calendar:

<u>Soldi</u>	<u>Veldi</u>	<u>Amordi</u>	<u>Terdi</u>	<u>Guerdi</u>	<u>Redi</u>	<u>Voltadi</u>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

The feasting days of the 15th and 30th are not "real" days and not considered part of the week.

Knowledge

With the help of the Vaticine Church, Théans are a little ahead of where our own technological progress was in the mid-17th century. The last ten years of Théan history have produced an impressive array of scientific advancements: the microscope, the reflecting telescope, knowledge of human anatomy, and astounding discoveries in astronomy, physics and chemistry.

Unfortunately, with the Inquisition's rise to power, these advancements are in danger of being destroyed. The Inquisition claims that the time of knowledge is past, and that Théans should prepare for the end of the world rather than dabble in scientific heresy. The secret society known as the Invisible College has managed to thwart their efforts, but without a Hierophant in place, no one can truly keep them in check. Countless advancement may be lost to the flames if the Inquisitors are not stopped.

Here is a short summation of Théah's current technological development and knowledge:

Archaeology

Currently, archaeological technology is restricted to shovels, brushes, historical investigations and notepads. The Théans are perfectly capable of sketching the things they discover in the archaeological digs across Théah, but they often don't understand the purpose of these objects. Worse, important artifacts often get destroyed accidentally, or stolen to hang on some private collector's wall.

Architecture and Construction

The Théans are capable of some very impressive architectural feats. While they couldn't construct a highway, a suspension bridge, or a skyscraper, they've built beautiful cities and enormous cathedrals that stretch up to 400 feet in the air. They possess the secret of making concrete, but they lack the mass production facilities necessary to use it on a large scale. Their roads are cobbled, their roofs are often covered with sheets of tin, and their windows, at least in the bigger cities, are usually made of glass.

Astronomy

The Théans understand that their world, Terra, is a sphere that orbits their sun (which is called Solas), and their moon orbits their world. In addition, they've discovered five other planets that orbit their sun in the same way. There may be more, but their telescopes are too primitive to see them. The names of the six known planets, starting with the closest to the sun, are: Velme, Amora, Terra (the Théan homeland), Guer, Re, and Volta. The planets were all named after the gods of the Old Republic.

Théans know how big Terra is within a 1% degree of error, and they can predict eclipses of both the sun and the moon. Telescopes have been around in Théah for a century, but a few months ago (1668), a Castillian astronomer named Alvara Arciniega constructed the first reflecting telescope. It has allowed Théans to see further into the skies than ever before. With the help of the Invisible College, he has revealed his invention to the scientific community and hopes to further refine it in the future.

Chemistry

Chemistry has recently emerged from its mystical roots in alchemy (although in Théah there could be some truth to alchemy). An Avalon named Jeremy Cook wrote *The Rational Chemist* in 1661, which established a more rigorous discipline based on the scientific method. Now only a few practicing alchemists are left, most having turned to the new science of chemistry. In 1662 Cook created the first air pump, an act which should have proven the existence of air. Unfortunately, by that time, the Inquisition was coming to power, and Cook was shot for his heretical research. His work survived only because of the efforts of the Invisible College.

Mathematics

Théan mathematicians have worked out the mysteries of algebra, trigonometry, geometry, and the zero. They do not yet possess calculus, but it won't be long in coming. Probability is not yet a rigorous discipline, and, as Verdugo himself said, "Only gamblers would be interested in its results."

Medicine

Théan doctors are significantly more advanced than our own doctors were in the 17th century. The humor theory, which states that the body is governed by four humors (blood, phlegm, bile, and black bile) was denounced by Vendel physician Franz Deleboe in 1661. The Inquisition carried him off in the night, but word of his revelation leaked, and other physicians have been able to capitalize on his work, although with less success than they might like.

The Théans understand that careful hygiene during operations leads to a higher survival rate, but they aren't sure why. To treat a gunshot wound, they know to remove the bullet and stitch the wound closed afterwards. They also know to change the bandages on a wound every so often and to boil the bandages to make sure they're clean. They believe that it's very bad to mix the blood of two people together, but they don't yet know why. They are aware that diseases are spread by sick people, so they keep them quarantined. Unfortunately, they don't know about bacteria and viruses yet, so the causes of disease are still a mystery. In

1610, scholars completed a map of the interior of the human body, which has greatly aided future medical studies.

On a more tangential note, Avalon scholars have recently begun to study air pollution at the urging of Lord Ryefellow, a noble with a lung condition aggravated by the Avalon practice of burning peat and coal for heat. The study, while medical, is one of the first instances of environmentalism in Théah.

It should also be mentioned that the microscope has been around in Théah since 1608. Its inventor, a Vendel whose name is not recorded, used it to view blood corpuscles, as well as insects and small plants. In addition to its aid in medicine, it has greatly enhanced the fields of biology, botany and entomology.


Natural Philosophy (Physics)

The field of physics has witnessed some startling breakthroughs in the past few years, despite the efforts of the Inquisition. Static electricity was harnessed in 1662 with a small device using a rotating globe of sulphur. Maria Alverado, a Castillian scholar, invented the device as part of her university studies; it was the first practical demonstration of static electricity on a large scale.

The Inquisition was not powerful enough at the time to stop Alverado's experiment (she was prominent and well-respected) but they came close to wiping out another breakthrough just four years later. The Castillian Alvara Arciniega discovered the light spectrum with a series of homemade prisms. The Inquisition, upon learning of this theory, attempted to hang him, but Arciniega was a skilled swordsman and killed three Inquisitors before escaping to the country. (It was there that he first perfected the reflecting telescope, detailed in the Astronomy section.)

Navigation

The Théans possess magnetic compasses and astrolabes, but do not yet possess a chronometer that is accurate enough and resistant enough to the moist sea air to allow them to measure longitude. The Montaigne have a method that works, but it requires a noble gifted with Porte magic to teleport home and look at a clock there, then return. Obviously, this method



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doesn't see much use, but it does give the Montaigne navy the best maps of Théah. Most mapmakers realize that Théah comprises only a small part of the globe, but they believe the rest contains only oceans and the occasional island chain like those in the western seas.

Weapons and Warfare

Currently, muskets are the weapon of choice in warfare, typically supported by a line of pikemen. The Théans do not yet have rifles, so the accuracy of these guns is less than it could be. They have developed cannons as well, but do not yet possess the ballistic knowledge necessary to create mortars. The Montaigne have also developed primitive grenades, but the weapons have proven so unreliable that only peasant levies (grenadiers) carry them into battle. The average lifespan of a grenadier is three battles.

In duels of honor, rapiers or other fencing weapons are commonly used, with the saber reserved for the brave cavalymen of the day.

Pirates and Privateers

"It took only five days at sea for him to learn why the sailors sang songs about going home."

– *Two Years on the Waves* by Eliza Cunningsworth

"A pirate hunts all colors; a buccaneer all but his own; and a privateer only those he is told."

– Sea proverb

Ships and shipping have played a large role in Théah's history despite the lack of a New World (which spurred their development on our own planet). With the continent surrounded by seas and bisected by a huge river, ships have always proven a more viable means of transportation than long and treacherous journeys overland. Théah's economic lifeblood literally travels over the waves. The two foremost economic powers – Vendel and Vodacce – depend on merchant shipping, and Avalon has used the Sea Dogs to similar (if more brutal) effect. An array of outlying islands in the far west have produced troves of riches from the Surneth ruins, and the Crescent Empire can generally only be accessed by the water. Because of this, Théah has a

thriving shipping industry, fuelling its economy and giving rise to an entire subculture of sailors. And where gold and trade goods travel by sea, there are always pirates willing to plunder them...

The seas of Théah are almost a world unto themselves. Here, there are no nations, no borders, no towns or cities; just ships and the men who sail them. Each vessel is like a nation unto itself, a self-contained community with its own rides and customs. The simplicity and freedom of such a life can be remarkably tempting.

Théah's shipping lanes and ports of call form a subculture all their own: an exotic world with riches and dangers to stir the soul. Seamen talk about the thrill of spotting another sail, not knowing whether it's friend or foe; of colourful characters lurking in the back of seedy bars; and of untold treasures hiding behind loaded cannons. A life at sea can be both blessing and a curse, but it's never boring.

Every Théan nation maintains a navy, although Ussura's is more of a fishing fleet and Vodacce's is divided among its seven Princes. They guard important shipments, patrol trade routes for pirates, and spar with other navies if they can get away with it. The seas are large, however, and no navy can be everywhere at once. Merchant vessels often carry extra weapons, and countless mercenary ships sell protection to the highest bidder. Then there are the pirates: sharks searching for prey wherever they can be found, using terror and chain shot to send their victims to the bottom.

While the regular shipping lanes form the crux of Théah's naval activities, the western islands hold equal excitement. Besides exploration and the dangerous promise of the Surneth ruins, the absence of civilization makes for tempting territory. Here, pirates can bury their booty, wanted men can vanish into an island paradise, and the great nations can hide all manner of secrets. Rival buccaneers fight personal wars amid these unexplored archipelagos, while the Explorer's Society risks life and limb to bring secret Surneth knowledge back. Here at the untamed edges of the sea, Théah's buccaneers can live as free as they choose... and die just as easily.

Types of Sailors

Sailors in Théah fall into four basic categories.

Merchants are those who use their ships for trading or other commercial activities. They include businessmen hauling cargo from one port to another as well as fishermen, whalers, and explorers of the western seas. They also include less savoury professions such as smuggling and bootlegging. More sailors belong to this class than any other.

Naval Recruits belong to a nation's official navy, serving as officers or seamen aboard a military vessel. They patrol the waters around their country, protect important convoys, hunt pirates, and do battle with other navies. Life on a naval vessel is notoriously bad, although there are exceptions (usually under competent captains).

Privateers form a nebulous category of mercenaries and ne'er-do-wells. They're essentially "pirates for hire," granted official sanction from a government to patrol the seas. They prey on their employer's enemies, stealing booty from rival nations while keeping the more formal navies from dirtying their hands. Privateers also engage in escort duties and other specific missions. The Sea Dogs, under the sanction of Queen Elaine of Avalon, are the most notorious privateers on the seas today.

Pirates are the wolves of the sea – outlaws who ride the waves in search of cargo to plunder. They answer to no one save themselves and most feel obligated only to the profits they steal from their victims. The dangers of a pirate's lifestyle are beyond counting, but they have more freedom than any other class in Théah. Because they are usually after the goods in their targets' holds, they rarely attack to sink ships, preferring instead to close and board them. Their bloodthirsty reputation has earned them few friends: military vessels have orders to sink all pirate craft on sight, and captured pirates are usually hanged without trial. Despite that, not all of them are malevolent. The famous pirate Gosse, for example, was renowned for his gentlemanly behaviour, and the Brotherhood of the Coast, while ruthless, has brought a rough sense of honour – and the first stirrings of democracy – to the Théan seas.

Secret Societies

Los Vagos

"Live for Castille Bleed for her people. Die in their name."

– El Vago

Castille has never been in such dire straits as it is today. Foreign invaders control nearly a third of the country, the Inquisition moves openly through the streets, and the crowned head is a young boy with no experience in worldly matters. In these dark times, the people cry out for a protector. Los Vagos have answered their call.

Led by the mysterious vigilante known as the Vagabond, this clandestine organization of Castillian patriots works to protect their country from all enemies. Their mission is simple... defend King Sandoval from corruption, save the people from the oppression of the Inquisition, and liberate the western territories from the occupying Montaigne. They work in secrecy and never reveal their true identity, for Castille is awash in potential enemies. Their numbers are small, but prominently placed; they have sympathizers in the highest avenues of power.

The actions of Los Vagos have reverberated far beyond their immediate scope, restoring hope to a nation on the verge of despair. They rescue helpless citizens from the Inquisition's flames, and sabotage the war efforts of the invading Montaigne. They have prevented at least three assassinations.



The seal of Los Vagos

attempts on Good King Sandoval, and rumour has it that one of the King's advisors belongs to the order. With each new rescue, with each thwarted plot, they encourage other Castellians to stand up for themselves. As the nation braces itself for an ever-darkening future, its people look to the rooftops – and the shadowy form of El Vago – to see them through.

Sophia's Daughters

"The puppet never sees the strings that make it dance."

– Duchess Anne Shallott

Ostensibly, Sophia's Daughters exists to bring equal rights to Théah's "fairer sex." In practice, however, they are far more than that – a veiled political machine manoeuvring important men in directions they could never hope to perceive. Using boarding and finishing schools, they train young women in matters covert and clandestine, then place them near men in powerful positions – to point them in the "proper" direction. Through their actions, they have slowly gained strength. Eventually, they hope to move in public rather than in secret, taking their agenda to the streets of Théah.

When not engaging in such activities, they make efforts to keep women safe from abusive fathers and husbands. They also help lower-class women better themselves through earnest work and diligence. The merchant guilds (especially the jenny's Guild) have been particularly useful in this matter, as have Vodacce's courtesans, who form the Daughters' largest bloc.

The Daughters have used magical as well as political means to further their goals. Glamour serves to beguile the weak-willed, while Porte allows them to pass secret orders and Sorte can manipulate the strands of fate to their advantage. An abnormally high number of the Daughters are sorcerers; it is even rumoured that they have rejuvenating potions to extend their members' lives. The Daughters' leadership hotly denies such rumours, of course.

Each member of the society is required to keep a detailed journal, sending copies to Daughter-controlled nunneries where they are organized into a great library. Hundreds of Daughters compile and catalogue these journals, which comprise one of the most accurate recordings of history in



The seal of Sophia's Daughters

the world. The Rilasciare makes use of the records from time to time in exchange for other secrets.

The Church

The Inquisition

The Inquisition is a secretive order within the Church, created by the Third Prophet following his rise to power. He charged it with seeking out and destroying sorcery in whatever form it took. Inquisitors were answerable only to the Hierophant, and had vast authority over Church procedure. Vaticines were expected to assist them in any way they could. Thanks to their efforts, sorcery in civilized Théah remained underground for many centuries.

Luckily, they were always kept in check by the Hierophant. Each successive leader kept a close eye on the Inquisition, limiting its membership and ensuring that its power never grew beyond control. Overly ambitious Inquisitors would be quietly removed from their positions, which kept the order focused on its duties instead of seeking to control the Church.

