

ARDUIN

ETERNAL

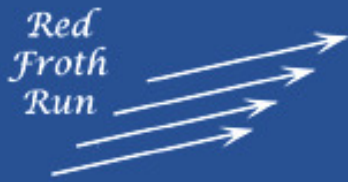


Chorynth

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CHORYNTH

The Aeolian Sea



The Stormy Sea



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ARDUIN® ETERNAL

Country of Chorynth

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CHORYNTH

Location: L7 – L8, M7

Capitol: Vorkhar (current Prince of Princes)

Population: 950,000

Demographics: Humans 89%, Elf 3%, Amazon 2%, Goblins 2%, Orc 2%, Other 2%

Government: Oligarchy [stable]

Tech: Low

Magik: Low

Psychic: Low

Spirit: Medium

Religion: Borsala

Symbol or Heraldry: Wind rose compass

Allies: None

Enemies: Ardashaera, Aranzian Isles, Sandara, Misty Isles, Zagrana, Kozangi Dales

QUICK DESCRIPTION

A renaissance-styled swashbuckling culture, ruled by 14 self-proclaimed sea princes, one for each coastal city.

GEOGRAPHY

The nation consists of one large island and clusters of smaller ones that hug closely to its shores. One island is artificially separated from the main, shorn away during the Wars of Darkness in the dim past. The magic unleashed that day drove a nearly perfect channel deep through the stone that underlies the island. Time has dulled the perfection from its initial creation but the channel that islanders call the Flume is clearly evident. The rest are more natural, created by one act of nature or another. The center of the island is dominated by verdure wrapped, towering piles of stone, while glimmering cities hug the shores.

SOCIETY

Chorynth is a society where sea princes rule the individual ports as each one sees fit, making for some interesting, often contradictory and energetic differences. The widely varying opinions of the sea princes tend more towards internal conflict than outward, and the Chorynthians, unfortunately more often than not, end up fighting among each other more than anyone else. Every 45 years a Prince of Princes is selected from the 14 to represent the isles as a whole to other nations. Of course, sometimes this event comes around earlier, usually due to the death or unfortunate accident of the current prince of princes. The position is highly coveted and goes to the prince who can buy, kill, or convince a majority of the other princes to vote for him or her. The end of a Prince of Princes time is always a bloody time in Chorynth. No Prince of Princes has ever willingly or peacefully handed over the rule of the country without some conflict,

and the process of change is never an easy transition.

The commerce of the islands is pirating, or *trading* as they call it with others. Chorynthians, or Malanchians as they are sometimes called, rarely purchase their cargo, but instead prey on others for goods or scavenge goods from wrecks. Something they very often cause. This attitude has started more than one war with other nations, such as the currently inactive, but ongoing, conflicts with the Aranzian Isles, Sandara, and the Misty Isles nations to name a few. This predation of others, constant squabbling with others, and flat out desire to just fight with anyone or any situation is their way of life. Given trade is the lifeblood of the area and their contentious nature, they seem to feel there is nothing wrong with preying, as they say, *on the fish*. Most sea captains out of Chorynth are more of the scavenger variety than truly sea wolves though some have attained a rather bloody reputation in their aggressiveness for lively *trading*.

Chorynthians are loud, brash and boisterous as a rule of thumb. They live their lives at breakneck speed and do not like to think there is anything they cannot do. The chip on their shoulder comes from a deep seated belief that the world owes them for their bad path in the past and they are determined to take their worth from the world, one way or another.

They also seem to live in the past. Actually, it might be more appropriate to say Chorynthians can't let go of the past. Its the source of why they hold on to grudges and also their maddening habit of giving directions according to where something used to be. Something utterly confusing to someone who doesn't dwell on the island. Giving directions based on landmarks that don't exist is form of a challenge. The taunt to someone to ask what that landmark was is a way to continue the past, to tell its tale and relive the unique experience it was. It affirms the Chorynthian sense of history in a way their normal brashness doesn't allow.

