

Ars Magica

# Between Sand & Sea

Mythic Africa



by Ferguson,  
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**Timothy Ferguson** is a librarian from Australia, who did not realize that the Red and the iconography of the Australian interior were similar until he was writing this sentence. He dedicates this book to his wife and children. He thanks the other authors for taking over the bulk of the work on this book, and its sister, when his life struck a difficult patch. The book's level of polish and coherence are due to a great deal of clever work on their part and he'd like to congratulate and thank them for it.

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# Contents

<b>Africa and Its People</b> .....6	Zenata.....18	Tuareg Society.....32
THE SHAPE OF THE WORLD.....6	Arabs.....18	<i>Tuareg Castes</i> .....33
THEMES.....6	<i>Banu Hilal and Allies</i> .....19	<i>Ineslemen</i> .....34
A Land of Wonder.....7	Others.....19	<i>Tuareg Women</i> .....34
A Land of Hunger.....7	<i>Banu Khalida</i> .....19	Tuareg Magic.....34
SAGAS IN MYTHIC AFRICA.....8	<i>Tuareg</i> .....20	<i>Tuareg of Hermes, Tuareg of Suleiman?</i> .....34
Why Are There No	<i>Non-Human Races</i> .....20	THE BANU KHALIDA.....34
Covenants in Mythic Africa?.....8	Muslim Names.....20	<i>Background</i> .....35
<i>The Cordovan Sabirs</i> .....8	<i>Sample Arabic Isms</i> .....20	<i>Culture</i> .....36
<i>The Early Order Was Roman</i>	<i>Sample Muslim Laqabs</i> .....20	<i>Religion</i> .....37
<i>in Ancestry, But Not Location</i> .....8	<i>Sample Muslim Nisbas</i> .....20	<i>Warfare</i> .....37
<i>Christian Europe is Bigger Than It Used To Be</i> .....8	Berber Names.....21	Stories Involving the Banu Khalida.....38
<i>The Pattern Of Uprisings</i> .....9	MAGHREBI ARABS.....21	<b>Geography of North Africa: Coasts</b> 40
<i>There May Be Failed Settlements</i> .....9	Pick A Religion.....21	COASTAL TRAVEL.....40
Virgin Territory.....9	<i>The Virtues of A Good Muslim</i> .....22	Story Ideas For Pirates.....40
<i>No Churches</i> .....10	<i>Non-Muslim Characters: the Dbimmi Flaw</i> .....22	<i>The Merchant House</i> .....40
<i>A Land for Exiles</i> .....10	<i>Guards</i> .....22	ROBBING THE IFRANJ.....40
The Spirit of Exploration.....11	<i>Merchants</i> .....22	MAKING IT PERSONAL.....40
Logistical Difficulties.....11	<i>Moneylenders and Wine-Smugglers</i> .....23	MERCENARY PIRATES.....40
Hermetic Presence.....12	Always Speak Respectfully.....23	PUNIC AND ROMAN SITES.....41
<i>Mercere Trading House</i> .....12	<i>Avoid Making Direct Requests</i> .....23	<i>Mauretania Tingitana</i> .....42
<i>Jerbiton Scholars</i> .....12	<i>Avoid Speaking About The Future</i> .....23	<i>Mauretania Caesariensis</i> .....42
<i>Criamon Mystics</i> .....12	How to Act.....23	<i>Numidia</i> .....42
<i>Tremere Spies</i> .....12	<i>Avoid Shame</i> .....23	<i>Cyrenaica</i> .....43
THE LAND.....12	<i>Reputations and Shame</i> .....23	THE WESTERN COAST.....43
Mauritania.....12	<i>The Gift</i> .....24	Anfa.....43
Numidia.....12	<i>Associate With Fortunate People</i> .....24	Asfi.....43
Cyrenaica and Tripolitania.....13	<i>Murabitin</i> .....24	Island of Mogador.....44
The Great Desert.....13	<i>Act as a Member of Your Social Class</i> .....25	Rabat and Salé.....45
<i>Mountain Ranges</i> .....13	<i>Dress Appropriately For Your Wealth</i> .....25	Pithecoussa, the Island of Monkeys.....45
<i>Libyan Desert</i> .....13	<i>Maintain Your Social Network</i> .....25	<i>Arriving on the Island</i> .....45
<i>Tanezrouft</i> .....13	Segregate by Sex.....27	<i>Exploring the Isle of Monkeys</i> .....48
The Torrid Zone and Beyond.....13	<i>Female Agents</i> .....27	<i>The King of Monkeys</i> .....48
HISTORY.....14	<i>Husbands and Polygamy</i> .....27	THE RIF.....48
Antaios and Tinjis.....14	THE BERBERS.....27	Tangier.....48
Carthage.....14	Appearance.....27	<i>Tumulus of Antaeus</i> .....48
and the Romans.....14	<i>Tattoos</i> .....27	<i>Walili</i> .....49
Vandals and Byzantines.....15	Berber Culture.....28	THE TELL: TUNISIA.....49
The Arab Invasion.....15	<i>Gender Roles</i> .....28	Marrakesh.....50
and the Berber Uprising.....15	The Village.....28	<i>Storyguide Tip: Describing Marrakesh</i> .....51
The Dissident Dynasties.....16	The Tribe.....29	<i>An Empire In Decline</i> .....51
<i>The Bani Hilal</i> .....16	Berber Beliefs and Folklore.....29	Saga Seeds.....51
The Almoravids.....16	<i>The Gods of the Imazighen</i> .....30	<i>A New Ruler</i> .....51
The Almohad Caliphate.....17	<i>Yemma-t n</i> .....30	<i>Aiding a Governor</i> .....51
THE PEOPLE OF MYTHIC AFRICA.....17	<i>Dunmit and Awettuf</i> .....30	<i>Invited In</i> .....51
Berbers.....18	<i>The Netherworld</i> .....30	<i>Revenge Against The Order</i> .....52
<i>Masmuda</i> .....18	THE PEOPLE OF THE VEIL.....32	<i>Virtues for the Thieves of Marrakesh</i> .....52
<i>Sanbaja</i> .....18	Tuareg Culture.....32	

## Between Sand & Sea

All According To Plan (Minor General Virtue) ..	52
Falls Like A Cat (Minor General Virtue).....	52
Indescribable Face (Minor General Virtue).....	52
Just an Instant (Minor General Virtue).....	53
Finding Hidden Loot (Minor General Virtue).....	53
Rat Up A Drainpipe (Minor General Virtue).....	53
Schooled in Crime (Minor General Virtue).....	53
Sees In The Dark (Minor Supernatural Virtue).....	53
Skilled Smuggler (Minor General Virtue).....	53
Fes .....	54
Storyguide Tip: Describing Fes.....	54
Tunis.....	54
Storyguide Tip: Describing Tunis.....	54
Tripoli.....	55
Storyguide Tip: Describing Tripoli.....	55
Other Communities of the North Central Tell.....	56
Sbarshal.....	56
Tabert.....	56
Tlemcen.....	56
Algiers.....	56
Ruins of Note.....	56
Other Communities of the Eastern Tell.....	56
Qusantina.....	56
Soussa.....	57
Bouna.....	57
Tbessa, Lambaesis, and Tamagudi.....	57
ISLANDS OF NORTH AFRICA.....	58
Djerba.....	58
Malta.....	58
THE EASTERN COAST: CYRENAICA.....	59
The Ruins of Apollonia and Cyrene ..	60
Leptis Magna.....	62
The Jebel Akhdar.....	62
The Altars of the Philaeni.....	62
Siwa.....	63
THE GRAND PLATEAU AND THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS.....	63
Sijilmasa.....	65
The Atlas Mountains are Like A Faerie Forest.....	65
<b>The Great Desert</b> .....	<b>66</b>
THE LANDSCAPES OF THE GREAT DESERT.....	66
The Fezzan.....	67
Al Kufra.....	67
Awdjila.....	67
Djofra.....	68
Murzuq.....	68
Ubari.....	68
The Garamatians.....	68
History.....	68
Lost Sites and Cities.....	69
Garama.....	69
Zinchebra.....	69
Gbat.....	69
Sarir Tibesti.....	70
Royal Tombs of Abramant al-Hattia.....	70
Wells & Water.....	70
Language of Garamantian Magic.....	70
Garamantian Gods.....	70

Types of Garamantian Magic.....	71
The Central.....	71
Great Desert.....	71
Djanet.....	72
Ghadames.....	72
Ghardaia.....	72
Gbat.....	73
Wargala.....	73
The Redoubts of the Tuareg.....	73
Abaggar.....	73
Tamangbest.....	73
Tassili n Ajjer.....	74
Air.....	74
Adagh.....	74
Tanezrouft, the.....	74
Western Great Desert.....	74
Iwalatan.....	74
Sijilmasa.....	75
Tasarabla.....	75
Taghaza.....	75
Tuwat.....	75
Ténééré Desert.....	75
Aouderas.....	76
Bilma.....	76
Facbi.....	76
Fada.....	77
Takedda.....	77
Timia.....	78
TRADE ACROSS THE SANDS	
Arranging Caravans.....	78
Western Route: Iwalatan Road.....	79
Central Routes: Taghaza Trail.....	79
Central Routes: Ghadames Road.....	80
Central Routes: Garamantian Road.....	80
Southern Route: Bilma Trail.....	80
Camels.....	80
THE MYSTERY OF THE SUDAN.....	81
Trade Goods Carried	
Across the Great Desert.....	82
Human Slaves.....	82
The Time-lost.....	82
Fantastic Slaves.....	84
IS THE GREAT DESERT TIED TO A REALM? ..	84
Magical Interpretation:	
Two Great Spirits.....	85
The Hunger, and the Creatures of the Red.....	85
The Hope, and the Creatures of the Black.....	86
Faerie Interpretation:	
The Land of Ghouls.....	86
Infernal Interpretation:	
The Punishment of God.....	86
High Fantasy Interpretation:	
The Crack Between the Worlds.....	86
The Caravans Are Faerie Markets.....	87
The Caravans Come From Wounded Worlds..	87
The Caravans Come From Unknowable	
Places, for Unknowable Reasons.....	87
THE SOURCES OF THE NILE.....	87
Actual Geography: Oasis Stories.....	87
The Black City.....	87

The Silent Princess.....	87
Zerzura.....	87
Fantastic Geography:	
Stories for the Nile of the Blacks.....	88
The Long Voyage: A Saga Hook.....	88
Making the Nile Fit For Transport and Trade.....	88
A City in the Atlas.....	88
The Western Nile As A Trade Route.....	89
Fantastic Civilizations.....	89

## The Realms of North Africa

THE MAGIC.....	90
The Winds of the Desert.....	90
Cult of the Sun and Moon.....	92
The Cult of the Dead.....	92
Ancestor Spirits.....	92
TATTOO MAGICIANS.....	93
THE SETTUTEN.....	94
Settut Characters.....	95
New Virtues and Flaws.....	96
Settut.....	96
Disjunction.....	96
Dislocation.....	96
Dismay.....	96
Dismissal.....	96
Dissidence.....	96
Dissolution.....	96
Divination.....	96
Dust Devil.....	96
Settut Magic.....	96
Greater Amulets.....	97
Lesser Amulets.....	98
Using an Amulet.....	98
Disjunction.....	99
Dislocation.....	99
Dismay.....	99
Dissidence.....	101
Dissolution.....	101
Divination.....	102
Dispelling Magic.....	103
Warping and the Tamzawit Curse.....	104
Effects of the Tamzawit Curse.....	105
Settut Culture.....	105
Tuareg Settuten.....	106
MINOR MAGICAL TRADITIONS.....	107
The Daughters of Four Fathers.....	107
Inducers.....	107
Induction (Major Virtue).....	107
Potteresses.....	108
Maker of Water Vessels	
(Minor Supernatural Virtue).....	108
Maker of Textured Vessels	
(Minor Supernatural Virtue).....	108
The Leaders of this Tradition.....	108
Leather-workers.....	109
Rippers.....	109
Ripper (Minor Virtue).....	109
Fabric Ripper (Minor Virtue).....	109
Leather Ripper (Minor Virtue).....	110
Geomancers.....	110
New Supernatural.....	110



## Between Sand & Sea

Ability: Geomancy .....	110	THE JNUN .....	124	Dogma .....	132
Geomancy Virtues .....	111	Jnun or Jnoun?		Sacred Places .....	134
The Inenden .....	112	– African Jinn and non-Jinn .....	124	Carthage in 1220 .....	134
Superior and Wondrous Items .....	112	Gholas: the Ghouls .....	125	Punic Deities .....	134
Inenden Crafter .....	112	Shayatin: the Devils .....	125	<b>Appendix: Mundane Bestiary</b> .....	<b>136</b>
Touched by (Realm) .....	113	Leriah: the Jnun of the Air .....	125	Camel (Jamal) .....	136
Mythic Saddle-Maker .....	113	Afarta: the Winged Messengers and Nobles .....	125	Camel, Dromedary (Camelus) .....	136
Crafter's Eye .....	114	Babaria: the Jnoun of the Sea .....	125	Dog, Painted (Kalb) .....	137
Wondrous Items .....	114	Siadna: the Masters Underground .....	125	Dog, Painted (Lycaon) .....	137
The Blue Men of the Desert .....	116	Kel Asouf: the People of the Empty Places .....	126	Fox (Tha'lab) .....	138
THE SHAPESHIFTERS OF THE MAGHREB .....	116	<b>LOWHUSH — A BERBER BESTIARY</b> .....	<b>126</b>	Goat (Maa'ez) .....	138
The Magical Bouda .....	116	Giants .....	127	Goat (Capra) .....	138
Bouda Statistics .....	116	Hataf Larrais .....	127	Hyena (Dhubba) .....	139
Faerie Bouda .....	118	Talafsa .....	127	Hyena (Yena) .....	139
Folk Witch Bouda .....	118	Jnun .....	127	Jackal (Wawi) .....	140
THE MONSTROUS RACES OF AFRICA .....	119	<b>THE DIVINE</b> .....	<b>127</b>	Jackal (Thos) .....	140
Choosing a Social .....	120	Murabitin .....	127	Lizard (Waral) .....	140
Status Virtue or Flaw .....	120	Mystic Tradition: .....	128	Lizard, Waral (Varanus) .....	140
Anthropophagus, or Man-Eater .....	120	Divine Murabitin .....	128	Ostrich (Na'aam) .....	141
Astomus, or Mouthless .....	120	Virtues .....	128	Ostrich (Struthio) .....	141
Blemmya .....	121	Abilities .....	128	Scorpion, Monstrous (al 'Aqrab) .....	141
Cynocephalus, or Dog-Head .....	121	Sufism and the Maghreb .....	130	Scorpion, Monstrous (Scorpio) .....	141
Maritimus .....	122	<b>THE GODS OF CARTHAGE</b> .....	<b>132</b>	Unicorn, Eastern (Karkadann) .....	142
Panotius, or All-Ear .....	122	Punic Worship .....	132	Unicorn, Eastern (Monoceros) .....	142
Tripithamus .....	122	Priesthood .....	132	Vulture (Nasr) .....	143
Troglodyte, or Hole-Creeper .....	124	Origins .....	132	Vulture, Egyptian (Vultur) .....	143

## List of Inserts

A Note for Modern Readers .....	6	Story Seed: Lost Virgilian Magics .....	56	Phases of the Moon .....	98
Story Seeds .....	10	Story Seed: To Claim a Wife .....	57	Example Divinations .....	102
What if I Don't Want Characters to Cross the Torrid Zone? .....	13	Vis Site: Heady Lotus Blooms .....	57	Ceremonial Bonuses for Divination .....	102
The Kahina .....	15	Story Seed: Cyclopskin Handiwork .....	58	Story Seeds: The Settuten .....	104
The Marinids .....	17	Kura, the Nereid of the Sacred Spring .....	59	A Note on Tuareg	
African Languages .....	18	Muqadam, the Barbary Lion of Virtue .....	60	Males with Settut Powers .....	105
This Is Not Real Islam .....	21	Silphium, Asafoetida or Fennel? .....	62	Entrancement and Induction .....	106
Leisure of the Wealthy .....	24	Azru, the Atlas Bear of Virtue .....	64	Daughter of Four Fathers Virtue Package .....	107
Agencies .....	24	Hazards of the Great Desert .....	66	Stylus Material Bonuses for Geomancy .....	111
The Jealous Wife .....	25	Vis Sites .....	68	Greater Inenden .....	112
Moors, Berbers, or Imazighen? .....	27	Garamantian Walking Dead .....	69	Craft Magic .....	112
Kharijite and Ibadite Islam .....	29	Vis Site: The Forgotten Foggara .....	70	Merin ag Gwafa, the Inenden Saddle-Maker .....	113
Story Seed: The Christians of the Desert .....	30	Story Seed:		Common Wondrous Items of Africa .....	114
The Tagelmoust .....	31	The Vexillation of the Fata Morgana .....	71	The Hunger and the Dessicated Men .....	115
Tuareg Story Seeds .....	32	The Iter Praeter Caput Saxi .....	71	Story Seed: Predators and .....	116
Tuareg Raiders .....	33	The Great Desert Regio Network .....	72	Prey Alike .....	116
The Unholy Trinity .....	35	Myrtle of Virtue .....	72	Faerie Bouda (Werhyena) .....	117
Story Seeds: The Banu Khalida .....	36	The Cypresses of the Desert .....	73	New Virtues and Flaws .....	118
Khalida Characters .....	37	Faerie Tuareg and the Jnun .....	74	The Plinian .....	118
Jurfaret .....	38	Saga Seed: An Atakor Covenant? .....	74	Races as Faeries .....	118
Wine, Women, and History .....	42	Story Seeds .....	75	The Awful Truth About Anthropophagi .....	119
Arc Seed: Imperial Legacies .....	42	Amur, the Pale Fox of Virtue .....	77	Astomus Power .....	120
Story Seed: A Pirate Crown .....	42	Story Seeds .....	79	Maritimus Power .....	120
Story Seed:		Tales and Travelogues .....	80	Panotius Power .....	121
Punic Ghosts and Roman Ruins .....	44	Story Seed: The Archetypical Road .....	80	Tripithamus Powers .....	121
Tales from the Wine Dark Seas .....	44	Axudad, the Deathstalker Scorpion of Virtue .....	81	Troglodyte Power .....	121
Satyrus, an Ape .....	46	The Silent Trade .....	82	Other Monstrous Races .....	122
Story Seeds: Pithecousa .....	47	Demon of Thirst and Despair .....	83	A Note on Jinn and Realms .....	123
The Marinids .....	49	Why Do People Remain Slaves? .....	84	The Awlad al-Hut .....	124
Story Seed: A Claim to the Throne .....	50	Symbols of The Two Forces .....	84	Al-Maghrebi:	
Story Seeds .....	50	A Traditional Way of Killing Ghouls .....	84	the Dark Magicians of Morocco .....	125
The Pavilion with Three Items .....	52	Aisha Qandisha .....	85	Toaten (Ant-folk) .....	126
New Sample Childhoods for Those Raised by Thieves .....	53	Sirocco, the Howling Thirst of the Maghreb .....	91	Story Seed: Dream a Dream of Days Past .....	128
The Sons of Sāsān .....	53	The Tomb of Tin Hinan .....	92	Legacy of the Philosopher Poets .....	129
Vis Site: Molting Beetle Husks .....	54	Tin Hinan the Shade .....	93	Fae vs Infernal .....	130
Al-Kairouine Madrasa .....	54	Design & Inscription Bonuses .....	95	Echoes of the Destroyed .....	130
Vis Source: Figs of Two Colours .....	54	Settuten and Vis .....	97	Story Seeds .....	131
Saga Seed: Rebellious Governor .....	55	Studying Settut Magic .....	97	The Right of the Victors .....	132
Kairouan .....	56	Durations Available to Settuten .....	98	Ba'al Ammon, Lord of Carthage .....	133

## Chapter One

# Africa and Its People

Welcome to Mythic Africa!

This continent, occupying a full quarter of our habitable zone, is mostly unexplored by Mythic Europeans — and, in fact, by most Mythic Africans as well. Sandwiched between the Great Desert to the south and the Mediterranean Sea to the north is a region just barely inhabitable by humans, or so it seems. Despite the hostile environment, some of the largest and furthest reaching dynasties known to the world have originated in Africa, and their descendants dwell here still.

Herein are described the lands of Mythic Africa, as seen through the eyes of both Mythic Europeans and those who live here. This book can be used either for running stories where magi from Mythic Europe visit the mysterious continent across the sea, or as a setting for whole sagas with African characters. You will find here details of the geography, customs, and legends from the Atlantic coast to the Siwa Oasis — the whole of Mythic Africa except for Egypt and Ethiopia. The lands of the Nile differ sufficiently from the rest of Africa to warrant separate treatment, and will be detailed in a future supplement for *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*.

## The Shape of the World

The habitable zone in which Mythic Europe lies is a quarter of the sphere of the earth, divided by the meridian and the equator. It consists of three continents, and Africa is the one bounded by the Mediterranean sea to the north and

the River Nile to the east. The continent is named after the Roman province of Africa, a name preserved in the current Arab province of Ifriqiyeh. Its southern boundary is the Great Ocean that runs around the earth's equator, and the western limit is the Atlantic Sea. The existence of the Great Ocean has been deduced from indisputable logic rather than directly observed, since it lies at the center of a belt of intense heat and stunning dryness called the torrid zone.

The torrid zone is where the sun is closest to the earth, and it scorches the land directly around the equator. The northern limit of the torrid zone is a matter of debate, but most agree that it extends no further north than the Tropic of Cancer, and probably ceases well to the south of this limit. It is almost universally accepted by the Christian West and Arab scholars alike that Africa is limited to the northern side of the equator, that the equatorial ocean is unpassable, and that the torrid zone is uninhabitable. There have been expeditions into the fringes of the torrid zone both by land and by sea, and those who have returned have brought back stories of fabulous lands beyond the desert. Stories that might arise from entering the torrid zone are explored later in this book.

## Themes

Mythic Africa has two dominant themes: wonder and hunger. To the natives, elements relating to either theme are so commonplace that they are rarely noticed or mentioned, but to outsiders these themes should stand

out. Storyguides introducing Mythic Africa into a saga may wish incorporate elements from one or both of these themes, particularly during the characters' first experiences on the continent.

### A Note for Modern Readers

Some might be surprised to see that this book refers to a land called Africa, but covers only a fraction of the continent that currently bears that name. However, in the thirteenth century this was Africa, not North Africa. It was generally accepted that Africa had a southern shore on the Great Ocean somewhere north of the equator, but this had never been witnessed because the proximity of the sun to the equator formed a torrid zone that is hostile to all life. The black-skinned inhabitants of the continent are mostly Ethiopians who live on the fringes of the torrid zone. The historical empires and kingdoms of sub-Saharan Africa are relegated to legend, since in Mythic Africa they exist within or beyond the torrid zone. However, the border of the torrid zone is ill-defined and need not be at a constant latitude throughout its extent. At the option of the storyguide there may be regions beyond the Great Desert that can support human life, or else these lands could lie within regiones.

*Art & Academe* page 28 has a more complete discussion of the shape of the world in *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*, but pertinent material has been extracted here.





## A Land of Wonder

Africa is an exotic continent to Mythic Europeans. It is filled with outlandish beasts, strange spirits, and savage monsters. Further, it is the point of origin of one of Christendom's biggest threats — the Moors of Al-Andalus in Iberia, an enemy that goes back half a millennium to the days of Charlemagne, originated in Mythic Africa. A European visiting the markets of Marrakesh will be overwhelmed by their strangeness; a welter of unusual smells, fabulous sights, and foreign sounds that he has never before encountered. Open plates are heaped high with fragrant spices, while at the next stall, impossibly-bright cloth flutters in the wind. He might see a group of blemmyae — headless humans with faces on their chests — trading nuggets of raw gold, the bulging panniers of their camels guarded by savage looking dog-headed men, each ten feet tall and covered in black fur.

Even at the edge of the desert, travelers experience heat like none they have experienced before save in a smith's forge; the aridity consumes flesh and saps willpower. It might seem that no-

one could possibly live here, yet there are hidden oases and seasonal rivers that support pockets of hardy folk who seem to defy the savage dryness and heat. There are even some who dwell within the shifting dunes of the sand seas. An attack by diminutive raiders riding ostriches might be foiled by a group of Tuareg nomads who ride straight out of a desert mirage and disappear as quickly without saying a word.

In the deep desert one's sense of what is normal and what is strange is turned on its head. Distance and time seem to cease having true meaning; accidental travelers have reported visiting fabulous cities from ancient times, witnessing the congresses of demons, or speaking with angels.

## A Land of Hunger

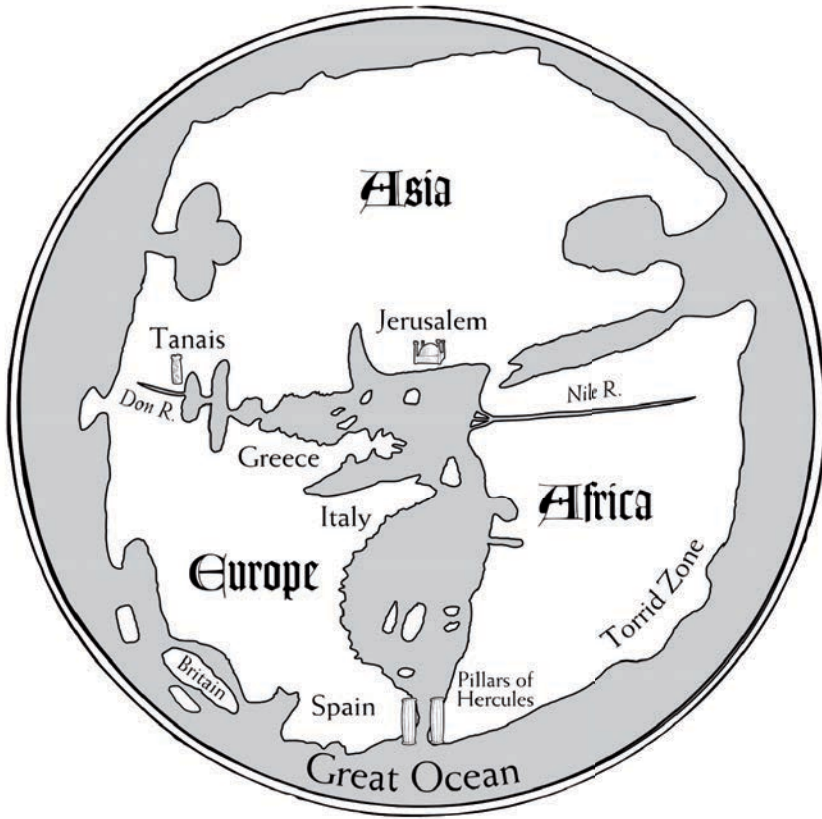
There is a spirit dwelling at the center of the Great Desert, a creature so mighty that it gives gods pause. It is the embodiment of the parching heat and the eroding winds, and seeks to consume everything, to suck all vitality out of the world, and leave nothing but dust

behind. The Romans called it the *Fames Magna*, the Berbers know it as *Lazz*, the Arabs *Al-Ju'*: all these names mean the same thing — The Great Hunger.

Without opposition, the Great Hunger would parch the oases, stop the seasonal springs, cover the towns in sand, even grind down the mountains until there was nothing but dust from the equator to the Mediterranean Sea. But the Hunger has never been unopposed. In Ancient Egypt's day, the spirit of the fertile black earth was invoked to guard against the sterile red spirit of the wastes. Carthage worshiped and obeyed its terrible gods in return for protection against the Great Hunger, and in those days its advance ceased — and even reversed. Some believe that the Romans were influenced by the Great Hunger when they destroyed Carthage and their gods, but were then forced to find a power of appropriate strength to ward themselves against its all-consuming appetite. Today, the Dominion of God — first Christian, now Muslim — forms a thin yet firm barrier to the ambitions of the Hunger.