Recently, however, that has begun to change. Over the centuries, the Church has gradually grown more conservative, giving the Inquisition greater leeway in carrying out its duties. That rising tide crested when the current Hierophant disappeared. Now, the Inquisition is answerable to no one and cannot be stemmed until a new




Hierophant is chosen. Cardinal Esteban Verdugo has moved quickly to seize power, expanding the Inquisition's goals and filling its ranks with devout fanatics. They declared war on Théah's universities: burning books and hanging professors who oppose them. Their enemies are kidnapped and executed as heretics; many who might oppose them are too frightened to act. In the space of a decade, they have come to dominate the Church's affairs.

The Inquisition's stated goals are the destruction of heresy and saving souls from Legion's flames. In practical terms, that translates into a ruthless campaign against sorcery, Objectionism and all forms of learning. Théah's universities in particular have suffered; Cardinal Verdugo has declared that the time for learning is past, and that humanity must prepare their souls for the Fourth Coming. He has cut university budgets, bullied professors into abandoning experiments, and killed those who persist in "unholy" studies. Most believe that his actions are a naked grab for power, but Verdugo insists that he is merely saving as many souls as he can. With the vast control he currently exercises, the argument is moot.

Organization and Methods

The Inquisition is organized around a small group of "High Inquisitors" – priests and Bishops charged with fulfilling the Third Prophet's edicts. They answer to Cardinal Verdugo, the Grand High Inquisitor who controls the entire organization. Beneath them is a bewildering array of assistants, lackeys and contacts, which they control through loyalty, fear or blackmail. Those willingly involved in the Inquisition's affairs may hold the title of "Inquisitor" if they wish – a rank beneath the High Inquisitors who command them.

Because the order is ostensibly secret, Inquisitors and High Inquisitors all have normal positions within the Church. Most masquerade as ordinary priests or mundane agents of Vaticine authority. That way, they can move among the populace and sniff out their prey without raising suspicions. Their targets are heretics – scholars, sorcerers, Objectionists and anyone who questions the Church's policies. Often, "blasphemous" literature and scientific research are targets as well. When they have amassed enough evidence against someone, they strike without warning, using surprise and terror to keep their target confused. They attack at night if



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they can and always make sure the local authorities cannot intervene. Victims are hanged on sight, or burned if the Inquisitors have time. Experiments, books and research notes are burned as well. The Inquisitors then vanish without a trace, leaving cryptic warnings to accompany the bodies. By maintaining their mundane identities, they can fade away before help arrives. Their tactics have been devastatingly effective.

The Inquisition holds the most power in Castille, where the Vaticine Church is strong. Castille is the only nation where they can move openly among the populace, without hiding their true purpose. In the most fanatic areas, they can even act as *de facto* rulers. Other nations require more subtlety. Montaigne Inquisitors use the peasantry – who are still largely Vaticine – to mask their movements against the heretical nobility. The chaos of Eisen makes it easy for them to operate in that broken country, although they must avoid the forces of the Eisenfürsten who dislike religious fanatics. Vodacce, while dangerous, is tightly wound with political infighting, which the Inquisition can use to their advantage. There are few Inquisitors in Avalon, Ussura, or Vendel; all three nations are hostile to Vaticine zealots.

Two forces currently stand against the Inquisition: the secret society known as the Invisible College and the mysterious vigilante called El Vago. So far, they have been able to stem the worst of Verdugo's crimes, but unless a new Hierophant is chosen soon, their efforts can only slow him down.

The Objectionist Reform

In October of 1517, a twenty-eight-year-old monk walked up to the door of his Bishop and nailed a piece of paper upon it. This was not a unique act; there were other pieces of paper nailed to the door, each a list of topics the monks of the mission wished to discuss at the end of the week. But this paper was different. The author was named Matthias Lieber, and within the span of five years, the whole world would know his name.

Lieber's paper contained a list of inflammatory questions, which he brought with him to the annual Diet in Castille. They challenged every notion of Church authority, calling for widespread reform and a fundamental shift in Vaticine

philosophy. Lieber denounced his fellows in the presence of the Hierophant, demanding an explanation for "the Church's inexcusable crimes and decadence." The Hierophant excommunicated Lieber on the spot, demanding his death, but he was smuggled out of Castille by King Franz II, and returned to Eisen.

In the safety of his homeland, Lieber used a new invention, the printing press, to spread his news. He also translated the Books of the Prophets into Low Eisen, and distributed them throughout the country. Through his efforts, a new religious movement called Objectionism slowly spread, first to Eisen and then to the entire world. Within a few years, it had reached every corner of civilized Théah.

Objectionism embraces the same basic ideals as the Vaticines, but with key differences. Under it, the Church no longer acts as an arbitrator between Theus and humanity: no one can interpose or "filter" the teachings of the Creator. Theus is everywhere and therefore needs no human institution to interpret His will. Priests cannot absolve sins; only Theus can. The Church cannot create miracles; only Theus can. Therefore, humanity should appeal directly to Theus for absolution and guidance, not depend upon the Church to do it for them.

They can do this by reading the Books of the Prophets and acting on what they read. They can express their faith through charity, hard work, and helping others in need of aid. "Theus," Lieber wrote, "has granted every creature a measure of His grace, which we must use to further His good works." While the Church can act as a facilitator in this scenario, it cannot claim any absolute authority or interpose itself between Theus and the individual.

Objectionism is organized roughly along Vaticine lines, but with fewer ranks and less authority. Individual priests are called "chaplains," who each oversee a single church. "Deacons" are senior chaplains who each coordinate twenty churches. Above the deacons are "Apostles" who coordinate the church's efforts for an entire province or nation. They are the highest branch of the faith; there are twenty-five of them in all. No apostle has authority over any other, and each is considered equal in the eyes of the church. Apostles are elected by the deacons, who can also remove them from

office by a vote of no-confidence.

There are no dioceses, no bishops and no Hierophant; chaplains cannot absolve sins or declare heresies. Fasts, pilgrimages, and miracles are unnecessary. Baptisms take place at age seven, and the children are not required to take an exam. A chaplain's official duties are fairly limited – holding mass, overseeing marriages and conducting funeral rites – but he or she is expected to serve as an example to his or her congregation. When not spreading the word, Objectionist priests are expected to work in universities and hospitals, bettering the lives of their fellow men.

Needless to say, the Vaticine hasn't taken well to this new faith. For one hundred years after Lieber's teachings, tensions between the two sects rose until exploding into the War of the Cross. After thirty years of bloodshed, Théans have come to the inevitable conclusion that the continent will remain forever divided between Objectionist and Vaticine faiths.

Equipment and Starting Wealth

All Heroes are assumed to start out with a set of clothes and a single weapon of their choice. If they wish to purchase more, they must use their starting money. A general price list can be found in at the end of Chapter Three on page 166-167 of the Players' Guide. Your starting money is equal to your monthly income multiplied by three.

New Advantages

Specialty (Varies)

You have trained yourself to be skilled in one very narrow area of expertise, bypassing the schooling you would ordinarily need. *You gain one Rank in a Knack that is not found inside a skill you already possess. This Advantage costs 1 HP for a Basic Knack, and 3 HP for an Advanced Knack. You may purchase this Advantage up to three times, and increase the Rank of these Knacks during character creation. Knacks purchased in this manner may be increased normally after Hero creation and must obey normal limitations.*

Ship Design

Some parties may wish to run a ship of their own as part of an ongoing campaign, or GMs may wish to construct ships as allies or adversaries to the Heroes. Sailing and ship-to-ship combat rules are detailed in the *Game Masters' Guide*, pages 180-182.

There are three steps to designing a ship in *7th Sea*.

1. Assign Traits

Ships have the same five Traits as Heroes (Brawn, Finesse, Resolve, Wits, and Panache) and can go up to an absolute maximum of 10 in each. This, as well as the points allowed in modifications and flaws, is further limited by the total number of points spent on the ship (see the chart below).

Ships may exceed their maximum in flaws or modifications if they take one, and only one. Thus, even a small ship can have Haunted as a flaw or Retractable Keel as a modification. In addition, a ship cannot have obviously opposing modifications and flaws, such as Good and Bad Captain, or Friendly Spirit and Haunted.

Heroes can only begin with a 10, 15, or 20 point ship. Beyond that, they'll have to either save up and buy a ship later in the campaign or capture one from someone else.

2. Add Modifications and Flaws

Once the Traits are assigned, modifications and flaws can be added. Each Modification costs a number of points equal to its Difficulty Rating, while each flaw reduces the point cost of the ship. Note that flaws and modifications cannot change the maximum Rank allowed in each Trait. That is set by the number of points spent in step 1.

3. Calculate Other Values

Draft and Cargo are both equal to a ship's Resolve, unless the ship has a modification or flaw that alters them. The Crew of a ship is equal to its Finesse unless modified by a flaw or modification, and a ship's Reputation always starts at 0, regardless of the Captain's Reputation.

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Example: Bill wants his character to start with a ship. He settles on a 15 point ship; he can also take up to 3 points in flaws, for a total of 18 points. He may only take up to 3 points of modifications, and the ship's Traits can't be any higher than a 4 normally. (Even if he could have spent 5 points on flaws, the Traits would still have been limited to a 4.) He decides to make an agile ship with fewer cannons, so he assigns the Traits like this: Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Resolve 3, Wits 4, Panache 3. That costs him 15 points. If he wants any modifications, he'll have to pay for them with flaws, so he picks the Vermin flaw, for 3 points. Then, he chooses Wide Rudder for 2 points, to increase the ship's Wits to 5, and Hidden Towline for 1 point. Lastly, he looks at his Resolve for his ship's Draft and Cargo (3 each, as there are no modifiers), and Finesse for his Crew (3 also). The ship's Reputation starts at 0.

Ship Maintenance

It costs 250G and takes one week to repair one Dramatic Wound on a ship. Once a year a ship needs 100G in maintenance costs. Failure to pay this results in the ship's Traits all dropping by 1 until maintenance is performed.

Ship Modification

Besides Traits, there are a number of other things that give life to a ship and make it memorable in the eyes of the crew.

Some ships are built too heavily and sit low in the water, while others seem to have Legion's own luck in a fight. Some ships have more than their share of vermin, and a few were built with such skill that they exceed the normal limits their design imposes upon them.

Each ship modification has a difficulty rating assigned to it. A Shipwright must have a Shipwright Knack at least as high as a modification's difficulty in order to install it. Modifications cost 750G and take two weeks to install per point of difficulty if added to an existing ship. A ship can never have more modifications installed than it is allowed according to the chart in Step 1 of Ship Design, on the previous page. Ship flaws may be bought off after creation at a cost of 1,500G and two weeks for each point the flaw was worth.

Ship Building after Creation

In order to purchase a ship after Hero creation, go through all the ordinary steps of design, and then tally up the total number of points that would have been invested in the ship. It will cost 600G and take one week per point to build the ship.

The shipwright must then make a Wits + Shipwright test against a TN of 5 x the highest Trait or difficulty rating of a modification on the ship. Thus, a ship whose highest Trait is a Brawn of 5 calls for a TN of 25, while that same ship with a retractable keel would have a TN of 30.

If this roll fails, then the ship takes an additional two weeks to build. If the roll fails by 10 or more, then the ship acquires 1 additional point of flaws for every 10 by which the roll fell short. These additional flaws do not give the ship more points to build with. In any event, the Shipwright must roll again until he succeeds.

Ship Maximums

Total Points	Max in Trait	Max in Mods	Max in Flaws
10	3	2	2
15	4	3	3
20	5	4	4
25	6	5	5
30	7	6	6
35	8	7	7
40	9	8	8
45	10	9	9
50+	10	10	10

Modification List

Note: Modifications that cannot be added to a ship after its creation are marked with an asterisk after their name. Modifications and flaws may only be taken once per ship unless otherwise noted.

Difficulty 1

Hidden Towline

This modification fixes a hidden rope to the underside of the ship. *Smugglers use this to haul contraband materials beneath the water, where it is unlikely to be found. On the downside, this increases the ship's Draft by 1.*

Oars

The ship has one or more banks of oars. *This modification allows a ship to move even when becalmed or sailing directly into the wind. However, when oars are used, the ship's Wits is considered 2 less, to a minimum of 1*

Prow Ram*

This ship is equipped with a ram and a reinforced keel to absorb the impact of a collision. *When this ship rams another ship (see Advanced Naval Battles, Pirate Nations, page 106, for ramming rules), the target ship suffers one additional Critical Hit, and this ship suffers one fewer.*

Reinforced Masts

The masts of the ship are specially hardened against chainshot. *This modification allows the ship to roll two extra unkept dice for Wound Checks when fired upon with chainshot.*

Difficulty 2

Concealed Gunports

The gunports of this ship are designed to be nearly invisible when closed. *This ship's Brawn can be kept a secret until used. Brawn dice must be revealed before being used (this can be done at any time using no Actions), and cannot be concealed again after being revealed until the next Scene.*

Overgunned

The ship is loaded down with cannons. *This modification*

increases the ship's Brawn by 1. This may exceed the normal maximum for the ship's point cost.