There is a total hatred and antipathy for anything related to Set in any of his guises within the Chorynthian mindset, due to a 135-year long plundering rule by priests of the World Snake. This dark stain in the past has never died out in the eyes of the Chorynthians. The World Snake priests came into power with sudden, hidden precision, toppling the preexisting government and installed a darkly themed regime. One whose foundation was the cultural, social, and physical destruction of the island inhabitants. The hatred of the islanders for the acts of the priests during that time frame continues. Out of this bloody time in their history is when the sea princes took power, each rising in a city, overthrowing the snake priests, razing their temples and blundering.

Slavery is more than legal on the islands, and a majority of industry and agriculture is dependent on the labor of slaves. The legalities of slaving inside of Chorynth are incurably vague, and slaving gangs are common in the poorer sections of Chorynthian cities and in the rural regions. A slave's life on the islands is not a good one, and the Chorynthians mark slaves with brands: usually over the left eye for slaves good only for labor, over the right eye for educated ones, and in between for fighting slaves. Slavery is not forever, however. If death doesn't arrive first, a person can buy their way

free of slavery and back into freedom; or even earn it.

Amusement and relaxation in Chorynth revolve around play (usually with some element of risk), drinking, festivals, and just parties in general. Chorynthians attack life with a verve that takes no consideration for their own welfare or even their health. Smoking is enjoyed heartily by all the social levels (all 2: the Princes and everyone else) of Chorynth, and is a common pastime. Games of chance are another heart held favorite, as well as, strangely, the enactment of the silent play on the stage. For some reason, this strikes a chord with Chorynthians, and they cannot seem to get enough of it, even the most bloodthirsty of them.

Chorynthian architecture is hodgepodge, and has no distinct 'style', taking from anyone and everyone to make a mishmash of building styles. The buildings of previous conquerors are often copied, or Chorynthians assume some favored design seen elsewhere. This has done nothing to build any particular statement, but instead contributed to the cacophonous arrangement of their cities and settlements.

The salt of the sea is in the Chorynthian blood, and they live and die by its gifts. Its as important as their patriarchal traditions and the two concepts are dominant ones, coloring their vernacular, politics, and culture.

Chorynthian dress is as brash, bold, and confused as their architecture, and defining a 'style' to Chorynth is like trying to hold the winds in one's hand. Still, in a way, this is the definition of Chorynth's style, and they delight in the chaos of their differences. Tattoos are commonplace, and Chorynthians decorate their bodies, clothes, and everything else with accouterments to proclaim their status. Usually the louder, more garish, or in ill taste (at least to others) the better and more fashionable.

WELL KNOWN CUSTOMS

Chorynthians mark the beginning of adulthood for a person by when they serve on a ship and make a successful voyage. Until such a time, a person is not considered an adult, and has rights only a step or two higher than a slave. Different cities show this social landmark in different ways, though a colored sash, gem stone pin, or tattoo is thee most common.

While the previous is of more cultural holdover from the early island days, it is the next fact that most know about Chorynth. Chorynthians love impromptu contests of swaggering exaggeration. It is an art form they take seriously, and there is no city in Chorynth without a professional. They take these contests as seriously as duels, and more than one dispute has been handled via intermediaries whose boasts are often the meaty fare of legends.

Chorynthians honor the ocean and pay attention to its voice, patterning their actions after its own. When the ocean storms, so do they, just as when its calm, they too are placid. Meeting a Chorynthian ship on a calm sunny day is the best of luck; they are likely to let you pace unhindered. Otherwise, they turn into predators, even to the extent of sailing through raging storm to lay down their assault.

Equally so, Chorynthians will rescue anyone stranded in the ocean barring putting them there in the first place! Its a common custom, even among cutthroats, though they might consign them for slavery in place of drowning. Also, anything floating or adrift in the ocean is considered freely available for taking.

Respect is given to those who are brash, bold and loud. Quiet is rarely rewarded. Chorynthians measure life in its outcry of sound and bold color. They attribute wisdom to those who are vocal, who do not wait for action but instead take action.