While it might seem foolhardy, some humans serve the interests of the Great

THE CORDOVAN SAHIRS



At the beginning of the tenth century a schism developed in the Order of Solomon. The sahir of Iberia and western Africa began to meet in Cordoba rather than making the arduous journey to Baghdad to meet with the rest of their order. The vast expanse of the desert was barrier enough, but it was also haunted by the settuten - witches serving The Great Hunger who hated the sahir and who had the power to disrupt their magic. The Baghdad sahir eventually repudiated the Cordovan sahir and cast them from the Order of Solomon. In 925 most of the Cordovan sahir joined the Order of Hermes (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 133). One of the conditions of their joining was that no covenants would be founded in Mythic Africa for three centuries. The reason for this stipulation is not entirely understood. The new Hermetic sahir may have been hiding from the jinn they had betrayed in joining the Order, or else it may have been imposed by the Hermetic negotiators to prevent the Order of Hermes from inheriting the settuten as enemies. If it suits the saga, this restriction on Maghrebi covenants may not have been strictly followed, and there may have been Hermetic covenants of questionable legality established in the past. Either way, the agreement expires in 1225, and at least some magi are eager to explore the new lands and the wonders therein.

Hunger. The settuten (see Chapter 4: Realms) are a powerful group of non-Hermetic magicians who have powers of dissolution and dissension. Their legendary progenitor is the Yemma-t n Dunnit, the First Mother of the World, who mythology suggests might be foremost amongst the Great Hunger's servants.

opportunity for players looking for an alternate setting without going too far afield. Its exotic nature allows players to enjoy the roles of outsiders, taking a "vacation" from the familiar trappings of Mythic Europe. This can provide easy opportunities to explore themes, characters, and situations that would be ill-suited to the Christian lands across the Mediterranean before returning home to their covenants.

THE EARLY ORDER WAS ROMAN IN ANCESTRY, BUT NOT LOCATION

The early Order's members were mostly descended from Roman magi, but the demographic heartland of the organization they founded was in Germany. It expanded outward not from Rome, but from the Black Forest. Young magi wanting to settle could, and in many tribunals still can, find suitable sites without the effort of colonizing Africa.

Sagas in Mythic Africa

The wide expanse of Mythic Africa offers several reasons for magi to strike out to the frontier and for troupes to set a saga in this diverse and challenging environment. First, it presents a region of opportunity. Second, it offers a place of relative mundane and supernatural freedom. Third, Mythic Africa is a land of potential exploration, rife with lost ruins and magic places. From a metagame standpoint, Mythic Africa offers a great

Why Are There No Covenants in Mythic Africa?

Mythic Africa seems an intriguing possibility for young magi wishing to found a covenant. This leads them to wonder why the coast has not been settled before. There are several reasons why this may be the case, and one or more of these may be true in your saga.

CHRISTIAN EUROPE IS BIGGER THAN IT USED TO BE

Another reason that magi have not settled Mythic Africa is that, there used



to be intervening Muslim territories between the core Tribunals and the Maghreb. Had the oldest magi now alive in the Order wanted to colonize Muslim lands in their youth, their covenants would have been in Sicily and Castille. Pope Innocent III called a crusade against the Muslims in Sicily only 21 years ago. Even in 1220, Western Sicily is effectively under the control of a Muslim warlord. If your game's history follows that of the real world, Frederick II of Sicily will begin a series of campaigns to take back his kingdom in 1221. Magi looking for Roman ruins outside the core of the Order could find them within Europe.

### THE PATTERN OF UPRISINGS

Mythic Africa suffers infrequent waves of destruction, as uncompromising groups of nomadic Muslims emerge from the desert and destroy the opulent lives of agrarian people. These groups sometimes found new ruling dynasties, but many smaller groups merely shatter the economy of the region, for example by deliberately wrecking irrigation works. These groups despise material possessions, so they cannot be bribed for safety. Like most jihadis they seem to be protected by the Divine. Few magi have seriously considered settling Mythic Africa during these periods.

### THERE MAY BE FAILED SETTLEMENTS

This supplement doesn't detail any failed covenants in Mythic Africa, but troupes desiring them should include them.

### Virgin Territory

The opportunity to establish a covenant without political rivalry for resources will likely hold great appeal for magi aware of the kind of contention evident in a tribunal like the Rhine, or tired of the situation in a resource-poor tribunal like Normandy. In almost every situation, the competition for vis sites or mundane resources in Mythic Africa only arises from Moorish or Berber

settlements and local hedge wizards or sahir. Certainly, there are occasional interactions with rare Trianomae or Seekers, but these are the exception rather than the rule.

European Magi may experience prejudice from indigenous populations, but enjoy very few limitations on their responses - beyond what they can actually negotiate or claim by force. The remote nature of the area may force a covenant to either recruit manpower from like-minded, adventurous souls across Mythic Europe willing to risk their fate, or establish alliances with local lords and tribes. An influx of foreigners could rouse animosity from communities fearing invasion and attack. However a covenant might be uncomfortable forming long-term agreements with native groups, concerned about betrayal from within or irreconcilable cultural differences. The absence of an established Hermetic Tribunal in Mythic Africa means a covenant worries less about immediate claims of "mundane interference," should the magi decide to act violently. However, this lack of Hermetic society also means a covenant is isolated from news and interaction from the rest of the Order, and may face long delays when calling for help or resupply. Additionally, Hermetic wizards in Africa might find charges levied against them in European Tribunals, should their actions have consequences which spill across the Mediterranean and impact other covenants.

The lack of an organized magical society in the region brings similar concerns. The sahir and hedge wizards of Mythic Africa may have no larger, formal structure, but that does not mean individuals of significant supernatural power do not exist amongst their number. Stories from the seventh and eighth centuries mention the powerful sorceress known as the Kahina, who led the Berber tribes against Bedouin invaders. Certainly, the unregulated nature of Mythic Africa seemingly gives hawkish Hermetic magi carte blanche to prosecute magical warfare against a culture they may view as nonbelievers or heretics. However, this freedom comes with the realization that any expeditionary covenant is alone in their personal crusade against the locals. They need to balance their apparent magical

superiority, evident through the protection of the Parma Magica and the power of Hermetic magic, against the vast resources of native practitioners. Any sustained campaign of conquest and violence may galvanize sahir, hedge wizards, and other local traditions like murabitin, the Tuareg tribes, or the Wind Spirits to unite against the Hermetic threat. Members of the Order may be free to wage war without political limitations, but the lack of a tribunal does not mean an absence of consequences. Additionally, they may find further Hermetic repercussions when other magi follow their footsteps and encounter the hostile natives left in the characters' wake.

However, those missing political limitations provide magi with the chance to establish a covenant without the machinations of tribunal. There is no vote necessary prior to building or claiming a location. There is no Code dictating a covenant must be within a certain proximity of a vis site, like the Normandy Tribunal. There is no requirement for a new covenant to acquire the approval of previously established covenants, like the Rhine Tribunal. There is no need to participate in a social contract, like the Theban Tribunal. For a group comprised of only Muslim magi, the region promises a place devoid of the sort of internecine conflict which might be experienced in the Iberian or Levant Tribunals. The lands of Mythic Africa are wild and, for all intents and purposes, completely unsettled by the Order of Hermes. This means magi may freely seek desirable places for establishing a covenant where Divine auras are patchy and Magic auras are stronger. The vast area combined with the sparse populations means the Divine doesn't often encroach on or affect a magus' laboratory and magi can more readily find Magic sites suited to their needs. Should investigation reveal a desirable Magic aura occupied by a less potent native sorcerer, a genius loci, or faerie creature, nothing prevents the magi from forcibly evicting the current owner and claiming the site for themselves. This sort of "conquest and seizure," combined with relative mundane isolation, is much harder to find in the Tribunals of Mythic Europe, where the Order has been active, in some places, for over 400 years.

## NO CHURCHES

Even more so than the Order of Hermes, the Latin Church has nearly no presence in the Maghreb, allowing magi to establish a covenant without interference from the Church. There are no real abbeys or monasteries competing for land and craftsmen. The bulk of Mythic Africa's Christians live in Tunis and there is a very small enclave further south in the Muslim-founded city of Kairouan. However, the situation still requires interaction with the Muslim faith, a situation which might not be readily apparent to European magi. The educated Muslim community is less given to superstition, and the Murabit tradition of the region means magi ex-

perience less suspicion toward ascetic wisemen than they might see in Europe. No matter how tolerant the natives' attitudes, the call to prayer helps establish the reach of Divine auras, and mosques are ubiquitous throughout the area.

## A LAND FOR EXILES

Mythic Africa's physical isolation and political ambiguity also offer magi a second chance to establish a covenant despite declarations of Wizard's War or Wizard's March. In this instance, characters exiled from the Order of Hermes might hide from the wrath of their former sodales by taking advantage of the difficult terrain, hostile territory, and

numerous supernatural creatures. While such an existence has its risks, the relative proximity to the rest of Europe may mean the magi can build a new life while still pursuing attempts to clear their name or maintaining some connection to the relatives and loved ones left behind. These same links to the past, however, may serve to lead Hoplites and opportunists to destroy anything built in this inhospitable paradise.

## Story Seeds

A number of initial story seeds might draw magi to Mythic Africa or engage them once they establish a covenant.

### THE KAHINA'S LEGACY

The Kahina, or al-Kahinat, died fighting with sword in hand against the Arab invasion in 703, at the age of 127. Her gift of foresight was no help, but it did ensure the survival of her line. Her Berber sons converted to Islam and led the Berber army into Iberia. Relics of her struggle against the Arabs, such as her sword, her veil, or pieces of her jewelry, may lie hidden in the many caves of the Atlas mountains, secreted away by loyalists afterward in order to prevent their capture by conquering armies. Any magus able to present such heirlooms to the locals, while claiming descent from the Kahina, would certainly face less opposition and might even be able to unite the more fractious Berber tribes. Is it possible her secrets hold the key to even more ancient magics from the region?

### MUTING THE MUEZZIN

The power of the Divine often spreads as far as the prayers of the devout may be heard, and for a covenant near a settlement, the muezzin's call could quickly dampen an otherwise strong Magic aura.

A clever covenant might find a way to lay an enchantment or place a sufficiently powerful item which limits the muezzin's song, keeping it audible only within the boundaries of the oasis and protecting their aura. Creating an item capable of affecting such a large area, then sneaking inside the Divine aura to appropriately place such an item so that it remains hidden but functional is no small endeavor. Additionally, if the Divine aura retreats, what will be left in its wake? Will the magi trade the difficulty of working under the shadow of the Divine for the troubles of an encroaching Infernal power, eager to exploit the new vacuum?

### SEIZING THE SAHIR'S BOUNTY

There are few priests arriving from Europe to minister to a Christian population, beyond what the magi bring with them, until 1219, when St. Francis of Assisi dispatched a number of his order to proselytize across the coast. In the first weeks of 1220, Yusef II, Caliph of Morocco acted on the advice his sahir vizier, Abu Sa'id Uthman ibn Jam'i, and beheaded most of the friars. The group had befriended Princess Sancha of Alenquer when they passed through Portugal on their way to Morocco. In a vision she experienced while praying, the Princess saw the death of the missionaries. She

has offered a reward for the return of the Franciscans' remains and suggested that anyone who brings proof of ibn Jam'i's death might find a great reward.

### HUNTING THE HUNTED

The magi may arrive in the Maghreb while chasing the target of a Wizard's March or a Wizard's War, perhaps even a peer who has soured potential relations with the natives. After crushing the target's defenses and dispatching any resistance, a group of magi may realize the benefits of such a pre-established covenant location. However, they find claiming the holding in the wilderness is more complicated than just moving in, as they discover that the local tribes, the genius loci, and the jinn all had agreements or grudges with the ostracized magus. With those agreements gone or the magi presumed to be the former occupant's successors, what began as a rich source of loot and freedom could become a battle for survival.

### WAGING WAR

The covenant's activities threaten to create a nascent Order of Atlas, one bent on opposing the Order of Hermes. Trianoma magi come to dissuade the covenant with diplomatic entreaty. Hoplites actively but indirectly oppose them, attempting to



## The Spirit of Exploration

Finally, Mythic Africa is a land of exploration, presenting chances to claim both magical and mundane resources. The lost secrets of Antiquity lie relatively untouched in the wilderness and buried beneath the sands. Many places require but modest efforts to recover the artifacts of the Egyptians, Phoenician, Greek, Roman, Berber tribes, and ancient Garmantians. But unquiet spirits, magical creatures and meddling faeries mean pulling these fragments from the dust may prove to be the easy part. While the ruins and hidden places of Mythic Africa preserve

fragments of the past, the ports and souks offer ample opportunity to establish trade or communications as the Genoese maintain a bustling and jealously guarded exchange with ports on both sides of the Pillars of Hercules.

## Logistical Difficulties

Any covenant establishing itself in Mythic Europe may face a variety of problems related to its remoteness from the heartlands of the Order. Magi are required to be members of one (and only one) tribunal. As it is so far outside traditional tribunal boundaries, a tribunal

might refuse to recognize the magi of an African covenant as members. Houses Mercere and Guernicus might oppose such a covenant, since their members would be required to travel periodically a great distance outside the bounds of the tribunal.

An African covenant is equally likely to find itself in the middle of a power struggle between two (or more) tribunals that wish to extend their borders to cover the new territory. These alternatives are not exclusive - the characters may have difficulty gaining acceptance, but once they do, everyone wants to make a claim on them.

If accepted as part of a tribunal (or perhaps as a requirement for that ac-

## Story Seeds (Cont'd)

destroy their resources. House Flambeau remains divided, as some see this as an action opening a welcome second front to the Reconquista, while others want to keep the enemy disorganized. Will *Castra Solis* support or hinder the covenant? Throughout it all, the native sorcerers and hedge wizards gather their forces for a confrontation which will reshape the Maghreb.

### LOST SODALES

The magi don't arrive on a mission of exploration, but tasked to discover the fate of a previous expeditionary covenant sent by the tribunal with the collected resources of several senior covenants and an important mission. What will they find when they arrive at the expected location? Were the magi there overwhelmed by Tuareg tribesmen? Were their water sources fouled by the sandstorms of vindictive Wind spirits? Did a pack of bouda betray them from within? Or were they seduced by Infernal powers and convinced to abandon their task? Are survivors recovering in the depths of the Great Desert, or hiding in plain sight on the streets of Marrakesh? What happened to the first covenant's assigned task? Discovering the fate of not only the magi, but the invested devices, texts, and stores might take the newcomers from Rabat to Taghaza to Bilma to the ruins of Cyrene and still leave them with questions.

### THE LONELY LIGHTHOUSE

The half-buried city of Leptis Magna is the home of an elder Verditius and dedicated Hermetic Architect and its lighthouse is his sanctum. In exchange for his services, the characters' senior covenant members have struck a deal. The magi will travel to Cyrenaica and labor in Leptis Magna for five years, clearing the sands and repairing the Verditius' covenant grounds while the Architect enchants their home in Mythic Europe. The Verditius has left a list of tasks and rules for his guests, and violating the contract might have tangled consequences. Will the characters quickly work to complete their end of the bargain, freeing them to explore Mythic Africa seemingly without concern, or will they leave the work for later? How will the region's residents respond to their new neighbors? Will the former occupant's reputation be protection from harassment, or did the cantankerous old wizard make enemies with powers intent on ruining his handiwork?

### MYSTERIOUS SOURCES

The magi all belong to a Mystery Cult, like the Neo-Mercurians or Mithraists. Their mystagogue sends them as a chartered covenant to seek out relics of their cult or lost places of worship amongst the Roman ruins. In order

to progress deeper into the mysteries of their cult, they must establish a base of operations and not only thrive, but succeed in their hunt. What happens when a rival cult, such as the Disciples of the Worm, establishes a similar covenant, intent on plundering the characters' secrets? How can they prove the theft of lost rites, and will the rivalry blossom into full-fledged hostilities in lost ruins with few witnesses?

### SEEKERS OF LOST MAGICS

The magi are members of the Seekers, looking for the lost magics of Carthage and the powers which allowed that far-flung empire to oppose Rome through three conflicts over the course of almost 120 years. While the Republic eventually triumphed, there must be fragments and relics of those Punic traditions hidden in the ruins and wilds of the Maghreb, concealed by those who survived the legions' conquest. The covenant arrives with the dedicated mission to unbury the long-dead corpse of the Carthaginian Empire and acquire its secrets for House Bonisagus and the Order. While they search, the magi might also discover the remnants of the Garmantians or delve into the local hedge traditions of the Berbers, looking for new magics worthy of incorporation into Hermetic Theory, like those of the settuten.

ceptance), the characters may have to make provisions for redcaps to visit them. This might require the characters to create an enchantment which allows the swift passage of redcaps to Mythic Africa, or perhaps even the funding of a Mercere's Portal.

## Hermetic Presence

In some sagas, troupes may prefer a light or nearly non-existent Hermetic presence in coastal Mythic Africa. This allows the troupe to focus on stories of exploration and colonization, rather than founding supply bases and maintaining contact with the order. This is particularly useful if the troupe's stories are set deep in the desert. In this supplement, points of Hermetic settlement have been left undefined. Troupes should apply any option which suits their stories to any of the cities in Mythic Africa, but future sourcebooks assume Mythic Africa has no Hermetic presence.

## MERCERE TRADING HOUSE

Some sections of House Mercere are deeply involved in trade. When using this hook, the Mercere have warehouse and wharf space in one of the coastal cities. This option suits troupes who want their characters to have a ready source of local servants, guides who can explain local society, and aid to found a settlement on the trade routes. House Mercere tries not to use flashy magic in Mythic Africa, so allied player characters will, similarly, be expected to maintain decorum.

## JERBITON SCHOLARS

The madrasas of Mythic Africa beckon scholars from Europe, although few travel to them. Every so often, a young Jerbiton magus travels to Mythic Africa to attend one of these colleges or as part of an Itinerarium. A loose network of earlier Hermetic immigrants welcomes them. At times this network contains one magus per city; at others the magi form a small group, like a covenant, with the older magi acting as mentors for their younger sodales. This option

suits troupes interested in the political disintegration of Mythic Africa, and the efforts to defend the treasures of the region from looming civil war.

## CRIAMON MYSTICS

House Criamon has had Sufi members for centuries. They form a small group considered less secretive than simply inscrutable to outsiders. They welcome visitors, particularly those willing to learn Enigmatic Wisdom. This option suits troupes who wish to visit a series of Sufi philosopher mystics and Murabits, complete their Ordeals, and learn their Mysteries or incorporate them into their own.

## TREMERE SPIES

A few decades ago, the Primus of House Tremere asked House Mercere to scour Mythic Africa for Gifted children. This has created a generational cadre of magi who look Mythic African, and they have been dispatched to Mythic Africa to assess the region for threats or opportunities. This option suits troupes wanting to meddle with Mythic Africa society, surreptitiously control regions, and ferret out sources of power and opposition in the Maghreb.

# The Land

Medieval Arabic sources refer to Africa (excluding Egypt) as *Bilad al-Barbar* ("the land of the Berbers") or else *al-Maghrib* ("The West"). Mythic Europeans still use Roman names on their maps, with an ill-defined Gaetula for the center of the continent, and Ethiopia beyond that.

Mythic Africa can be divided into four broad geographic areas. For clarity we have labeled these regions using the names used on medieval maps in order keep them distinct from the people or confederations that currently occupy the area. Three regions hug the coast of the Atlantic and Mediterranean Seas (from west to east):

Mauritania, Numidia, and Tripolitania–Cyrenaica. The Arabs call these regions the Farthest, Middle, and Nearest West respectively. They are the most settled parts of Africa, where temperate winds from the sea allow Mediterranean forests, woodlands and shrubs to flourish. The fourth geographic area is the Great Desert, an exceptionally hot and arid region in the interior of the African continent, extending into the torrid zone. This section provides a brief geographic overview, which will be expanded in the following chapters.

## Mauritania

Mauritania, or *Al-Maghrib al Aqsa* ("The Farthest West") to the Arabs, occupies the Atlantic coast of Africa. The region is mostly a coastal desert; what plants grow here gain most of their moisture from the frequent fogs that roll in from the cooler sea. The cooling influence of the sea allow human habitation to extend south of the Tropic of Cancer. The Adrar highlands separate Mauritania from the blasting heat of the desert further west.

## Numidia

The region of Numidia boasts the highest population density of all of Africa, excepting Egypt. Called *Al-Maghrib al Awsat* ("The Middle West") in Arabic, this region has a coastal Mediterranean climate thanks to the sheltering influence of the Atlas Mountains. Rather than a single range, the Atlas Mountains are actually a series of ranges; between the Tell Atlas on the coast and the barrier ranges of the Anti-Atlas, High Atlas, and Saharan Atlas further south are crop lands and pasture.

The key populated areas are: Er Rif, a mountainous area between the Middle Atlas and the Straits of Gibraltar; the Tell, a high altitude plateau south of the Tell Atlas; and Ifriqiyeh in the Aures Mountains.



## Cyrenaica and Tripolitania

Cyrenaica is the region immediately east of Egypt (thus the Arabic name of *al-Maghib al Adna*, "The Near-est West"), whereas Tripolitania is the name given to the coastal region around the Gulf of Sidra to the north of the Libyan Desert. This is a poorly populated area, occupied mostly by the nomadic Banu Sulaym.

## The Great Desert

The Great Desert (in Arabic *As-Sahra al-Kubra*, whence "Sahara") is a vast area of largely uninhabited land that occupies the majority of the known land mass of Africa. Labeled "Gaetula" on medieval maps, most westerners are under the mistaken impression that it is just a single wasteland of sand. This is only really true of the ergs, or sand seas, broad flat areas of windswept sand that forms into dunes. There are several ergs of vast size in the Great Desert, notably the Grand Erg south of the Atlas Mountains; the Great Sand Sea, the Ubari and Murzuq Deserts of Libya; and the Erg Chech and El Djouf east of Mauritania. Ergs generally have no human inhabitants. Outside of the ergs, most of the Great Desert consists of stony desert called *regs*, and vast rock plateaus called *hamada*. Salt flats dot areas in the shelter of mountains.

The Tademaït Plateau south of the Grand Erg is a hamada of unparalleled flatness. It is truly empty, free from hills, villages, and animals. There aren't even any stones or pebbles, just an expanse of dust. The occasional bush manages to eke out a living, and these give welcome relief to eyes tired of seeing nothing but ground and sky. Tademaït deservedly has the reputation for being a haunt of jnun, and men have been driven mad by the emptiness.

The Tademaït Plateau finally comes to an end at mountains to the south west, and Tuat to the south east. Tuat contains a string of small oases strung out along the eastern edge of a dry valley called a *wadi*, which forms an important route for travelers seeking to cross the desert.

## MOUNTAIN RANGES

A number of mountain ranges can be found in the Great Desert; the most prominent are the Ahaggar Mountains (Berber: *idurar n Ahaggar*) at the very center of the desert. Forming the north-east border of the Ahaggar Mountains is the Tassili n Ajjer (Berber, meaning "Plateau of the Rivers"), a panoramic region of "rock forests" made of eroded sandstone. South of the Ahaggar is the Adagh in the east and the triangular massif of the Air Mountains in the west.

## LIBYAN DESERT

The Libyan Desert is on the southern and eastern border of Cyrenaica. The Great Sand Sea occupies much of the desert, with the Ubari and Murzuq ergs forming the southwestern region. The Al-Haruj al-Aswad is a plateau of black rock rising out from the sand of the Murzuq Desert crowned by volcanic craters.

Beyond the Great Sand Sea, on the border of the torrid zone, are the Tibesti Mountains. These are the highest mountains of the Great Desert; the tallest peak is Emi Koussi at over eleven thousand feet. Their name means "the Mountains of Hunger" in the local dialect.

## TANEZROUFT

Tanezrouft (Berber: "Land of Thirst") is the most desolate part of the Great Desert. It lies to the west of the Ahaggar Mountains, south of Tuat. There are no oases in Tanezrouft at all, making it exceptionally dangerous to travelers, giving them a taste of what the torrid zone is like.

Tanezrouft is a region of dark sandstone hills riddled with steep canyon walls rising 250 to 500 paces in between dune fields. The blasting wind has scoured out geometric patterns from the sandstone, making hollows in the shape of perfect concentric ellipses or circles.

## What if I Don't Want Characters to Cross the Torrid Zone?

Some storyguides might want the torrid zone to be an impermeable barrier that keeps the characters on the right side of the equator, and this can be an edict enforced by the power of the Divine. This is something that should be discussed with the players so that they know the bounds of the world in the saga; however, it needn't stifle the curiosity of the characters. As characters enter the torrid zone, a magus might expect to be able to ameliorate or negate the effects of heatstroke and sunburn, but could find himself unable to do so in the torrid zone. If the damaging heat and light derive from the proximity of the sun, they are products of the super-lunar world, and therefore beyond the reach of Hermetic magic. Insights into research concerning the Limit of the Lunar Sphere could be productive in the torrid zone. As the characters penetrate deeper, the heat becomes more and more intense, and eventually overcomes even the strongest of defenses. Magic used to overcome the effects of the Divine edict fails, perhaps spectacularly. Furthermore, the torrid zone could be patrolled by angels who turn away any who attempt to cross.

## The Torrid Zone and Beyond

The torrid zone has an ill-defined border within the Great Desert. Some scholars talk of the torrid zone as a "ring of fire," as if it were a precise geographic border; if this is the case then it occurs further south than most travelers can reach. Throughout most of its length the torrid zone exists as an intensification of the heat and aridity of the desert. Deprivation rolls for thirst (see Chapter 3, The Great Desert, "Hazards of the Desert") increase to a two-hourly interval, and the sunlight on bare skin inflicts +5 non-combat damage over the same period. There are no known



sources of water within the torrid zone; characters must bring with them whatever they want to drink.

The torrid zone is inhospitable in the extreme, but it is not necessarily homogeneous. There could be regions which can sustain life and give some surcease from the heat, and those creatures who live in the desert are likely to know where they are. These areas may lie within Magic or Faerie auras or regiones, and may be connected to the regio network of the Great Desert.

According to medieval maps, Aethiopia (or Ethiopia) lies to the south of the Great Desert; Aethiopia Orientalis is located to the south of Egypt, and Aethiopia Occidentalis is south of Mauritania. Aethiopia borders on the equatorial ocean. Whether this Aethiopia is the same as the torrid zone, or whether it is a separate land, is a matter for the saga to decide. Some other ideas of what might lie within the torrid zone include:

- A city built by refugees from Rome's sack of Carthage, now ruled by a college of priestesses who masterminded the escape;
- The Empire of Prester John: a land of tranquility and prosperity ruled by a Christian king;
- Vast grasslands and dark jungles where tribes of nomadic pastoralists herd cattle and antelope in service of a race of sphinxes;
- A river of gemstones and vis that flows through a maze of black ravines capable of trapping the ghost of any who die there;
- Aithiopia Occidentalis may be the true home of the Sudanese.

Logic dictates that there is another habitable zone on the other side of the equator, a twin to our own on this side of the meridian, but that it is forever unreachable due to the Great Ocean. Some have theorized that this might be the physical location of the Magic Realm.

## History

Mythic Africa's history stretches back far into antiquity, when it was the home of giants and non-human races. In historical records, Mythic Africa rose to prominence in the days of Carthage.

### Antaios and Tinjis

In the time of legends, the giant Antaios (Antaeus to the Romans, Ānti to the Berbers) used to dwell within Libya's desert. The giant was gradually building a temple to his father Poseidon out of the skulls of those he defeated in a wrestling match. He drew his might from his mother, the earth itself, and had her limitless strength. Herakles happened upon Antaios while on his way to his eleventh labor, the Apples of the Hesperides. He held the giant aloft during their match, severing him from the earth and leaving him as weak as a mortal. Herakles then crushed the giant's ribcage. Herakles took Antaios's wife Tinjis to bed, and fathered on her Sufax, who is the mythic ancestor of the Berber people. Sufax built the city of Tangier, which he named after his mother, and from here took over Antaios's role as guardian of the country of the Berbers.