Silk Sails

The ship is equipped with rare silk sails from Cathay. *This modification increases the ship's Panache by 1. This may exceed the normal maximum for the ship's point cost.*

Sturdy Hull*

The ship's hull is reinforced with extra planks. *This modification increases the ship's Resolve by 1. This may exceed the normal maximum for the ship's point cost.*

Well Trained Crew

The ship's crew are particularly skilled. *This modification increases the ship's Finesse by 1. This may exceed the normal maximum for the ship's point cost.*

Wide Rudder

The ship has a wide rudder, enabling her to make quicker turns. *This modification increases the ship's Wits by 1 This may exceed the normal maximum for the ship's point cost.*

Difficulty 3

Decoration

Due to her distinctive decorations, the ship is very memorable. *The ship's positive Reputation awards are all increased by 1.*

Extended Keel


The ship's keel is particularly long, granting increased stability at the cost of a deeper draft. *This ship rolls two extra unkept dice when checking for capsizing, but her draft is increased by 1.*

Lucky*

The ship has always been particularly lucky, both in and out of combat. *This modification gives the ship one extra Drama die.*

Smuggling Compartments

Some of the supposedly solid areas of the ship are in fact hollow, and used to smuggle contraband. *Up to 1 Cargo can be hidden in these secret compartments, safe from all but the most thorough search.*



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Difficulty 4

*Extra Cargo Space**

The cargo hold of the ship is well designed and can hold more goods. *This ship's Cargo is increased by 1.*

*Extra Crew Quarters**

Extra quarters have been provided for the crew, so the ship is manned by more men than other ships her size. *This ship's Crew is increased by 1.*

Good Captain

The Captain of the ship is a particularly able man. *Once per Round, the Captain may add one unkept die to any roll the ship makes. This modification can only be taken if the Captain (whether he is a Hero or an NPC) has a Leadership Knack of at least 4.*

*Narrow Hull**

The ship is built to be narrow, and slip through tight squeezes. *Piloting checks that involve sailing through a narrow opening receive one Free Raise.*

Difficulty 5

Boarding Party

This ship has a well-trained boarding party aboard. *When rolling on the Boarding chart in the Advanced Naval Battles section, this ship moves up one result on the chart,*

Extra Boarding Guns

The ship has a number of small cannons used to repel boarding parties. *When rolling on the Boarding chart in the Advanced Naval Battles section, ships attempting to board this ship move down one result on the chart.*

Friendly Spirit

The ship is inhabited by some sort of friendly entity that occasionally helps out. *Once per Scene, the ship rolls two extra Kept dice on any one check.*

*Slight Draft**

The hull of the ship is designed in such a way that she can sail in shallower water than other ships of its size. *This ship's Draft is reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1.*

Swivel Cannon

A number of small cannons have been placed on swiveling mounts. *Once per Round, this ship can fire outside her normal firing arc with a Brawn of 2.*

Difficulty 6

*Retractable Keel**

This ship can retract its keel, reducing her draft, but making her less stable. *While her keel is retracted, the ship reduces her Draft by 2, but rolls one less unkept die when checking for capsizing. It takes one Action to retract or extend the keel.*

Ship Flaws

Note: Flaws that cannot be removed from a ship after her creation are marked with an asterisk. Modifications and flaws may only be taken once per ship unless otherwise noted.

1 point flaws

Flimsy Masts

The ship's masts are built of inferior wood. *This ship rolls one less unkept die for Wound Checks when fired upon with chainshot.*

Old

Some of the ship's planks are rotten, but overall, she's in good shape; she just needs a little more love than a newer ship. *This ship requires maintenance every six months instead of every year*


Sluggish

The ship tends to sail more slowly than other ships of her size. *This ship travels one less hex when she moves forward.*

2 point flaws

Brittle Hull

The ship's hull was not properly cured, and splinters easily when struck by cannon fire. *When rolling Wound Checks, none of this ship's dice may explode.*



7th Sea

Leaky Hull

The ship's hull is poorly built, and takes on water even when carefully tarred. *When making Resolve-related checks, none of this ship's dice may explode.*

Poorly Trained Crew

The ship has a particularly poorly trained crew. *When making Brawn-related checks, none of this ship's dice may explode.*

Small Keel

The ship's keel is too slight for its size, giving the ship a slight tendency to roll over. *This ship rolls one fewer unkept die when checking for capsizing.*

Small Rudder

The rudder is not big enough to turn a ship of this size, so she turns slowly. *When making Wits-related checks, none of this ship's dice may explode.*

Tattered Sails

The ship's sails are in poor repair. *When making Panache-related checks, none of this ship's dice may explode.*

Undergunned

The ship has fewer cannons than most other ships her size. *When making Brawn-related checks (but not Wound Checks), none of this ship's dice may explode.*

3 point flaws

Gaudy

The ship is offensive to the eyes. Either she looks shabby, or has clashing decorations that make her look silly. *Due to her distinctive decorations, the ship is very memorable, but in a bad way. Therefore, her negative Reputation awards are all increased by 1.*

Incompetent Bosun

The Bosun is in charge of the deck, and if he does his job poorly, the ship suffers as a whole. The bosun of this ship is utterly incompetent at his job. *The ship's travel speed (see the Advanced Sailing section) is reduced by 25%.*

*Unlucky**

Something about the ship seems to have given her a run of

bad luck. Perhaps her keel was laid on an unlucky day, or perhaps she sailed into a cursed area once. *The ship receives one fewer Drama die.*

Vermin

The ship is infested with rats, weevils, and other vermin that constantly get into the provisions. *Ship's provisions only last three weeks for every month's worth of supplies purchased.*

4 point flaws

Awkward Cargo Space

The cargo hold of the ship was poorly designed, so that this ship can't carry as much cargo as other ships of her size. *This ship's Cargo is reduced by 1.*

Bad Captain

The Captain of this ship is particularly incapable of doing his job, *The Captain subtracts one unkept die from the first roll the ship makes each Round.*

Cramped

The crew quarters of the ship are poorly designed. This means she has to make do with fewer crewmen than other ships of her size. *This ship's Crew is reduced by 1.*

Disgruntled Crew

The men on the ship are easily upset by any little thing going wrong. They help the Captain if the rum ration runs out. *The GM may spend one Drama die to have one Crew turn surly and refuse to do anything for the rest of the Scene. If they're in combat, they surrender immediately.*


5 point flaws

Deep Draft

The ship has a deeper draft than most of her size, and can't sail in shallow waters. *The ship's Draft is increased by 1.*

*Haunted**

The ship seems to be inhabited by a malevolent entity. Occasionally, strange things happen aboard her. Other times, it's as if she has a mind of her own. *The GM may spend two Drama dice to control the ship's actions for one Round. He may do this once per Scene. In addition, strange things have*



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a tendency to happen on the ship.

Warped Rudder

The ship's rudder is bent, either to port or to starboard. Left to her own devices, the ship will sail around in circles. *At the end of each Round, this ship turns 60 degrees to port (or starboard) without spending any Actions. The direction is chosen during ship creation.*

Sample Ships

10 point ships

Pirate Sloop

Brawn 4, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wits 2, Panache 2
Modifications: Overgunned (2)
Flaws: Vermin (3)
Draft: 2
Crew: 2
Cargo: 2
Reputation: 0

Explorer's Brigantine

Brawn 1, Finesse 1, Resolve 2, Wits 3, Panache 3
Modifications: Extra Cargo (4)
Flaws: Disgruntled Crew (4)
Draft.. 2
Crew: 1
Cargo: 3
Reputation: 0

Naval Frigate

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Resolve 2, Wits 2, Panache 2
Modifications: Prow Ram (1)
Flaws: Small Keel (2)
Draft: 2
Crew: 3
Cargo: 2
Reputation: 0

Merchant Snow

Brawn 1, Finesse 2, Resolve 2, Wits 4, Panache 2
Modifications: Wide Rudder (2)
Flaws: Undergunned (2)
Draft: 2

Crew: 2
Cargo: 2
Reputation: 0

15 point ships

Merchant Pinnace

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Resolve 4, Wits 4, Panache 4
Modifications: Lucky (3)
Flaws: Deep Draft (5)
Draft: 5
Crew: 3
Cargo: 4
Reputation: 0

Pirate Schooner

Brawn 5, Finesse 4, Resolve 3, Wits 3, Panache 3
Modifications: Overgunned (2)
Flaws: Disgruntled Crew (4)
Draft: 3
Crew: 4
Cargo: 3
Reputation: 0

Smuggler's Fleut

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Resolve 4, Wits 4, Panache 4
Modifications: Smuggling Compartments (3)
Flaws: Haunted (5)
Draft: 4
Crew: 3
Cargo: 4 (1 of which is hidden)
Reputation: 0

Naval Bark

Brawn 2, Finesse 3, Resolve 3, Wits 3, Panache 3
Modifications: Boarding Party (5)
Flaws: Awkward Cargo Space (4)
Draft: 3
Crew: 3
Cargo: 2
Reputation: 0

20 point ships

Naval Galleon

Brawn 4, Finesse 4, Resolve 6, Wits 4, Panache 4

Modifications: Sturdy Hull (2)
 Flaws: Unlucky (3)
 Draft: 6
 Crew: 4
 Cargo: 6
 Reputation: 0

Naval Man o' War

Brawn 5, Finesse 3, Resolve 3, Wits 4, Panache 4
 Modifications: Slight Draft (5)
 Flaws: Awkward Cargo Space (4)
 Draft: 2
 Crew: 3
 Cargo: 2
 Reputation: 0

Pirate Barkentine

Brawn 4, Finesse 4, Resolve 4, Wits 4, Panache 4
 Modifications: Good Captain (4)
 Flaws: Disgruntled Crew (4)
 Draft: 4
 Crew: 4
 Cargo: 4
 Reputation: 0

The Syrneth

What follows is a series of articles from the Explorer Society regarding their theories and speculations on Syrneth. While it may not be as straightforward as the previous sections, it does give a first-hand glimpse at what the Théans believe they are dealing with in those vast caverns and lost cities.

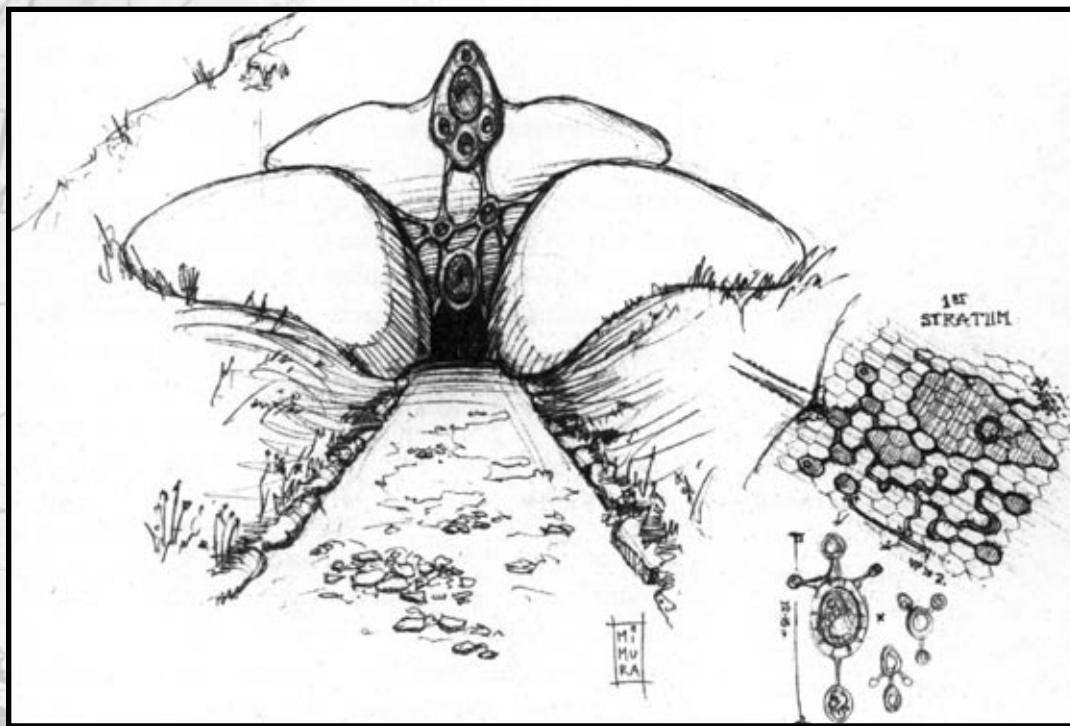
Presented by Headmaster Vincent Berndavore at the Annual Archaeological Conference in Carleon, Tertius 17, 1668.


Today is the tenth anniversary of the Explorer's Society, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has made this decade so memorable. We have improved the fields of exploration, cartography, and world knowledge and made great discoveries in their sciences of chemistry, medicine, and mathematics, among others. I, for one, could not be more proud.

Though I have been the Headmaster of this Society for only five years, I would hope that all of you are as pleased with my work as I am with yours. The nation of Castille has been exploring with the blessing of the Vaticine Church for nearly fifty years, and they cannot claim half the accomplishments we can. So I say unabashedly congratulations, one and all.

Now, on to business.

First and foremost, I must again stress the number of damaged artifacts we receive every year. I cannot help but wonder if our techniques in the field are not too aggressive, or if the work is done too quickly. These items are our future, and should be treated with the proper care at all times. In addition, please note that many of our Directors have pointed to the





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mercenaries we have been hiring for protection over the last two years as part of the cause for this problem. Please observe caution when hiring such individuals.

The newest order of business this year must be our considered response to the sudden interest of the Church of the Prophets in our work. Since the death of the Hierophant, they have become more active in their appraisal of our activities, and on at least a few occasions, directly interfered with a project's success. Also, several items have been confiscated by the Inquisition, who claim that they are of "religious importance."

I wish all of you to know that the Explorer's Society has made this their top priority for 1668 and beyond. Though we must still adhere to their rules and especially their borders, we will by no means stand idly by while they deny us access to our own finds. Nor will we tolerate the incarceration of our representatives, or the blatant hindrance of our efforts abroad. When we have more information to afford you on this matter, additional meetings will be convened. Until then, please report any abuses of Inquisition power directly to your coordinators.

So, without further ado, I present to you the summary reports of our current field researchers, and their finds.

Enjoy.

The following sections are highlights from the report presented to those at the Archaeological Conference.

Speculation on the Setines

Annual Progress Report

Dr. Jules von Gregor

Scientific Advisor

Hello good sir,

As I write these words and consider the ramifications of the enclosed material, I cannot help but wonder why you have chosen to include it in the Conference presentation. I do not suppose to question your judgment in this matter, but I am quite concerned at the possible directions our research could take after this information is released. Those unprepared for

it may very well scurry back into their ignorant hovels and cast our fledgling scientific community adrift. Other may simply decide that nothing else matters.

We cannot take that chance.

Please reconsider your inclusion of this material. It is dangerous. As the research is not yet complete, we cannot make accurate assessments of the present data, and my personal opinion is that its presentation will cause friction with various powers in Théah, particularly the Vaticines, who could hinder our progress in other areas as well. Ultimately, however, you can rest assured that I will bow to your judgment.

As always, I am your obedient servant,

Dr. von Gregor

Our first encounter with the beings we refer to (for lack of a more accurate term, and for reasons I will relate below) as "Setines" occurred late in the year 1664, shortly after the annual migration of the bocca through Castille and Vodacce along the Great River. In their wake, they had left great patches of upturned soil, which the farmers of both countries worked feverishly to cover before the winter snows arrived.