MYTHS AND QUIRKY THINGS

Rinni Lalli is a bogeyman myth, a mutable being that changes shape based on who tells the tale. From adults to children it is feared, said to haunt the docks at night, ever seeking something to drink. If he cannot find a drink or if a person will share when asked, it will bash in their skull, sucking out the brains and blood to satiate its ravenous thirst. Rinni Lalli especially loves sailors, stalking after them most of all.

Alostalo is another night walker, who lurks about looking for naughty children to cram into his sack. Those he catch become his meal, and turn into festering ghouls that will rise the next morning to prey on the living.

While normally cats are regarded no better than any other animal, on a ship they are treated as almost equals, prized for their mousing ability. More odd, however, is on land, if a cat looks down on someone from the roof while they are in the road, Chorynthians render them a salute and cry of greeting. They say this greeting is not to the cat but to the lord over them. Its an old superstition and one related to a past time when they say the lord of cats used their island as a hunting ground.

EDUCATION AND ORGANIZATIONS

Malanchian is the tongue of the islands. Its roots are in low elven, amazon, and the original patois of the islands. Its written form is simplistic and phonetic, with general grammar structures that emphasize its oratory strengths. Malanchian is made for speaking, and it shows, whether in writing or speaking. While its prominently spoken, among the potpourri of languages heard on the streets, Arduinian, Amazon and Viruelandian dominate.

Chorynth has no organized colleges or educational edifices; individuals learn at the school of hard knocks and at the knee of their fathers. Individuals may stand out, but no educational institutions have taken root in the Chorynthian society at this time. In counterpoint, Guilds are strong, if very locally organized, in the land. The Shipbuilders, Slavers, Merchants, Thieves, and supporting Guilds are the strongest and most influential.

Numerous fraternal organizations exist in Chorynth but they come and go with the wind, built on the impetus of the personality that founded them, and dying just as swiftly when that person is gone. A few, however, have persisted. The captains who sail with the red-black star on their ships are highly feared. The Red Black Star has

survived for nearly 80 years, an Elf's lifetime in Chorynthian years. The captains who are in this organization are considered among the most worst to meet on the seas, as they are merciless, yielding to none and giving quarter to none in return. Another is the Quill and Wave, a loose group of scholars that have maintained their solidarity for nearly a hundred years. Few in number they are a powerful presence in each island city, frequently influencing politics and society in directions they consider optimum for Chorynth.

RELIGION AND POWER

Borsala is the commonplace religion of the land, dear to everyone's hearts. Following the religion of the Sea King is the god of mischief and thievery, Marbonas and his ever close brother in trickery, Puck. The goddess of waves and foam, Lilikeal, the birth mother of the Sagaar, the spirit-demons, has a strong following, along with a hodgepodge of other gods and goddesses common to urban areas and coastal shores.

Spirits, and spiritual issues tend to be maritime in nature. Plagues of drowned zombies, shrieking spirits, odd jelly like beings, and other oddities seem to spring up like curses, almost seasonal in their appearance. The Chorynthian, for all their bravado tend to ignore the spiritual world and its beings and very little of it has entered the fabric of their culture and folk lore. Mental powers, technology, and magik are recognized and known but more as pockets of capable beings that rise to power, serving one prince or another with their ability.

MILITARY

Chorynthian ships are brigantines and similar mid-sized to small, fast, and mobile ships. The few larger ships they have are used for defense, usually little more than barge like platforms for heavy cannon. Chorynthians are excellent at coastal defense and ship-to-ship warfare, utilizing black powder cannons and smooth bore muskets in both cases. The use of the black powder is a commercial and economic secret they work diligently to keep in the proper hands. The fact their mixture is highly reliant on special minerals torn from the soil of the Snake Back Mountains further adds to the mystery (and ease of secrecy) of the dark, grainy powder they use. This is not a common fact, and not even the very rotten of Chorynthian society would dare reveal the fact (if they even knew).