### Carthage and the Romans

The Phoenician princess Dido founded the city of Carthage in 814 BC. At the height of the city's power it controlled a mighty trading empire that stretched from the Gulf of Sidra to the Atlantic Sea, and had colonies in Spain, Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. Meanwhile, Greek settlers controlled the eastern Maghreb, along the coast of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, and built on the strength of Egypt following its conquest by Alexander the Great. Several Berber kingdoms emerged at this time and developed trading partnerships with Carthage. The greatest of these were



Numidia and Mauritania.

During the second Punic War, two Numidian kings took opposing sides: Suphax of the western Masaesyli sided with Rome, and Gala of the eastern Massylii tribe sided with Carthage. Gala's successor Massinissa sided with Rome, judging that they were winning; and Suphax allied with Hasdrubal, Carthaginian general and brother of Hannibal.

Carthage was eventually destroyed by the Romans in 146 BC, and while the city itself was destroyed and its fields salted, the Roman empire claimed its territory for itself, creating the Province of Africa. Massinissa was given all of Numidia, surrounding Carthage and extending to the south east as far as Cyrenaica.

By 112 BC, Massinissa's grandson Jugurtha was at war with Rome. Failing to gain a decisive victory, the Romans forged links with neighboring Mauritania, with whose help Jugurtha was captured in 104 BC. Western Numidia was added to Mauritania; the remainder was governed by local princes. In the first century AD Emperor Claudius divided Mauritania into two provinces, Mauritania Caesariensis and Mauritania Tingitana.

The Roman provinces in northern Africa were very prosperous and its inhabitants became Romanized, acquiring citizenship and speaking Latin. Christianity spread quickly through the Roman Mauri, producing several important theologians including Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine. However, as the power of Rome faded in the fourth century, the northern African provinces became susceptible to heresies such as Arianism, Pelagianism, Donatism, and Montanism.

The Berber tribes of the interior continued with their old way of life untouched by Roman influence beyond providing tribute and auxiliary troops for the great Roman army.

## Vandals and Byzantines

In 422 the Vandals raided Mauritania Tingitana. Sensing trouble, Rome's *Comes Africae* (military governor of Africa) invited the Vandals under Gaiseric into northern Africa with the intent to confine them there, but they rejected any attempt to control them. These provinces were lost

## The Kahina

The Kahina (Arabic: al-Kahinat, "the seeress") was a Berber chief who fought against the Arabs in the seventh century. Her given name was Dihya: she acquired her epithet from her opponents who ascribed her military success to her ability to foresee the future. After taking over the resistance in the 680s she led the Berbers in several very successful campaigns, driving out the Arabs from Ifriqiyeh and keeping them besieged in Cyrenaica for over five years while she laid the land to waste. This lost her the support of the oasis dwellers who relied on the land she despoiled, and who felt this demonstrated her bias toward the mountain and desert tribes. With her support wavering, the final nail in her coffin was her betrayal by her adopted son to the Arab leaders. She died in battle, sword in hand, at the age of 127 years old.

Part of the Kahina's power was attributed to an idol of Gurzil, the Berber god of war. Inherited from the days of Jugurtha, she had the idol carried into

every battle with her. Some believe that her adherence to Gurzil indicated that she was a *settut*, which would certainly explain her divinatory powers.

### STORY SEED: THE GOLDEN IDOL OF GURZIL

Khalid ibn Yazid, the treacherous adoptive son of the Kahina stole Gurzil's idol prior to her final battle, perhaps explaining her defeat. His descendants were forced to leave the idol behind in al-Andalus when they migrated to their new homeland, but they would dearly love to have it back. The characters learn of its current whereabouts from a disreputable merchant who also sells the information to a faction within the Banu Khalida. It is a race to see who can get their hands on it first: if it is the Banu Khalida, then it could have dire consequences for the stability of the Almohads.

to the empire until the province of Africa was reconquered by the Byzantine general Belisarius in 522. The western territory was lost to the Mauri, and never brought under Byzantine control. The Maghreb was too vast to be controlled from Constantinople; the empire was already weak thanks to wars with Persia. The Byzantines concentrated their efforts in Mythic Africa on the coastal towns, and used the rivalries between the local chiefs to prevent a general insurrection. As in the time of the Romans, the interior remained untouched by Byzantine influence; the dominant tribes of the Luwata (in the east), Sanhaja (in the west and center), and Zenata (in the south and south-west) controlled most of Mythic Africa.

'Uqbah ibn Nafi, who founded the city of al-Qayrawan as his base of operations. From Ifriqiyeh (the Roman Province of Africa), 'Uqbah extended Arab rule over the whole of the Maghreb. In 683 he was slain by a Berber tribal chief named Kusayla, who vigorously opposed the Arab invasion.

Under Kusayla, and later the Kahina (see Insert), the Berbers held out against the Arabs for twenty years. Umayyad wizards brought in to oppose native sorcerers found their spirits abandoned them when faced by Berber magic. The defeat of the Berbers came at their own hand: the Arab generals seduced certain Berber tribes with promises of rich rewards and choice territory. These new converts to Islam swelled the ranks of the Arab armies sufficiently to finally defeat the Berber resistance in 711. The Arabs did not stop there, and under General Tariq ibn Ziyad the mostly Berber army swept into southern Spain and conquered the Visigothic Kingdom of Hispania. By 720 the Umayyad wizards were fighting a full-scale magical war in Africa against the rebellious jinn who has once served them; goaded by Berber

## The Arab Invasion and the Berber Uprising

When the first incursions from Umayyad Egypt extended into Cyrenaica in 642, the Byzantines bribed them to leave. They returned in 670 led by

magic the spirits managed to drive the wazirs back east.

In Africa, the governors appointed by the Umayyad caliphs were quick to enforce Arab dominance over the Berbers through discrimination and slavery. Discontent was rife, and there was widespread revolt in 739. This uprising was united under Kharijite Islam; this sect had been fighting Umayyad dominance in Egypt, and its doctrines promoted egalitarianism that appealed to the independent Berbers. The timing of the revolt was fortunate; combined with the death of the caliph and a revolt in Egypt, the Umayyad dynasty collapsed under the pressure.

## The Dissident Dynasties

When the Abbasids — who succeeded the Umayyads — came to the Maghreb, they discovered three centers of political authority had appeared in the vacuum left, and all rejected the political authority of the caliph. Two were Kharijite sects, the Rustamids in Tahart and the Banu Midrar in Sijilmasa. The third dynasty, the Idrisids of Fes, were Sunni but had fought on the side of the Shi'ites against the Abbasids.

The Rustamids arose from a small tribe called the Banu Ifran who were under al-Kahina's leadership. The founder Abdul-Rustam ibn Rustam was of Persian descent, and he established a theocratic government where imams were elected to rule over a confederation of Ibadite Berber tribes. They gained a reputation for honesty and piety, and fostered support for astronomy, mathematics, and theology. However, they neglected to organize a reliable army, which proved their downfall against the Fatimids.

The Banu Midrar made Sijilmasa a cosmopolitan city occupied by Sanhaja Berbers from the desert, Jews, Andalusians, Berbers, and Arabs, as well as exotic men with coal-black skin, dog-headed men, and other wonders. The kingdom was known for its religious tolerance and peacemaking; only toward the Idrisids in the north was hostility shown.

The Idrisid Dynasty was an Arab dynasty that followed Sunni Islam, and therefore could get little support from

Berbers. It is thanks to the Idrisids that the northwest region of Africa remains mostly Arab to this day. The Idrisids failed to conquer a people called the Barghawata on the Atlantic coast despite numerous attacks. An early ruler of this Berber confederation had claimed prophecy for himself and composed a holy book in the Berber language. He then proceeded to convert his people to a Berber religion of his own making. The heresy was eventually stamped out by the Almoravids (see later).

Faced with hostile neighbors, the caliph could exert only limited control over Africa. The embassy at Qayrawan established by Ibrahim ibn al-Aghlab effectively ruled independently as the Aghlabid dynasty. From 903 to 909, the Aghlabids suffered one military defeat after another against Abu 'Abdulla, a Yemeni missionary of the Isma'ili sect of Islam. He had been sent by the Isma'ili leaders in Syria to raise an army against the Abbasids, and had managed to convert the Kutuma tribe of Sanhaja Berbers to his cause. After conquering Kairouan and Ifriqiyeh, he marched on Tahart and crushed the peaceful Rustamids before moving on to the Banu Midrar stronghold of Sijilmasa. In 909 the leader of the Isma'ilis, 'Ubaydalla Sa'id, came to the Maghreb and took over the new Fatimid Dynasty from his protege Abu 'Abdulla. Within two years Abu 'Abdulla and his family had been murdered by the ruthless leader.

The Fatimids persuaded the native magicians, the settuten, of their Kutuma allies to apply their talents to the struggle against the Abbasids. Many Arab sahirs were driven out of Africa by the settuten, who were capable of disrupting magical abilities, banishing spirits, and fomenting rebellion amongst the summoners' jinn allies. Africa gained a reputation of being hostile to the Order of Solomon, a reputation it retains today.

Despite Abbasid attempts to destabilize the Fatimid regime, by 969 the Fatimids had conquered Egypt. The city of Cairo was founded to be the new Fatimid capital, and the administration of the empire left the Maghreb. A Berber, Buluggin ibn Ziri, was chosen by the Fatimids to be governor of the Maghreb, and his capable administration soon established the Berber Zirid family as the ruling dynasty of northern Mythic Africa.

## THE BANI HILAL

Fatimid authority in Egypt was threatened by an anarchic community of Arab bedouin clans that had grown through migration from other nomad tribes and from peasants seeking to escape debt and servitude. Before he was really aware of it, the caliph was facing over a quarter of a million individuals and at least 50,000 young warriors at the disposal of the clan chiefs. At the advice of his ministers, Caliph al-Mustansir requested the help of these clans in quelling the rebellion of the Zirid emirs, offering them governor positions in the conquered territory for their efforts. In 1051 the great nomad horde migrated west under the name of the Bani Hilal ("the children of the crescent moon"). Some occupied Cyrenaica, but the majority continued west, overwhelming whatever resistance the Zirids could offer. They were not interested in investing the towns and cities; instead they took possession of the grazing grounds at the edge of the desert. The Zirids attempted to treat with them, but the great migration had no leader, and the Zirids had nothing that they wanted. Some individual chiefs reluctantly accepted the suzerainty and judgments of the Zirid rulers, but the Bani Hilal were impossible to tax, and the town-based culture of the interior was destroyed in one fatal stroke of the Fatimid caliph. With his authority disintegrating, the Zirid emir retreated from Qayrawan to Mahdia on the coast, leaving the interior to the Bani Hilal. Northern Mythic Africa reverted to a patchwork of local Berber lordships, interspersed with the militant presence of nomadic Arab clan chiefs. The society of the steppe and plateaus of the Atlas mountains became mostly Arabic-speaking pastoralism rather than Tamazight-speaking agriculture.

## The Almoravids

The *al-Murabitun* movement, also known as the Almoravid Dynasty, arose from a zealot of the Sanhaja Berber called Abdallah ibn Yasin. He was from the Gazzula tribe, but his brand of orthodox Islam went down poorly amongst his own people. He was invited to preach to the Lamtuna tribe by their chieftain Yahya



## The Marinids

The Ayt Mrin (Arabic *Banu Marin*) is a dynasty of Zenata Berbers. They have battled with the ruling Almohads since the very beginning, but in 1217 they won a decisive victory in the Rif, despite losing their leader Abd al-Haqq. His son Uthman ibn Abd has secured control of Er-Rif, and is looking to extend his influence over more of Africa. The Almohads have counterattacked in vain, and have even fortified their Iberian cities against a possible Marinid attack.

ibn Umar, who desired to refound the Sanhaja union, and saw ibn Yasin's mission to spread the Sacred Law as a useful tool to force the tribes to put aside their rivalries and unite under a single banner. Under the twin leadership of Ibn Yasin and Ibn Umar, the al-Murabitun movement began its inexorable conquest of the Maghreb in the early 1050s. A decisive victory in 1054 brought them the town of Sijilmasa, at the northern end of the desert trade route. By 1062 the Almoravid leader Yusuf ibn Tashfin had founded the city of Marrakesh, and from here he spread his influence over the entire Atlas range. In 1086, Yusuf ibn Tashfin was invited by the Muslim princes of al-Andalus in the Iberian Peninsula to assist them against the Christian king of León and Castile. Having seen the disunity of the Andalusian princes and the discontent of the people, he returned a few years later, and by 1094 he had conquered all Muslim territory in Iberia except Zaragoza, and added the united al-Andalus to the Almoravid empire.

The successes of ibn Tashfin were not to persist long past his death. His son and successor Ali ibn Yusuf had not experienced the harsh life of his desert-dwelling predecessors, but had grown up in the luxury of Marrakesh. His father's empire was eroded by the Christian kings of Iberia and the Almohads in Africa (see later). Just four years after Ali ibn Yusuf's death in 1143, Marrakesh was taken by the Almohads and the dynasty was at an end.



## The Almohad Caliphate

Like the Almoravids, the Almohads (*al-Muwabbidun*, "the monotheists") began as a religious movement. Ibn Turmart of the Masmuda confederation had studied in Grenada and Baghdad, where he developed his doctrine of the strict unity of God, denying the independent existence of separate attributes of the Deity. He returned to the Maghreb in 1117, and agitated against the Almoravids, gathering a following and erected a fortress at Tinnel in the High Atlas. For eight years he harried the road linking Marrakesh to Sijilmasa whilst making alliances with more tribes and growing in strength. Their first proper battle was a failed siege of Marrakesh in 1130 which ended in disaster for the Almohads. Ibn Turmart died a few months later, but his death seemed to merely encourage his followers. Abd al-Mu'min took over the movement and was successful in driving out the Almoravids in a series of victories, and by 1147 had extended control of Africa as far as Egypt. Al-An-

dalus was gradually conquered from the Almoravids between 1147 and 1173.

The current Almohad caliph is Yusuf al-Mustansir, who was just ten years old when his father died in 1213, and the caliphate is still largely under the control of the regency council put in place then.

## The People of Mythic Africa

Africa does not in general consist of feudal states with clear national boundaries. Rather, each village is a member of a tribe, and the tribal leaders form confederations that usually generate or support a ruling dynasty. Currently, most of northern Mythic Africa is part of the Almohad confederation, whose rulers are Berbers.

## Berbers

The Berbers (or Imazighen, singular Amazigh) are the aboriginal people of Africa, and a Berber dynasty currently rules most of the Maghrib. They are divided into three tribal confederations: Zenata, Masmuda, and Sanhaja.

### MASMUDA

The Masmuda are found mostly in the north west around Fes and Rabat, amongst the western Atlas Mountains and around Sijilmasa. Ibn Tumart, who founded the Almohad dynasty, was a Masmuda, and this confederation currently dominates the Almohad hierarchy. Masmuda subtribes include the Barghwata, Ghomara, Doukkala, and Hintata. Ifriqiyeh is currently ruled by Masmuda governors from the Hafsid

dynasty on behalf of the Almohads.

### SANHAJA

The Sanhaja now occupies two geographically distinct regions. The eastern Sanhaja, which includes the Kutama tribe, are found in the eastern Maghreb on the Tademaït Plateau and Ahaggar Mountains. The western Sanhaja occupy Mauritania: the Gazzula and Lamta tribes in the Anti-Atlas range, the Massufa, Lamtuna and Banu Warith further south, and most southerly on the edge of the torrid zone is the Gudala. The Sanhaja Berbers formed the nuclei of the Almoravid, Zirid, and Hammadid dynasties.

### ZENATA

The Zenata are distributed throughout the Tell and northern Numidia. There is great rivalry between the Zenata (who were allied with the Caliphate of Cordoba) and the Sanhaja, who were allies of the Fatimids. The Marinids of Er-Rif are a Zenata tribe, as are the Banu Zayan (or Abd al-Wadids) who are gathering power in Tlemcen.

## Arabs

The Arabs arrived in Mythical Africa in two major waves: the Umayyids in the eighth century and the Banu Hilal in the eleventh. The invasion by the Umayyid Caliphate in the eighth century resulted in the building of cities and the subjugation of native Berbers, leading to a city-dwelling Arab upper class

## African Languages

The following Living Languages, each with distinct regional dialects, are spoken in the Maghreb and northwestern Africa. Most characters should take the appropriate dialect as a specialty but Educated or well-travelled speakers will have tried hard to rid themselves of their dialect and may have standard specialties (see ArM5, page 66).

- Arabic (Andalusi, Classical, Derija)
- Tamazight (Tarifit, Kabyle, Tashelhiyt, Zenaga, Tamahak, Siwi)
- Lingua Franca (Sabir) (Western, Eastern)
- Punic (Khalidan)

The most common Arabic dialect spoken throughout Mythical Africa and by those Arabized Berbers that have migrated across the straits is Derija (Maghrebi Arabic). Classical Arabic remains the language of secular scholarship, original poetry and the Qur'an but is rarely spoken in common day conversations. An Artes Liberales score of 1 and an Arabic (Classical) score of 3 is required to read from the Qur'an.

The true Berber language, known as Tamazight to its speakers, has divided into three main dialects over time: Tarifit (Maghreb and Rif), Kabyle (modern

Algeria region) and Tashelhiyt (central highlands). Zenaga is a fourth dialect spoken by the tribes of south-west Mauritania and was the primary tongue of the warriors of the Almoravid Empire. Siwi is an eastern dialect spoken only by the inhabitants of the Siwah oasis. Contemporary Berber speakers and the Tuareg still use the Tifinagh (Libyan) alphabet, although more recently the Arabic alphabet has been substituted particularly in the coastal Muslim enclaves with their Arab dominated culture.

Also known as Sabir, *lingua franca*, the pidgin trade tongue of the Mediterranean, is the most common language spoken by visitors from Mythical Europe, although many of the foreigners speak their native languages (French, Greek, Italian, Occitan, and Veneto) in the company of their own people.

Tamahak is the less common dialect of the Tuareg tribes of the deep south and is less closely related than the other northern dialects. The southern Banu Khalida speak their own language, an early dialect similar to Punic combined with a mixture of archaic Arabic and Tamazight.

Descendants of Berber families involved in the initial invasion of Visigothic Hispania speak predominantly Arabic — only the warriors and religious hierarchs of the newer Almoravid and Almohad waves speak Berber as their primary tongue and many have a limited fluency in Arabic, equivalent to a Arabic (Classical) score of 3, which permits basic understanding of the Qur'an and the sermons of the clerics.

Many *dbimmi* encountered in the Maghreb use the Andalusi dialect of Arabic learnt in Iberia but the *lingua franca* (Western dialect) and the various languages of the merchant republics can be heard being spoken by visiting Europeans in the coastal cities.

Arabic and the Tamazight dialects spoken in the north use the Arabic script, but the Tuareg and southern Berbers use their own Tifinagh alphabet. The Punic dialect spoken by the Banu Khalida uses a variant of the ancient Phoenician cuneiform alphabet.

### DEAD LANGUAGES

Lost to the past, several Dead Languages brought by invaders to the region no longer have living speakers but



dominating the rural Berber underclass in the coastal regions, while the interior remained predominantly Berber. This situation persisted until the Almoravid dynasty took control of the region: this Berber political movement placed its own in positions of power.

### BANU HILAL AND ALLIES

The Banu Hilal are confederation of Bedouin tribes from the Upper Nile who arrived in Mythic Africa in the eleventh century. Their arrival destroyed the power of the Arab Zirid dynasty, and severely weakened the Hammadids. Before the arrival of the Banu Hilal there was a distinct separation between Arab and Berber, but the nomadic Banu Hilal have brought the Arabic language into traditionally Tamazight regions, along with Sunni Islam and nomadism.

The Maqil accompanied the Banu Hilal on their invasion of the Maghreb.

They originated in Yemen, and consisted of several sub-tribes, the most important being the Banu Hassan, after whom the Hassaniya variety of Arabic is named. They settled in the far west beyond the High Atlas Mountains, although some remained in Ifriqiyeh with their sahir, who became advisers to the Banu Hilal.

The Banu Sulaym originated in Nejd and Hejaz and followed the Banu Hilal and Maqil westwards. The Banu Hebib tribe of the Banu Sulaym settled in Cyrenaica, whereas the 'Awf, Debbab, and Zegb tribes settled west of them in Tripolitania and the fringes of Libyan Desert. After a century of feuding and civil war, the Debbab eventually came out as the dominant tribe.

### Others

The Ayyubid Sultanate founded by Saladin currently controls Egypt, Cyrenaica and Tripolitania, as well as much of the Arabian Peninsula. They rule the region from Tripoli. The rulers set in place over Cyrenaican cities are Kurdish in origin, and supported by Bedouin and Turkish forces.

### BANU KHALIDA

The Banu Khalida occupy twelve oases in the very south of Mauritania. They live further into the torrid zone than any other human race. They have seemingly limitless quantities of gold, and are blessed with well-irrigated soil and a temperate microclimate for their cities despite the blasting heat of their surrounds.

## African Languages (Cont'd)

inscriptions carved on ruins can be found throughout the wastes. Carthaginian is the classical Punic dialect spoken by the western Phoenician colonies that later formed the empire of Carthage but is now found only on inscription or uttered by the ghosts of the destroyed empire. Libyan refers to the pre-Punic languages of the Numidians and other tribes encountered by the first Carthaginian settlers and their Roman conquerors.

East German (Gothic, Vandalic)  
Greek (Classical)  
Latin (Classical)  
Libyan  
Punic (Carthaginian, Phoenician)

The German scripts use the Gothic alphabet and the Punic dialects uses the original Phoenician script. Ancient Libyan uses a cuneiform script resembling the Phoenician alphabet and bearing a definite resemblance to the Tifnagh alphabet still used by the Tuareg.

### DIALECTS

The various Berber groups speak related dialects, although some speakers may find making themselves intelligible difficult if they speak one of the more isolated tongues.

#### Same language, different dialects:

-1 penalty to both speakers  
Tamazight (northern dialects) vs Tamahak dialect -2 penalty to both speakers

Tamazight (including Tamahak) vs Punic (Khalidan) -3 penalty to both speakers

#### Punic vs Libyan

-2 penalty to both speakers

The other languages are so distinct from each other that comprehension is likely to be based on signing and good guesswork, or magic.

Example: Jarfuret the Khalidan (see later) with Punic 5 (Khalidan) speaks to a fellow Khalidan with an effective score of 6, Punic-speaking demons with no dialect with an effective score of 5, Carthaginian or Phoenician ghosts with an effective

score of 4, ancient Libyan ghosts with an effective score of 3, and can hold a basic conversation with northern Berbers and Tuareg (effective score 2). He cannot however make himself understood to Arabic speakers or northern characters without using some form of magic.

### A NOTE ON PRONUNCIATION

While Tamazight grammar has its own rules for pluralizing nouns, it is a common convention in western writing to indicate the plurals of many words by simply adding s (e.g. Tuaregs). That is the convention used (with a couple of exceptions) throughout this book.

As a (very approximate) pronunciation guide: c is pronounced ch as in "church," i is pronounced ee as in "meat," q as k in "kiss," u as in "mood," v is pronounced f as in "free," ny is nye as in "mañana," kh as in Scottish "loch," sy as in "shield," nng as in "bingo." Other pronunciations are as normal for English with rare exceptions.

Similar guidelines for the pronunciation of Arabic words are given in *Realms of Power: the Divine Revised Edition*, page 107.

TUAREG

The Tuareg are a nomadic people sharing a common origin with the Berbers. They roam the breadth of Great Desert, and probably know it better than anyone else.

NON-HUMAN RACES

Africa is home to a fair number of different kinds of Magic Humans, such as the headless Blemmyae, the dog-faced Cynocephali, and the child-sized Tripithami. In general these do not mix with normal humans except in large cities, but encounters with them are not uncommon.

Muslim Names

Traditional Muslim names consist of some or all of a number of elements:

1. *Ism*: The name given at birth. This may be an Arabic name, the Qur'anic form of a biblical name, a compound name consisting of "Abd" (servant of) plus one of the names of God (among men; women might use "Amat" in place of "Abd," but this is much less common), or a non-Arabic name.
2. *Nasab*: Pedigree. The *nasab* in Arabic consists of "ibn" (son of) or "bint" (daughter of), followed by either the father's *ism* or a family *ism*. The similar Tamazight equivalent used by Berber men is "ag" but there is no female equivalent.
3. *Kunya*: This is the term "abu" (father of) or "umm" (mother of), prefixed to either the name of a child or an attribute, acquired either upon becoming a parent or as an epithet. This may appear before the *ism* or after the *nasab*.
4. *Laqab*: An honorific or descriptive title, or occasionally a nickname, often held by nobility, religious notables or other important figures. Many *laqabs* consist of a compound term ending in "al-Din" (of the faith) or "al-Dawla" (of the state), while another common form is to start with "al-Malik" (the king), followed by

a descriptive term. Individuals may have more than one *laqab*.

5. *Nisba*: A broad term denoting profession, place of origin or birth, or tribe or family. It can also be a descriptive element. *Nisbas* often begin with the definite article "al-" and end in "i," in the case of men, or "iyya," in the case of women. An individual may have several *nisbas*.

As an example, the full name of Saladin is:

Al-Malik al-Nasir Salah al-Din Abu'l-Muzaffar Yusuf ibn Ayyub ibn Shadhi al-Kurdi

This breaks down into:

- a) Al-Malik al-Nasir (the King who Aids - *laqab*)
- b) Salah al-Din (Righteousness of the Faith - *laqab*)
- c) Abu'l-Muzaffar (father of al-Muzaffar - *kunya*)
- d) Yusuf (Joseph - *ism*)
- e) ibn Ayyub (son of Job - *nasab*)
- f) ibn Shadhi (son of Shadhi - *nasab*)
- g) al-Kurdi (the Kurd - *nisba*)

A number of sample *isms*, *laqabs* and *nisbas* are given below. Other Muslim names may be found in many history books about the Middle East.

SAMPLE ARABIC ISMS

- **Men's isms:** 'Abd Allah, 'Abd al-Rahman, Ahmad, 'Ali, Asad, Ayyub, Bakr, Badar, Dawud, Dirgham, Fadl, Ghassan, Ghazi, Harith, Harun, al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Ibrahim, 'Isa, Ishaq, Isma'il, Ja'far, Jamil, Kathir, Khalid, Khalil, Labid, Mahmud, Muhammad, Nu'man, Qasim, Rashid, Ridwan, Salih, Salim, Shibl, Sulayman, Tahir, Tamim, Tariq, Thabit, 'Umar, Usama, 'Uthman, Wahhab, Yahya, Yusuf, Zayd, Zibyan, Zubayr.
- **Women's isms:** 'Aisha, Amina, Anisa, Bilqis, Busra, Dhakira, Duba'a, Dujaja, Durra, Fadila, Fatima, Ghazala, Ghaytha, Habiba, Hajir, Hakima, Hind, Jamila, Jumana, Kabira, Kabsha, Khadija, Khalila, Layla, Lubaba, Maryam, Maymuna, Nasiba, Nawal, Nawar, Qamra', Rabi'a, Rahima, Sa'da, Safiyya, Salma, al-Shafa', Shayma',

Sumayta, Taliha, Tarifa, Tayma, Thubayta, 'Unayza, Walida, Yasira, Yasmina, Zahira, Zahra, Zaynab.

SAMPLE MUSLIM LAQABS

Given their predominance in government, Muslim *laqabs* are most commonly used by men.

- **Men's laqabs:** 'Imad al-Din (Support of the Faith), 'Izz al-Din (Power of the Faith), Nur al-Din (Light of the Faith), Salah al-Din (Righteousness of the Faith), Sharaf al-Din (Honor of the Faith), Baha' al-Dawla (Beauty of the State), Majd al-Dawla (Glory of the State), Nasir al-Dawla (Aid of the State), Sayf al-Dawla (Sword of the State), Shams al-Dawla (Sun of the State), Nizam al-Mulk (Order of the Kingdom), Fakhr al-Mulk (Pride of the Kingdom), Taj al-Muluk (Crown of Kings), al-Malik al-'Adil (the Just King), al-Malik al-Afdal (the Most Excellent King), al-Malik al-Kamil (the Perfect King), al-Malik al-Nasir (the King who Aids), al-Malik al-Salih (the Righteous King).
- **Women's laqabs:** Walidat Khalil (Mother of Khalil — used by the Mamluk *sultana* Shajar al-Durr (r. 1250), indicating her being mother to the son of al-Salih II Ayyub), Radiyyat al-Din (Approval of the Faith).