Within the hole left behind by one of these patches, the remains of a single being were found. The bones were unlike anything the Castilian farmer who owned the land had ever seen before, and so he dug out what he could and contacted us in the spring. Unfortunately, the bones had been badly damaged by the bocca, and subsequent digs in the same site recovered no new evidence to determine what the thing could have been.

Initially, my dig team and I thought that the being was the result of some form of occult tampering with the human form. It was slightly larger than even an outsized human. Its skull was grossly malformed, with a forward protrusion reminiscent of a snout or beak of some sort. The most remarkable thing about it, however, was the growth of what appeared to be frail wings from just below its shoulder blades.

These growths were the most heavily damaged part of

the find, and we spent several months attempting to piece them back together in their original composition. I can only hope that our efforts have provided us with a close-to-correct abstract, though with our lack of other samples for comparison until very recently, we cannot be sure yet. The wingspan” of this first set of remains measured just over four yards in length by our calculations.

Needless to say, we were all intrigued.

We spent the next year conducting additional research on the being and scouring the Castilian countryside and Vodacce wine-lands for additional specimens. During this time, our only additional discovery was that the bones of the creature were mostly hollow and very brittle, like those of some smaller birds. Though we contested the Society’s resulting decision that it was an aberration not worth additional time and money, we were overruled. My team was split up and sent to new digs across Théah, and I was ordered back to my post as Scientific Advisor for the continent.

For two years, I continued with the coordination of digs and performed my regular duties without further incident. Last year, however, while working with Father Butolli at one of his Eisen locations, I found something that I believed was relevant to the “Setine” project. It was another set of remains (these only providing a partial corpse) that – while much larger and of a radically different body structure than the last – had the same type of hollow bone configuration.

Immediately contacting the Society about the find, my request for an investigation of the Setines was again flatly rejected. But this time, I would not be stifled that easily. I contacted my associates from the former dig site and asked them to keep an eye peeled for additional remnants of what I was coming to believe was an entirely new race which lived upon Théah in the far-distant past.

Much to my surprise, reports began flooding in over the following months of skeletons recovered within digs across southern continental Théah, previously unidentifiable, all with the same hollow bones. Few remained fully intact, but there were both males and females, some with wings and some without. They varied greatly in size and shape, ranging from something approximating humanity to immense and

distorted beasts over twelve feet in height and apparently built to walk on all fours like a dog or bear.

But the most startling new find was what appeared to be armour modelled after the style of that worn by our predecessors in the Old Republic. Some of these suits were obviously useless to humans, being far too large and sometimes even form-fitted to ten-foot monsters with grossly bulbous barrel-chests and gnarled legs. By late last year, we had recovered two full suits and nearly a dozen individual pieces.


The Society could no longer ignore these finds. They brought my old team back together at the start of this year and cleared our docket. We have been working around the clock ever since, attempting to make up for lost time, and piece together the truth of these lost beings.

My greatest fear since that time has been this report. While I can be nothing short of truthful herein about my suppositions, I do not believe that we have enough evidence to support any claim. I have just received a letter from my former colleague, Father Butolli, which I have included for your perusal. It relates that another of the Setines has been discovered on the smallest island in the Vodacce Keys, which is owned by the Villanova family.

The importance of this particular sample is that it reportedly exhibits traits from both the male and female genders, as well as being roughly androgynous in shape and size when compared to our former finds. I believe this Setine may present the Project with a unique opportunity to piece together the common denominator between the existing samples. Unfortunately, Mr. Villanova seems hesitant to release the specimen for some as yet undetermined reason.

Now, with regards to the theory that Director Carleon has requested for the Conference, I can only repeat that these speculations are premature in the extreme. Please consider them unsubstantiated until further evidence to support them has been retrieved.

The members of the Setine Project team believe that our civilization was preceded by another: a vast collective of races held or forced together by an as yet unknown element,



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and that the element was the Setines themselves. Their remains have been found in nearly every dig on continental Théah, proving that the only place these beings did not roam was (perhaps) the far Isles of Thalusia and Syrne.

There are four probable reasons for the Setines' prolific presence, as follows:

- 1) They were a slave race, exploited by the others.
- 2) They were a servitor race, working together with the others.
- 3) They were a guide race, subtly or overtly influencing the others.
- 4) They were a ruler race, suppressing or enslaving the others.

This last theory is the most favoured at present, given the beings' obvious strengths and incredible adaptability.

The Syrne Isles

Annual Progress Report
Professor Joseph McTavish
Isle of Syrne Site Director

To Headmaster Carleon,

This has been another outstanding year for the Explorer's Guild here on the Isle of Syrne. We have completed the clearing away of vegetation from Site A and commenced a careful study of its interior from top to bottom, and the initial survey and removal of debris from sites B and C proceeds on schedule. In response to 'Your request for a summary of our discoveries and theories for the Archaeological Conference, I have prepared a short presentation for your use. Please see enclosed. As always, it is a pleasure working with you.

Your Loyal Assistant,

Professor Joseph McTavish

The Isle of Syrne runs fifteen miles from its northernmost

point to its southernmost point, and five miles from its western-most point to its easternmost point. It is located near the Median, approximately 300 miles west of Castille. It possesses a warm, humid climate year-round, and thus far we have discovered three sites that we are researching. The island is primarily inhabited by the charming aspreys, though recent years have shown a sharp decline in their numbers, and there is growing concern for the race's survival. Besides the aspreys, there are a number of small seafaring birds that they feed on, as well as crabs and other common seashore life. The vegetation is lush and thick, and has presented us with the problem of clearing it away from any sites we wish to investigate. In addition, there are large patches of sea rose that flourish near the island which provide an important supplement to our diet. Located on the island are two large volcanoes, jokingly named "Captain Johnson" and "Councilman Bernard", after two rather hot-headed individuals who were involved in the early stages of the dig site's history. These two volcanoes have thus far done nothing but smoke and rumble occasionally. In the centre of the isle we discovered a wide, deep lake filled with hot, almost scalding water. We refer to it as Terra's Blood. Captain Johnson and Councilman Bernard are located on the southwest and northeast sides of Terra's Blood, respectively. That should provide you with some idea of the island's layout.

Before we move into what we have discovered, let us examine the difficulties of conducting digs on the isle: as they say, bad news before good. The waters near Syrne are infested with pirates: both the so-called Sea Dogs and the Brotherhood of the Coast have attacked our ships. While they were ferrying cargo back and forth from Théah. Next, there is the constant worry that one of the two volcanoes on the island may erupt at any time, destroying years of effort. When you add to this the flooding found at two of the three sites as well as the virulent diseases that fester in the jungle here, you are presented with a complex puzzle to solve. Thankfully, we have thus far had no significant pirate activity on Syrne itself, but the threat has always loomed, over us, since this island was once the haunt of the famous Captain Rogers himself. As a matter of fact, we are forced to chase off at least two expeditions a year that wish to thoughtlessly dig up the island following rumours of buried treasure. The Captain's long habitation of Syrne adds one

final complication to our task. Every time we discover an artifact, we must ascertain whether it is simply a remnant from the pirates, or if it represents an actual scientific discovery.

Enough doom and gloom for now, however. Let us discuss happier subjects. We have made marked progress in researching the Synchron sites these past seven years. We have discovered three primary sites that we are conducting digs at. We refer to them as sites A, B, and C, in order of discovery.

Site A is located deep within the jungle to the northwest of Terra's Blood, approximately one mile from the ocean's shore. It was brought to our attention by a group of sailors who had landed on the island in search of Roger's treasure (in retrospect, perhaps we owe him a debt of gratitude for basing his activities on the island). At first sight, it appeared to be a tall, narrow stone structure with strange markings above its single entryway, but after we removed the vegetation, we found it to be an enormous building. The entire building is covered in a grid of lines, and appears to be laid out lengthwise along a fine extending to magnetic north. Each square formed by the grid is exactly 10 1/2 inches tall by 10 1/2 inches wide. Measuring the budding, we found that it was exactly 32 of these units tall, 128 units long, and 64 units wide. Inside are row upon row of rounded rocks. These are one unit high, two units wide, and eight units long, the exact height and width of the single door leading into the building from the south. In each row are eight rocks. At the very centre of the structure we found a small white featureless cube that exactly fit the measurements of the squares inscribed on the wall. When we attempted to move the cube, we found it to be attached to the floor in some manner. The building is lit by sunlight shining in through apertures two units high and two units wide spaced along the ceiling and covered in some hard, clear substance that resists our attempts to break it. We are uncertain what the structure signifies, but we are fairly certain that it has some sort of religious significance.

Site B is located to the southeast of Terra's Blood, approximately one mile from the ocean's shore. It is a mirror, down to the exact detail, of Site A, at least from what we can tell by what we have uncovered. However, whereas

site A's single door opens to the south, site B's door opens to the north. Moreover, it has sunken part-way into the ground, filling up with mud and debris that we have been removing as we go. We have not yet reached the centre of the budding in order to ascertain whether or not there is a duplicate white cube there.

Site C was found on a submerged island in the centre of Terra's Blood. The water is approximately three feet deep, and as mentioned before almost scalding to the touch. In addition, it appears to contain great quantities of sulphur, which leaves a thick yellow crust on anything submerged in the lake for very long, such as the ruins themselves. Work on site C has gone very slowly due to the discomfort of working the site for very long and to the concealing properties of the thick sulphurous crust, which has to be painstakingly scraped away. However, we have counted the buildings at site C, which number 127, and we have determined that they are laid out along a rigid grid aligned to magnetic north. In the building at the centre of the city, we discovered an unusual thing: a small raised grid, 8 squares by 8 squares. On the grid was an assortment of variously coloured, featureless cubes, all the same size. There were eight each of black and white, and two each of red, blue, yellow, green, purple, orange, grey and brown. While we have yet to figure out its purpose, one of the men studying the device invented "Squares", a game that has become surprisingly popular.

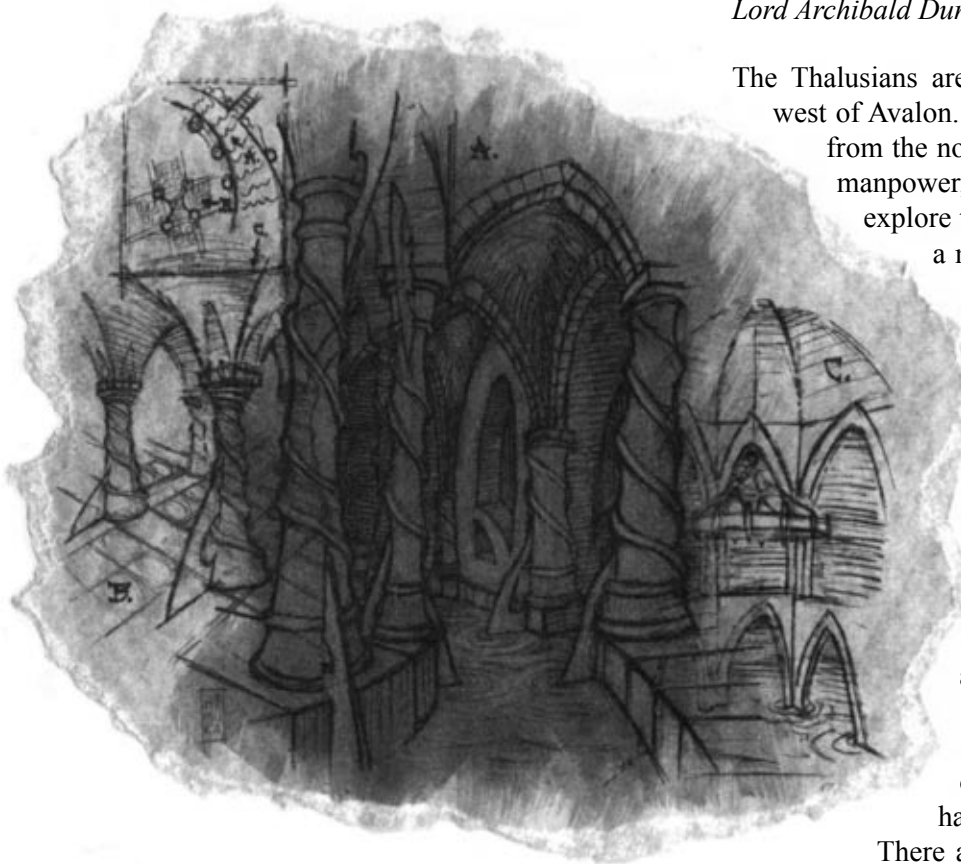
The artifacts that we have discovered vary in size and shape, but most of them seem to possess a magnetic attraction. Many produce odd humming noises when held, and one very odd device floated up away into the sky when we disturbed it. Strange magnetic disturbances on the island periodically cause every compass on the island to reverse its magnetic poles, and swivel around to point in the opposite direction. With the next disturbance, the compasses return to normal. Worst of all, several workers have been burned by scalding hot steam when investigating buildings at site C forcing us to increase our safety precautions.

Analysing the information we have on the Synchron, which admittedly is little enough, they must have been about 6-7 feet tall and 1-2 feet wide, since their doors are of approximately that size. It does not seem unreasonable that they might have resembled a larger variety of the asprey, which would give

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them the appropriate dimensions. In addition, they placed the number 2 throughout the ruins, raised to its various powers: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128. Presumably, it must have been of some great importance to their culture, though we are unsure exactly what.

Since the Director asked me for my best theory concerning how all the dig sites are related, I must add that I am currently of the opinion that the Synchron race started out as primitive creatures similar to large aspreys, then later in their reign developed some technique that let them change their form, which led to the divergent forms of their race that we have discovered at the various dig sites. I believe that in each instance, as they moved to a new home, they assumed a different form and a style of building that fit their new environment. How else could so many creatures of different shapes live in peace, when mankind, which has only a single form, cannot maintain a peace lasting more than a dozen years?



The Thalusian Isles

Annual Progress Report
Lord Archibald Dunnet
Thalusian Isles Lead Site Director

Dear Vincent,

How are you, my old friend? The wife and children are well, I trust. Did you receive that bottle of Felice I sent you for your anniversary? The digs here on the Thalusian Isles have been disgorging their mysteries to us faster than I had dared hope, although there have been some slight problems with the exploration of the amber caves. Nonetheless, I feel that this year has been our best ever, and I know in my bones that we are very close to unravelling the mysteries of the Thalusian Synchron. I have enclosed the report you desired for the Conference. I hope it is sufficient for your purposes.