On land, each city fields its only force, usually a polyglot of forces built with no standardizations among them. Little to no policing is done external to the city walls so most of the land power on the island is centered on urban zones. Issues outside the cities are either ignored or handled from the ocean, usually by bombardment.

COMMERCE

Mercantilism in Chorynth is the art of theft or pirating from others. Why purchase goods when others can do it for you is a common theme in Chorynthian thinking. Most

merchants in the nation are black marketeers, though there are a few legitimate ones here and there on the islands that traffic in 'clean' goods. The islands have a poor internal road system, and all significant transport of goods is affected via ship, tugs, and barges along the coast rather than overland. These are frequently the targets of Chorynthian 'opportunists', who treat their own shipping with the same reverence they give to foreigners. More than one Chorynthian 'merchant' has made its way home only to find another 'merchant' discussing a 'trade' in wares at the other end of a cannon or sword.

Now all that aside, Chorynth really does have some homegrown items it does commerce. They just tend to get stolen from one another! Anyway, they make a kind of earthy brown glass they sell in ingots called sharks, that seems to be popular on the mainland. They also produce some iridescent-hued pottery from the clays found in the Snake Back Mountains that has found a growing market on the mainland, especially in the colder nations of the north.

LANDMARKS OF NOTE

Blood Tangle – The northern forest of island, it takes its name from the deep darkly vermilion hue of the soil that seems to powder and permeate everything in the region. The forest is actually very colorful, full of life, from brilliantly hued flowers to iridescent-plumed predators. Its beauty is something admired from afar, since traversing the thick snarl of trees and growth is slow and difficult. The Blood Tangle has swallowed more than one city in its time though and left wonders that call to the adventurous blood. Its siren lure has seen many leave their bones in the undergrowth, streams and soil, though as the forest hides many dangers small and large that can fell the unwary.

Knuckle Bones – A duo of islands set off the coast. They are relatively flat and grassy, though the larger island has a sheer cliff pocked with cliffs that runs along the ocean facing side that is nearly impassable. While strategically placed across three of the major cities on the island (Arignion, Brinyer and Vorkhar), the islands are little used. They hold a darkly ominous reputation and are seen as cursed since businesses that take root there fail; buildings built crumble, and people seem to sicken and die if they stay there overlong. Additionally, the larger island holds a large earth mound shaped like a star. The grass that grows on it is unusual for the region and no other plant or grass will take root except for the fibrous, lichen-like grass that grows there. Most surmise its a giant barrow and given the precipitous amount of undead that seem to show up from time to time on the island around the grass star, perhaps it is so.

Petrified Current – Above the water its little more than slate gray glimmer in the water that gives little warning before it strikes. Below water its a storm of gray, blue and steel glimmers, churning madly to the tune of an unknown flutist. Those who are caught in the grip of this odd ball nexus find their ship rapidly converted to stone and themselves along with it if they are touched by the mercurial waters of the current. It generally appears south of the Red Froth Run and its considered a bogeyman of the ocean. For all the fear about it, a strange sect of cultists in Arignion worship it as the Seed of Aucuaon and say it heralds the birth of something wondrous (or perhaps cthonically

so....)

Red Froth Run – Less a place and more of a region, this current is infamous for two things: its vermillion hued algae that blooms brightly in the summer and fall and its treacherous pull that switches and turns, forming flash mobs of whirlpools, like bleeding mouths sucking ships down to the hells.

Rime Island – More a mountain with a beach than a true island. The island is used prominently for business and manufacturing. Its hard stone slopes are sources of minerals and metals and the flat region and the adjacent Siphon Channel are littered with shipwrights, docks and bays to build ships out of the lumber floated to the island from the Snake Dark Forest and Blood Tangle.