SAMPLE MUSLIM NISBAS

- **Men's nisbas:** al-Kufi (of Kufa), al-Makki (of Mecca), al-Isfahani (of Isfahan), al-Farisi (of Persia), al-Khwarizmi (of Khwarizm), al-Kalbi (of the tribe of Kalb), al-Khazraji (of the tribe of Khazraj), al-Qaysi (of the tribe of Qays), al-Shaybani (of the tribe of Shayban), al-Ayyubi (of the family of Ayyub), al-Kutubi (the book-seller), al-Qalanisi (the hat-maker), al-Suyufi (the swordmaker), al-Shafi'i (follower of the Shafi'i school of law), al-Mutanabbi (claiming to be a prophet).
- **Women's nisbas** appear in the



masculine or feminine forms in historical sources, depending on whether the author regards them as being part of the woman's name or the patrilineal genealogy. Generally if the *kunya* is placed after the *nasabs*, the *nishas* will be in the feminine. The feminine forms of the above are: al-Kufiyya, al-Makkiyya, al-Isfahaniyya, al-Farisiyya, al-Khwarizmiyya, al-Kalbiyya, al-Khazrajiyya, al-Qaysiyya, al-Shaybaniyya, al-Ayyubiyya, al-Kutubiyya, al-Qalanisiyya, al-Suyufiyya, al-Shafi'iyya, al-Mutanabbiyya.

## Berber Names

Muslim name structures are generally used by most Berbers except the Tuareg, with only a few differences. Traditional Berber *isms* tend to replace the Arabic components but *Laqabs* and *nishas* tend to follow the Muslim model, although often using their Tamazight equivalents.

Traditional Berber men have much simpler names compared to their more Arabized counterparts, although some of the more urban individuals have adopted the extended Muslim naming conventions and use openly Arabic names.

The most common structure for a traditional Berber man is "(name) ag (name)," where "ag" stands for the similar Arabic term "ibn" or "son of." Traditional Berber women have even simpler names than their menfolk and lack a patronymic. Famous Berber women are often referred to merely by a single forename in daily use or just use a Tamazight *laqab*.

The majority of Tuareg have Tamazight names like other Berbers, although some members of the more northern tribes use Arabic elements. As an example, Aljilani ag Ibrahim is "Ajilani, son of Ibrahim" and the use of both Tamazight and Arabic elements in his name likely signifies mixed heritage. Several apparently Christian names have been encountered, hinting at possible pre-Islamic influence.

- **Men's isms:** Aderfi, Afalkay, Afaw, Afer, Afra, Afulay, Agafay, Agerzam, Aghbalu, Aghilas, Agizul, Agwectim, Agwilal, Agwillul, Ajeddig, Akensus, Aksim, Aljilani, Amalu, Amanar, Amaynu, Amayyas, Amazigh, Amazzal, Amenzu, Ameqran, Amesggin, Amessan, Amestan, Amezwar, Amêzyan, Amnay, Amzîn, Anamar, Anaruz, Anazâr, Anebdad, Angad, Anir, Antalas, Areksim, Asafar, Asafu, Asfru, Aslal, Asmun, Assalas, Asulil, Atbir, Atrar, Awsim, Awzal, Aylal, Ayrad, Ayyur, Aza-yku, Azêllay, Azenkwed, Azenzêr, Azerwal, Aziki, Aznag, Azrur, Azûlay, Badis, Bukkan, Gaya, Gwafa, Gwasila, Idder, Idir, Idu, Igider, Ikken, Ilatig, Ilayetmas, Irat, Isul, Itri, Izdârasen, Izem, Izemrasen, Izîl, Izri, Masinissa, Massensen, Massin, Maysar, Meddur, Mennad, Merin, Munatas, Saden, Sifaks, Tacfin, Takfarinas, Tanan, Udad, Ugwistan, Usaden, Usem, Usus, Wimmiden, Winaruz, Winifsan, Winitran, Winsen, Wiwul, Wiwurch, Yani, Yattuy, Yuba, Yufayyur, Yufitran. Yufitri, Yuften. Yugerten, Ziri.

- **Women's isms:** Bahac, Barshako, Damya, Dassin, Dihya, Guraya, Henu, Herru, Ijja, Ijju, Illi, Ittû, Izza, Kella, Kwella, Lalla, Lunja, Mamma, Mammass, Markunda, Meghighda, Menna, Siman, Siniman, Tadêfi, Taderfit, Tadla, Tafalkayt, Tafsut, Tafukt, Tagafayt, Taghbalut, Tagwerramt, Tagwilalt, Tagwillult, Tagwizult, Thiyya, Tajeddig, Takama, Takensust, Taksimt, Tala, Tamalut, Tamanart, Tamaynut, Tamayyurt, Tamazight, Tamazzalt, Tamenzut, Tameqrant, Tamesmût, Tamezyant, Tamimt, Tamment, Tamseggint, Tanamart, Tanazâr, Tanebdatt, Tanezawit, Tanirt, Tanemghurt, Tasa, Tasafut, Tasekurt, Tatbirt, Tawekint, Tawenza, Tawzalt, Taylalt, Tayri, Tazêllay, Tazenkwêt, Tazerwalt, Tazikit, Tazrurt, Tazrît, Tecwawa, Tedus, Tidar, Tidir, Tifawt, Tilelli, Tingh, Tinhinan, Tinifsan, Tinitran, Tinsin, Tintadêfi, Tintafukt, Tintf-sut, Tintifawin, Tintlelli, Tintziri, Tinwurch, Titrit, Tiwul, Tizemt,

## This Is Not Real Islam

Real-world Islam is too complex to be described in a role-playing sourcebook. This book instead contains simple guidelines to allow non-Muslims to play characters who are superficially suitable for telling stories similar to traditional folktales. No offense is intended by this. Players are encouraged to learn more about Islam, to enrich their game experience.

Tiziri, Tlafulki, Tlatig, Tlaten, Tlayt, Tlaytmas, Tsul, Tuda, Tuddatt, Tudert, Tufayyur, Tufitran, Tufitri, Tuftafukt, Tuftent, Tuftifawt, Tugertent, Tumert, Tunaruz, Tzeddig, Tzîl, Ultafa, Ultasila.

## Maghrebi Arabs

Troupes who select a Mythic African setting for their sagas may opt for a mixture of character origins. This section helps players to maintain their role when playing African Arabs, who are the most numerous people in the northern part of the continent.

## Pick A Religion

The vast majority of characters who live in the Maghreb are Muslims. Muslim characters must publicly demonstrate certain virtues, or they gain negative Reputations. That being said, the True Faith Virtue is no more common in Mythic Africa than in Mythic Europe. Most Muslims fall short of the saintly ideal. As a rough guide, the further west an Arabic character comes from, the more religiously conservative he is likely to be, provided he is not from Marrakesh. Characters who are poor or nomadic are less likely to make excuses for luxuries than their urban co-religionists.

THE VIRTUES  
OF A GOOD MUSLIM

Islam has five key activities, referred to as Pillars, which demonstrate the submission of the worshiper to the will of Allah.

**Profession of Faith and Attempt to Follow The Faith's Laws:** To become a Muslim, a person must make the statement that there is no God but God, and that Mohammed is His Prophet, in the presence of Muslims. This serves a vaguely similar role in Islam to baptism in Christianity, in that it brings the person into the community of the religion. The religious instructions given to Mohammed are recorded in the Qur'an. In addition to this, Muslim jurists consult a series of folk-sayings which have passed down from the Prophet.

**Regular Prayer:** A Muslim prays at five specified times each day, while facing Mecca. These times are between dawn and sunrise (preferably well before sunrise), slightly after noon, in the afternoon, after sunset but before dusk, and after dusk (preferably before midnight). Before prayer, the worshiper washes certain parts of the body. A Muslim need not to go to a mosque to pray, but many find it convenient to do so. A mosque provides water for cleansing, and has a niche to mark the correct direction to pray toward. Friday is the holiest day, and many Muslims make a particular effort to get to the mosque at midday.

**Giving alms:** Characters are expected to give alms. Some rulers also collect taxes for redistribution as alms. The idea that wealth is a reward for virtue, or conversely that the poor somehow deserve to be poor, is foreign to Maghrebi thought.

**Fasting:** Particularly during the month of Ramadan, a character is required to fast, unless a child, elderly, pregnant, ill or traveling. Fasting includes not drinking water, so it can be difficult to adjust to the fast when it occurs in hotter times of the year. During the evenings of Ramadan, people often break their fasts with lavish feasts, taking turns to host their friends and neighbors. There are certain other dietary taboos in Islam, like pork, alcohol, and garlic, which are observed

with varying degrees of stringency.

**Pilgrimage:** Each Muslim, particularly every man, should try to visit Mecca, and preferably also Medina, at least once in his lifetime. A character who returns from pilgrimage is honored with the title of Hajj (masculine) or Hajja (feminine) and many wear green head coverings to mark their status. Poorer people often go on pilgrimages to other places: three pilgrimages to Kairouan are considered the same as a pilgrimage to Mecca, by poorer Maghrebis.

NON-MUSLIM  
CHARACTERS: THE DHIMMI FLAW

Christians perform useful functions in Muslims society, and are allowed to remain in Mythic Africa provided they fulfill certain duties, and avoid provocative acts. These social restrictions are reflected mechanically in the Dhimmi Flaw, which is a Minor General Flaw. Characters who do not reside in Mythic Africa might use Outsider instead. As a general rule, the further west characters are in the Maghreb, the worse dhimmis are treated.

Jews are treated particularly badly. If your saga's history follows that of the real world, the last synagogue in Marrakesh will close in four years' time. There are exceptions, which are described in the city chapters later, but the Golden Age of Jewish acceptance that flowered in the previous century is over in the Maghreb.

Dhimmis must not:

- avoid paying the annual tax on dhimmis
- hold offices of government, which includes rank in the army
- proselytize
- have sex with or marry Muslim women.
- carry weapons
- plot with the enemies of the ruler
- give evidence against Muslims (even in self-defense)
- wear religious symbols
- be disruptive, by praying or ringing bells, or having lavish funerals
- create new places of worship, or repair current ones without permission.
- publicly do things Muslims find

unsightly, like eating pork or drinking alcohol

- hide the distinctive mark on their clothes, in areas where such a mark is used
- ride horses or camels
- react badly to expressions of contempt, by Muslims, for their low status

The two main roles for Christians in Mythic Africa are as guards and merchants.

GUARDS

Many Muslim leaders think it wise to have bodyguards who have no connection to the webs of social obligation which permeate Mythic African society. They therefore hire foreign guards. The rule that dhimmis may not bear arms is not enforced in this case. A problem with hiring mercenaries is maintaining their loyalty; a bodyguard who fights only for money is not dependable in a *coup d'etat*. To minimize the risk of betrayal, the nobleman must be selective in his choices.

The younger sons of European noble houses are often chosen as bodyguards. They have the rudiments of a code of honor, and extensive training in armored fighting. Most are grateful that they have not been forced to become sellswords, but can retain the dignity and lifestyle associated with their birth. Many cannot go home, due to intrafamily feuding, or because their lands have been claimed by others. None of these things make these recruits perfectly loyal, but they make the Europeans socially disconnected. This allows the nobleman to build loyalty by binding the Europeans to himself and his allies. Inter-marriage, without conversion, is of course impossible, but conversions, or concubinage, often occur.

MERCHANTS

Christian merchants form enclaves in many of the coastal cities of the Maghreb. They are not permitted to trade through the Straits of Gibraltar, but trade to other parts of Europe is common. Sicily, in particular, is a major



market for African goods. Players with merchant characters may find the *City and Guild* supplement useful.

### MONEYLENDERS AND WINE-SMUGGLERS

Many professions in this society are forbidden non-Muslims, forcing Dhimmis to find work in less savory industries. This means that many of the jobs which are left for Jews to do in Mythic Europe are, in Mythic Africa, performed by Christians. Money-lending, for example, is one of these jobs. Christian money-lenders in Mythic Africa suffer much the same opprobrium that Jewish moneylenders do in Europe.

Another significant shadow industry is the supply and sale of alcohol. Muslims are forbidden to make, transport, or sell alcohol, but many drink it regularly. All Christians, in comparison, are meant to know a priest, and all priests require wine to perform the Mass. This means every Christian, in theory, knows a man who knows a man who makes wine. Many Muslims have a Christian contact who is their supplier. The main alcohol in the Maghreb is date wine, but this trade is also dominated by Christians.

### Always Speak Respectfully

When communicating, characters from this region are careful to maintain the dignity of the person with whom they are speaking. They use a variety of techniques for this. Speaking in this way is one of the charms of the setting and troupes are encouraged to experiment with it.

Characters speak to each other in a formal, polite way, even within close friendships and families. Lacking any other social cue, the honorific *sidi* for a man, or *lella* for a woman, can be used to mark the person the character is speaking to as an honorable person of higher status, greater age, or deeper wisdom. This politeness does not extend to public spaces: people on the street are fair game for all kinds of jostling.

### AVOID MAKING DIRECT REQUESTS

A character unable to meet a reasonable request may lose face, so it is important to phrase requests as suggestions, or to send them through intermediaries. Conversely a character who is given a reasonable request must fulfill it, and what is considered reasonable is judged by different, and perhaps broader, criteria than are found in European cultures. This, importantly, includes requests for information, or pressing for answers to questions. If a person asks for information, and you cannot provide it, you lose face, and then he loses face for embarrassing you.

### AVOID SPEAKING ABOUT THE FUTURE

Respect for God is demonstrated by the use of the phrase "if God wills it" when speaking about intended actions. By using this phrase, the character is signaling his acceptance of God as author of human destiny. In any case, speaking about good fortune about to be realized is foolish, as it invites the Evil Eye from jealous rivals. This is represented as a +3 bonus on Hex rolls, to destroy the circumstance discussed, by any character who envies the speaker.

### How to Act

This section highlights some key features of Maghrebi culture. Players are encouraged to consider them when determining the actions of their characters.

### AVOID SHAME

A person does not accrue shame for sinning: shame is the public knowledge of his transgressions. This means that certain sins, like drinking, accrue little shame in most communities, and sins with no living witnesses, like murder, accrue no shame. Characters from Mythic Europe often do not care that they have negative Reputations, or deliberately cultivate them. Some nobles, for example, think it wise to have a bloodthirsty

Reputation, as it keeps their neighbors pliant. In contrast, a Muslim character from this area generally wishes to expiate any negative Reputation, lest his family repudiate him, to free themselves of shameful associations. This society, aware of the need to redress shame, has many methods of countering it.

### REPUTATIONS AND SHAME

If a character has a negative Local Reputation, the usual method of removing it is to deliberately do contrary things, so that a rival Reputation is formed. Once the competing Reputation equals the undesired Reputation, new experience gained in the second Reputation can instead be used to buy down the first (rules for this are found on page 167 of *ArM5*.) This culture has such a strong emphasis on shame that other characters expect and accept that characters with a shameful Reputation will counter it in this way. It's not seen as cynical: attempting to reconcile with society is both morally right and obvious.

The epitome of removing shame is to go on the Haj, the pilgrimage to Mecca. The Haj is, from a game perspective, a series of scenes. Each of these grants Reputation experience to erode negative Reputations and grant a positive Reputation as a Haji +1. It also provides other benefits, depending on the events which take place during the character's travels. Shorter pilgrimages can also remove negative Reputations but because they contain fewer events, they may not provide as much experience. This is why, in game terms, some pilgrimages are described on the basis that "five (or three, or whatever) pilgrimages to here are equal to a pilgrimage to Mecca."

Beyond its social role, in mediating shame, the Haj also grants religious insight. The Haj may be simulated using the rules for pilgrimages given in *The Church* (pages 15–19). A character can undergo both enlightenment and social rehabilitation simultaneously, but these are different processes. Shame removal through pilgrimage is a social, not a supernatural, tradition.

THE GIFT

Although being Gifted is not, of itself, shameful, it makes people distrust magi. This makes it easy for magi to develop negative Reputations, which are shameful.

ASSOCIATE WITH FORTUNATE PEOPLE

One large difference between Muslims from this area and those further east is a belief in *baraka*, which is a sort of supernatural power. Baraka will be called fortune in this book, to differentiate it from a similar concept discussed in *Realms of Power: The Divine*. People with fortune are more skillful, luckier and happier than other people. Fortune is given before birth as an element of the person's fate; it is not earned during life. Nonetheless, if you interact with people who have powerful fortune, you

can be pulled into fortunate situations by them, so its almost like having good fortune yourself.

There's no particular Virtue representing fortune, and Hermetic magic cannot detect it, although it can sometimes detect the effects of the Virtues it creates. Player characters who are wealthy, lucky or highly skilled have fortune. Player characters who are poor, unlucky, or of modest skill do not. People are seen to have fortune by others; they do not trigger their fortune as a person might use the daily power associated with Mythic Blood, for example.

MURABITIN

People with fortune are often so thankful for their blessings that they become deeply religious. This leads them to True Faith and murabitanism, a sort of

sainthood. Once a murabit dies, some of his fortune resides in his relics and place of entombment, which is also called a murabit. Many families have a favorite local saint, who they pray to as an intercessor, and whose tomb they visit once a year. A man who fails to perform this duty would not be surprised if spirits of place or faeries came to torment him, for failing to show respect to his family's benefactor.

Agencies

If your troupe is using the rules for agencies published in *Houses of Hermes: Societates* (pages 140–144), what the character is doing is constantly pushing up bond scores, so that when the character needs help, it can be requested without weakening the Bond markedly.

Leisure of the Wealthy

Wealthy people have many diversions to fill their time.

AT HOME

As described elsewhere in this chapter, Maghrebi people try to include others in many of their daily tasks. They also hold parties in their homes strictly for the pleasure of entertaining their friends. Among men of property and influence, these parties vary in tone due to cultural differences between hosts, and due to the strictness with which that particular social circle conforms to the Islamic ideal.

Sharing food plays an important role in recreation. Lunch is the largest meal of the day. The people of this region eat a diet similar to those in the northern Mediterranean, with a few differences. Spices are cheaper here, particularly in the large cities, and so they are more common in food. More dates are eaten in Mythic Africa than elsewhere. Flatbread is served with virtually every meal, and is often flavored with aniseed. Couscous, small grains of pasta made from the hard bits of wheat that resist stone-grinding, is

a staple in the diet. All the food is served together, in large communal dishes. People always eat with the right hand.

In some parts of the Tell, the current fashion for these parties requires characters skilled in Carousing. Each attendee dresses in a bright robe. He perfumes his beard with musk or rosewater. At the party he sits on a couch that wraps around three sides of the room (called a diwan), or on a stool with a mattress upon it. He is served from huge communal dishes of food, with are placed on little tables or on the floor. Wine and date wine are liberally provided. Entertainment comes from slave-songstresses, who often belong to the host. The affections of these women are open to negotiation. Characters who wish to discuss significant business matters may need to attend, or throw, such parties, but a Reputation as a great host may alienate local holy men, particularly if the characters are unbelievers.

TOWN AND COUNTRY

Local people usually socialize at home, but there are two major excep-

tions. Characters attend the public baths. They also participate in sport, which must usually be undertaken outside the city.

Bathing follows the Roman model, but public baths are less opulent than in Roman times. Characters can sweat, swim, and get massages together, while discussing political affairs, mutual acquaintances, or business matters. Barbers and physicians also sometimes attend the bathers.

Sports popular in the Tell tend to be descended from military training. Archery, fencing, horse racing and throwing javelins are simply practice for war, now done with friends and refreshments. Polo is used to practice small unit cavalry tactics, while a ball and mallet game similar to croquet or hockey serves a similar purpose for infantry. Hunting and falconry are also popular.

Falconers in the Tell take prey from birds quickly, then slit the animal's throat. This means the animal dies of an injury caused by a human. This is important, because Islamic law forbids eating the flesh of animals who have been killed by predators.



Although thought of as holy men — and, rarely, women — local saints and their tombs can be tied to any Realm. Some think that people who have lots of fortune, but aren't particularly holy, can still become local saints. This is true, but in this case the "saint" is not aligned with the Divine Realm. It's either a Magical spirit of place, or a faerie playing the role of saint. Intermediaries between man and God are specifically forbidden by the Qur'an, which is why conservative Muslims and those from outside the region worry that these saints are demons (particularly False Gods).

Some murabits have local sects of followers, who practice secret teachings. A character able to observe the initiatory rituals or activities of a sect can sometimes determine which Realm a particular murabit is aligned to. Examination of the tomb, and detection of its aura, is also helpful in some cases, although Infernal murabits mask their true allegiance.

#### ACT AS A MEMBER OF YOUR SOCIAL CLASS

Wealthy or educated characters must reinforce their place in society by commanding those with less status. This means characters socialize within their own class. If your character has an education, or wealth, he must not do physi-

cal labor. The country is full of slaves, or people who can be employed for virtually nothing. To fail to employ people is to fail one's community.

#### DRESS APPROPRIATELY FOR YOUR WEALTH

Male dress in Mythic Africa usually consists of a few basic articles. The fundamental garments are loose trousers, which on their own theoretically meet the standards of modesty. These are almost always worn with a long, often hooded, robe and a head covering. The head covering may be a scarf, turban or hat. The headdress may identify the ethnic or geographical origin of the wearer. The basic garments are usually accompanied by tough slippers and a jacket.

Women in the presence of men not closely related to them are required to cover their bodies and arms in garments loose enough to be unprovocative, but not so loose as to make them indistinguishable from each other. They must also cover their hair. Generally the body is covered with a single piece of colored cloth held together with pins, and the hair is covered with a scarf. Berber women wear brighter and more revealing clothing than Arabs.

Clothes are a useful way to express

social distinction. The clothing of rich people is brighter and has finer embroidery than that of the poor. Similarly, rich people conspicuously display jewelry. In opposition to this characters on pilgrimage all wear white unadorned clothing as a sign of the equality of people before God.

#### MAINTAIN YOUR SOCIAL NETWORK

Characters from this area spend a lot of time with family, friends, and business contacts. This seems, to some Europeans, as if there's a continual round of parties, which is a bit decadent. The point of this, however, is to maintain social networks, purchased at character creation with Virtues like Social Contacts, Gossip and Temporal Influence. A person needs to spend a lot of time demonstrating his usefulness to his social network.

Many of the tasks which could be performed at home are instead performed in public to provide further opportunities for maintaining a character's social network. Communal bathing and food preparation, for example, allow characters to avoid wasting social time on necessary functions. Whenever your character is doing anything alone, seriously consid-

### The Jealous Wife

This faerie possesses women who fall from the central favor of their husband, when another wife has good fortune. Note that this means a house in which all wives are treated equally cannot be inhabited by the Jealous Wife. The Jealous Wife sometimes uses poison, and sometimes seems incapable of it. This may indicate there are several of these creatures. The Jealous Wife can, if she chooses not to kill, instead keep causing wives to rise and fall in the husband's estimation, possessing each victim in turn.

The Wife is not suited to be a player character.

**Faerie Might:** 15 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre 0, Com +1, Str 0\*, Sta 0\*, Dex 0\*, Qik

0\*.

\* These statistics are provided by the human host.

**Size:** 0 (as host)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Focus Faerie Powers (Possession, see below), 2 x Increased Might, Loosely Material\*; Incognizant. \*Modified to a Minor Virtue: may only take forms using possession power

**Personality Traits:** appears Jealous +3, Vengeful +3, but as some scholars have pointed out, the faerie cannot itself truly be jealous because it, personally, has not lost anything to the victim. The faerie just chooses women who have some social prompting toward jealousy, and

possesses them, acting as it thinks it would be interesting for them to act. This is mechanically best represented by personality traits.

**Combat:**

*Fingernails* \*: Init +1, Attack +3, Defense +1, Damage +0

\* Modified by the body's statistics. The fingernails are no more dangerous than those of a usual human. The faerie prefers to use intrigue and, sometimes, poison.

**Soak:** 0

**Wound Penalties:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious.

**Pretenses:** Intrigue 5 (servants), but may use Pretenses equal to the Abilities of the host.



er whether it might not be better to throw a party, or invite some friends around to gossip while you all perform the same task.

Gift giving also plays an important role in maintaining each character's social network. When gifts are given, they are not opened in the presence of the giver, and might never be spoken of again. This is because to show enthusiasm for a gift implies the receiver needed a thing, but could not buy it for himself. This brings shame.

Even religious rituals are performed at home. Circumcision is celebrated with a party. Couples are married at home. Funeral rites are performed at home. All of these life-rituals are shared with relatives and friends in the person's private space, not in mosques.

Most magi live in a way that's considered particularly alien by Maghrebi people. A person who disappears into a laboratory for hours, without seeing other people, is weirdly antisocial. Those magi who lock themselves away for three months are clearly holy, hiding shameful acts, or insane. That most magi do not live with members of their

## The Jealous Wife (Cont'd)

### Powers:

**Possession**, 1 or more points, Init +2, Mentem: If this power penetrates, the victim is possessed by the Jealous Wife and is under her direct control. Any attempt to force the victim to act contrary to her nature, or to use any of the host's own magical powers requires that faerie spends Might. A supernatural power (including spell-casting) requires 1 Might point per magnitude to produce. A questionable action that is contrary to the nature of the host requires the faerie to exceed the possessed being's Personality Trait roll on a stress die + Might points spent. The storyguide may give a modifier to the Personality Trait roll based on the nature of the command (see the Entrancement power, ArM5, page 65, for suggestions). Both Might costs must be met if the use of a supernatu-

ral power is also contrary to the victim's nature. If the Jealous Wife is in direct control of its host's actions, the host acquires her Magic Resistance, but is also affected by wards that would normally exclude her. If the host is acting under her own free will, then she does not benefit from Magic Resistance, but may also walk through wards with impunity. This power's costs are not based on the Hermetic system of magic: it is based on material in *Realms of Power: Magic*.

**Equipment:** Someone else's body, all of their material goods.

**Vis:** 3 Mentem, in the fingernails of the possession victim.

**Appearance:** This faerie does not have a material body, but if seen with Faerie Sight, or Second Sight outside a body, she seems to be a face with a furious expression that floats like a mask before the victim's head.

### STORY HOOK: THE CHAMELEON

A messenger contacts the player characters with an offer from a powerful lady in a nearby town. Her husband has been visiting prostitutes, and she wishes to regain his favor. In Tunisian folk magic a perfect way to reorient the desire of straying husbands is to put the bones of a chameleon into his food. She would like to buy a dead chameleon, and offers a valuable jewel in exchange for it. How will the player characters hunt a chameleon? It can be so similar to what stands behind it as to be virtually invisible and has a venomous bite.

After the characters have given the dead chameleon to the lady's servant, can they find another use for its venom? What strange effects on the body does chameleon venom cause?



family is considered tragic. People may assume that some terrible thing has occurred in the magus's homeland. That magi do not, generally, marry is considered both scandalous and extremely sad.

## Segregate by Sex

Life is divided into public and private spheres in the Maghreb, and women are part of the private sphere, while men dominate both.

### FEMALE AGENTS

It is almost impossible for male characters to speak to women of high social status to whom they are not related. This strict sexual segregation makes female characters useful when gathering information or exploring the homes of non-player characters. Women often socialize at the baths or while performing chores, either in their homes or on their rooftops, and trading interesting information with each other is one way to maintain their social network.

Female characters are often restricted from the full range of public actions they could perform in European settings. This can sometimes split the story a troupe is telling into two plot lines which run in parallel. To keep the group together, female characters may wish to pretend to be boys. This is may be represented with the Dark Secret Flaw, if the risk of discovery is a story element the troupe wishes to explore. If a player simply wants to keep the group together, but doesn't want the ruse to generate potential stories, then the character may still pretend to be a boy, but this isn't a Flaw.

### HUSBANDS AND POLYGAMY

A woman has a fuller life once married, because she is able to travel while accompanied. Even female magi may find it easier to have a man who might conceivably be a husband do much of the talking. Under Islamic law a man may have four wives at any one time, provided he treats them equally. Only

rich men can afford several wives in a culture where no wife may work outside the house (or at all, for wealthy women). On the other hand, many nobles have more than four partners.