Your Friend,

Lord Archibald Dunnet

The Thalusians are a chain of islands located to the far west of Avalon. There are eleven islands in all, running from the northwest to the southeast. Due to limited manpower, we have only been able to thoroughly explore three of them. The others remain largely a mystery to us for reasons I shall explain momentarily. The three islands that we have explored are named Grimorias, Alvara and Stark, after some of our most esteemed colleagues and forefathers. They are, respectively, the second, seventh, and tenth islands in the chain, starting from the northwest. They possess a temperate climate, although the winters get chilly. The islands were only discovered three years ago by a lost fisherman, but already we have learned a great deal about them. They possess an incredible variety of insect life seen nowhere else on Théah. Most of these creatures are harmless, if sometimes inconvenient. There are a few dangerous specimens as well,

but again, I'll get to that in a moment. Each island is topped by a mountain. These range from Mouse Hill, at a mere 500 feet tall, to the mighty Mt. Re, which we estimate to be no less than 15,000 feet tall. Our estimates are somewhat hampered by the perpetual fog of clouds that clings to the sides of several of the taller mountains. However, it was at the base of the smallest mountain, Mouse Hill, which is located on Stark Isle, that we made our greatest breakthrough. Following the remnants of an unusual road, we found a vast network of caverns that honeycombed the hill, and led us deep underground. The caverns were entirely without sharp edges, being almost perfectly rounded. More incredibly, they are completely lined with amber! If even a small portion of the amber here was mined and sold, it would destroy the amber market forever. Needless to say, we have kept the export of amber from the isles carefully regulated. Thus far, we have mapped only a small section of the grottos.

This brings me to the difficulties of the task at hand. The length of underground expeditions is limited by the food and fight that the men can carry with them. We have, to our misfortune, been victims of mysterious explosions in the caverns. In addition, men have simply laid down and died, for no apparent reason. If that wasn't bad enough, there are hideous insects the size of your fist found in the caves that can kill with a bite, and unstable areas that can collapse without warning. When we attempted to land on any of the islands that we are not currently exploring, great swarms of insects attacked us, and we were forced to flee back to our ship. I would like to land a small party on one of these isles dressed in heavy cloth and armed with torches to drive away the insects, but thus far no volunteers are forthcoming. If the Headmaster had not forbidden it, I would go myself.

The rewards that are uncovered on these isles are just as great as the dangers, which make the Thalussian Isles a gold mine of knowledge for men daring enough to face their threats. On Grimorias Isle we have found pieces of road in many places, particularly concentrated around three cavern entrances, which we have named "The Abyss", "Martin's Doom", and "No Man's Cave." If these names seem somewhat dramatic, it is because Grimorias is the most dangerous of the explored isles. When we were exploring the Abyss, we lost five men to an unexpected collapse of the floor. They were dropped


into a chasm, which we have been unable to explore due to its great depth, and I was forced to forbid further exploration in that cavern entrance.

Martin's Doom was where we discovered the first of the insects we refer to as ten-second scarabs, the name alluding to the amount of time a bitten explorer has left to live. As you might perhaps guess by the cavern's name, a young explorer named Martin was the first to discover this property of the scarab's bite.

Lastly, No Man's Cave is so named because of the extraordinary fear it has elicited from the explorers on the island. Periodically, strange lights can be seen glowing from within the cave. When one group of six explorers dared its depths, they never returned, except for one poor man who came crawling back to the entrance before he died. His skin was a charred mess, as if he had been burnt horribly. Since then, no one has ventured into its depths. It must be stressed that these sacrifices are inevitable in the pursuit of knowledge, and these men knew what they were getting into when they signed up for this assignment. The Explorer's Guild has provided their families with an ample pension from the amber mined in the caverns.

On the isle of Alvara, we have found two entrances into caverns, which we have named "The Fiery Winds" and "Leon's Place." The Fiery Winds was the cave in which we first encountered the mysterious explosions that sometimes decimate entire explorer parties. We lost twelve men in that first instance, and have since restricted the size of expeditions to eight to avoid losing so many good explorers at once.

Leon's Place is a small cave that doesn't go very far into the mountain. Apparently a Vodacce sailor named Leon lived in this cave for several years after being shipwrecked on the isle some 60 years prior to our arrival. It is from his diary that we learned of several insects to avoid. Leon, because of his meticulous style of note-taking, probably saved dozens of men's lives. The diary ends with an entry stating that he had finished building a raft and stocking it with food, and that he was going to attempt to sail off these isles. Although I have made a point of checking historical documents in every country I have visited, I have yet to find any evidence that suggests Leon survived the journey. For the sake of the men



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whose lives he had saved with his notes, we sent his diary home to his native Vodacce to be buried in lieu of a body, and erected a small memorial to him in the cave in which he dwelled for so long.

The smallest of the isles, Stark, has ironically revealed the most about the Thalusian Synchrony to us. It was the first isle explored and contains only one cave entrance, which we have named "The Great Hall." There are few of the dangers that seem to infest the other cavern entrances. The cave goes up into Mouse Hill, branching into many small, empty rooms. Then it splits into two primary corridors. The left corridor leads to an enormous amphitheatre of some sort. The walls are pocked with holes leading half way up to the ceiling. The holes are three inches in diameter and spaced thirty inches apart. At the top of the ceiling is an enormous crystal, which peeks out of the top of the mountain and diffuses light throughout the room, lighting the amphitheatre during the day. When we attempted to follow the right corridor, one of the men touched a lens mounted on one of these walls, which promptly exploded, taking the corridor and three men with it. Since then, the men have been under strict orders not to touch any lenses they encounter.

If it were not for the miraculous nature of the artifacts we continue to unearth from the caverns, I would abandon the dig without a second thought. However, we have found strange devices that float in the air without any obvious support, artifacts that are capable of genuinely frightening acts of destruction, and most importantly, examples of Synchrony writing. I hope to someday gather enough of their writing to decipher their language, which could unlock their secrets, giving mankind powers it can only dream of. Ironically, the nobles who help to fund the dig are only interested in certain decorative pieces of a hard material that we occasionally dig out of the walls. These trinkets often wind up as jewellery or decorative (but ineffectual) armour. We find enough samples of this material that, like the amber itself, I do not feel any contrition in selling it to fund our efforts here and at the other digs.

As for my personal theories about the Thalusian Synchrony, and the Synchrony in general, the Headmaster is quite familiar with them, but I will repeat them here at his request. I believe that the Thalusian Synchrony were approximately the

size of humans and possessed eyes that were very sensitive to light, hence their choice to live underground. Due to the presence of the amphitheatre, I believe that the Thalusian Isles were the capital of a great Synchrony council. Judging by the reports made by my colleagues from the other dig sites, I find it hard to credit that a single race constructed all these vastly different buildings, and the only way they could have maintained the peace between such different races was by bowing to the wisdom of a council of representatives.

Finally, I would like to ask the assembly at the Archaeology Conference to observe a moment of silence while the Headmaster reads the names of those men who sacrificed their lives here on the Thalusian Isles: Alms, Armister, Baker, Bernard, Bertrand, Caster, Craige, Daviau, Dumont, Franklin, Gerald, Heileger, Indigo, Jones, Keller, Layalis, Martin, O'Riley Perr, Roark, Sakes, Stevens, Thane, Traner, Ulwin, von Haffe, Wester, and, of course, our mysterious benefactor, Leon. May the Prophets guide them and hold them near.

The Home Front

Annual Progress Report
Father Andre Butolli
Domestic Sites Coordinator

Prophets preserve you, my son.

Even after an entire year in the position, I am still gratified that you would allow an old priest such as myself to coordinate the digs on continental Théah. It is a great deal of responsibility, but a job that I greatly enjoy. I pray I will be equal to the task. There are so many things to do, so many details that cannot be overlooked. Sometimes I wonder if any man is capable of the task. But fear not. As long as you continue to place your faith in me, I will perform my job to the best of my ability. Please find enclosed the report you wished me to write in preparation for the Conference. I wish I could attend, but my duties here are unrelenting.

Your Servant,

Father Andre Butolli

There are two primary efforts taking place on continental

Théah: one in Montaigne, and one in Eisen. I will address them separately.

It is a well-known fact that many of the larger Montaigne cities are built on strange foundations. One need only glance at some of their more unusual architecture to see that no human hand ever fashioned those buildings. Unfortunately, so many people have lived in those buildings for so many years that anything of value there has long since been lost, stolen, or destroyed. However, many of the Montaigne sewers are built by the same race that built the fantastic buildings up above: one of the Surneth races. Rather typically, the Montaignes have buried this vital information, knowledge that could unlock the Great Puzzle itself, under an enormous pile of garbage. The sewers underneath Charouse are our main dig site in Montaigne. They are known as “Little Vodacce” and they are inhabited by several dozen homeless Montaigne beggars who have been forced off the streets and now jokingly refer to themselves as “Sewer Hunters” in imitation of the famous Eisen Monster Hunters. These men and women have been instrumental in our researches, serving as guides to the dizzying maze of tunnels below the city. They have told our team that when the Montaignes began to dig sewers under Charouse they broke through into a complex series of passages, and, instead of exploring them or sealing them up, decided to save themselves the effort and used them as the sewer.


This brings me to the logistical difficulties of carrying on an archaeological dig in the Montaigne sewers when not only will the Montaignes not assist us, but they in fact seem determined to thwart our every effort. Their officials harass our workers; their townsfolk drive us from the town when we emerge from the sewers; the Empereur has sent guards into the sewers to drive off the Sewer Hunters; and once, one of our men was executed when the Empereur passed downwind of him after a dig simply because he had offended l’Empereur’s nostrils! Clearly, these are not ideal conditions. If the aboveground situation weren’t bad enough, the sewers themselves are dangerous. There are bizarre creatures in some of the less travelled sections of the sewers that are known to be dangerous to men. Even when our men are not assaulted by these things, they must dig in moving water, somehow attempting to sift the Montaigne trash from the Surneth remnants, all the while worrying about the unhealthy

conditions under which they must work. It seems incredible that we have recovered anything at all. Still, we continue our efforts in the hopes that we may find some essential piece of the puzzle that will bring everything together for us.

One of our greatest discoveries seemed to be a gift from Theus Himself. As one of our teams prepared to enter the sewers at night (so as to better remain unnoticed by the city guard), their torches caught a silver glint in the water. Investigating more closely, they found a small metallic globe. When held in the hand, it pulled the holder in a certain direction. Curious, the team followed the globe through the sewers, mapping as they went. It led them to a dark spherical room with a transparent bridge crossing its centre. Embedded in the walls around them was a fantastic assortment of gemstones and jewels. One of the team members had some experience in astronomy, and noticed that some of the formations on the wall resembled constellations in the sky. Since then, we have discovered that indeed the room appears to be a map of the night sky, more detailed and accurate than anything we’ve ever seen.

Besides this incredible find, we’ve also discovered samples of Surneth writing, and, rarest of all, certain devices that would appear to be weapons built for creatures very much like humans. One of these, a glove-like device that killed anything its wearer touched with it, was so dangerous that we’ve been forced to hide it away to keep it out of the hands of the Empereur. Only days after we found the thing, his men were poking around our headquarters in Charouse, looking for something. I hate to think what he wants with it.

In Eisen, we’ve had much less success than in Montaigne. Only one of the Eisenfürsten has allowed us to examine any of the ruins there: Nicklaus Trägue of Freiburg. He allowed our team to not only tour the Wachturm, an obvious remnant of a Surneth society, he also took them to visit a series of caves carved into a remote hill. The caves contained paintings of what appeared to be drachen using tools and standing upright, as men do. This would seem to be a fanciful notion, given the reputed size of the drachen, and one of our team members mentioned that point to the Prince. In response, Trägue took them to an enormous room, one that was far too big to have ever been built by humans. The team reported to me that, “Standing there in that room,



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with the roof arching high over our heads like the sky itself, we were prepared to believe that drachen had built it. In fact, if one of the beasts had emerged from a side passage and invited us to tea, not one of us would have been particularly surprised.”

My teams are coming to believe that the Montaigne sewers contain the remnants of a very advanced race. They had a great reverence for the heavens, and they must have been peaceful, for a more violent race would surely have destroyed themselves utterly had they possessed the weapons we have discovered under the streets of Charouse. I am unconvinced that the dragons of legend were responsible for the ruins in Eisen. As any student of anatomy could tell you, the remains of the dragons we have found thus far lack even the most basic grasping appendages, which are required for the development of intelligence. As for my theories regarding Syrneth history, I must state that I am inclined to agree with Dr. von Gregor's Setine theory. That one race built all the various ruins we have found seems utterly preposterous to me. The philosophies represented by their styles of architecture, alone are so varied as to be utterly alien to one another. Moreover, the thought that all these races lived in peace without some ruling body standing watch over them is so incredible as to be scientifically unsupportable.

Black Market Artifacts

Annual Progress Report

Professor Andrea Galia

Explorer's Guild Black Market Collection Agent

Sirs,

I have sent no formal report with this letter. I apologize for this, but I have never shared the taste for minutiae that so many of my colleagues seem to possess. Rather, I prefer to speak in my own words, without unnecessary embellishments. If my colleagues choose to think less of me because of this, then so be it.

I would like to speak primarily of three artifacts that have come into my possession within the last year. Although whether or not they are of Syrneth make is in doubt, I firmly believe that these objects are just as deserving of study as anything the Syrneth ever created. In fact, the objects seem

rather too new to be made by the Syrneth. I instead believe that their place of origin is the land of Cathay. I'll explain my reasoning for each artifact as I go.

The first artifact was acquired from an Ussuran trader who had found no use for this unusual object. It was nothing more than a bracelet, but it had strange writing on it, writing of the sort that we have come to associate with the people of Cathay. I took a fondness to the bracelet, and, for lack of a better way to determine what, if anything, it did, began wearing it on a daily basis. One night, I was meeting with a contact of mine concerning a supposed Syrneth artifact that turned out to be nothing more than a rather fancifully designed hatpin of Montaigne design. I was warming myself next to the hearth when an atrociously careless barmaid bumped into me and knocked me into the fire. However, not only was I not burned by the fire, my clothing wasn't even singed! Retiring to a more private place, I determined through experimentation that wearing the bracelet protected me from being burned by flames. I daresay more than one scholar would have benefited from the bracelet during a visit by the Inquisition. My reasoning that the artifact is Cathayan is simple. 1) It has Cathayan writing on it, and 2) It possesses protective properties against fire, something I'm sure the Cathayans have mastered.