Shrine of Critize – Islanders are typically not religious, except for a deep reverence for Borsala, of course. They have taken up superstition in its place, as well as an abiding fear and love of spirits. The great stone shrine, in its seat within the wooded throngs of trees that litter the slopes of the Snake Back Mountains, is where one treks to when spirits and multitude of little demons and gods they believe in have left them with no hope. Its the recourse one seeks when all other hope is lost. The shrine exacts a stern toll on those who seeks its exonerating powers. Some say the price is exaggerated, while others the opposite, fearing its relief is paid in the coin of life. Regardless, the foolhardy and desperate trek to the pillars that mark the gate to the shrine, hoping the unknown gods within will succor them.

Snake Back Mountains – This mountain range is not only a prominent feature of the main island known for its horned lizards, but also where the sea prince, Scoreöcre of Stygla, retreated before invading Amazonian forces, and buried his famous hoard of treasure. Many Chorynthians have boasted of finding it, but none have spent its gold as proof. Besides, none have seen the legendary treasures purported in his treasure trove: the prized gold and Yaddrack swan that flew and sang songs as precious as its metals; the Bhanduruakk Blade, used by the Whelp of Ktar, whose edge tasted divine blood; the legendary stone and Silveel chased Steed of Khudrōsu; and lastly, the Zaklfaun Harp, strung with the golden hairs of the fallen Elven Goddess Lliunōnel'n, slain since the mythic God Wars.

Snake Dark Forest – The great southern forest of the island. When one speaks of the forest of the island they invariably mean the vine shrouded depths of this tall wood. Its heavy canopies brood over a plethora of life. Unlike its name, however, it has no excessive amount of snakes or like creatures; its naming lies in its sprawl across the Snake Back Mountains instead. Islanders tell tales of the forest, saying it holds secrets. Perhaps they are right. Its wooded reach is littered with crumbling buildings, hidden ruins, cloistered barrows and more. The feared and hated Seven Spire lies somewhere within as does the hidden fortress of the Snake Mark, the last bastion of Set on the island. And these two are but a small bit of the darkness that lies at the heart of the wood, for all its life giving and ship building providence. More indeed is hidden within, waiting for the right brave heart to discover its location.

Whistle Skull Island – This long strand of land is flat and desolate, covered with little but dwarfed grass and the crumbling ruins of failure. Nothing built on this island lasts

long though many have tried over the long history of the island. Their past failure litter the land like skulls and the harsh wind that whips from the sea burns through them, sounding for all like the keening of the dead. Whistle Skull Island has a firm root in the superstitions of the island and most natives avoid it. Only outsiders try to build there as wise islanders know that anything constructed on its shores are doomed to failure.

Witches Cauldron – This fog shrouded zone lies south of the island is avoided by all with sense in their heads. Local legends are rife with its dangers, home to plagues of Sagar, and a seemingly endless ocean of salted undead. The “witches” as they are known, are the knobby tips of the bulbous towers that leer drunkenly from the ever present stench-ridden fog that enshrouds it. The few errant fools that have braved it and returned speak of scents that change one like the infamous Winds of Change, shadows that try to marry up with the living, and other horrid manifestations within.

Wreck of the King’s Blade – Harking back to Malanchian times, this is the ship captained by Outervail Menahem, a noble man who wielded the Draskenaine forged blade that slew the I bathene of Moon’s Crest. The Malanchian were much ‘nobler’ than their descendants, and fought the pirates that infested the region in their day. King’s Blade fell to two pirate ships, or some great sea beast if other tales told are right. Regardless, the gold of Menahem is true, and the sum of gold set on the return of the fabled blade wielded by Outervail Menahem has lured more than one into seeking this fabled wreck that lies somewhere along the coastal region of the Fog Door.

REGIONAL HISTORY

The islands separated from the mainland of Khaora sometime in the forgotten past, perhaps around the time of the sinking of the second continent, or even further back in time. The islands have a checkered history littered with conquest by one country or another. The Chorynth of present times is but one in a long line of successors to the islands and its advantages off the coast, for the advantage of where the isles sit off the southeast corner of Khaora cannot be questioned. Many of the maritime empires, from Chardos to the Dreaming Isles, have put colonies and fortifications on her shores at one time or another. The litter of the past is found in every field and worked stone that lies broken, crumbling, or taken from its original foundations to form some newer building.