There are three main ways to have more than four partners. The first is to just ignore the rule, which is a popular choice with kings. Concubines do not count toward the total: a man may have as many of those as he likes. Finally, a man may only have three wives at a time, but divorce only takes a minute. Some nobles keep a lot of women in their harem, marrying them as their sexual proclivities require and divorcing afterward. They never have more than four legal wives simultaneously, and never have sex out of wedlock. The vast majority of Islamic scholars think this is an abuse of the intentions, if not strictly the words, of the Qur'an.

Jealous wives are as common in Arabic stories as evil stepmothers in European stories. Some magi have suggested that women who suddenly become vicious and violent when another wife becomes pregnant, finds treasure, or otherwise changes her status, are possessed by faeries or have been tempted by demons.

## The Berbers

The Berbers are the original inhabitants of Mythic Africa. They have witnessed the invasion of many other races — Phoenicians, Romans, Visigoths, Greeks, and several waves of Arabs — but are still the dominant African culture. Closely allied to the Berbers are the Tuareg, a nomadic people of the Great Desert (see later).

### Appearance

The Imazighen are a Mediterranean people, similar to Greeks or southern Italians in appearance, although their skin is usually more deeply weathered by the hot desert winds. They have an olive complexion and dark hair tones, although auburn and blond are not unknown.

## Moors, Berbers, or Imazighen?

The term "Berber" derives from "barbari," a term used by the ancient Greeks to describe the people of Africa. Despite its lack of general use, it is a handy English word to describe the people and the culture native to Mythic Africa. The Berbers refer to themselves as *Imazighen* (singular *Amazigh*), meaning "free men"; this is the origin of a Roman name for them, the Mazices. The Romans more generally called the Imazighen "Mauri," from whence the Europeans get their term "Moor" which they apply indiscriminately to Berber and Arab alike.

In this book we use the term "Berber" and "Amazigh" interchangeably, but reserve "Moor" for the Mauritians.

Men wear a hooded woolen robe or *tajellabiyyt*, with a wool cloak called an *asilham* for nighttime or in the mountains. Women veil themselves in a white cotton dress called a *baik*, and a headscarf called a *tabruyt*. If she might be seen by a man who is not a member of her family, the *tabruyt* is pulled over the face so that only the right eye is exposed. Women also have a ceremonial *baik* and *tabruyt* which is dyed indigo. This *tabruyt* is embroidered with traditional symbols like those used in tattoos.

### TATTOOS

Tattooing has a long history in Berber culture, despite the Islamic *Hadith* where tattoos are proscribed. Berber usage falls under *aada* or 'normative practice' and is permitted by local clerics. Amazigh women are far more likely to be tattooed than the men; it is generally accepted that women with tattoos are more beautiful than those without. The symbols used are passed down from mother to daughter, although influenced by personal preference.

Women bear symbols called *siyala* on the face, neck, and chest. *Siyala* are marked in green, a holy color. A line from the lip to the chin is marked when a woman is married, and over time this

line is extended and embellished with crosses and palm fronds that indicate the number of children she has, and records family events and tragedies. She might also have her eyes outlined with dots (called "ant-tracks"), or mark her nose, cheeks, or brow with other simple symbols.

Body markings are called *abadjam*, and are usually more extensive and occur on both sexes, but are still more common on women. Designs on the back prevent and treat infertility, those on the breast enhance sensuality, those on the wrists and ankles protect against the evil eye, whereas those on the hands and feet are supposed to prevent possession by the *jinun*. A necklace tattoo might ring the neck bearing many potent symbols. A later insert describes some of the forms and purposes of traditional *abadjam*. For special occasions, these symbols may be elaborated with *tawzayt*, temporary symbols marked with henna (orange-brown), saffron (yellow), or *harquus* (a black dye); such symbols are often elaborate, and require a specialist cosmetician called a *neggafa* to apply them. Some *ngagef* are magicians who endow these ceremonial tattoos with power.

## Berber Culture

Berber society is nominally leaderless; indeed, they are united by a common resistance to the imposition of a centralized authority. Egalitarianism is a strong motivator of many Berber cultural traits; Berber villages, for example, have equal-sized houses — a rich man is not accorded any more space. Privacy and self-sufficiency are also very important to Berbers. It is considered shameful to buy milk, for example; it implies that the family cannot manage to support itself. Furthermore, excess should be freely given rather than sold.

### GENDER ROLES

In Imazighen communities, men and women occupy entirely different social spaces. The man is responsible for everything occurring outside. Berber men are most often herders of

sheep and goats, which they graze on the tribal pasture. Berber men also take on trades that need to be outside, such as metalworking and butchery. Even simple tasks like going to market are performed by men. The grainstore is the exclusive province of Amazigh men; it is a matter of great scandal for a woman to be seen near one.

The female space is found within the home. A Berber house is ruled by the wife or mother of the eldest male in the family; she is entirely responsible for the household economy and the behavior of those who live with her. Trades that take place inside are the task of women; this is principally the preparation of wool and associated trades such as weaving and dyeing. However, making pottery, baskets, any food-related trade, and even carpentry are women's trades. The Amazigh woman is more likely to be literate than her husband: women teach each other to read and write while they work together at the loom or at the potter's wheel. The local fountain is the women's taboo place; it is deeply improper for a man to approach one.

Despite the strict separation between men and women, the Imazighen are more permissive toward women than Arabs, in general. Monogamy is the norm, even though Islam permits the taking of up to four if a man is capable of supporting them.

## The Village

The village (in Tamazight, *thad-dart*) is the heart of Berber life. Where possible, Berber villages are sited on the summit of hills dominating a valley below. The slopes are covered with closely packed houses, each one stepped back against the hill, giving a pyramidal appearance to the whole village, with the minaret of the mosque forming the apex. In the Atlas Mountains, it is common to build the village into the hill by excavating a whole cave system. Above-ground Berber settlements grow by extending further down the hill, so the older families are at the top and the newer arrivals toward the bottom. Villages can be tiny, with just 50 or so houses,

but those near to trade routes can be huge — 1500 houses or more. In Berber towns and cities, there is a physical separation between male space and female space. The streets are covered with vaults and are frequented almost exclusively by men, who line the dark streets with benches. Above, the vaults and roofs form a network of communications for the town's women, unseen by the men except for fleeting glimpses when they cross gaps between houses. Women learn to be light on their feet and good jumpers, although there are ladders and bridges for the less agile.

Each house is two or three stories, with a terrace on the flat roof. The house contains the family's worldly goods; livestock are kept on the ground floor, other possessions in the family room above them. The uppermost story usually has a drying room for grain and fruit. Only the upper stories have windows, to maintain privacy. Three or four houses cluster around a courtyard that has a single entrance to the street; these are occupied by the families of brothers or cousins. Several of these clusters make up a ward, or *thakberroubt*, which are often based along occupational lines. Each ward has its own communal cemetery, threshing room, and grain store. Mixed wards occupied by outsiders — Arabs or Jews, mainly — are found near the edge of the settlement. Wards are arranged in concentric rings due to the way Berber villages grow. Each ward has its own council, or *tajmait*, composed of representatives from each family or lineage and presided over by an elected official called the *amin*. All adult men are represented in the meetings, and must attend them or else pay a fine. Women are not permitted at the *tajmait*. The *tajmait* makes decisions on communal life, passes judgments, and issues fines for petty misdemeanors and unacceptable behavior. Money raised from the fines is spent on public works, the labor provided by the men of each ward as a form of taxation. Families with no representative have all decisions made for them by the *tajmait* as a whole until a suitable marriage can be arranged. The strongest penalty levied by the *tajmait* is excommunication: the offender is literally excluded from all communication; no-one will speak with him, trade with



## Kharijite and Ibadite Islam

Kharijism was the earliest religious sect of Islam. They were supporters of the fourth caliph Ali (656–661), until he submitted to arbitration over his right to the caliphate. Some of his followers withdrew to east of the Tigris and thus earned the name *khariji*, seceders. The Kharijites became increasingly fanatical, and spawned several sub-sects, both moderate and extreme. They saw themselves as the only true Muslims, and sought to establish a community where the Qur'an was the sole authority. Their core belief was that anyone who committed a major sin ceased to be a Muslim and must be expelled from the Faith, and killed as an unbeliever unless he repented. Faith was justified only with correct belief and right action. The Kharijis rejected the dynastic approach to the caliphate. Rather, any irreproachable believer could be caliph, and any caliph could be deposed if his actions did not conform to religious law. Another basic principle of Kharijite Islam was jihad, which they saw as the sixth pillar of Islam. It was the obligation of all true Muslims to use the sword in order to establish truth. Khariji saw it as their religious duty to rebel against any authority who fell below their high standard of behavior. Finally, Khariji were radically egalitarian, accepting all believers as equal regardless of class or

origin. Even non-Muslims are treated fairly, as long as they do not violate the word of the Qur'an.

Khariji communities constantly rebelled against Umayyads and Abbasid rulers, whom they saw as false caliphs. They proved popular amongst new converts in both Persia and Africa who resented not being treated as equal by the Arab elite. Whilst Kharijism itself is now extinct in Africa, its core doctrines persist in the more moderate Ibadi sect. Ibadis do not believe in violent rebellion, and are more conciliatory toward other Muslims than their parent sect. Ibadis still consider sinners (including non-Ibadi Muslims) to be capable of repentance, although deserving of hostility. The religious elders and religious scholars (the *Mashayekh*) of Ibadi communities elect an Imam to promote good and prevent evil, and to be supreme military leader and judge. The imam's rule is absolute while he conforms to religious law; if the *Mashayekh* become aware of failure to adhere strictly to the Qur'an they can remove him. Chief amongst the *Mashayekh* are the *'Azzaba* (those who have retired), who lead religious orders. Ibadism opposes Sufism but accepts some mystic principles such as the *baraka* of great leaders. In the 13th century most Berbers are Ibadi Muslims, although the ruling Almohads are predominantly Sunni.

him, or offer daughters for marriage.

The most learned women of a ward form a group called the *tala*, named after the ward's fountain where they meet. It is taboo for men to approach the fountain; this is a uniquely female space equivalent to the *tajmait*. This group's principle function is to care for the bodies of the dead, but they also act as a kind of police force. They act on anonymous denunciations and take steps to control private behavior (unlike the *tajmait*, which controls public behavior). Accusations are investigated, and if necessary the *tala* decides on penances and punishments, which are enforced through pressure put on sons and husbands by their womenfolk. They provide counsel for those who

ask, and can, on occasion, alter the customs of the community entirely.

## The Tribe

Berber villages occupy relatively equal pieces of territory with clearly demarcated boundaries between them. A group of villages — two to eight, sometimes more — within a given area forms a tribe or *'arsb*. Most trees and all vegetables grown on irrigated plots belong to the individual, whereas plow land put to grain crops if the rains come early belongs to the village. Pasture land is usually the property of the tribe as a whole. The tribe typically labors as

a group to terrace new land in preparation for vegetable crops, and to build the underground channels that bring the water.

Members of a tribe trade with each other directly; Berbers do not hold markets, because this implies trade with outsiders, which is against Berber ideals of inviolability. The occasional peddler is tolerated, selling jewels, cosmetics, or other things which cannot be sourced locally. Berber men attend markets held outside the tribe's lands; these tend to occur between tribes that specialize in different areas, for example between predominantly pastoral tribes and agricultural ones.

Tribes sometimes join to form a confederation, or *thaqbilt*. These confederations make up the three chief Berber "super tribes" of the Zenata, Masmuda, and Sanhaja.

## Berber Beliefs and Folklore

Berbers are often considered superstitious by the Arabs of the coastal cities, an accusation that is not entirely unfounded. Islam was brought to Berbers by the Arabs, and it has always suffered amongst the Imazighen from that association. While most Berbers are nominally Muslim, their religious practices have pervasive influences from their pagan roots. This is most prominent in the Berbers of the interior, amongst whom is the greatest preponderance of pagan Berber tribes. Muslim Berbers are mostly followers of Ibadi Islam (see insert), and have little interest in persecuting others for their religious beliefs.

Christianity has a minor following amongst Imazighen. It is most common amongst those who inhabit the coastal regions of the Tell, and adopted the faith from successive waves of Roman, Vandal, and Byzantine settlers.

Few Berbers are overtly pagan, although many hold traditional beliefs that do not sit well with Islam. The mountain tribes are most likely to hold to the ancient ways and worship the same gods that they did before even the Carthaginians brought their

gods to this land.

These three religions sit poorly side by side; most villages are either Muslim, Christian, or pagan, and the majority of that community follow the dominant belief. The chief exception is that the settuten are nearly always pagan, regardless of the prevailing faith of their community; if their wrong beliefs are overlooked by the imam or priest it is because of the service they can provide for the village. This willful ignorance has its limits.

## THE GODS OF THE IMAZIGHEN

Pagan Berbers honor many gods, most of them personifications of nature. Their principle deities are Tafuyt, harsh goddess of the sun and Ayyur, god of the moon and sacrifices. Gurzil is the bull-headed god of war; his image has been carried into battle to incur his blessing on the enterprise. Anzar is the god of rain, a vital deity to the desert-dwelling people. The goddess of both fertility and death is Dunit ("The World"), known as Tanit to the Carthaginians and Neith to the Egyptians; her name recalls that of the First Mother of the World (see later). The Berbers may also worship local deities of relevance to their villages, such as Baccax the god of caves and Lilleu, a river god.

In the town of Badja, near Tunis, a stone engraving shows seven ancient Berber gods known as the Dii Mauri. Seated on a bench, they represent Bonchar in the center with a staff as the lord of the group. To his right, the goddess Vihina sits with an infant at her feet, representing home and childbirth. To the right of Vihina is Macurgum, who holds a scroll and a serpent entwined staff, the god of health. On Bonchar's left stands enigmatic Varsissima, a goddess of secrets. Left of her, the goddess Matilam presides over the sacrifice of a boar. Standing at either end of the carving are Macurtan, holding a bucket as the god of the waters, and lunam, god of the moon. Beneath the gathering is the Latin inscription, "salutares" (redemptory), "immortales" (immortal), and "augusti" (exalted). The Dii Mauri were mostly subsumed by the ar-

rival of the Romans and their temples.

Beyond the larger towns and the coast, Berbers treated these entities as jealous and capricious genius locii, offering them small sacrifices in cave shrines in exchange for noninterference or even minor aid in the form of plaguing one's enemies. This practice persists in small communities to the present, but it is more a form of placation than worship, as village elders seek to protect their residents. Whether the Dii Mauri are listening, or smothered by the Divine, is another matter entirely.

Pagan Imazighen also honor their dead ancestors as gods, and treat tombs as holy places. They swear oaths by placing their hands on a tomb, and may sleep within to receive dreams from the gods. In pagan communities, each head of the household is responsible for conducting the rites honoring the village's gods, whereas the chief woman of the house is responsible for observing the family's gods. The settuten are the closest thing to a formal priesthood since they are dedicated to the god of sacrifices. Like other pagan gods, most Berber gods are associated with the Faerie Realm.

## YEMMA-T N DUNIT AND AWETTUF

In the beginning there was just a man and a woman, and they lived beneath the earth in the sterile and dark Netherworld. The woman was called Yemma-t n Dunit, the First Mother of the World, and she was a powerful witch. They had fifty sons and fifty daughters, who climbed through holes onto the light, fertile world above; these were the first men. Initially, Yemma-t n Dunit was a beneficent (or at least, neutral) creatrix; she created the sun and moon, the stars, and all animals and plants. Having run out of things to create, she began to create destruction, and her evil grew. She instituted eclipses, dispute and discord, and even death. She is responsible for the hardships of the Berbers, while their enemies the Franks and Arabs prosper. The Yemma-t n Dunit is the source of all evil counsel, malicious gossip, and hurtful lies. Many of her creations bear the marks of her evil: for example, the

## Story Seed: The Christians of the Desert

Swathed in their *litham* veils, carrying their long *takouba* swords, thin lances and cross-decorated shields of gazelle hide, Tuareg warriors sometimes appear similar to Frankish knights, albeit mounted on dromedary camels. Some Arabic writers refer to the nomads as *Nasara al-Sabra* (Arabic: "Nazarenes of the Desert") from a belief that that the Tuareg are lost Christians adapted to life in the deep desert.

Characters may hear tales using this terminology and seek out the nomads, perhaps believing they are representatives of the mythic Christian king Prester John. Unfortunately, the Tuareg are entirely un-Christian in their behavior and will just as soon heartlessly rob and beat any explorers seeking their aid unless presented with goods of value: camels, slaves or clothing. Will the characters be stranded in a forsaken realm of sand?

porcupine has the wood splinters from her destroyed spindle on its back, and the tortoise was originally a calf who was crushed between her millstones. The moon god Ayyur is her son and Tafuyt the sun is her daughter.

The evil of the Yemma-t n Dunit is opposed by Awettuf the ant. Awettuf is the wise counselor of mankind, and the husband of Tafuyt. While he is not himself a creator, his advice enabled mankind to make the best of creation. Thus, the First Mother of the World created sheep, but Awettuf showed mankind how to use the meat for food and the wool for clothing. He demonstrated the growing of grain and making of bread, instituted rituals and sacrifice, and convinced the wild bulls to be domesticated by men.

## THE NETHERWORLD

The Netherworld is an invisible world of shadows on the other side of the human, civilized world. It is the re-



verse of the human world: mountains are deep pits, and ravines form cliffs across the landscape. Rivers of water cross the sky. The black sheep eat coal, and the black goats give black milk. When it is night in the mundane world, it is day in the Netherworld, for this is where Tafuyt retreats at night; similarly when the moon is not in the sky, the Berbers say that Ayyur is visiting his mother.

The Netherworld is peopled by spirits of the dead, hideous giants like the *teryelen* (ogresses), and dwarfs that swarm everywhere like ants, with whom they share kinship. Pagan Imazighen believe that mankind was born in the Netherworld, but climbed up through a hole in the sky into the mundane world above. When they die, they return to the Netherworld, but

they are not entirely cut off from the mundane world. A network of communications between the human world and the Netherworld exists, through tombs, wells, caves, and occasional iron gates built by *jnun*. Snakes in particular are the messengers between the Netherworld and ours, and should be treated with respect lest they speak ill of you to your ancestors.

## The Tagelmoust

The *tagelmoust* (Arabic: *litham*) is the dark blue veil worn constantly by Tuareg men. Composed of separate pieces of Sudanese cloth dyed indigo (see below), the veil is wrapped around the head to reveal only the eyes. The veil acts not only a practical protection against the sun and sand but is also central to the sense of identity of a male Targui — the Tuareg refer to themselves in Tamahak as Kel Tagelmoust, "The People of the Veil." Many Arab detractors however believe that the Tuareg use the litham to mask their extreme ugliness!

Each veil is unique in hue, although relatives and members of the same tribe usually have closely matched colors. The folding style of the veil denotes each Targui's relative status within the tribe with nobles generally covering more of their face. Minor adjustments of the veil during conversation can reflect an individual's mood or unstated opinion. A Targui warrior receives his first veil in a ceremony overseen by a member of the *ineslemen* tribe on passing into adulthood at age eighteen and only removes it when replacing it with a new veil, reflected by the Vow (constantly wear *litham* veil) Minor Flaw.

The basic *litham* veil of a mature Targui warrior is enchanted using hedge magic by a *ineslemen* magician aligned to the Magic Realm with a Level 25 Rego Auram effect that protects against sandstorms, which has Duration: Sun and 2 uses per day, effectively resulting in permanent protection against the conditions of the nomad's homeland. An additional effect customarily woven into the veil is designed to provide protection against evil spirits — once per day, the wearer can invoke a *Ward against Spirits of the Desert* with Penetration ranging from between 5 and 20, depending on the status of the individual.

Tuareg men wear their veils constantly, not even removing them to eat or sleep after the age of 25. As the veils carry constant magical effects, this grants at least 2 Warping Points associated with the Magic (or Divine) Realm per year and older warriors have a Warping score of at least 1. By the eighth year of wearing a magical veil constantly, Tuareg males are plagued with frequent headaches and suffer from either the Short Attention Span or Poor Concentration Minor Flaw (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 50).

By the age of forty, a Targui warrior who has worn his veil constantly has a Warping score of 3, which rises to 5 by the age of fifty. Traveling through high strength Magic auras in the deep desert, passing through Magic regions or exposure to other powerful magical effects can accelerate this process and cause the gain of additional characteristic Flaws at higher Warping scores. Gradually the deep indigo dye penetrates into their whole skin and, as their Warping score increases, they gain characteristic Flaws and Virtues following ArM5, pages 167–168, as detailed below:

Warping Score	Effect
2	Short Attention Span or Poor Concentration Flaw
3	Disfigured (deep indigo skin)
5	Minor Supernatural Virtue*
6	Wanderlust
7	Magical Air
8	Blatant Magical Air

\* Either Desert Regio Network, Dowsing (water), Lesser Immunity: Thirst, Second Sight or Wilderness Sense. Most Tuareg strongly believe their

veils actually help prevent their headaches rather than being the cause and suspect that their malady is a curse of the settut or malevolent *jnun*. To offset the Flaws gained from Warping, older Tuareg progressively seek to acquire more magically potent *litham*, amulets or other hedge magic items with enchantments offsetting the effects of Minor Flaws due to the Targui's frequent headaches. Other minor magical effects mimicking the Minor Supernatural Virtues listed above are also sometimes be woven into the fabric at the time of creation. Unfortunately, the constant wearing of an assortment of minor magical items may actually increase the rate of accumulation of Warping points and lead to further negative effects.

### VEILED WIZARDS AND HAJI

Male Tuareg wizards such as *assebar* (sahir), *imbergi* (cunning-folk), *ineslemen* (murabitin) and *ineden* (blacksmiths) do not suffer this style of Warping, but do Warp at an accelerated rate through wearing their veils constantly. Those cognizant magicians that realize the baneful effect of their magical headgear often substitute mundane indigo cloth and rely on their own magical protections. Others abandon wearing the *litham* altogether, substituting the equivalent of the Judged Unfairly Flaw for their Vow Flaw.

Only *haji*, those infrequent Tuareg who have completed a pilgrimage to Mecca, are exempt from the requirement to wear a veil — their sacred status replaces the need to wear the *litham* and they exchange their Vow for the Pious Minor Personality Flaw instead.

## Tuareg Story Seeds

The customs of the Tuareg can lead to many stories.

### THE DEEP TUAREG

The enforced isolation of the elder Tuareg males due to the effects of Flaws gained from Warping often leads them deeper and deeper into the desert where they may fall prey to the attentions of the Great Sahara daimon known as the Hunger (al-Ju' in Arabic). The more foolish are tempted to bargain with the spirit in return for release from their afflictions. At a minimum, these elder Tuareg become dark Spirit Votaries and suffer the Servant of the Desert Major Flaw. More commonly they are transformed into a unique form of undead Magic Humans with a Might Score known as Dessicated Men.

### INDIGO DYE

This blue dye with the color of European woad was once known as *indicum* to the Romans. It is produced from several natural sources, all of which must be imported by the nomads from beyond the southern desert, from Europe or from as far afield as mythical Hind. Indigo dyed clothing denotes high status among the Tuareg and the dye is a vital component in the manufacture of the traditional *litham* veil of an adult Tuareg male. Any clothing dyed with indigo is considered a valued commodity. Magi are able to reproduce colors comparatively easily using Hermetic magic and may intervene in the dye trade from as far away as Europe or supply cloth to local Tuareg tribes when seeking allies while journeying through the desert regions.

The Netherworld is part of the Faerie Realm, although sections of it lie within Faerie regiones and can be more easily visited.

## The People of the Veil

*"The scorpion and the Tuareg are the only enemies you meet in the desert"*

- old Arab saying

The nomadic Tuareg (*Arabic*: "abandoned by god," singular: Targui) are a collection of aggressive nomad tribes that roam the deep expanses of the Great Desert centered around the Ahaggar and Air massifs (*Tuareg*: Atakor and Ayār respectively). They instead refer to themselves as the Kel Tagelmoust (*Tuareg*: "the People of the Veil") or Kel Tamahak (*Tuareg*: "the People who speak Tamahak").

## Tuareg Culture

*"Pillage is our work"*

- Tuareg saying

The verb *iobagh* means both "he is free" and "he pillages" — the concepts of brigandage and liberty are so inseparable to a Targui warrior that they have no concept of the plight of the victims of their raiding. Even a negotiated *ghefara* or "pardon" for protection means little to a traveling merchant as the raiders are just as likely to rob a caravan that passes out of their territory on the grounds that they are no longer under the specific band's protection.

Tuareg consider only camels, clothing, slaves, and weapons to have any significant value. A Tuareg male noble's worth is measured in the number of camels he owns and status displays amongst other men are reflected to a coquettish extreme by the amount of clothing worn. The more exotic and colourful the clothing a male Targui wears, the more status it conveys, regardless of the impracticality of multiple layers of heavy cloth in the bak-

ing desert sun. The most famous item of Tuareg clothing is the *tamelghoust* or *litham*, an indigo dyed veil worn by all adult males except those rare Tuareg who have completed the *hajj*, or pilgrimage to Mecca.

These nomads take little care about food or hygiene and are purported to eat almost exclusively the milk of sheep and camels, supplemented with roots or grains foraged from the sands or other foodstuffs begged from others. Nobles never ask but rather demand food in the form of *mouna* or "tribute" from their serfs or anyone unfortunate enough to be regarded as their inferior, and to a noble Targui, all but other noble Targui are inferior.

Many Tuareg men are illiterate but all Tuareg speak Tamahak, the southernmost dialect of Tamazight common to these nomads but distinct from that of the settled northern tribes.

## Tuareg Society

The basic unit of Tuareg society is the "drum group" or clan (*tewsit*), a collection of families summoned by an *amghar* or war leader's large hemispherical war drum (*ettebel*). The larger societal unit of a *Kel* or confederation is a loose series of tribes (*tawsbeten*) bound together under an *amenoukal*, nominally equivalent to a greater chieftain. Although respected, an *amenoukal* acts more as an impartial adjudicator for his confederation, albeit one who can be ignored without significant consequence.

There are several well known *Kel* located within the southern parts of the Great Desert:

- Kel Ajjer (found near the oasis of Ghat and the Tassili n Ajjer plateau)
- Kel Ahaggar (overlord confederation of the Ahaggar massif)
- Kel Ayr (dominate the Air massif)
- Kel Owey (roam along the southeastern mountains and the Fezzan road)
- Kel Ifoghas (settled around the Adrar Ifoghas massif)

In addition, the two Iwellemmeden confederations (the western Kel Ataram and eastern Kel Denneg) and the Kel Geres dwell further south in the deeper



## Tuareg Raiders

Tuareg nobles typically lead a band of one to two-dozen lesser tribesmen from the *imgbad* caste riding camels. Each is equipped with a lance and a *takouba*, the Tuareg longsword. Some bands are accompanied by disguised Tuareg settlers or even secretly led by one of the deep desert witches. The leaders of the more successful bands have an uncanny ability to find their way through the trackless deserts and escape through hidden entrances to the regions that cross the wastelands.

### ALJILANI AG IBRAHIM, A TARGUI AMAJEGH

This noble has been designed for use as a starting Companion but requires 2 more Minor Virtues to balance and may choose up to one more Minor Virtue if balanced by an additional Minor Flaw.

A more experienced raider leader may have additional martial skills, carry more protective amulets, or have additional Virtues & Flaws gained through Warping.

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +1, Pre -1, Com 0, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik 0  
**Size:** 0

**Age:** 37 (37)

**Decrepitude:** 0 (0)

**Warping:** 3 (8)

**Confidence:** 2 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** *Amghar* (Knight); Inspirational, Lightning Reflexes, Long-Winded, Self-Confident, Tough, Strong Willed; Proud (Major); Infamous, Poor Hearing, Oversensitive (shown lack of respect), Vow (constantly wear *litham* veil).