The next artifact came into my hands from a street peddler in Vodacce. It is nothing more than a frame of wood with some silk stretched across it and a string tied to it. However, when the string is held in windy conditions, the frame and fabric float up into the sky in the most extraordinary way. Written on the fabric is a single letter that I believe to be of Cathayan origin. As the device pulls upwards with a good deal of force, I must wonder if a big enough frame could carry aloft a person. If so, that would truly be something remarkable to see.

The last artifact I wish to tell you of is the most unusual. It is nothing more than a flat stone with text upon it, and yet I feel it may be the most important discovery of all time. I recognize at least a portion of the text as Cathayan writing. However, there are at least two other languages on the stone, both of which are known to me. One of them is represented at the ruins on the island of Syrne on the walls there. The other is a text that an Avalon friend of mine identified as

writing that is in fact in use by the Sidhe. If any of these three languages can be deciphered, the stone could provide the key to the other two, which would surely be an accomplishment unprecedented in archaeology.

New Prospects and Conclusion

Annual Progress Report – Addendum
Professor Andrea Galia Explorer’s
Guild Black Market Collection Agent

Sirs,

I have been asked to elaborate here about a situation I find most distressing. As long as those insufferable Vaticines continue their ban upon Crescent and Cathay trade items, the scientific community will be the ones who pay the price. There are wonders of history hidden away in these “infidel countries” that would completely revolutionize modern thought, and we must not allow faith to stand in the way of the progress we could achieve with them! My reasons follow.

In the spring of 1667, my contacts in the Vodacce black market obtained for me an item of unusual design. It looked like a series of animal bladders sewn together into a ring, with the centre hole approximately nineteen inches in diameter. The bladders had been cured and had a texture much like leather, and were partially filled with a pale green fluid. On the inside of the bladders, there was a white, viscous compound that clung to anything it touched with incredible strength.

The morning after we examined the item, everyone who had touched the compound was dead, apparently having passed in their sleep. Of the rest, anyone who had had extensive contact with the fluid also died within a week. Given the chance to examine these people throughout their prolonged debility provided us with a great deal of information about the ailment. It was as if their bodies began to slow down at first gradually, and then more and more quickly. By the third day, most were unable to feed themselves or even sit up. Nothing we or the Castillian herbalists did was effective.

I make no pretence of being objective on this point. My husband was among those who never awakened. His work

is well known to all of you, I am sure, so I will not elaborate on his loss here. But I will comment that I did tot, participate in the initial study, being preoccupied with other matters at the time, and that I was scheduled to do so the next morning. I feel personally responsible for Norman’s death, and the deaths of all seventeen members of the team that worked with the bladder-ring, and my report is, understandably coloured by this fact.


Further experimentation with the compound and fluid determined that they were both of similar design, the former being a more concentrated version of the latter. Both are deadly toxins, purposefully sewn into the bladder-ring for a purpose I have yet to determine.

Another object I must note here is the sliver of red gemstone that has come to be known as “Legion’s Spike.” Though I am sure that all of you know of the item, I will repeat its description here for posterity. It is a simple jagged sliver of red crystal that looks very much like ruby. Its edges are sharp, but its most outstanding feature is a reflective surface in which a large number of people have claimed to see images more beautiful than they can describe.

Many who have looked into the stone have been interviewed and asked what they saw, though most have been unable to describe their visions. The images vary from one subject to the next, we are sure, and they are always the most fabulous sights imaginable. I myself have looked into the Spike’s depths and found within a vista of colours and images that, apart, are likely meaningless. The memory of them together, however, has been the source for more dreams of fantasy and joy than I can relate.

Of course, there have been the well-documented side effects of such exposure. Melody Charmers of Avalon has not stopped screaming for two years, and Molokai Breslow Komunuv, the Ussuran tradesman, spent one full month silent and unmoving before slaughtering a family of twelve and their visitors in Vodacce. There are countless other lesser known incidents of altered personality and various “episodes.”

I, like most others in the Explorer’s Society, had assumed that Legion’s Spike was a unique artifact, and that with its



GM's Section

recovery and confinement the threat was over. But in recent months I have come to understand that there is another red jewel of the same type – this one a full, uncut stone the size of a human fist – among the treasures of one of the Vodacce Princes, which came (against the edicts of the Church) across the eastern mountains. I have not been able to confirm this, but should the rumour be true, we may have a large problem on our hands. Not only would such an artifact be priceless (and therefore in high demand), if it is of the same class of stone we have seen before, it could be incredibly dangerous to everyone who sees it.

The Importance of these finds is in their effect upon the human body. If either of these items were constructed by the Crescents or the Cathay, then these “infidels” have knowledge of medicine and the workings of our bodies far beyond our own. If not, if these things predate the cultures that currently occupy the East, then our organization is the most qualified for the prospect of seeking that knowledge out. Either way, the Church has no right to impose embargoes on these artifacts or to refuse us access to the countries they came from.

I do not presume to support any theory of the old world, other civilizations or races, or even the nature of these artifacts we are recovering across the globe. Gentlemen, our place is not to make these decisions yet. It is to continue the search. To do that, we are going to have to move past the outdated notions of religious distinction and political boundaries when conducting our surveys. I beg of you, please, to consider my suggestion that we begin a campaign against such restrictions. Until we do, the Explorer's Society will continue to fumble around in the dark with an unsheathed sword.

Someday we may stumble, and spear ourselves dead.

Thank you.

Professor Andrea Galia



GM's Section

The following passages are for the Game Master only. Players should not read it, lest they reveal vital campaign secrets.

The Inquisition

This section gives you a better idea of the mindset driving the Inquisition. No villains ever believe they're doing evil and Cardinal Verdugo's forces are no exception.

The Inquisition may be the most dangerous force in Théah today: a ruthless band of power-mad fanatics running unchecked through the ranks of the Vaticine Church. But they don't see it that way. In fact, they see themselves as Théah's last hope for salvation. Fanaticism can be blinding and the Inquisition is so caught up with saving everyone's soul that they don't realize how dangerous they've become.

The average Inquisitor doesn't believe he's abusing his power. He sees the world's wickedness tearing lives apart, destroying good souls, and strengthening the forces of Legion. Wickedness has claimed the Empereur of Montaigne, thrown the true faith out of Avalon and shattered Eisen into tiny pieces. Against such fearsome acts, the Inquisitor must take extreme measures. He must use whatever leverage he has to save as many souls as he can from Legion. If that means killing a man in the middle of the night, he'll do it. If it means burning a library to the ground, he'll do it. If it means abusing his position and manipulating the power of the Church to achieve his ends, he'll do it. The alternative is

unthinkable.

In that light, the terrible things the Inquisition does become understandable, even justifiable. The Inquisition is all about using the ends to justify the means. GMs should keep that in mind when throwing Inquisitors at their players.

The Invisible College

The Invisible College was an inevitable reaction to the Inquisition. Having heard all their lives that the path to Ultimate Truth is research, not every Vaticine scientist was going to step off that path on the say-so of a mere Cardinal. Those who openly defied Verdugo became martyrs to their studies. Those who obeyed him escaped his wrath, at the cost of sacrificing their core beliefs. Those who clandestinely continued their studies, however, became the Invisible College.

The College has few secrets beyond its anonymous membership. It exists solely to further scientific discovery and keep important knowledge from the fires of the Inquisition. It is almost entirely Vaticine in membership; Objectionists can be more open about their research, since the Inquisition is less of a threat to those over whom it has no authority. Indeed, some of the College's greatest allies are Objectionist researchers who can look past their religious differences to help their colleagues.

Sophia's Daughters

As the Players' Guide suggested, the Daughters have attained the secret to immortality, or at least increased longevity. They achieve it through a mystical potion which only the highest-ranking members of the Daughters have access to. The potion can reverse the aging process as well as extend life, granting those who drink it a youthful appearance. The potion only works on women, however; men who drink it instantly die.

The Daughters give the potion to those they feel are truly worthy; only a handful of people in history have tasted it. Their leadership apparently has some long-term plan that requires specific women to be around centuries beyond their normal lifespan. Why they require these people – and what they've done to merit such a gift – is one of the order's most

closely guarded secrets.

The Surneth

The following information first appeared in the 7th Sea module *The Arrow of Heaven*. It is reprinted here for your convenience.

The beings collectively known as the "Syrne" are actually several races, which lived at different periods during Théah's prehistory. Some, such as the Sidhe, are still known to humanity. Others are only vaguely discerned through their ruins and artifacts. Each race is detailed below. The Explorer's Society is unaware of almost all of this information. The names are taken from Old Empire texts. Old Théan scholars did a great deal of research on the Surneth, but almost all that information is lost; only fragments remain. The legend of a translation of one of the languages persists in scholarly circles, but so far, it remains undiscovered.

The Sidhe

The Sidhe first appeared to men during the age of the Old Republic. They came from the northwest, the direction of present day Avalon, and they've been seen wandering the roads of mankind ever since, although never with great frequency. Although most Théans think of the Sidhe as tall, slender, pale beings with unpredictable and sometimes terrible tempers, the name "Sidhe" actually refers to a confederation of creatures. The bright and shining host of myth and legend are the High Faerie, but also included in their number are a variety of other races, including boggans, brownies, sprites, and pookas, just to name a few.

These other races hold their own courts and customs, but defer to the High Faerie in most matters.

The Sidhe exist in the material world of Terra only part of the time. Their own world stands a little apart, although the two overlap in certain places and times, most notably the Sidhe island of Bryn Bresail. Mortals have been known to 'slip' over the veil between one realm and another, and have returned years later, little older than when they left.

The Drachen

The Drachen were great reptilian beasts that once roamed and ruled the lands that are currently known as Eisen. They stood approximately 500 feet tall and weighed many thousands of tons. They had wing spans of hundreds of feet, although no drachen is ever confirmed to have flown, and the supposition that their wings could have supported their incredible mass is unlikely in the extreme.

The Drachen were sentient and extremely intelligent. They communicated verbally and had an extensive written language consisting primarily of pictographs. They carved vast caverns out of their native mountains, covering the walls with their etched writing. They also used and created tools, fashioned decorative items as well as practical ones, and lived in organized communities.

Most of these things have remained unfound by the Explorers since the Drachen mountains are vast, and the Eisenfuersten are fiercely protective of them since this is also the area from which they mine the ore for their dracheneisen. Those items that have been found have mostly been misinterpreted, since the Explorers have not yet realized the incredible size of the race they're dealing with. For example, a tail ornament, having survived the ages, might be documented as an elaborate tapestry or carpet.

The Tessera

Very little remains of the Tesseran civilization. They showed up after the demise of the Drachen, but were wiped out by the other Old Races. Stripped clean from the face of the earth, the only thing they left behind was their strange technology.

Tesseran technology, based on magnetism, exploited Terra's iron core itself. The Tessera used magnetic fields to fire huge cannons that could lay waste to entire cities, flew in machines that employed magnetic repulsion and sped along the ground in magnetic skimmers.

Very little of their once-great civilization remains. Gone are the great cannons, flying machines and skimmers. The only testaments to their existence are the tiny trinkets that Théans find and pass on to their children as clever toys. (See

examples under "Artifacts," p. 56.)

The Thalusiai

Located on the Thalussian isles, this insect race was wiped out by some great catastrophe. Fortunately, they had the foresight to bury themselves in amber coffins while a few others remained in caves, preparing for the end. Something went wrong, and the entire race was destroyed, leaving only the few left in amber coffins.

Now, Théans break open those coffins and steal the "armor" left inside. Armor that was once the carapace of a great, lost people.

The most common Thalussian artifacts are bits of "armor" and weapons from their lost culture. The caves where artifacts are found are filled with the stuff, almost as if the Thalussians were awaiting an enemy, but were caught completely off guard.

Perhaps they were awaiting the wrong enemy.

The Domae

This humanoid species built huge underground cities. The Domae lived in peace and harmony for many thousands of years until a bitter civil war destroyed them in a matter of weeks. Millions of Domae drowned in blood, leaving only a single city of their vast empire: the underground ruins below the cities of Montaigne.

The key to Domae technology seems to be gemstones. While Montaigne could be a hotbed of archaeological research, l'Empereur keeps the sites closely guarded while his own diggers seek out these precious stones.

The Setines

Of all the known races, the Setine appear to have ranged the furthest abroad. Their remains have been found scattered throughout Théah and her surrounding islands. These remains vary from large hulking creatures to forms a little smaller than an average human. Some have wings, others have the remains of great horns or tusks. All of them, however, have hollow bones.

The Setines were a single race but with varied forms. This allowed them a specialization and versatility unmatched by any other group. They used a technology based on aether, a gaseous substance known but not yet understood by contemporary Théans, and intricate clockwork-like mechanisms made of crystal and brass.

Artifacts

The Drachen

All Drachen artifacts are huge, much too large to carry out of a site, let alone use. However, their vast halls are filled with tools, furniture and other implements that make a man standing among them feel very small indeed. Because the Drachen relied on sorcery rather than technology, their “artifacts” are rather primitive compared to other cultures.

1. An enormous rod topped with man-sized pictographs, made of lustrous gray stone and weighing several tons. When a Hero touches the correct pair of pictographs at the same time, he ceases to age for next five years, although the only noticeable effect at the time is that of energy being transmitted through the Hero’s body. After it’s been used once, the rod cracks and is useless.

The Tessera

1. A small, flattened sphere that fits neatly into the palm. When squeezed, it slowly grows warm and begins to lift. It will lift up to two hundred pounds upward at a rate of 1 foot per second. Unfortunately, it continues to heat up as it lifts and will begin to scald skin (1 die of Wounds) after sixty seconds. It also leaves a distinct coppery taste in the user’s mouth for about a day.

2. A curved and pointed device with two gem stones set into the top and side. This device’s original intent may never be discovered, but its current use is sufficient enough. When the gem stones are touched, the device begins to hum and vibrate. Then, in the span of five seconds, an intense magnetic field fills the room, causing all metal objects to vibrate and hum at the same frequency. Both the device and the metal objects begin to heat up, until after a minute, they burn any flesh in contact (1 die of Wounds). If contact with the object is

not broken by the time seventy seconds have elapsed, it will cease to function until reactivated. This device was found with small glass lenses. The Society has not yet determined if they have some purpose with the device.