The Malanchian kingdom of the isles formed after a series of struggles between differing cultures on the islands ended up in a bloody battle. The battle left the culture of the islands open for the Malanchian people to gain the upper hand. Riven from their home island of Malacha in the Southern Ocean by the Azure Slaving Ships of Chardos, they resettled in the isles and eventually grew strong enough to throw off the reigns of all other countries. The rise to power was hard, but the Malacha learned to play the contesting nations on the islands off at each other. This eventually triggered the full-scale conflict that gained them the opportunity needed to attain freedom from the grip of their slave masters.

The kingdom of the Malanchian Isles lasted for a stately 231 years before falling to a coup by followers of the World Snake. Declaring the isles sanctified to Set, the priests

shed blood, and despoiled the land for nearly 45 years before the people finally gained the courage to overthrow them. While the loss in life was terrible, the Malanchians would rather pay any price in blood and death to attain freedom than lie another minute under the shadow of the Great Snake and its fanged daggers.

After no trace of the snake priests was to be found on the isles, the people chose new rulers, each city taking one, and thus began the reign of the sea princes. Since the grip of the Great Snake had tainted their name in the world, the Malanchians took for the title of their nation a portion of the name of their greatest heroine of legend, Chorynthi lu'Amion.

After a few cycles of internal warfare and the shadow of an invasion from the far away Dreaming Isles, the princes came together, and determined there should be a ruler to their kingdom, but only on terms the princes could accept. Out of the counsels of the sea princes grew the path to elevating a single prince. As Prince of Princes, the elected would lead for a short time, then step down before another who could sway the council of sea princes.

ARDUIN ETERNAL INFORMATION

Most people benefit from the culture they are raised in. Unless otherwise directed in the racial write-ups, you select one culture and choose three cultural influences from that culture. Keep the following items in mind as well:

- Some influences cost more than one. Check both the write up for full details.
- Where a cultural influence indicates either wealth or items, note them down on your character sheet for when you select your equipment.
- The entries under the cultures define the range of influences common to that culture. These are subject to GM modification – check with them for specifics.
- Where a racial entry is indicated (e.g., Arduin Elf) this indicates a distinct and strong subculture exists that influences the mainstream of that nation.
- Many cultures give access to one or more languages. Unless otherwise indicated you can use them with full fluency, to include any written form. Any checks required against a language will use REAS checks.
- If you choose 2 or more cultural influences with the bonuses to the same skill, add them together.
- You cannot take opposing cultural influences, like Individualist Nature and Community Spirit.
- You can use one language option to learn to read and write a language you can speak.
- Named skills, like Business or Wilderness, have entries with a number following a plus sign. These are skill ranks. Bonuses to skill checks are stated as bonuses.
- History entries are Knowledge skill specializations. The Knowledge skill is detailed in the Skills section.
- Culture entries are Culture skill specializations. The Culture skill is detailed in

the Skills section.

- Everyone starts with a base Tech Level (TL) 1 unless previously given a higher TL. Any TL noted under the cultures is added to any existing entries.

CHORYNTH CULTURAL INFO

You gain the follow base skills as a product of being raised or influenced by this culture:

- Chorynth Culture +15
- Chorynth History +20
- Read/write & speak Malanchian and speak 2 other tongues.
- TL +1
- Crime +3, Nautical Lore [Know] +3, Wilderness +3, Underworld +2, Clandestine +2, Ocean Ship [Pilot] +1

CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Ancestral Hatred (Set)

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: Hatred for deity and religion of Set is a cultural trait, one savored and treasured. You have Knowledge Religion (Set) +30 and Knowledge History (Set) +30 and against this culturally loathed thing you gain a +5 bonus to all rolls directly involving it.

Banditry

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: Culture has a long and colorful history of attacking and ransacking and pillaging. You have a +5 bonus with Crime skill checks and split 15 skill ranks (with at least 1 skill rank in each) across Crime, Wilderness, Underworld, Intel, and Clandestine skills. In addition to the cultural influences listed under your culture, you can choose **Recognized** and **Ruthless** as a cultural influence if desired.