**Additional Virtues & Flaws\*:** Desert Regio Network; Disfigured (indigo skin), Short Attention Span

\* from Warping due to constantly wearing magical *litham* veil

**Personality Traits:** Arrogant +3, Proud +3, Oversensitive +3

**Reputations:** 2 Merciless raider (local)

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init +0, Attack +3, Defense +2, Damage +1

*Kick* (mounted): Init -1, Attack +7, Defense +5, Damage +4

*Takoba & Aghar* (long sword & shield):

Init +2, Attack +11, Defense +10, Damage +7

*Takoba & Aghar* (mounted): Init +2, Attack +14, Defense +13, Damage +7

*Allagh* (lance, mounted): Init +2, Attack +13, Defense +8, Damage +6

**Soak:** +14 (Stamina, Tough, full chain armor)

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 2 (camels), Arabic 3 (demands), Area Lore: Ahaggar 2 (history), Athletics 2 (leap), Awareness 2 (ambushes), Bargain 3 (beg food), Brawl 2 (kick from horseback), Etiquette 2 (Tuareg), Folk Ken 1 (soldiers), Great Weapon 4 (lance), Guile 2 (spot lies), Hunt 2 (gazelle), Intrigue 2 (alliances), Leadership 2 (rallying troops), Ride 4 (battle), Single Weapon 5 (long sword & shield), Stealth 2 (ambushes), Survival 3 (Desert), Tamazight 5 (Tamahak).

**Powers:**

*Brave the Sandstorm*, ReAu 25, Init 0; Range: Personal, Duration: Sun, 2 uses per day. This effect protects the wearer from sandstorms by repelling the breeze that carries the dust.

*Ward Against the Kel Asuf*, ReVi 15, Init 0; Range: Personal, Duration: Sun, 2 uses per day, Penetration+10. Repels minor Faerie spirits of the deserts as a Ward Against Faeries of the Desert.

**Equipment:** full chain armor, *aghar* (gazelle-hide heater shield), *litham* veil\*, *takoba* (long sword), *allagh* (lance), wooden camel saddle\*\*, jeweled amulet\*\*\*

\* see Powers above for effects enchanted into the Targui's indigo veil

\*\* has been enchanted by an *inenden* to provide +3 to Ride rolls for one scene or three minutes

\*\*\* has been enchanted by a *inenden* witch to grant Wilderness Sense 3 (desert)

**Encumbrance:** 3 (9)

desert and perhaps beyond, although whether these tribes are composed of mundane humans, Magic-kin, Magic Humans or Faeries playing out the nomad raider role is uncertain.

## TUAREG CASTES

The rulers of Tuareg society are the *imajeghen* (singular: *amajegh*), the nobles who lead raids and expect to be served by all other humans, but are bound by an unusual code of honor equivalent to the Dutybound Flaw. A Tuareg noble has the equivalent of the Knight or Muslim Emir Virtue, but with a focus on hunting and travel as well as military activities. Equivalents for greater nobility amongst the Tuareg exist — an *amghar* is equivalent to a Landed Noble or Muslim 'Muqta, and an *amenoukal* is equivalent to a Great Noble (see *Lords of Men*, page 31). The *amenoukal* of the Kel Ahaggar is equivalent in power to a European Duke, although much of his power is nominal at the peripheries of the Tuareg lands. Noted for their remarkable arrogance and sense of racial superiority, Tuareg nobles commonly possess the following Virtues and Flaws: Fury (not respected as superior), Obsession (appearance), Overconfident, Oversensitive (to disrespect or lack of grooming), Piercing Gaze, Proud, Self-Confident, Social Handicap (Superiority complex), Strong Willed, Wrathful.

Beneath the ruling nobles are the *imgbad* (singular: *amghid*), a vassal caste who comprise the bulk of the warriors and pasture the tribe's goats and camels and act as the common soldiery on raids. Some tribes such as the Kel Ulli (Tuareg: "the goat people") are composed almost entirely of these dependent pastoralists.

The *ineslemen* are the religious caste of the Tuareg. Descended from the families of Tuareg *marabouts*, their neutral stance allows them to mediate between feuding tribes and individuals. Their leaders and other exceptional individuals may have magical powers or abilities reflecting the *baraka* associated with their holy ancestors. Tuareg *ineslemen* usually lack the Dream Interpretation powers of their northern counterparts and substitute Purity

instead. They lack the power to Create Vis but may have access additional Holy Powers such as Adjunction and Wonders. Not all magicians from an *ineslemen* tribe are aligned to the Divine Realm — Infernal-aligned equivalents exist and some practitioners of other hedge traditions aligned to the Magic or Faerie realms may pass off their powers as *baraka*, masquerading as holy men to gain similar social benefits.

The *eklan* are the lowest caste, a class of black-skinned serfs who work the limited agricultural holdings of the Tuareg nobility. Similar to the *Haratan* of the northern Berbers, these workers are little more than true slaves, although the latter are referred to as *abid* and are universally drawn from black-skinned races. See the Berber culture section earlier for further details.

The *inenden* are a pariah caste of wandering craftsmen. Believed to have Jewish origins, they practice a different form of magic from the *settuten* and have the Outcast Minor Flaw.

## INESLEMAN

### *Minor Virtue, Social Status*

This character is a member of one of the designated religious tribes of the Tuareg and is therefore accorded some authority over disputes and immunity from the usual feudal demands of the nobles. He may purchase Theology: Islam, Islamic Law and (Realm) Lore during character generation and gains an additional 50 XP to spend on these Abilities. The character begins with the Minor Flaw Noncombatant, which does not yield any points for buying Virtues.

## TUAREG WOMEN

Tuareg women are more respected than even their northern Berber counterparts and occupy a social position unequalled in other Islamic countries. Unlike the menfolk, these women disdain the veil and freely voice their opinions — many hold a prominent place in the leadership or counsel of each tribe and inheritance amongst the noble caste is matrilineal as “the stomach holds the child.” After marriage, a Targui woman is permitted a number of male friends who may visit her when her husband is out raiding, although such meeting rarely result in consummation.

Tuareg women are so respected that when a band raids another tribe, the male warriors may be put to flight or killed but the women and children are not molested and left with sufficient equipment to survive — only the slaves and luxury items such as camels, gold, salt and fine clothing are taken!

Female Tuareg are generally better educated and mothers are responsible for passing down knowledge of their unusual script, Tifinagh or Tidinar — the letters being similar to the ancient Libyan alphabet but particularly noted for being written in a random direction of writing rather than the right to left order of Arabic. They are also more musical in nature, than their men, singing traditional folk songs accompanied by either the *anzad* (a single stringed violin) or the *tende*, a small hand drum.

Compared to the traditional medieval Arabic concept of beauty as proportional to the degree of obesity, Tuareg women are tall and elegant with their wrists frequently adorned with fine bracelets or exceptional examples of embroidery and leatherwork. This contrasts to their clothing, which unlike the men is often poorly kept, dirty and comparatively revealing compared to the heavily swathed northern women who are influenced by the modesty dictated by the Arab dominated culture.

## Tuareg Magic

Tuareg magic, like that of their northern Berber cousins, is split along gender lines, with a dominance of female practitioners across the different castes. Settuten are rarer than amongst other Berber tribes and women that practice forms of magic other than that of the *settuten* are not uncommon. Male practitioners tend to be less powerful overall, unless created as *marabouts* or impostors from other hedge magic traditions that belong to one of the *ineslemen* tribes. See Chapter 4: The Realms of Mythic Africa for further details.

## TUAREG OF HERMES, TUAREG OF SULEIMAN?

Recent history provides examples of outcast Tuareg *sahira* who have escaped the wrath of the *settuten* and at least one *sahir* of the Order of Suleiman claims to be of mixed Tuareg heritage. In the 11th century, a Tuareg of the *inenden* caste is recorded as joining House Ex Miscellanea but his semi-Hermetic lineage appears to have disappeared or been absorbed into a small Muslim lineage within House Verditius. A Tuareg magus may provide an interesting archetype for either a player character or an antagonist in an African based saga.



## The Unholy Trinity

Medieval European Christians have many misconceptions about Islam, perhaps the most common of which is that Muslims worship an unholy trinity composed of three deities known as Mahound, Termagant and Apollyon. This misunderstanding is in part due to early contact with the Banu Khalida in Iberia.

In *Ars Magica Fifth Edition* the three deities are demons of the Order of False Gods (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 37), who seek to foment hostility between Christians and Muslims. They may be found operating anywhere within Mythic Africa, Europe or the Middle East, whispering their vicious lies into the ears of any who might listen. Like most False Gods, the demons usually take forms that will appeal to their listeners. In their original forms, though, they appear as follows:

The demon **Mahound** takes the form of a grotesque parody of a monotheistic prophet, clothing itself in fine robes of green silk and gold, and leering at those around it. It has immense ears, intended to mock the fact that such prophets heard the divine revelation.

**Termagant** takes the form of a hag with an incredibly wrinkled face and bulging eyes, literally spitting venom at any who oppose it. It has sharp, jagged fingernails with which it claws at its opponents' eyes.

**Apollyon** appears on first glance to be a twisted parody of the Graeco-Roman Apollo, a hunchbacked, hideously ugly blond man with a lyre, dressed only in an oversized, ill-fitting golden cloak. The cloak drips with acid and the lyre produces jangling discords that set teeth on edge and paralyze the senses.



## The Banu Khalida

*Out in front rides a Saracen, Abisme,  
King Marsile has no greater villain in his  
company.*

*A man of evil traits and mighty treachery,  
He does not believe in God.*

~ The Song of Roland, laisse 114

The great French epic *The Song of Roland* speaks of a very different variety of Moor than is found in most of Africa. This *chanson de geste* was written in the eleventh century, but tells of events in the eighth century, when the Moors had overrun the Visigothic kingdoms of Iberia and now set their eyes on the lands of the Franks. The poem recounts the attempt of twelve men to delay a hundred thousand Moors in the Pyrenean Roncevaux Pass until Charlemagne could arrive with his main force. The Moors described in the poem are sinister beings aligned with dark powers; many of

them have bestial characteristics or are said to have unnatural size, supernatural strength, or the power to enslave the minds of men. These are the Banu Khalida.

This section presents a legendary people who fulfill the expectations of Mythic European prejudice about Moors. They could be villainous antagonists for the characters, lurking in distant lands and brewing their evil against the race of men. Travelers might come across the cities of the Banu Khalida by following trade routes across the desert. The Twelve Cities could even provide a source for a player character who is struggling to overcome his dark past.

### BACKGROUND

Legend has it that the Moors of the Banu Khalida are descended from Khalid ibn Yazid, the adopted son of the Kahina. He was a traitor to the core: born an Arab, he rejected Islam to spare his life and professed Berber

paganism to ingratiate himself with the Kahina. He later tricked his foster brothers into becoming the captives of the Arab invaders. Khalid later appears, once again claiming to be a Muslim, leading a Berber army into Iberia with his apostate brothers. Khalid's sons were amongst the survivors of the battle at Roncevaux Pass through base cowardice, and retained their territory in al-Andalus to become viceroys on the Iberian Peninsula. Their descendants, the Banu Khalida, were never amongst the more powerful *taifa* princes, but they navigated the delicate rivalries through secret alliances, clever marriages, and demonic assistance.

The coming of the Almoravids was a major blow to the Banu Khalida power base. They had survived by keeping the factions fighting each other, but a single Almoravid ruler enforcing a strict adherence to Islam was contrary to their way of controlling politics from behind the throne. The

Banu Khalida migrated *en masse* back to Mythic Africa, carving out a realm for themselves in southern Mauritania, beyond Almoravid influence. Here they still lurk, in the *bled es-Siba*, the "land of dissidence," using their hell-gotten powers to build a land of plenty on the edge of the torrid zone.

### CULTURE

The Banu Khalida have a caste system that reflects their mixed ancestry. The Hassane are ruling warrior caste descended via Arab bloodlines from Khalid the Apostate. Below them are the Zawiya clerical caste, who gain protection from the Hassane in return for religious services and payment of a tributary tax. Subordinate to both Hassane and Zawiya are the Znaga, who are the laboring caste; this includes specialist professions such as the mraguen (fishermen), mallemin (blacksmiths), and igawen (poets and praise-singers).

They must also pay tribute, and are forbidden from bearing arms. The Zawiya and Znaga have Berber origins, mostly from the Zenata tribe.

The three upper castes are collectively called the *bidan* ("white") castes, and are supported by the lower two castes who are black-skinned. The 'Abid are the slave caste at the bottom of Banu Khalida society, and the Haratan are the freed slaves who form the bulk of the bureaucracy and army. Most *bidan* — even the commoner Znaga caste — have at least one house slave, and rich Hassani might own hundreds of 'Abid and employ dozens of Haratan. The arrogance of the Banu Khalida is such that they believe they have total control over the lower castes, and for the most part this is true. Despite the designation of 'bidan' for the upper castes, skin color is no real determinant of caste. There are ebony-skinned members of the *bidan* just as there are pale 'Abid and Haratan. The former come from high-

## Story Seeds: The Banu Khalida

A whole culture of diabolists is a rich source of stories.

### A LOST TREASURE RETURNS

A valuable possession of the characters or their patron that went missing years ago reappears in the possession of a prominent local. The merchant from whom he bought it swears that he received it in legitimate trade. Investigations (or divinations) lead the characters through a chain of buying and selling back to the Twelve Cities. The possession was originally stolen using demonic powers to summon wealth. This is a good way to bring the Banu Khalida to the attention of the characters.

### SLAVE REVOLT

For some years now, Islam has been spreading clandestinely through the 'Abid of several cities. An Ibadi imam from the north has been teaching the Word of the Prophet, and the slaves have become aware that it is within their hands

to make the change. The characters meet an escaped slave who is trying to free his kinsman from Khalidi bondage.

### INVASION

A hitherto unheard of coalition of three emirs threatens to destabilize the delicate power balance of the Twelve Cities. Under Termagant's influence, they seek to raise an army to wage war against the Almohads to the north. Despite urging from their demoness patron, the emirs are exercising caution. They have dispatched spies into Almohad territory looking for defensive weaknesses, and if they find none, to create some. The characters might foil the plans of one of these sorcery-enhanced spies, and become embroiled in the plots that threaten their homeland.

### THE FOURTH ESTATE

The emir of Malprimis has been corrupted by a fourth False God, Baal-Peor (*Realms of Power: the Infernal*, pages 50–51). The Lord of Filth lacks any subtlety, yet still poses a threat to the Unholy Trinity's monopoly on the souls of the Banu Khalida. Through Zawiya intermediates they manipulate outsiders (that is, the characters) into uncovering and destroying Malprimis's dark worship.

### TWICE-WON GOLD

A common tactic to keep the Hassane occupied is to trade gold with foreign merchants, and hiring out Haratan guards under the command of a Hassane scion. As the merchants return north, they are certain to be attacked by "bandits" — actually another band of Khalida. Whichever Hassane wins takes the gold back to the Twelve Cities. The presence of the characters amongst the merchant train might well ruin this scheme.



## Khalida Characters

Players wanting a Khalidi character, particularly a goetic one, should check with the storyguide. Their casual relationship with the Infernal can make them challenging characters to play, particularly among a troupe of non-Khalida.

The Social Status Virtues suggested here include both the European and Islamic equivalents (which can be found in *Realms of Power: the Divine Revised Edition*, pages 114–115)

Hassane characters have either the Knight/Emir or Landed Noble/Muqta' Social Status Virtues, depending on their closeness to the royal families. The most powerful, such as the Emirs of the Twelve Cities, are Diabolist Mythic Companions; other Hassane commonly have the Summoning or Ablating Goetic Arts (*Realms of Power: the Infernal*, Chapter 11).

Zawiya characters should take Priest/Alim Virtue. Like Hassane, many are goetic sorcerers, although they concentrate on the Commanding and Binding Arts.

Znaga can take any Free Social Status Virtue; they have no special

rules regarding character creation.

Haratan have the Freed Slave Social Status Flaw (see later). They usually have either the Warrior Virtue if they are a soldier, or the Educated Virtue if they are a bureaucrat.

'Abid take the 'Abid Major Social Status Flaw.

Khalida names: Abisme, Alphaien, Burdel, Canabeus, Chernubles, Corsablix, Esperveres, Eudropin, Faldrun, Gemalfin, Guarlan, Jouna, Malduit, Marcule, Priamon, Timozel

### FREED SLAVE

#### *Minor Social Status Flaw*

You were either born a slave and have been freed by your current master, or you were born of two freed slaves. You bear a brand to indicate that you are not a runaway slave, but which also marks you as a lower class citizen. You can expect to be paid for whatever work you do, but it is likely to be a pittance, and your only way to avoid poverty may be to join the army or become a clerk

caste breeding with their slaves; such children inherit the higher caste if recognized by their parent, and suffer no stigma from skin color. White lower caste members derive from slaves taken or bought from the north, often European in origin.

The Banu Khalida have their own language; they used Punic as a secret language during the *taifa* period, and now use it as their main language, although now cross-fertilized with Arabic and Tamazight. The Zawiya are taught Arabic, and many Hassane receive a formal education in that language as well. Znaga involved in trade may well speak some Tamazight.

The Banu Khalida live in twelve cities named after the twelve peers of King Marsile who opposed the twelve peers of Charlemagne: Aelroth, Balaguer, Chernubles, Corsalis, Escremiz, Estorgans, Estramariz, Falsaron, Malprimis, Margariz, Moraine, and Turgis. They are placed just one

day's journey from each other, with paved roads between to facilitate travel. Each of the cities is set in an oasis in the midst of a stony desert. The buildings are made from red clay baked hard in the sun, and are arranged around a central plaza. The oasis provides water for the nearby fields, which grow millet, dates, and forage for livestock. The population of these cities consists of three to six extended families each of Hassane and Zawiya, a dozen families of Znaga, five hundred Haratan (of whom a quarter to a half are soldiers), maybe two thousand 'Abid. One of the Hassane families is dominant over the others, and is headed by the emir who is the absolute ruler of the city.

## RELIGION

Khalidi culture does not appear particularly pious: they lack overt demonstrations of faith, they do not utter familiar prayers and blessings with their speech, and their mosques are often plain and poorly maintained. To outsiders they explain that their faith is a personal and private matter. Those questioning a Zawiya are left believing that they are Muslim clerics, although a scholar would spot a lack of consistency with respect to observances with the Sunni, Shi'ite, or any other sect. They are closest to Khariji practice, the eldest of Islam's variants.

Such religious pretensions are a sham; the Banu Khalida in reality worship a trio of gods. The Zawiya and most of the Hassane know the truth about their deities — that they are demons — but over five centuries of indoctrination have grown convinced that they have the upper hand in the relationship. Most of the Znaga and virtually all of the slave castes are ignorant of the true nature of their gods, having been deliberately kept away from the darker aspects of demon worship.

The upper echelons of the Banu Khalida are goetic sorcerers (*Realms of Power: the Infernal*, Chapter 11), summoning demons during their profane rituals and stripping them of their Might through the Ablating Art to extend their lives, heal injuries, and enhance their physical Characteristics and Abilities. The Gift is no more common amongst the *bidan* than in Mythic Europe and most gain their powers through demonic pacts. Few Hassane ever go to battle without multiple enhancements and powers; a duel between two Hassane is often determined by whoever can Summon and Ablate the most powerful demon rather than any actual skill at arms. The Zawiya use their goetic powers mostly to support the Hassane and exert control over the lower castes; through the Commanding Art they construct and repair buildings and roads, and they Bind demons from the Order of Aerial Powers into stone pylons that dot Khalidi cities in order to keep the air cool and bring rain to the crops.

## Jurfaret

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per -2, Pre +2, Com +1 (0), Str +2, Sta +2 (+1), Dex +2, Qik +2 (0)

\* Characteristics in parentheses are his natural scores

**Size:** 0

**Age:** 26 (26)

**Decrepitude:** 0

**Warping Score:** 2 (0)

**Confidence Score:** 1 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Knight; Summoning, Ablating; Arcane Lore, Infernal Heirloom, Large, Protection; Overconfident, Supernatural Nuisance; Compulsion (to close things), Corrupted Abilities\*, Mentor, Poor Hearing, Tainted with Evil

\* from Warping

**Personality Traits:** Impetuous +3, Cutthroat +2, Refined +1

**Reputations:** Ruthless Warrior 2 (Infernal)

**Combat:**

*Greatsword:* Init +4, Attack +12, Defense +10, Damage +11

*Longsword & Round Shield:* Init +5, Attack +11, Defense +10, Damage +8

*Gauntlet:* Init +2, Attack +7, Defense +8, Damage +4

**Soak:** +8

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Twelve Cities 2 (worthy opponents), Athletics 1 (leaping), Brawl 4 (gauntlet), Folk Ken 2 (opponents), Great Weapon 5 (greatsword), Guile 3 (misdirection), Infernal Lore 4 (Ablating), Leadership\* 1 (Haratan), Native Language: Punic 5 (Khalidan), Organization Lore: Hassane 2 (Estorgans), Penetration 2 (Ablating), Single Weapon 4\* (long sword), Stealth 1 (ambushes)

\* Corrupted Ability; gain a +3 for sinful uses of this Ability, but a -3 for virtuous uses

**Arts:** Summoning 10, Ablating 9

**Powers:**

*Infernal Vitality*, 0 points, Init +4, Corpus: Jurfaret's great sword has a demon bound within it. When the sword is used to inflict a wound, Jurfaret's overall Wound Penalty is reduced by the same amount. So if he inflicts a Medium Wound, he reduces his Wound Penalty by 3. He cannot gain a positive Wound Penalty from this power, and the benefit only lasts while his opponent is still alive. The power has a base Penetration of 0, but the wielder can generate a Penetration Total using his own Penetration Ability; it is especially easy to gain blood as an Arcane Connection. This power is equivalent to a 25th level effect.

**Equipment:** partial chain mail, infernal heirloom in the shape of a great sword.

**Encumbrance:** 1 (3)

**Appearance:** Nearly seven feet tall with ebony-black skin, Jurfaret shaves his head and paints his face with red ochre before going into battle. He wears a chainmail shirt covered by a black djebellah to keep the sun from it.

Jurfaret is a young Hassane who seeks renown as a warrior. He empowers himself by preying on the ghosts of those individuals he defeats in combat, and often seeks out particularly skilled opponents to test himself against. However, he is haunted by the remnants of the ghosts he has tortured for personal glory, and the stress of their constant presence at the edge of his perception has left him nervous and in possession of a strange compulsion to close jars, doors, shutters, chests, and other places where spirits might hide.

Rules for Summoning and Ablating can be found in *Realms of Power: the Infernal*, pages 114-117; Hassane can cull experience points, Confidence points, or increased Characteristics from ghosts, or heal his wounds. He gains Warping and Infernal Reputation for these deeds. These statistics reflect fifteen such victories, and has left some of his Abilities tainted by his sinful methods.

## WARFARE

The Banu Khalida are a warlike race. They do not conduct war for the acquisition of territory; they can carve as much as they need out of the torrid zone, limited only by the capacity of their priests to bind and command demons. They have little need for material wealth, having seemingly limitless gold reserves. Over the centuries Khalidi emirs have realized that sending their Hassane champions out to wage war on trade routes and nomad clans is the best way to prevent them from fomenting trouble at home. In the three hundred years or so that they lived in Iberia, there were

always Christians against whom the Hassane could test their mettle, but the Banu Khalida were forced to migrate to an area conquered and then vacated by their Almoravid successors. They must now travel further afield to find opponents, which suits the emirs fine.

## Stories Involving the Banu Khalida

The Banu Khalida have managed to maintain a thriving culture built on the subjugation of demons for nearly two

centuries, and yet have not yet been destroyed by Hell for their temerity. That is not to say that they have any advantages that other practitioners of the black arts lack; Khalidi sorcerers are just as prone as others to disastrous botches and Vituperation. Simply because of the number of sorcerers operating in each city barely a year goes by without a demon breaking free and running amok.

While the interests of individual demons are certainly not served by permitting the Banu Khalidi to continue existing, the interests of Hell most certainly are. Without access to a Divine faith with which to seek redemp-



tion, even the lowest member of Khalidi society is vulnerable to sin. The Unholy Trinity are amongst the upper echelons of Hell's hierarchy, and are able to simulate patience in pursuit of the bigger picture, especially with the help of the council of twelve emirs and the senior Zawiyas. As is all too common with demons, the individual goals of Mahound, Termagant, and Apollyon are generally at odds with one another, and the emirs exploit this to create a stalemate in which the Banu Khalida state is permitted to continue.

Mahound is principally focused on apostasy. It sends missionaries to northern lands to corrupt the faithful, but is also most watchful of visitors to the Twelve Cities, looking for opportunities to engender a fall from grace.

Termagant wants blood to be spilt, as much and as often as possible. This demon has most influence amongst the Hassane, driving them to acts of meaningless violence. It also promotes callousness toward the slave caste, encouraging the bidan castes to consider them little more than livestock. Termagant is always on the lookout for new sources of slaves.

Apollyon is obsessed with greed; it creates gold to encourage merchants from the north to come here for trade; it corrupts them before sending them back. False Gods like Apollyon are able to summon riches from thin air, but this gold is invariably stolen from somewhere else.



## Chapter Two

# Geography of North Africa: Coasts

North Africa is divided into four bands, each of which suits a different type of transport for merchants, or groups of magi with supplies. The fastest travel is by ship along the coastline. To the west lie the Atlantic coastal cities of Mauritania and to the east, along the Mediterranean, stretches the old Roman province of Cyrenaica. The largest cities of the Maghreb lie in a fertile strip often called the Tell, and here carts are the fastest means of overland trade. Further south lies the High Plateau, which rises into the Atlas Mountains. In these regions, horses predominate. South of these lies the Great Desert. For most travelers, this is the land of camels.

## Coastal Travel

The swiftest way to travel in the Maghreb is by ship. The largest cities are near the coast, and ships frequently pass between them for trade and the transportation of pilgrims. Travel over water is also much safer than land travel. The advantage is so great that it is faster to travel to many Christian ports in Europe by ship, than to other North African cities by land. Piracy is currently relatively rare in this region. The rulers of the southern Iberian coast have a powerful navy, and use it to punish disruptions to the sea lanes.

## Story Ideas For Pirates

The presence of powerful and effective enforcement of naval law does not mean there is no piracy in this area, just that it takes a less overt form than in other parts of Mythic Europe. There are

no pirate bases, with full time crews of outlaws; piracy in North Africa is more pernicious.

### THE MERCHANT HOUSE

The easiest way to be a pirate in North Africa is to run a merchant house already, and use piracy as a lucrative sideline. If pirates kill all witnesses, or sell them as slaves in distant ports, then send the seized ships to other foreign ports to begin legitimate trading, the ship is unlikely to be recognized as stolen. If pirates steal the cargo from a vessel, and use it to fill the hold of a ship already known to carry similar goods, then who is to know the cargo is blood-stained? The key is to be subtle: take one ship, every so often, using a hand-picked crew of men who will not talk about where they earned their gold. Most of the time, just pretend to be a merchant.

Player characters can be drawn into this when a vessel is taken and an important passenger — a redcap, nobleman, merchant prince — is put to death. They are asked to help find the missing person. Alternatively, their supplies may be in a ship which vanishes, and they seek out answers.

### ROBBING THE IFRANJ

It's easier to capture local ships than to attack Christian ships far from the North African coast. One of the advantages pirates have over their victims is that they carry few supplies. This means they can fill their holds with additional warriors, and these make the melee against the defending crew so much more certain. A ship traveling to Italian waters, for example, needs to sacrifice some of those men for supplies. That

being noted, pirates robbing the Iفرانج gain respect in some parts of North African society, and can even be given formal recognition if war breaks out. Player characters can enter this story either as raiders or pirate hunters.