3. A coin-sized metal disk with blank facings. Whenever it’s dropped, it always lands on its edge.

4. A small needle. Whenever it’s placed inside a lock, it warms up, then pops the lock open.

The Thalusiai

1. A Thalusian gauntlet with a gem inset slightly above the wrist. When placed on a hand, the gauntlet shuts tight around the skin and the wearer can feel a slight “sting.” However, he now has one extra unkept Brawn die for all actions. He’d better like the gauntlet, because it’s never coming off short of amputation.

2. A long, thin, twisted piece of amber. It’s a perfect shaft for a polearm or even just a walking stick.

3. A gemstone much like a bee’s eye. It’s large enough to fit in a palm and blood red. No alchemist or chemist can identify what material its made of.

The Domae

“Domae stones” are some of the most desired artifacts in all of Théah. The stones have their own individual color, but when four of the nine types are placed in proximity to each other, they lose their color, appearing to be diamonds. The stones also change color at the rising and setting of the sun. Finally, some stones have dangerous effects when placed together, as you will soon see...

Domae Diamond

Domae diamonds actually look nothing like mundane diamonds. They are green in color with speckles of blue. However, the stones earned their name from their hardness. Domae diamonds are the hardest substance found on Théah, the only material that can cut the other Domae stones.

Rainbowstone

Rainbowstone is highly desired by the nobility for its wide



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range of colors... that seem to change depending on who wears the stones. The colors in a rainbow stone include red 1 blue, yellow, green, orange, purple and “white” (transparent). Many scholars have studied the stones, attempting to make sense of the colors, but no pattern has made itself evident.

Smokestone

Smokestone gains its name from its color. The stone also has veins of black that coalesce in pools of darkness. As nighttime approaches, smokestone grows darker and colder. At midnight, smokestone is so cold it burns human flesh.

Bloodstone

During daylight bloodstone is a milky clear color with “veins” of red. As the sun sets, the veins thicken and a “heart” appears in the center of the stone.

Domae Moonstone

There are two types of “moonstone” in Théah. The first appears much like smokestone. This is the second. Domae moonstone has many similar qualities to bloodstone; it is milky white during daylight hours. However, as the moon rises, its color fades to translucent with a dim glow. The glow is enough to recognize in the dark, but not bright enough to see by.

Sunstone

Sunstone is a pale yellow with shards of bright orange. As the sun rises, the orange shards begin to glow with the same radiance as moonstone. Explorers have used both sunstone and moonstone to create “Domaedials.” The small jeweled time pieces have both moonstones and sunstones, and are used while underground to keep track of day and night. Experienced explorers can look at the brightness of both stones and tell the time of day to the hour.

Waterstone

Waterstone is one of the strangest Domae stones. Its color is a mixture of blues that seem to shift as the observer turns the stone to the left and right. The stone grows dark blue as storms approach, a quality that makes it very valuable on ships.

Bonestone

Bonestone earns its name from its color: a pale white / yellow that resembles human bone. When the sun sets, the stone becomes almost pure white. The current fashion in Vodacce is to grind up bonestone into a fine powder and add it to a morning drink of wine.

Blackstone

Blackstone is, without a doubt, the most dangerous Domae stone. When it is placed next to another Domae stone, both begin to vibrate. As they are brought closer, the vibrations become highly violent. Finally, if the two stones touch, they explode (1 die of Wounds). While blackstone does not change its color as the other stones do, it refracts light in a most peculiar manner. When light passes through a blackstone, it becomes a deep blue. The light also stains whatever it is shining upon with the same deep blue color. The stain fades within minutes.

The Setines

The theme for the Setines is clockwork. Not the kind found in your grandpa’s watch, but a strange system of sliding, clicking and turning mechanisms that have no obvious source of power. Some scholars speculate that the Setines discovered a method of perpetual motion. They argue that the strange runes carved into the clockwork provides the power necessary to make the machines move. The problem with this argument is that if it were true, the machines would still be moving rather than sitting like mummified corpses.

1. A clockwork hand. Only three of these have been found. This is the third. Fifty years ago, an alchemist found a way to attach the hand to the human body. His life and name were eradicated by the Inquisition. If your Heroes find a way to do it (Wits + Occult TN 30 and Wits + Surgery TN 30), the recipient has 1 unkept bonus die to all Attack and Wound rolls involving that hand. Unfortunately, as long as the hand is attached, he loses one Rank of Resolve permanently, and the highest Resolve he can ever have is a 3.
2. Clockwork eye. The above rules for attachment apply. If successful, the wearer can see perfectly in the dark but takes 1 die of Wounds for every hour he is exposed to sunlight.
3. Æther Compass. These famous artifacts (like the ones

in Erebus Cross) vary greatly depending on the site. This particular one always points north, except when the holder is pointed north. Then, it spins and points south.

4. Clockwork Cannon. Clockwork weapons are also very common in Setine sites. They are usually incomplete and require repair from a skilled weaponsmith. Clockwork Cannons (like the one used by the Explorer in the fiction in the Players' Guide) usually require Wits + Occult and Wits + Weaponsmith rolls (both at TN 30) to repair. When they are operational (Finesse + Firearms), they deliver a 5k5 blast of energy unlike anything seen on Théah. The weapon usually only has 1-10 charges before it becomes completely useless. Currently, the Society knows no way of recharging Clockwork Cannons.

Designing Your Own Artifacts

There are four important guidelines to designing your own artifacts.

Theme

Each old race has its own theme (clockwork, magnetics, insectoid, etc.). We set up these themes to give you plenty of space to improvise. Sure, you don't know everything about the Domae, but you know enough about magnetics to make up some really weird stuff for your Heroes to play around with.

Keep It Small

Don't let your artifacts out-do the genre. Too many weird gadgets and your Théah will look more like a science fiction novel than a swashbuckling movie.

Clarke's Law

Arthur C. Clarke once said that any technology that is advanced enough will look like magic to a less sophisticated culture. That's what we're going for here. Make your artifacts just as alien to the players as they are to the Heroes. They can study the artifact all night long, but they will never make any sense out of it. As far as the Hero and the player are concerned, it's magic, plain and simple.

Be Creative!

Not every artifact has to make sense. A few can just be

strange objects that have a single effect, then die. Others have no strange effects at all, but are made of a material that alchemists can't identify.

Remember, every strange thing you throw your Heroes' way makes the next strange thing a little less strange. Be careful, but have fun!

Artifact Creation Rules

If your Heroes discover an artifact, and you aren't quite sure what you want it to do, you can roll on one of the charts below. They are grouped by the artifact's original location; artifacts from different digs have very different properties. If you aren't sure where the artifact is from, roll on the last chart.

For each artifact, roll once on the powers chart, and once on the flaws chart. If you receive results that you don't like or that don't make sense to you, roll again. For more powerful artifacts, increase the number of times you roll on each chart, re-rolling duplicate effects.

Since artifacts are unpredictable and fragile, they may stop working at any time, particularly after being dealt a hard blow. Adventurers who do not treat their artifacts with care will quickly learn this. Once an artifact is broken, it is typically beyond the capability of Théan science to repair it.

You should make your Heroes aware of the danger of using Synchron artifacts early on, so that they aren't surprised when they finally get caught by a long-lasting or permanent effect.

Montaigne Sewers

Powers

1: When worn on hands and feet and activated, gives +3 unkept dice to any Climbing Checks.

2: When active, allows the user to re-roll one Initiative Die

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per Round if desired.

3: When rubbed along a blade, the blade acquires a pale luminescence (radius 10 feet) and the blade does one extra kept die of damage. Effect lasts for one Scene.

4: When squeezed, releases a gas that inflicts 4k3 damage to every living creature except holder within ten feet.

5: Shoots a spurt of flame up to twenty feet. This flame

inflicts 6 dice of damage to anything it hits the first round, then 3 dice each round thereafter until extinguished.

6: Ten seconds after being twisted, the artifact unleashes a burst of electrical energy that deals 3 dice of damage to all living things within ten feet.

7: When worn over head, provides air to wearer. Useful for exploring underwater. Doesn't work below depths of 100 feet.



8: When worn and active, reduces damage inflicted by fire by one die. In addition, the fire automatically extinguishes after the second round of dealing damage.

9: When placed over the eye, the artifact allows the wearer to see in the dark.

0: Incidental, but interesting effect. (Smells nice, changes shape periodically) Do not roll on Flaws table.

Flaws

1: Item ceases to operate after a single use.

2-3: Item inflicts 1 die of damage per use (or for every Round of constant use).

4: If worn, user is unable to remove artifact without destroying in.

5: Item is destroyed if exposed to alcohol.

6-8: When used, the artifact causes the user to lose one Rank of Brawn for one hour. If this brings the user below a Brawn of 0, the user dies. This occurs for each use, or Round of continuous use.

9-0: Subtle forces begin to influence the user's mind. He becomes slightly more aggressive as time goes on. Fate Witches and others who have magical perception are frightened by the artifact.

Syrneth Islands

Powers

1: When activated, the object levitates steadily upwards with 200 lbs. of force at a rate of ten feet per Phase. When turned off, it falls to the ground.

2: When worn on the legs, allows the wearer to walk across liquids.

3: Subtracts 10 from TN to be hit versus metal weapons while worn.

4: When wrapped around the hilt of a blade, the artifact adds one Rank to the wielder's Swordsmanship Knacks while it remains in place and operational

5: When worn, the artifact heals 1 Wound every Phase.

6: Adds 5 to TN to be hit versus metal weapons while worn.

7: While worn, the user is kept comfortably warm, even in the coldest of blizzards.

8: When worn, allows the wearer to sense magnetic north at will.

9: When worn, allows the user to detect large deposits of ferrous metal within 500 feet at will.

0: Incidental, but interesting effect. (Points in one direction, hovers an inch above the ground, hums quietly) Do not roll on Flaws table.

Flaws

1: Item ceases to operate after a single use.

2: Magnetizes nearby small metal objects when used.

3: Spooks nearby animals when used.

4: User loses one Rank of Brawn for every year he possesses and uses the artifact. This loss is permanent. If this brings him below Rank 0, he dies.

5: Artifact activates at random intervals.

6: Artifact only fits very thin, tall people.

7: The artifact's controls operate seemingly at random. It takes 1-5 Actions to turn it on or off.

8: If worn, artifact cannot be removed without destroying it.

9: The artifact induces a slight dizziness in its user when operational, The user cannot Keep his highest die when making a Check involving Finesse.

0: User begins to have strange dreams, which stop if he gets rid of the artifact. After one month of dreams, he permanently gains one Rank in the Mathematics Knack.

Thalusian Isles and Other Western Sites

Powers

1: The device is filled with 1-10 ten second beetles (see page 184 of the *Game Masters' Guide*). Ten seconds after being activated, it opens up and releases them, whereupon they attack anyone within ten feet. This item automatically has flaw #1 on the Flaws table below. Do not roll for another flaw.

2: When activated, artifact produces one gallon of a sap that hardens into an amber-like substance after one hour. During that hour, it has the consistency of clay. It can be shaped into an object approximately one cubic foot in area.

3: When activated, artifact melts and coats user's hand with a chitinous shell, allowing barehanded attacks with that hand to inflict 0k2 damage. This is permanent and cannot be removed. Do not roll for another flaw.

4: Lens apparatus on artifact produces an intense flash of light that blinds anyone looking at it for 1-5 Rounds.

5: Lens apparatus on artifact projects a hot beam of light that inflicts 3k2 damage.



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6: Artifact has a 2" by 2" cavity. When an object is placed in it and the artifact is activated, an illusion of the object approximately 6' tall appears above the artifact.

7: Adds +1 to TN to be hit while activated.

8: Resonates when activated. All insects within one mile rush to the artifact and cover it, attacking anyone holding the device. The device shuts off automatically after 3 Rounds.

9: While activated, no insect will approach within 10' of the artifact. In backed into a corner, the insect will flee past the holder of the device in terror.

0: Incidental, but interesting effect. (Glows, opens only in moonlight) Do not roll on Flaws table.

Flaws

1: Item ceases to operate after a single use.

2-3: The artifact's controls are so convoluted that they require two people to operate. The device can operate for one use or one hour of continuous use, and then it needs one hour of rest to recharge.

4-6: There is an odd looking lens on the device. If it is touched while the device is active, the artifact explodes with a Rank 4 explosion.

7: Artifact only works when exposed directly to bright sunlight.

8-9: Artifact must be allowed to sit in sunlight for one day after each use, or hour of continuous use in order to recharge.

0: The device ceases to operate after a single use. In addition, it is trapped to deliver an injection of a slow-acting poison (1d/2 months/Unlimited) unless the user makes a Wits Check against a TN of 25. The poison slowly turns the infected area black. Currently, there is no known antidote.

Eisen Ruins

Powers

1: The artifact heals all of the user's Wounds and Dramatic Wounds (excluding scars) when activated.

2: The artifact purges the user of all poisons (including alcohol) when activated.

3: The user's Finesse is increased by 1 Rank for one day (ignoring normal maximums) after the artifact is activated.

4: The user's Brawn is increased by 1 Rank for one day (ignoring normal maximums) after the artifact is activated.

5: The user deals 3 dice of damage to the next living creature he touches after activating the artifact.

6: User rolls and Keeps two extra dice on his next Check after activating the artifact.

7-8: User ceases to age for 5 years after activating the artifact.

9: After activating the artifact, the next time the user suffers a Dramatic Wound, it glows bright red, and is instantly healed.

0: Incidental, but interesting effect. (Causes pleasant dreams, sparks violently when touched). Do not roll on Flaws table.

Flaws

1: Item ceases to operate after a single use.

2-9: Item weighs in excess of one ton. Whenever it is activated, roll a die. On an even number, the device is used up and ceases to work.

0: Artifact is infected with the "Dragon's Curse". It ceases to operate after a single use, and inflicts its user with the curse. For now, the character simply begins consuming twice as much water as usual. This change is permanent. This flaw will be explained in a later supplement.

Other Site

- 1-2: Roll on the Montaigne Sewers table.
- 3-4: Roll on the Isle of Syrne table.
- 5-6: Roll on the Thalussian Isles table.
- 7-8: Roll on the Eisen Ruins table.
- 9-0: Unusual artifact. Roll on the Unusual Artifact table.