Criminal Heritage

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: You come from a long line of criminals, thieves and other bastards of society. You begin with your choice of (just 1) Criminal, Street or Underworld Type I connection. Unlike a normal connection it has no upkeep, can be called upon at any time, any number of times and does not decay in trust. Equally this connection never improves either. The connection calls upon you like normal (meaning it requires services in return like normal). You also split 10 skill ranks among the Clandestine, Crime, Underworld and Urban skills. You can elect to give up 1 cultural influence (once only) to make this connection Type II instead of Type I.

Cultural Fame (Swashbuckler)

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: People of your culture are well known as swashbucklers and all members of your culture have a joint inheritance in the Swashbuckling social motif. Specifically it means you tend toward the heroic, the idealistic and to performing outrageous actions. The social motif provides a +5 bonus to checks when you align it to such activities, though it cannot be applied more than once per melee round. As this is a cultural icon, you are not required to maintain it. However, you can still lose it by undertaking actions contrary to the social motif.

Cultural Fame (Pirate)

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: As above but for the Pirate social motif.

Cutthroat Society

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: Your culture's social life can be a dangerous thing to live and fosters a certain amount of paranoia, especially when you are in positions of power. Add a +5 bonus to all Social skill checks and a +10 bonus to PER. Add Crime +2 and Underworld +2. Add a +30 bonus to Social skill checks with Bribery, Intimidate, or Lie.

Melting Pot

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: Your society has a long history of mixing cultures and has served as the melting pot for 1 or more in the past. You can choose a cultural influence from any other culture.

Maritime Heritage

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: The culture has a long history of maritime tradition. You can split 15 skill ranks over Military, Nautical Lore [Know] and Pilot (declare the vessel (s) known) or start with the secret of Terrain Familiarity (Ocean) listed under the Wilderness skill.

Privateer Heritage

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: Culture has a long and colorful history of privateering in the name of its ruler. You have a +5 bonus with Wilderness skill checks while on water and split 15 skill ranks (with at least 1 skill rank in each) across Nautical Lore [Know], Wilderness, Underworld, Crime, Intel, and Clandestine skills. In addition to the cultural influences listed under your culture, you can choose **Recognized** and **Ruthless** as a cultural influences if desired.

Rae-Zant Khai Shang

Cultural Influence Cost: 1 (2 for Khai Shang)

Benefit: Khai Shang attracted to the Chorynth see a kindred spirit in the people there. Otherwise they differ little than the norm socially. You know the Shangu language and

are tutored in Khai Shang battle tactics. You have Combat +5 and Kyril [Weap] +5, Bolos [Weap] +5, and Kukri [Weap] +5. In addition to the cultural influences listed under the Chorynth, you can choose **Military Pursuits** or **Warrior Tradition** as a cultural influence. If you are Khai Shang, add a +5 bonus to all Athletic and Combat skill checks. You gain **Athleticism** and **Cultural Fame (Duelist)** for free.

Salt in your Blood

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: The open waters of the ocean, the river ways and lakes – it doesn't matter – they are your home. You start with the secret of Terrain Familiarity (Ocean) listed under the Wilderness skill and gain a +10 bonus to Wilderness when making checks on the ocean.

Self Taught

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: Your culture nurtures a strong sense of independent learning and has endeared an autodidactic, take charge mindset. Apply 20 skill ranks to any number of skills but you can place no more than 5 skill ranks in any single skill. You can also elect to give up 1 cultural influence and gain a +10 advancement bonus to a skill of choice.

Storytelling Traditions

Cultural Influence Cost: 1

Benefit: Your culture is renown for storytelling and many come from far and wide to hear them speak, tell tales or to hear of heroic exploits. You have a +5 bonus to all Perform skill checks. Split 15 skill ranks among Oration [Perf], Act [Perf] and Theater [Perf]. Add +10 to Wealth.