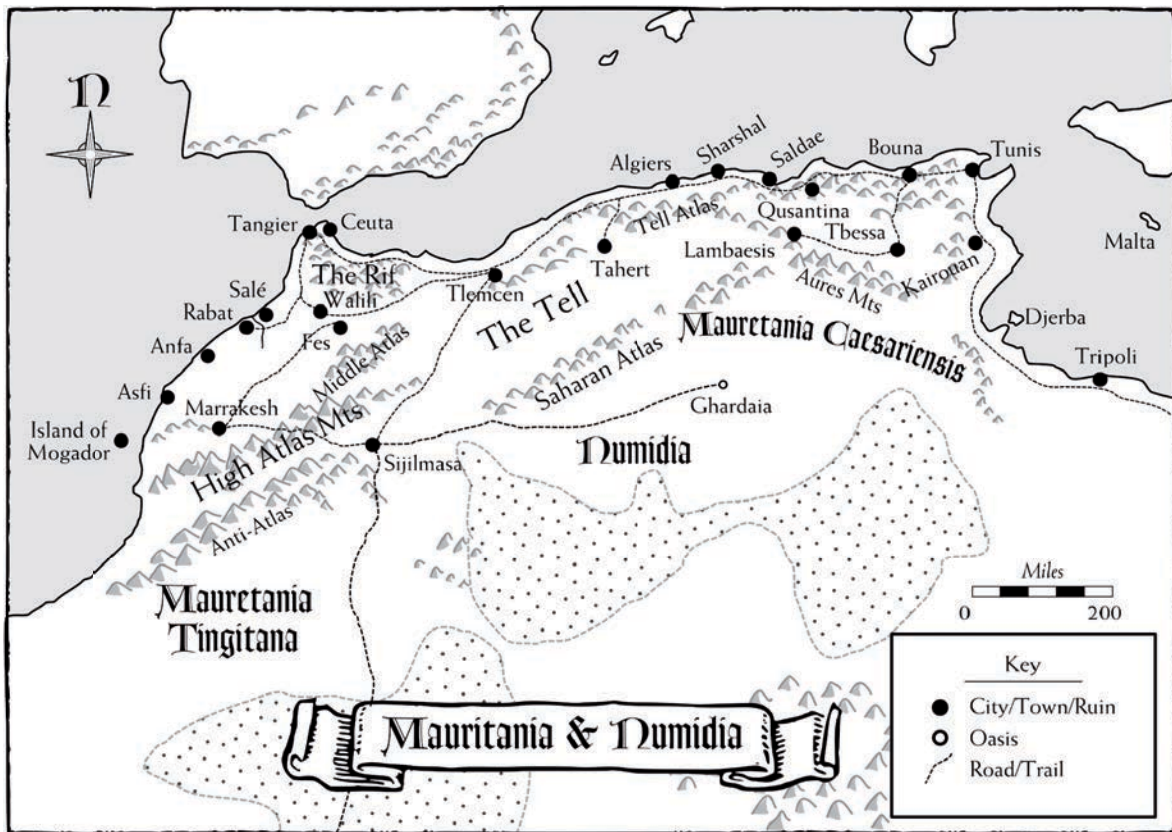
### MAKING IT PERSONAL

A pirate can avoid the wrath of the emir of Seville by not attacking the ruler's interests. In this story seed, the last scion of a noble house flees to sea (or is kidnapped and sold as a slave) after the rest of his family is destroyed. He (or she) becomes the leader of the pirates, and begins raids on the ships of the people he feels are responsible for the destruction of his family. The pirate leaves pilgrims unharmed, has excellent manners, and explains to all who listen that these are acts of personal vengeance. Technically, the emir's navy should destroy this pirate, but naval campaigns are ridiculously expensive, and the pirate's not harming the emir. Player characters may enter this story as allies of the pirate, if they have a shared foe, or by assisting the people he is attacking. They might instead act as investigators on behalf of the real scion of the family, who didn't flee to sea. He became an apprentice in a distant covenant, or a companion to the player characters, and wants to know who is using his name, and why.

### MERCENARY PIRATES

No Muslim nobleman would ever hire pirates, officially. Pirates are scum, and are hated by every right thinking person, officially. Just before war between local nobles, however, it is often





advantageous for each side to disrupt the other's trade. Some, unsubtle, people just have elements from their navy go pirating. Others hire mercenaries, using secret and dependable servants. These mercenaries can be merchants, but are often from the fringes of society: dhimmis, Christians from other lands, or marginal groups like magi. If characters are offered this role, they know to prepare for war. Even if they do not hoist the pirate flag, they can use the confusion to settle scores, gain resources, and protect their interests.

## Punic and Roman Sites

The Phoenicians and Romans both established numerous colonies along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts of Africa. The Punic communities grew first, favoring rocky promontories overlooking deep natural harbors, optimal for the seafaring culture's explorers, mer-

chants, and navies. These towns grew over the course of seven hundred years, trading and growing, becoming a part of the landscape and building the nation that would draw the ire of what would become the greatest empire since Alexander. The rivalry between Rome and Carthage became so rancorous that the Roman Senator, Cato the Elder, ended every speech to the Senate with the comment, "*Carthago delenda est*" — Carthage ought to be destroyed. Their first war began in 264 BC, with the ascendant Rome supporting a usurping band of mercenaries against the dominant naval power of the Mediterranean at the time, Carthage. Twenty-three years of conflict left the Republic the new lord of the western waves and Carthage preoccupied with repulsing independent mercenaries who were attempting to overrun Sicily. They clashed again in 218 BC, in 17 years of conflict that saw Hannibal march elephants into Italy. Ultimately, a lack of reinforcements allowed Rome to survive and endure. Fifty years later, Rome took the role of aggressor, culminating in the siege and destruction of the city of Carthage itself. The conquering Roman legions filled the vacuum left in the wake of the Punic

empire's demise, occupying its former colonies. The Republic enlarged most of these settlements, using the newly incorporated provinces of Numidia and Mauretania as a favored region for retired legionnaires. Fresh arrivals developed the countryside, subdividing the coast into Mauretania Tingitana, Mauretania Caesariensis, Numidia, and Africa Proconsularis, or Cyrenaica. Many weathered the tribulations of the Empire to succumb to the ravages of the Vandals, only to be reconquered by Bellisarius and then later claimed by the Islamic expansion.

Ruins lie scattered all across the Maghreb, from Sala Colonia (now Rabat) on the far southwestern Atlantic coast, to Cyrenaica on the eastern Mediterranean coast, not far from Egypt. Most surviving communities fell to the Arabs as they swept across the land. The army either conquered cities and made them a part of the Caliphate or simply left the remnants in place to be reclaimed by the sands. The Romans' two primary roads began in Tingis, now Tangier. The first, the Northern Road, follows the mountains east to Carthage, now Tunis, and then snakes along the coast, going all the way to Alexandria in Egypt. The second, the Western Road

## Wine, Women, and History

For those in search of the history of the Maghreb, few reliable sources exist. One of the most respected and oft-quoted is Ibrahim ar-Raqiq, an 11th century courtier, diplomat, and secretary to the Zirid Princes of Ifriqiya. He is also known for his texts on the less scholarly topics of wine, women, and song, such as *Qutb as-Surūr* (On Wine). His legacy as a historian, however was cemented with the rare and valuable *Tarikh Ifriqiyya wal-Maghrib*:

### The *Tarikh Ifriqiyya wal-Maghrib* (Arabic)

Summa Area Lore: Maghreb (Level 4, Quality 10), Tractatus Area Lore: Great Desert (Quality 10)

**Author:** Ibrahim ar-Raqiq, 11th century historian.

**Availability:** The private libraries of merchants and nobles in Maghreb and Al-Andalus.

**Description:** Of particular interest to Seekers are portions detailing the Fatimid caliph Ismail al-Mansur's military operations in the Tahert area. The Caliph visited the jedars at Jabal Lakhdar and asked for the translation of the dedicatory inscriptions; ar-Raqiq reports the interpreter stated the monuments celebrated a military victory by the Byzantine army of Justinian I. While this is incorrect, the text does accurately note the locations of the thirteen great Berber tombs located in the hills south of Tahert.

runs south to Ad Mercuri and the ruins of Augustus Zilil before it splits in two, one fork following the ocean to Rabat and the other to Volubilis, now called Walili. The Northern Road network reaches fingers out all along the coast from mansion to villa to fort to city, a stony spiderweb grown over 700 years of Roman governance. In most places, the roads are more valuable than the dressed stone, and so looters ignore them and take masonry from ruined buildings instead.

## Arc Seed: Imperial Legacies

The Romans quickly and inexplicably abandoned many of the region's ruins at the end of the third century. While the Berber tribes may have had a hand in this departure, they had been present for a thousand years, and had not previously forced an exodus. Can ancient Roman ghosts be summoned to provide clues, possibly revealing an incident involving the great Hunger Spirit precipitated by Mercurian wizards who meddled with things best left undisturbed? Are the libraries and scrolls of the former priests still hidden in their sanctuaries or secreted away in forgotten refuges? Perhaps some fragments of the fabled network of road-magic? Magi or Seekers coming to investigate Maghreb's ruins may find more than they bargained for, as a large pack of bouda have moved in from the south and plan to pick the region clean.

### MAURETANIA TINGITANA

While there are some abandoned ruins like those at Lixus or Iulia Valentia Banasa, many of the Roman and Punic sites in this area are still occupied, such as the coastal cities of Ceuta, once the Roman military town of Septa, or Mlila. In cases where the town remained inhabited, much of the former Roman architecture has been recycled for building materials, leaving only a few monuments or fragmentary structures. In places like Banasa or Lixus, locals have only scavenged some of stone over the centuries, leaving the ruins fairly substantial. Larger surviving communities include Tangier and Walili, formerly Volubilis, both discussed later.

## Story Seed: A Pirate Crown

A legacy of independent rule is not easily forgotten, even after 150 years, and the pirate culture of Anfa secretly hopes to throw off the yoke of the Almoravid suzerain. Until the time is right to act on their plans, the pirates secretly subvert and undermine the regional governor's endeavors. A canny Tytalus may recognize the potential for machination, and take up Anfa's cause, working with the pirates-cum-conspirators to make independence a reality. An even more devious rival may reveal the possible rebellion to an opposing Tytalus, using the situation to draw a target into the open.

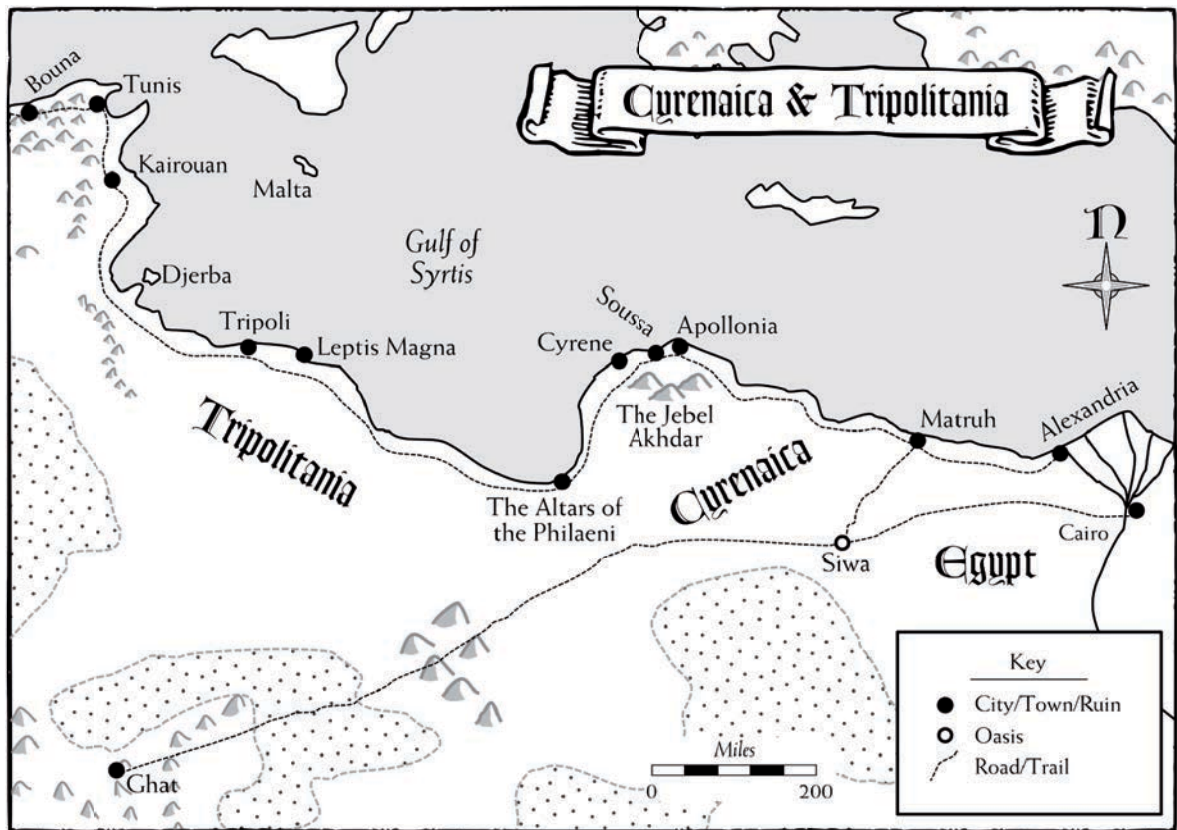
### MAURETANIA CAESARIENSIS

The region which would later be called "The Tell" saw a large number of colonia established in the temperate hills and valleys. Roughly eighteen communities follow the curves of the Northern Road along two forks. Some cities, towns, and ruins of note include Sharsal, Saldae, Tlemcen, Algiers, Djemila and Tifesh. They are discussed later.

### NUMIDIA

This was the region most densely colonized by the Phoenicians and Romans, and the majority of the area had already been seized after the Romans crushed Carthage at the end of the Third Punic War. Rome annexed the rest of Numidia after the Berber client king died and civil war erupted. Rome now governed all of the coast from the Pillars of Heracles to Alexandria, and would later claim Egypt. Numidia consisted mostly of the eastern Tell and Tunisia. It included Carthage, Constantine, Soussa, Bouna, Tbessa and ruins like Lambaesis and Tamagudi. These sites are discussed further later.





## CYRENAICA

The Cyrenaica region borders the deep deserts of Libya and has few cities. It does have a large number of forts, and nearly 2000 fortified farms built by the Legio III Augusta. The defensive line of the Limes Tripolitana survived in some form into the 11th century, protecting the cities until the nomad warriors of the Banu Hillal Arab tribe overran the area. Within a few decades, the area was nearly abandoned to the sand and wind.

## The Western Coast

The Western Maghreb region hosts several unusual sites, like the island of Mogador, nestled along an Atlantic coastline dotted with cities such as Anfa, Asfi, or the twin cities of Rabat and Sale. This is temperate coastline that occa-

sionally suffers vicious winds laden with biting sand sweeping out of the dunes to the east, but also sports fertile plains and hills that help communities thrive.

## Anfa

Anfa has a deep harbor and a strong wall surrounded by verdant farmland and overlooked by the tall tower of the great mosque's minaret. Like other cities along the coast, it was originally a colony established by Carthage and later incorporated into the Roman Empire. Its population consists primarily of Berbers, and from the seventh century to 1068, Anfa rejected rule by the Caliphate and created a city-state called the Kingdom of Anfa. The Almoravids, however, surrounded and conquered it, incorporating Anfa into their empire. Throughout all that time and to the present, the city has remained a haven for pirates raiding the Straits of Gibraltar and the Mediterranean. It is not simply a raider's port of call, however. Anfa is a bustling port, trading saharan goods, grain, and fabrics with many European cities, includ-

ing Seville in Iberia and Genoa in Italy. All of this combines to create a very tolerant and cosmopolitan environment that, if not welcoming to foreigners, is most certainly not hostile. Some might consider Anfa the secret entrance into the Maghreb, one jealously guarded by those merchants who frequent it.

## Asfi

Asfi is an ancient Punic colony, and the residents are renowned for their high quality pottery and rich fishing grounds. A trusted and valued trade partner with Marrakesh, its deep harbor is often quite busy with merchant vessels bringing in manufactured luxuries from Iberia or exporting exotic goods from beyond the Great Desert, and with trawlers hauling in their nets.

The Sufi mystic Abu Mohammed Salihi, or Al-Mighri, makes his home in Asfi, with an established ribat and the nascent foundations of the Magiriyyun order. At 67 years old, he is beloved by the town elders. If your saga follows history, he will live another 14 years, teaching Sufi

## Story Seed: Punic Ghosts and Roman Ruins

The necropolis of Chellah is ideal for magi seeking out ancient spirits. There are few prying eyes to question the acts of the investigators and there is little interference from Divine auras, as the necropolis is surrounded by a wall and separate from the city proper, which mutes the sounds of prayer from the few remaining residents. Few will question open graves or active digging within the complex, and the ancient nature of the structures and area mean magi will likely find what they're looking for, if it is here. Ghosts of those Punic dead buried in antiquity may prove difficult to question, however, unless the summoner has managed to learn the language somewhere or can cast *Thoughts within the Babble* with enough Penetration to defeat their Might. Those who speak

Aramaic may speak to Punic ghosts as if they had a Dead Language: Punic score of 3 lower (scores less than zero indicate no communication is possible). As a former Roman colony which was simply abandoned, there is also a chance several defixiones might be found inside. The Romans used Sala Colonia as a launching point to seek out the Hesperides, and so Roman ghosts may be able to aid those looking for clues to the islands' location. To the canny seeker, Chellah is a treasure trove waiting to be explored. However, what happens if a curious youth notifies the authorities or a mundane grave robber decides to interfere, reporting the activities to the powers in Salé? Can the magi contain the situation before it grows out of hand?

ascetics and writing his book *Bidayat al Mourid*, a record of Tassawuf, the mystic inner aspect of Sufism and the lives of certain sufi saints, like Al-Maghri's teacher Abu Madyan.

The city claims a strange legend as the origin of its name. In the early 11th century, a large group of sailors accidentally made landfall on the Hesperides. They collected a number of souvenirs before the natives captured them, blindfolded them, and sent them back out on the waves with a storm on their heels, compelled to never set sail again once they arrived at their next port. Lost within the blustery winds of their captors' curse, the crew finally stepped on to the docks of Asfi and asked where they were. The locals told the mariners they were months away from their native land al-Andalus. Upon hearing this news, a sailor responded by saying, "Wa asafi" (Oh, my regret). The great geographer, Al-Idrisi stated the city was called "Asafi" from that point forward. Many of the descendants of these sailors still possess the relics their ancestors smuggled away from the Hesperides, including several accounts of how their ship arrived. For those seeking a way to reach the mythic destination of Heracles, these tales may prove priceless.

## Tales from the Wine Dark Seas

Those searching for the Hesperides or the mysteries of Atlantis, or simply wanting to push the boundaries of the known world for fame or profit, may seek out stories of past explorers. Few are as famous as Hanno the Navigator of Carthage. The record of his journey only survives in translation, a book called *The Periplus of Hanno*.

of fresh water, intense heat, great hairy men, and "fiery streams running into the sea."

### STORY SEED: TABULA NON RASA

Hanno's expedition returned with a tablet detailing the wonders and spectacles he found beyond the Pillars of Heracles, but it was lost with the sacking of Carthage. Hidden in the text lie specific clues necessary for avoiding the hazards Hanno faced and possibly finding the lost Hesperides or some other famous place, such as the Tin Islands. Construction or chance has uncovered a copper slate engraved with Punic text which may just be the actual tablet. Once deciphered, it could lead magi to a potential source of resources for their covenant which might be completely uncontested, but only if they are willing to plunge into the unknown.

**The Periplus of Hanno (Classic Greek)**  
Tractatus Area Lore: Beyond the Pillars of Heracles (Quality 6), Tractatus Magic Lore (Quality 6)

**Author:** Unknown, originally Hanno

**Availability:** Very difficult to find, usually in private collections in Tangier, Alexandria, Rome, and Constantinople.

**Description:** Translated from Punic to Classic Greek by an unknown scholar, this book discusses Hanno the Libyan's journey out from Carthage and beyond the Pillars of Heracles with a fleet of 60 ships. His route took him into the outer Ocean with Libya on his port side, and he continued on toward the west for 35 days. When he turned the flotilla south, he encountered a terrible lack

## Island of Mogador

Noted in the Periplus of Hanno, the primary account of his expedition, the island of Mogador was renowned as the source of a specific sea snail. When crushed and prepared, its shell produces a rare dye once used to stain the purple stripe on the togas of Imperial Senators. The secret of this dye's production, reputed to create a terrible stench, is carefully guarded by the people who visit the island to harvest shells and live across the bay in the nearby town of Essaouira. The whole island has a Magic aura of 4 and remains uninhabited due to rumors of a bloodthirsty monster.

A regio exists on the island, accessed through a ruined cellar door in an overgrown and crumbling Roman villa. In this regio, the Roman villa exists as it did at the height of the Imperial period, peopled with the descendants of the craftsmen and autocrats dedicated to the production of the dye for the Emperor.



## Rabat and Salé

The towns of Rabat and Salé straddle the mouth of the Bou Regreg river. The Almohads used Rabat as a staging point for their conquest of Iberia, building up the Rabatu l-Fath fortress, or "Stronghold of Victory." Caliph Al-Mansur moved the capitol of the empire to Rabat in 1190 and began a great number of construction projects. He completed the great walls which surround it, and began the Hassan tower, an incomplete mosque intended to be the world's largest, capable of receiving 20,000 faithful, but construction stopped with the caliph's death in 1199. The tower stands 50 paces high, with internal ramps large enough to ride a horse up and surrounded by a forest of 200 columns supporting a cedar roof. Even in this partial state, the locals continue to use it as a mosque, and it has a Divine aura of 4.

Al-Mansur also encouraged the conversion of the nearby abandoned ancient Phoenician town of Chellah, which became the Roman settlement of Sala Colonia, into a full-fledged royal necropolis. He completed the reconstruction of Rabat's Kasbah, an immense palace-fortress complex with its own mosque, situated at the mouth of the Bou Regreg. The enormous Kasbah has been deserted since 1199, save for a few squatters, and the aura of its mosque has faded. Al-Mansur's heir, Muhammad al-Nasir, left the region to refocus on opposing the Reconquista and died in 1213. The current caliph, Yusuf al-Mustansir, appointed on al-Nasir's deathbed, is a neglectful absentee lord who leaves the administration and rulership of the Maghreb in the hands of governors and viziers. This area is no different, and the bureaucrat who manages this region focuses his attention on Salé.

Paired with Rabat, Salé occupies the northern shore. A stout wall surrounds the city, and rowboats carry brisk traffic across the river at all times of the day and night. The settlement developed primarily as a result of the growth of Rabat in the last hundred years. A canal links the river to the Beb Mrisa souk, allowing some boats to sail directly into the souk.



## Pithecoussa, the Island of Monkeys

Not to be confused with the Island of Ischia near Naples (which was once called Pithecoussa by the Greeks), Pithecoussa is a legendary land ruled by monkeys that lies just off the African coast. Some say that it is found amongst the Balearic Islands or adjacent to Gibraltar, others claim it is through the Pillars of Hercules in the Atlantic Sea, still others place it within the expanse of the Nile Delta. In fact, any of these locations can be true, for Pithecoussa sits within a regio that has several entrances. All these entrances are found at sea, within patches of unexpected fog. The regio has a Magic aura of 5. Those seeing through the regio boundary (Ease Factor 15, see *ArM5* page 189) perceive a conical island looming from the fog, its slopes redolent with lush vegetation, and they can land on its beaches. At certain times of year, particular headings through the fog lead directly through the regio to the island without needing any special abilities.

### ARRIVING ON THE ISLAND

Pithecoussa has two enchantments that affect any who arrive on the island. All human characters (and other creatures affected by *Corpus magic*) on the island are targeted by a magical effect with a Penetration of zero that transforms everyone who does not resist into the shape of a mundane monkey. The type of monkey depends on the personality of the character; aggressive warriors tend to become hamadryades, clever characters become callithrices, and agile individuals become cercopithecii (see insert for details on monkey types). Unusual characters may take exotic forms. The character retains her Intelligence, all Virtues and Flaws, and all Abilities, but her clothes and equipment are not transformed, and are probably too big to use easily. Monkey characters are capable of communicating with other monkeys; they can understand but cannot speak a human language. A magus cannot properly form the Latin words of his spells, and is limited to casting spells with quiet words (*ArM5*, page 83). This transformation lasts all the time the



## Satyrus, an Ape

**Magic Might:** 7 (Animal)

**Season:** Spring

**Characteristics:** Cun +2, Per 0, Pre -3, Com 0, Str -4, Sta 0, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** -2

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Animal, Learn Athletics from Mistakes, Baneful Circumstances (new moon)

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Essential Virtue (Presence), Gift of Speech, Gift of Thumbs\*, Improved Abilities x 2, Personal Powers x 2, Essential Flaw (Perception), Limited Speech

\* Just as Gift of Speech negates the inherent Mute Flaw of Magic Animals, this Minor Magical Quality negates the inherent No Hands Flaw

**Mundane Qualities:** Crafty, Defensive Fighter, Skilled Climber, Timid

**Personality Traits:** Cheerful at Full Moon (Presence)\* +3, Monkey\* +3, Mischievous +2, Brave -2, Attentive at New Moon (Perception)\* -3

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init +2, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage -3

**Evasion:** Init +2, Attack n/a, Defense +7, Damage n/a

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 5 (climbing), Awareness 4 (predators), Brawl 3 (bite), Stealth 3 (hiding), Survival 3 (foraging)

**Powers:**

*Ape the Beast*, 1 point, Init -1, Animal: The monkey can acquire any minor natural ability of any animal he sees: a frog's ability to swim; a squirrel's perfect balance; a cat's night vision, and so forth. He can acquire any mundane Qualities, like a pair of goat's horns, a tortoise's shell, a hedgehog's spines, the venomous fangs of a snake, or the thick pelt of a bear, but cannot make major adaptations like a bird's wings. He can only retain one such

ability at a time; if he adopts a second ability whilst he still retains another, then the first ability disappears. The power is otherwise maintained indefinitely, but as long as the monkey retains an ability he loses one Might point every sunset and sunrise (it takes him three hours to regenerate this point; less in a Magic aura). MuAn 25 (Base 4, +2 Sun, +1 Part, +1 Constant effect, +1 can change ability possessed) Personal Power (25 levels, -2 Might cost)

*Mimic the Man*, 0 points, Init +2, Imagination: The monkey can perfectly copy any sound he hears, even human speech, although he does not understand what he is saying. Mulm 3 (Base 1, +1 Conc, +1 Complexity) Personal Power (3 levels, -1 Might cost, +1 Init)

**Vis:** Two pawns of Muto, one in each hand

**Appearance:** A tailless monkey with yellowish, gray, or brown fur with paler underparts. Their faces are darker in color.

### MONKEY VARIETIES

This insert describes a magic animal, but not all the monkeys on Pithecousa are magical. For the statistics of a mundane animal, simply remove the Magic Animal Virtue, Magic Might, Magical Qualities and Inferiorities (including the Essential Traits, and Powers), and vis. Reduce Quickness by one.

The generic name for a monkey is *Simia* in Latin. The statistics given above reflect a type of ape called the satyrus (a Barbary macaque to the modern reader), which is the most common type of monkey and the only one without a tail. Non-magical satyri are found throughout the mountainous regions of North Africa. Medieval bestiaries also distinguished four other types of monkey. Modern names for the monkey species have been provided in parentheses. There may be other exotic monkeys on the island that cannot be found elsewhere, like tailless black furred giants, or tiny creatures with immense eyes.