Unusual Artifacts

- 1-2: Old Race Remains. Roll on Remains table.
- 3-4: Artifact reveals some information about an Old Race language. (GM's choice, or roll on Other Site table, ignoring results of 9-0)
- 5-6: Valuable work of Old Race art. It is worth 1 die times 1,000 Guilders.
- 7-8: The 'artifact' is an unusual fixed magical phenomenon, such as a pool that heals those who bathe in it, or a gateway to another world.
- 9: Artifact is in reality part of a larger, more powerful artifact, but will not operate on its own.
- 0: Artifact is broken and useless, but don't tell the players that.

Remains

- 1-2: Carapace usable only for decoration. Worth 2 dice times 1,000 Guilders if sold.
- 3-4: Unbreakable bones of varying size. They cause 3k2 damage if used as weapons (they are considered Heavy Weapons).
- 5-6: Ocular globe. If peered through, it allows the wearer to see in total darkness.
- 7-10: Early Human, or Monster Remains



Sailor Speech

Théan sailors have developed their own unique language. Terms such as “avast” and “bamboozle” have made their way across the waters. Listed below are some nautical terms and sailor slang to spice up your dialogue.

Abaft: toward the front of the ship

Abeam: toward the ship’s side

Adrift: movement without wind; also said of an absent sailor (absent either in body or in mind)

Aft: the rear of the ship

Aloft: a spot in the *rigging*, or simply, up high

“Avast!”: a command to stop; “Avast heavin’ that rope!”

Astern: toward the rear of the ship, or her *stern*

Bamboozle: to deceive another vessel as to your ship’s origin or nationality by flying false colors

Batten: to nail something down

Belay: to fasten something down with rope; also used to tell someone to keep his mouth shut, or to cancel orders

Belaying pin: a club-sized pin used to fasten ropes on the *rail* of a ship

Bilge: the lowest part of the ship, usually filled with old, putrid water

Bitter: a turn of a line around a bitt (nub to hold the line in place)

Bitter End: the last knot tied around a bit, thus the “bitter end”; also, a sailor willing to finish a job, no matter what the conditions is said to be “faithful to the bitter end”

Bow: another name for the front of the ship

Bowsprit: a small, angled pole at the front of the ship that carries a small sail

Braces: ropes used to move *yards*

Bullyboy: a term for sailors who chew on jerky, or “bully”

Carry on: a command when the wind turns good to bring up the sails from the hold

Chewing the fat: a colorful euphemism for eating the cook’s cuisine; wasting time

Cut of his jib: the jib of a ship is the very front, or “nose” of a ship, a very distinguishing feature; thus, judging a man’s nationality by the “cut of his jib” is to judge his nationality by the shape of his nose

Deck: one level of a ship

Draft: the distance between the bottom of the *keel* and the waterline

Eyes of the ship: the figurehead of the ship, specifically, the figurehead’s eyes

Fore: towards the ship’s *bow*

Forecastle: (pronounced “fohk-sul”) the raised deck nearest the *fore* of the ship

Foremast: the mast closest to the *bow*, or front of the ship

Freeboard: the distance between the waterline and the main deck

Gunwales: (pronounced “gunnels”) rails that run along the side of the ship just under the gunports

Gunwales under: a call meaning the ship (or a sailor) is in rough sea (trouble)

Half-shot: almost but not quite drunk


Halyard (Halliard): rope and tackle used to raise a sail or *yard*

Hook: the anchor

Jury: a quick and/or temporary repair (thus, to fix the rigging quickly is to “jury-rig”)

Keel: a piece of timber running along the entire bottom of the boat

Larboard: when facing the *bow*, the left side of the ship



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Lee: the side of the ship not facing the wind; when the wind changes, the lee-side changes as well (*see weather*)

Lifts: ropes used to change the vertical angle of the *yards*

Lubber: an insult implying incompetence

Mainmast: on a three-masted ship, the center *mast*

Mainsail: the largest, lowest sail on the *mainmast*

Mast: tall pole rising from the *deck* and supporting *yards* and *rigging*

Mizzenmast: the *mast* closest to the *stern*

Oakum: a thick, glue-like substance made from ropes and used for caulking

Old Salt: an experienced sailor

Orlop: the lowest *deck* above the hold

Port: another, more modern term for “*larboard*”

Quarterdeck: the *deck* that holds the crew’s quarters

Rail: wooden guard at the edge of the *deck*

Ratlines: the rungs sailors use to climb the *shrouds*

“**Reef the sails!**”: an order, given when a strong wind picks up, to reduce the sails

Running rigging: the ropse used to manipulate the sails to increase or decrease speed

Sally the ship: shift a ship that has run aground back and forth to get it loose

“**(I been) scuppered!**”: beaten or defeated (*see scuppers*)

Scuppers: channels to carry water off the *deck*

Scuttlebutt: cask of fresh water; also used as a term for gossip told around the watering hole

“**She/he can travel!**”: she/he can dance

Sheets: another word for sails

Shrouds: the rigging spread out aft of the masts that stabilizes them from *larboard* to *starboard*

Son of a gun: a compliment given to sailors for their firing skill, implying they must have been born on the gundeck

“**Splice the main brace!**”: a command from the captain, giving the crew permission to celebrate

Standing rigging: immobile ropes used to stabilize the *masts*

Starboard: if facing the *bow*, the right side of the ship

Stays: the *standing rigging* that stabilizes a mast fore to aft

Stern: the rear of the ship

Swallow the anchor: to quit the sailor’s life

Tack: to sail close to direction the wind is blowing from

Three sheets to the wind: putting all three *sheets* into the wind causes the ship to shudder and shake; being three sheets to the wind is to be so drunk the sailor can’t walk straight

Topsail: the second largest sail on the *mainmast*

Topgallant sail: the third largest sail on the *mainmast*

Trim: to adjust the sails when the wind changes

Weather(-side): the side of a ship the wind is coming from; when the wind changes, so does the weather-side of the ship (*see lee*)

Wales: *rails* running along the side of the ship

Watch: a time of duty aboard the ship; a third of the crew is on active watch all the time

Whistle up a Wind: to try something impossible

Yanker: a Vendel term for a man who drives a hard bargain; Vendel sailors use this word for pirates

Yard: a pole that crosses the mast, from which a sail is suspended

Knacks

Accounting	Embalmer	Masseur	Sincerity
Acting	Escape	Mathematics	Singing
Ambush	Etiquette	Menial Tasks	Skinning
Animal Training	Examiner	Miller	Snapshot
Appraising	Eye-gouge	Mooch	Socializing
Artillery	Fashion	Mounting	Spinner
Astronomy	First Aid	Musician (Instrument)	Sprinting
Attack (Weapon)	Fishing	Natural Philosophy	Stealth
Balance	Fletcher	Navigation	Steward
Barber	Footwork	Occult	Storytelling
Bartending	Forgery	Oratory	Strategy
Bear Hug	Furrier	Paper Maker	Street Navigation
Blacksmith	Gambling	Parry (weapon)	Surgery
Break	Gardener	Philosophy	Survival
Break Fall	Glassblower	Pickpocket	Swimming
Bribery	Gossip	Pilot	Swinging
Butcher	Grapple	Poison	Tactics
Calligrapher	Gunnery	Politics	Tailor
Cartography	Haggling	Potter	Theology
Ceramics	Hand Signs	Prestidigitation	Throat Strike
Chandler	Head Butt	Quack	Throw (weapon)
Cheating	History	Reload (weapon)	Throwing
Circus	Horse Archery	Research	Tracking
Climbing	Incitation	Ride	Trail Signs
Cold Read	Innkeeper	Rigging	Traps
Composer	Interrogation	Rolling	Trick Riding
Conceal	Jab	Sail Maker	Trick Shooting
Cooking	Jenny	Scheming	Unobtrusive
Cooper	Jeweler	Scribe	Underworld Lore
Cryptography	Kick	Scrounging	Uppercut
Dancing	Knotwork	Sculpting	Valet
Dentist	Law	Sea Lore	Veterinarian
Diagnosis	Leadership	Seamstress	Vintner
Diplomacy	Leaping	Seduction	Weather
Disguise	Lifting	Seneschal	Weaver
Drawing	Lip Reading	Set Defence	Writing
Drive Carriage	Lockpicking	Shadowing	
Dying	Logistics	Shopping	
Ear Clap	Long Distance Running	Side-step	

Backgrounds

Amnesia
 Cursed
 Debt
 Defeated
 Fear
 Hunted
 Hunting
 Lost Love
 Mistaken Identity
 Nemesis
 Obligation
 Rivalry
 Romance
 True Identity
 Vendetta
 Vow

Civil Skills

Artist
 Courtier
 Criminal
 Doctor
 Hunter
 Merchant
 Performer
 Sailor
 Scholar
 Servant
 Spy
 Streetwise

Martial Skills

Archer
 Athlete
 Buckler
 Commander
 Crossbow
 Dirty Fighting
 Fencing
 Firearms
 Heavy Weapon
 Knife
 Panzerhand
 Polearm
 Pugilism
 Rider
 Wrestling

Advantages

Able Drinker (1 Point)
 Academy (4 Points; 2 Points if Eisen)
 Appearance (Varies)
 Castillian Education (Castillian only, 10 Points)
 Citation (4 Points)
 Connection (Varies)
 Combat Reflexes (3 Points)
 Commission (Varies; 2 Points less if Montaigne)
 Dangerous Beauty (3 Points)
 Dracheneisen (Eisen only, 20 or 40 Points)
 Faith (5 Points)
 Foul Weather Jack (5 Points)
 Indomitable Will (3 Points)
 Inheritance (Varies)
 Keen Senses (2 Points)
 Language (Varies)
 Large (5 Points; 3 Points if Vendel or Vestenmannavnjar)
 Left-handed (3 Points; 1 Point if Vodacce)
 Legendary Trait (3 Points, 1 Point if Avalon)
 Linguist (2 Points)
 Membership (See Below)
 Swordsman's Guild (3 Points)
 Merchant Guilds (4 Points)
 Musketeers (4 Points)
 Secret Societies (5 Points)
 Noble (5 or 10 Points)
This Advantage costs 10 points, unless you have already purchased Sorcery, Dracheneisen, or Castillian Education, in which case it only costs 5 Points.
 Ordained (4 Points)
 Patron (Varies)
 Scoundrel (3 Points)
 Servants (3 Points)
 Small (2 Points)
 Toughness (5 Points; 3 Points if Ussuran)
 University (3 Points; 1 Point if Castillian)

Charts

Arcana for Heroes

Arcana	Hubris	Virtue
0 Fool	Rash	Propitious
1 Magician	Ambitious	Willful
2 High Priestess	Hedonistic	Intuitive
3 Empress	Lecherous	Comforting
4 Emperor	Hot-headed	Commanding
5 Hierophant	Trusting	Creative
6 Lovers	Star-crossed	Passionate
7 Chariot	Overconfident	Victorious
8 Strength	Cowardly	Courageous
9 Hermit	Overzealous	Focused
10 Fortune	Misfortunate	Fortunate
11 Justice	Judgmental	Exemplary
12 Hanged Man	Indecisive	Altruistic
13 Death	Reckless	Adaptable
14 Temperance	Envious	Self-controlled
15 Legion*	Loyal	Perspicacious
16 Tower	Arrogant	Uncanny
17 Star	Stubborn	Inspirational
18 Moon	Inattentive	Perceptive
19 Sun	Proud	Friendly
20 Judgment	Righteous	Insightful
21 Terra	Greedy	Worldly

*The Legion card is unique in that its Hubris is based upon its proper form, not its inverted form.

Sorcerous Heritage

Nationality	Sorcerous Heritage
Avalon	Glamour
Castille	<i>None</i>
Eisen	<i>None</i>
Montaigne	Porté
Ussura	Pyeryem
Vendel	Lærdom
Vodacce	Sorte

Trait Bonuses

Nationality	Trait Bonus
Avalon	+1 Resolve
Castille	+1 Finesse
Eisen	+1 Brawn
Montaigne	+1 Panache
Ussura	+1 Resolve
Vendel/Vesten	+1 Wits
Vodacce	+1 Wits

Swordsman Schools

Nationality	Swordsman School
Avalon	Donovan
Castille	Aldana
Eisen	Eisenfaust
Montaigne	Valroux
Ussura	<i>None</i>
Vendel	Leegstra
Vodacce	Ambrogia

Character Creation Step-by-Step

Step One: Sorcery

The first step is to decide if your Hero has sorcery. The cost depends on how strong your sorcerous blood is. Full-Blooded sorcery costs 40 Hero Points. Half-Blooded sorcery costs 20 Hero points.

Step Two: Swordsman

The second step is to decide if your Hero has attended a Swordsman's School. Training from a Hero's "native" school costs 25 Hero points. Training from a foreign school costs 35 Hero points.

Step Three: Traits

The third step is to put Hero points into your Traits. Your Traits start at Rank 1 and it costs 8 Hero points to increase a Trait by one Rank. Beginning Hero Trait maximum is 3 (except for Nation Bonus; see previous page, or page 110 of the *Player's Guide*).

Step Four: Advantages

The fourth step is to purchase Advantages, which give your Hero unique benefits such as heightened senses, an armed forces commission or membership in some of Théah's most exclusive clubs. The costs of Advantages vary, depending on the Advantage.

Step Five: Skills and Knacks

The fifth step is to purchase Skills and Knacks for your Hero. Purchasing a Skill costs 2 Hero points. Increasing a Basic Knack costs 1 HP, while purchasing or increasing an Advanced Knack costs 3 Hero points. You may not start with any Knacks higher than Rank 3.

Step Six: Finishing Touches

After Traits and Knacks, you have the opportunity to purchase a number of optional modifiers for your Hero.

Backgrounds provide your Hero with lingering back stories that need to be resolved. Backgrounds can cost anywhere from 1 to 3 points. You cannot begin with more than 4 points of Backgrounds.

Arcana provide your Hero with a fundamental personality trait that either helps or hinders him. Arcana either cost 10 HPs or give you 10 more HP's to spend, depending on whether your Arcana is proper or inverted, respectively.

Finally, your Hero has three Determined Statistics that you cannot directly spend Hero points on:

Wounds determines how much damage your Hero can take.

Reputation is a measure of how famous and well-respected your Hero is.

Wealth represents the amount of money you have to spend, and also the amount of money you receive over time – either as paid wages or as inheritance from your noble heritage.