**Cercopithecus:** The Smallest of the monkeys on Pithecousa and an incorrigible thief, the cercopithecus has a shaggy reddish-brown coat and a long tail. It has white legs and underparts, a cap of brighter red, and black lines from face to ear. The cercopithecus is also found in Mauritania in open scrubland. Grey-furred versions with black faces are found in forests close to the Torrid Zone. Adjustments: Size -4 (change Str to -8 and Qik to +4), add the Minor Virtue (Light Touch) Magical Quality and the Minor Flaw (Carefree) Magical Inferiority. The cercopithecus also has the Fast Runner mundane Quality. (Patas monkeys and other guenons)

**Callithrix:** The callithrix has a long white beard on its face, a long shawl of white fur over its back, and a white tuft on its tail; it is otherwise a black monkey. Unlike other monkeys, the callithrix lacks a thumb (represented by its Magical Inferiority, below). The callithrix is naturally found in the Horn of Africa, and is an occasional pet amongst Egyptians. Adjustments: Size -3 (change Str to -6 and Qik to +3), add the Minor Virtue (Perfect Balance) Magical Quality and the Minor Flaw (Palsied Hands) Magical Inferiority. (Colobus monkey)

**Sphinx:** This is a docile beast with shaggy hair and a long tail, the males have an impressive lion-like mane and a colorful face — a red median stripe, blue muzzle, and yellow beard. The sphinx is native to the Empire of Ghana, but has been brought into North Africa by travelers. Adjustments: Add the Minor Virtue (Inspirational) Magical Quality and the Minor Flaw (Noncombatant) Magical Inferiority. (Mandrill)

**Hamadryas:** These are also called the cynocephalus, but this would confuse them with the Magic Humans of the same name. The hamadryas is a fierce monkey with a dog-like face. They are olive brown, although the males have a silvery-gray cape and mane of longer hair. The hamadryas naturally lives in the eastern deserts and highlands. Adjustments: Add the Minor Virtue (Berserk) Magical Quality and the Minor Flaw (Oversensitive to Threats) Magical Inferiority. The hamadryas does not have the Timid mundane Quality, replace its Brave -2 Personality Trait with Brave + 2. (Baboon)



characters are on the island, and causes Warping as a powerful mystical effect. Any Flaws the characters acquire from this Warping make them more simian. If characters want to dispel the magic, it is equivalent to a 55th level enchantment (approximately Muto Corpus base 10, +1 Touch, +4 Until (leaving the island), +4 Boundary). A Bjornaer magus may also use his Heartbeast Ability to end the effect. Anyone achieving human form is immediately affected by the second effect (see below).

The second magical effect of the island is a ward that keeps out everything in human shape. This effect has a Penetration of 50. If this effect overcomes

the character's Magic Resistance, then she cannot leave the beach on the landward side, nor physically or magically affect anything that is not on the beach. Anyone managing to transform into human form while in the island's interior is immediately forced to head for the nearest beach if they fail to resist this effect's Penetration. Partial reversions to human form (to allow proper speech, for example) must be adjudicated separately; as soon as the character has a recognizable human shape, the ward is triggered. This effect is equivalent to an 85th level enchantment (approximately Rego Corpus base 15, +1 Touch, +4 Until (leaving the island), +4 Boundary, +25

for Penetration 50). Magi wishing to explore the island probably need to suppress their Magic Resistance and accept the transformation.

The origin of both effects is unknown; they seem to stem from the island itself, and derive from no form of magic familiar to the characters. Hermetic guidelines are given purely for investigative and dispelling purposes.

## Story Seeds: Pithecousa

An island of monkeys provides ample opportunities for stories.

### THE MONKEY'S FIST

The characters find a strange object amongst other treasures: a spherical knot of golden cord known as a "monkey's fist." Inscribed on the rope is the legend of Pithecousa, and it is enchanted with a minor Hermetic enchantment. Those familiar with the Order of Hermes may recall a famous Verditius called Verecunda from the covenant of Favonius (*The Sundered Eagle*, page 83), who is an expert in knots and has a monkey for a familiar. Verecunda made the item for the King of the Monkeys, as payment for one of his subjects as a familiar. The item was stolen from the king by a treacherous servant several years ago. That servant has now transformed himself into a formidable threat, but needs the Monkey's Fist to return to Pithecousa and challenge his former monarch for the right to rule monkeykind. If the characters are trying to find the island themselves, he disguises himself and pretends to help them, in the hope of getting his hands on the artifact.

### A FAMILIAR APE

A character wanting a monkey as a familiar would do well to visit Pithecousa. A magus who befriends or abducts a monkey without the King of Monkeys' permission is asking for trouble, the king dispatches his subjects to retrieve his subject, amounting to the Supernatural Nuisance Flaw. If the magus instead petitions the king, he'll be asked to win his familiar in the following way. Monkey mothers always give birth to twins. She loves one of her children, but loathes the other. She holds the one she loves in her arms, and carries the hated one on her back. When pursued by a hunter, the monkey needs her hands free to climb, and is forced to abandon the beloved child in order to save herself. However, it often works out that the hated twin is a Magic Animal whereas the loved one is a mundane beast. The magus must capture the mother and retrieve the hated twin without using his magic or harming any monkey.

### FALSE EMBASSY

Characters arrive on the Island of Monkeys in time for the Ceremony of the King's Urination. During the presentation of gifts (hopefully the characters have something they can offer), the characters meet the Embassy from Furthest Hind. These exotic monkeys are very

interested in the characters, and hope to use their friendship to get close to the king. Rather than ambassadors, these monkeys are actually shapechanged serpents working for the King of Punt, who hope to assassinate the King of Monkeys. Punt is the Egyptian name for Soqotra (see *Rival Magic*, Chapter Five), and the king there is a mighty serpent with far-reaching plans that might involve the player characters opposing the exotic sorcerers of that island.

### THE DESCENT OF MAN

Members of House Bjornaer would be very interested in Pithecousa. The effect that transforms characters into monkeys works somewhat like the heartbeast, in that characters become monkeys that reflect their temperament. They can also avoid being forced into monkey shape by adopting their heartbeast. Pithecousa could easily be an Ancestor Site for the house (see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 25). If the mystics of House Bjornaer perform the Ritual of Twelve Years at the king's court, they may find local-born apprentices expressing any number of exotic African animals as heartbeasts, monkeys included. However, the King of Monkeys is unlikely to allow this disruption, and the characters might be dispatched back to the island to secure his cooperation, or failing that, his eviction.

## EXPLORING THE ISLE OF MONKEYS

The island is mostly occupied by a single steep-sided mountain, although its slopes are rich in lush vegetation. Five rivers stemming from the plentiful rain have carved deep ravines into the mountain sides. The thick tropical forest is particularly rich in colorful unfamiliar flowers and exotic fruit. There are plentiful iridescent birds, oversized insects, lizards, frogs, and fish. Hoofed and clawed beasts other than monkeys are unusually small: one can find miniature goats, lions the size of house cats, and elephants no bigger than pigs. None of the predators pose a threat to the monkeys. There are no snakes at all, these are the traditional enemies of the monkeys, and have been hunted to extinction. Any brought in by visitors are met with both fear and violence.

As one might expect, there are lots of monkeys here. Monkey society on Pithecousa is a parody of human society: the noble sphinxes rule over the peasant satyri, enforced and supported by the hamadryas warrior caste. The callithrices fill in academic and clerical roles, and the cercopithecians are specialists, entertainers, and criminals. Most of the monkeys have Cunning rather than true Intelligence, and all the aping of societal roles is mere pantomime. A callithrix might make marks on a leaf like a scribe, but there is no meaning in them; a cercopithecus hammers at a rock industriously but he is not actually making anything.

Visitors are treated with curiosity, except on the new moon, when monkeys are depressed and withdrawn. Characters may find themselves under attack by enraged hamadryades if they wander into the wrong territory, or get caught up in a cercopithecus revel (they get drunk on naturally-fermenting fruits), or end up being arrested and tried before a court of sphinxes. Eventually, however, guests on the island find themselves at the court of the King of Monkeys.

## THE KING OF MONKEYS

The court is held in a bowl-shaped depression surrounded by date palms. A rock in the center of this natural amphitheater is the king's throne. He is sur-

rounded by his counselors and guards, who are drawn from all five kinds of monkey and several more exotic examples. The king himself has characteristics of all his subjects: he is tailless like the satyrus, he has the facial markings of the sphinx; the mane of the hamadryas; the beard of the callithrix and the size of the cercopithecus. The King of Monkeys and his counselors are all Magic Animals; the king has Intelligence rather than Cunning and so do many of his court. The King of Monkeys may have a higher Might and further powers as befitting a monarch of his race.

On each half moon, the king receives tribute from his subjects. They form a line and bring him the choicest fruit, the shiniest shells, colorful rocks, and the like. Occasionally a monkey is noisily reprimanded by a counselor for the quality of the gift. The tribute is piled before the king's rock, and anything that the characters lose (or have stolen) on the island is likely to end up here.

On each equinox, the tribute is combined with the Ceremony of the King's Urination. In great solemnity in front of his whole court, the King of Monkeys passes water seven times. All the monkeys watch with great interest but the purpose of this ceremony is not clear; observers have hypothesized that it might be some form of divination.

## The Rif

The simple banded model for this region's geography has one glaring exception: the Rif. The Rif is a triangular, mountainous spike which juts up from Africa, to create a thin strait at Gibraltar. It has several important towns. It is currently held by the Marinid, a Berber tribe who are opposed to the Almohads currently ruling Marrakesh. The Marinid dominance of this area gives them a staging ground for raids into Almohad territory, and makes trade with and administration of the Spanish territories of the Empire more difficult.

## Tangier

A city in the Rif likely to interest magi is Tangier. Under the Romans and Phoenicians, it was a modest port and trade city, but the Caliphate has grown Tangier into a busy maritime crossroads between Iberia, Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Great Desert caravan routes, maintaining a navy of sixty vessels. While it exports wool, hides, fruits, honey and wax, the city has a reputation for rough living, and St. Francis has called it "a city of madness and illusions."

Tangier was named after Tinjis, a goddess or giantess who married Heracles while he was on his way to perform his labors, bearing the city's first king. This king, a giant named Sophox, was buried in a barrow still evident in the city; any local can point player characters to it. Many Berber chieftains claim descent from Sophox. The Giant Blood and Great Strength Virtues are found in this area's population, and since this society rewards victorious warriors, these claims may have some foundation.

## TUMULUS OF ANTAEUS

Near Tangier, south of the city but before one reaches the mountains, stands the lonely tumulus of Antaeus, a titan or giant, depending on the source. Surrounded by a ring of 175 smaller menhirs, Antaeus' grave marker rises five paces into the sky. Once the monarch of the region, many of the local kings have claimed descent from his bloodline. The Roman commander Quintus Sertorius supposedly found the site, digging it open, his men found enormous bones. Out of respect for their discovery, Sertorius made propitiatory offerings, sealed the barrow, and helped to magnify the tomb's reputation by commissioning several epics. The learned Roman client-king, Juba II of Numidia (died 23 BC), who was husband of the daughter of Antony and Cleopatra, claimed his descent from a liaison of Heracles with Tinjis, the consort of Antaeus. This giant is interesting, if legends about him are true, as he is the offspring of a Magical creature and a Faerie.

Also to the south lies is the Cave of Heracles, where the hero slept before



## The Marinids

The Marinids are portrayed as barbarians by Almohad loyalists, but that may not be true. Storyguides who prefer a rampaging horde, a bit like the Mongols, can certainly use the Marinids in this role, but there are other possibilities. In real life, the Marinids eventually did conquer the west of the Maghreb. From their capital in Fez, which they did not destroy when they finally invaded it, they ushered in an age of art and scholarship which, although it did not rival the height of the Almohads, was certainly superior to the court in Marrakesh in 1220. Discuss with your troupe what sorts of stories you'd like to tell, then pick a theme for the Marinids.

The Marinids have one great weakness, if the player characters are maneuvering a faction against them. The dynasty remains coherent if it continues to successfully raid, or expand. If plunder, or conquest, ceases, then each Marinid warlord considers expanding his power by destroying his cousins and appropriating their followers. Characters who can stall the expansion of the dynasty can force it to change form. Through a period of internecine war, the Marinids can be transformed into a unified, but far smaller, force.

### IMGHRAWN, SCION OF ANTAEUS

**Magic Might** 20 (Ignem)

**Characteristics:** Int +0, Per +1, Pre +0, Com -2, Str +10, Sta +3, Dex +3, Qik -2

**Size:** +4 (14 ft and 2775lbs)

**Confidence:** 1 (3)

**Season:** Summer

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magical Monster; Improved Characteristics, Intuition, Magic Human, Keen Vision, Puissant Brawl, Sharp Ears, Tough, Warrior, Baneful Circumstances (when not touching the ground); Fury (disrespecting his bloodline), Overconfident, Proud, Weakness (must meet a declared challenge).

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Gigantic (x3); Improved Abilities, Improved Damage [Fist] (x2), Improved Powers, Improved Soak (x4), Minor Virtue: Improved Characteristics (x2), Personal Power [Friend of the Desert, mien of Man or Massif] (x2); Monstrous Appearance, Minor Flaw: Slow Power (Friend of the Desert), Susceptible to Deprivation

**Personality Traits:** Proud +3, Devoted +2, Gluttonous +3, Greedy +2, Violent +2

**Reputations:** None.

**Combat:**

*Dodge:* Init: +0, Attack N/A, Defense +1, Damage N/A

*Fist:* Init: -2, Attack +8, Defense +8, Damage +16

*Kick:* Init: -1, Attack +9, Defense +8, Damage +13

*Cudgel:* Init: -1, Attack +12, Defense +9, Damage +17

*Thrown Stone:* Init -2, Attack +9, Defense +8, Damage +15

**Soak:** +16

**Fatigue levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-9), -3 (10-18), -5 (19-27), Incapacitated (28-36), Dead (37-)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Maghreb 3 (kings),

Awareness 4 (spotting travelers), Brawl 5+2 (grapple), Guile 3 (concealing intent), Great Weapon 4 (cudgel), Living Language: Arabic 4 (threats), Stealth 5 (remaining unseen), Survival 4 (finding oases), Thrown Weapon 4 (stone)

**Powers:**

*Mien of Man or Massif*, 0 points, Init

-5, Imaginem This power makes Imghrawn appear and sound like a Size 0 man. Mulm 25 (Base 2, +4 for size, +2 Sun, +1 Moving Image); Improved Powers: -3 Might cost

*Friend of the Desert*, 1 point, Init -5, Ignem Imghrawn ignores heat and fire damage of +15 or less. Relg (Base 4, +2 for +15 or less, +2 Sun, +1 size); Improved Powers: -2 Might cost

**Equipment:** Acacia wood cudgel, sack of salt, gold, trinkets

**Encumbrance:** 0

**Vis:** 4 pawns of Ignem vis in heart.

**Appearance:** Nearly three times the height of an ordinary man, Imghrawn is a fearsome but strangely handsome giant with a thick, curly beard, a strong nose, and bright, calculating black eyes. He is dressed in Berber-style robes and keeps several skulls in swaths of indigo cloth tied to his waist. Imghrawn wields a huge cudgel of acacia wood, studded with chunks of green-white desert glass. He keeps a miserable camel, which carries his personal hoard of salt, gold and trinkets. Occasionally, he leads a chain of slaves, but these are usually traded for baubles, or infrequently eaten.

continuing on to finish his Eleventh Labor, slaying the dragon and recovering the Apples of the Hesperides. It has a Faerie aura of 4.

### WALILI

The best examples of Roman stonework in this area survive in Walili, formerly the Imperial provincial capitol of Volubilis. Surrounded by fertile plains, the Berber king Juba II claimed it as his

capital and Latin was spoken there until the Caliphate conquered the populace in 790. When the aqueduct fell into disrepair, residents shifted their homes to a nearby wadi, and the former city became their cemetery. Many buildings still display intact mosaics and statuary from the Roman era; the main road, the decumanus maximus, is intact; and the impressive basilica, forum, and triumphal arch of Caracalla harken back to the lost days of the Empire. A Magic aura of 3 covers the ruins.

## The Tell: Tunisia

The names for this region have shifted to match the lords in charge over the millennia. It has been called Massyli, Carthage, Africa, Ifriqiya, Tunis, and now Tunisia. It covers a broad expanse of territory, from modern-day Morocco to modern-day Tripoli.

## Story Seed: A Claim to the Throne.

The giant Imghrawn believes he should rule a swath of the Maghreb as his birthright. To achieve this, the giant thinks he must emulate Antaeus, and raise a temple fashioned from the skulls of his defeated foes. He has decided to start with a fortified ksour village and its oasis, established nearby and tasked with providing the covenant with dates and livestock. The ksour's population must be rescued from this brute before he slaughters them all for a delusion. Alternatively, the covenant may decide to support the giant, and begin a bloodthirsty campaign of slaughter and conquest, drawing the attention of local governor's forces and tax collectors and initiating a very strange conflict in the area.

### Pharsalia, Book IV (Latin)

Tractatus Area Lore: Maghreb (Quality 6), Tractatus Magic Lore (Quality 6)

**Author:** Marcus Annaeus Lucanus

**Availability:** Difficult to find, in heirloom collections in Italy, Iberia and Constantinople.

**Description:** This text details the story of Heracles' victory over Antaeus. The tale is told to the Roman Curio by an unnamed Libyan citizen who regales the author with the wide-ranging battlefield, the strength of the titan, and the demigod's eventual triumph.

### VIRTUE: OF KINGS AND GIANTS, ANTAEUS' BLOODLINE

#### *Major or Minor Supernatural Virtue*

Those who enjoy the gift of Antaeus' Bloodline manifest its attributes in several ways. Depending on whether the Major or Minor version is taken, the character ages as per the Faerie Blood Virtue (Minor) or the Strong Faerie Blood Virtue (Major), but also exhibits other traits. In its Minor form, the individual may have one of the following: a +1 to the Strength characteristic (but no greater than +3), +1 to the Brawl ability, or +1 to Soak. In the Major version, the character has all benefits, and also gains the Large and Magic Sensitivity Virtues, as well as the Major Flaw, Greater Malediction (Must be Touching the Ground). If prevented from touching the ground, the character loses the bonuses, and reduces his Soak by 2; however, he still remains physically the same size. When chosen, the player decides if this bloodline is Magical or Faerie aligned, and cannot change this alignment later.

Several important cities thrive within Tunisia, such as grand Marrakesh, bustling Fes, Tunis, once the city of Carthage, the holy city of Kairouan, and the vibrant port of Tripoli. Pirates are rife along the coasts, operating out of harbors in Mahdia, Sfax, or even the abandoned wharves of Girba on the island of Djerba.

This fertile region of North Africa is often called "the Tell." Characters traveling by land in the Tell may use wheeled vehicles, drawn by horses, donkeys, oxen, or camels. Donkeys and horses travel faster than oxen, but can carry or pull less cargo. Wheeled vehicles are worse than useless in the mountains and desert, where camels are preferred.

## Marrakesh

The largest city in the region, and most influential, is the source of many story ideas. Called the "Red City," for the ochre-colored earth used in so many buildings, the sultan Abu Bakr founded Marrakesh at the foot of the Atlas Mountains in 1062 and it has served as the capital for numerous regional rulers. Its great marketplace and souk, the Djemaa El Fna, serves as the functional and social heart of the city. Exotic baubles from the deep desert, Christian slaves from Europe, slaves from the south, gold and salt out of the desert, and goods from all across the Maghreb may be found in the tents and stalls of this massive bazaar, mingling with more than a few faeries plying the crowds as merchants, performers, or street urchins.

## Story Seeds

Travel is always a great source of stories, and this is particularly true in North Africa.

### THE ROADS OF ROME

The player characters, once they become established in North Africa, become a resource for other magi wanting to explore the continent. A Bonisagus magus who wishes to rediscover the secrets of the Cult of Mercury seeks out the player characters. He wishes to examine the Roman road network of North Africa, as it is more intact than that of Europe; in some deserted areas it remains entirely undamaged. If the player characters begin digging up the old Roman roads, they draw the attention of noblemen, and the Bonisagus magus is entirely unsuited to dealing with them.

### THE TAKERS OF TAXES

Merchants who travel in North Africa are subjected to various taxes as they enter and leave the domains of the various rulers. It is a sign that a ruler is corrupt if his representatives take more than they should, or destroy the merchant's cargo while assessing it. Right thinking men are almost required to taunt, fool, embarrass, and harass these tax collectors. Characters who do so are considered heroes by the poor. These stories are particularly suited to companions and grogs, and provide an excellent opportunity to introduce potential allies or enemies of the covenant, who respond accordingly to the action or inaction of the player characters. This interaction sets the scene for later negotiations, when the covenant comes seeking particular hard-to-find goods or services.



The Sultan's fortress redoubt, the Kasbah, overlooks the Djemaa El Fna while a hospice, mosques, the Imperial palace, parade grounds and a garden all ring this gorgeous monument to local prosperity. Caravans regularly arrive, passing through one of the city's nineteen gates and bringing both trade from distant lands and Sufi mystics who wish to study and debate with the local ascetics inside the impressive walls.

Many Sufi mystics use caves in the Marrakesh's surrounding hillsides as shelter, coming into Marrakesh on Fridays for communal prayer. Since the 1180's, when the Sultan Abu Yusuf Ya'qub al-Mansur began construction of the Koutoubia Mosque and a renovation of the Kasbah, Sufis have been welcome and encouraged in Marrakesh. Now, the area around the mosque is rife with booksellers who cater to the prolific Sufi authors.

#### STORYGUIDE TIP: DESCRIBING MARRAKESH

Marrakesh is the most opulent part of the Maghreb. Local bricks are often carved from pink stone. Gardens are a luxury, so they are particularly common here compared to other cities. When describing them, emphasize greenery, flowing water, and shade. This is the best city for fantasy elements inspired by *The Arabian Nights*, many of which are neither Arabic nor medieval.

Marrakesh is also the city with the deepest shadows. The empire is crumbling. Many people are using the confusion to settle scores. Others are having as much fun as they can before society collapses, even if that makes the Empire fall that little bit faster. Thieves here are particularly proficient, by birth, as are assassins, by training. When you need a setting or character on the fly, choose something to do with the court, or with the criminal classes.

#### AN EMPIRE IN DECLINE

This city is the capital of the Almohads, whose empire seems to be in decline. The Empire suffered a crushing defeat in 1212 at the Battle of Al-Uqab (Las Navas de Tolosa). Over 100,000

soldiers, mostly loyalists from the African territories of the Empire, were lost, along with the revenue from most of the Iberian territories. This has been followed by a series of defeats closer to home. The most recent occurred 1217, outside Fes, where Marinid tribesmen defeated the Almohad army, and were only prevented from taking the second city of the Empire by a lack of skill in siege warfare. These Marinid forces still control the Rif, and the rulers of Marrakesh seem unable to dislodge them.

The current ruler is a seventeen year old boy. He is incapable of providing charismatic leadership to the nobility of his kingdom. Instead, an oligarchy of his close relatives control the parts still within his effective power. These relatives constantly feud. A group of governors, who still accept the ruler's suzerainty, but in an increasingly nominal way, rule more distant territories. These include: Ab Mu ammad Abd al-Wahid bin Yusef, the governor of Sijilmassa, Yusef ibn Ali, the governor of Tinmal, Abdul-Wahid, the viceroy of Ifriqiya, Abu Zayd bin Yujan, the governor of Tlemcen, and Abu Zakariya, the governor of Fez. Additionally, the governors of Al-Andalus and the island of Majorca might have designs on the title of Caliph, in an attempt to move power across the Strait to Iberia.

None of these governors wants to be the first to break away. The Almohads might still have one good battle in them. Refugees fleeing Iberia might have revitalized the core Almohad cities, allowing them to field a more powerful army than expected. They might cut a deal with the Kings of Castile for aid. This means that each governor needs to answer a call to arms. At the same time, no governor wants to lose his best followers or his treasure in supporting the Almohads until the next crisis comes. All a governor need do to be independent, or perhaps even the next ruler of Marrakesh, is to make sure that someone else exhausts himself while destroying the Almohads.

The decaying empire offers many opportunities for storytelling. Some require a little political meddling, which must be handled carefully to avoid breaching the Code.

#### A NEW RULER

The player characters are approached by one of the cousins of the ruler. He may live in Marrakesh, or be a prisoner taken into Christian lands after capture at the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa. Players in this saga find ways to kill the other claimants to Almohad rule, while avoiding blame, and diverting mounting suspicion. While hollowing out the oligarchy, the player characters may place appointees more loyal to them than their patron. They may also need to complete stories that help hold the Empire together, so that their patron inherits enough to repay his debt to the player characters.

#### AIDING A GOVERNOR

The Empire is declining, but no clear successor has emerged. Even without direct military intervention, magi have a great deal to offer any of the regional governors. They can spy on rivals, assess their plans, perform sabotage, improve the local economy, and allow their patron to strike his enemies in times of weakness. Player characters who succeed in these ploys eventually have substantial connections in the new capital of North Africa.

#### INVITED IN

The Almohads are desperate to keep their kingdom together and are trying all kinds of things to bolster their economy. Most recently they have tried importing vast numbers of Christians, and even some Jews, from Spain, settling them in Fes. They are seeking treaties of alliance with Christian monarchs, even those with whom war is so traditional as to be almost a duty. A cousin of the ruler may seek out a redcap, and send a message to

## The Pavilion with Three Items

When the characters capture a thief who has violated their covenant, the man offers to give them a tale of great treasure in exchange for his freedom, a treasure he swears to be true. Given the chance, he tells them of a pavilion in the garden of a house in Marrakesh. The house belongs to three brothers, who have never entered the pavilion, as their father forbade it on his deathbed. Inside there is a sheepskin rug, a cap, and a hashish pipe. Each of these items is magical.

The sheepskin transports the person who sits upon it, in the blink of an eye, to the place they request. The person need not have seen the place, and it the instruction can be conditional, such as "Wherever the person who stole my trousers has gone." The sheepskin travels with the user, so they are not stranded unless it is taken from them.

The cap makes the wearer invisible. The wearer is still audible. Similarly, he can be detected by animals

who have a strong sense of smell, like dogs. Items worn or held by the wearer are also made invisible, but it does not affect mounts, nor does it hide objects, like statues.

The hashish pipe, when used, does not emit smoke when the user exhales. Instead, it transforms the smoke into small gold ingots. These are of apparently limitless supply, but there are two limiting factors. The pipe actually needs to be smoked, so the characters will eventually run out of hashish, although they can use the ingots to buy more. Further, as the pipe needs to be smoked, the person using it is not in his right mind. The character is placed under the control of the storyguide, who is encouraged to create stories centering on the humiliation of the character. Characters using the hash pipe often get themselves into terrible trouble using the other two objects. This is why the merchant forbade the pavilion to his sons.

the Order that some dhimmi magi would be welcome to settle in the new foreign quarters of Fes.

Player characters who are skilled diplomats could stretch this invitation. The Almohads are desperate enough that the right to settle elsewhere, and some financial assistance, could be extracted. This might be particularly generous if the magi are willing to reclaim areas only nominally held by the Almohads, like the Rif.

### REVENGE AGAINST THE ORDER

House Flambeau has always hinted that it might be in some way responsible, with the possible assistance of God, for the stunning victory at Las Navas de Tolosa. Many other magi assume they meddled in the outcome. The Islamic forces suffered up to 150,000 casualties compared to 2,000 Christians, mostly from religious fighting Orders whom the Flambeau find inconvenient. Characters wanting to operate in Morocco need to remember this history: elements of House Flambeau quite likely broke the rules about annoying mundanes on

the basis that there was no-one left to harm their sodales. Even if they did not, they are strongly suspected of having done so. Player characters coming to Morocco are entering the home territories of those who want revenge for the battle that cracked the Empire. Conversely, player characters who strongly identify themselves with the Order may find they have ready allies among those gnawing at the Empire's edges.

## Virtues for the Thieves of Marrakesh

The City of Marrakesh is named from the words "to cross over" or "to hide." Some dignified scholars claim that this is because it was a fortress that watched over the whole country. Many locals disagree, and say it was a tribute to the skill of the horse thieves who used to raid this camp, crossing over the walls and then hiding with the livestock.

People from Marrakesh who choose to follow this profession, are just innately better as thieves than other people.

Some local wise men suggest that they all share the blood of some legendary hero. Characters need only take Virtues which suit them to crime if they use these Abilities frequently.

Virtues which particularly suit thieves include: Affinity with (Athletics, Awareness, Legerdemain or Stealth), Cautious with (Athletics, Awareness, Legerdemain or Stealth), Intuition, Keen Vision, Light Touch, Perfect Balance, Premonitions, Puissant (Athletics, Awareness, Legerdemain or Stealth), Ways of the Town.

### ALL ACCORDING TO PLAN (MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)

Once per session, a player whose character has this Virtue can reroll a botch die. The character has prepared, in advance, for this exact failure and has a contingency plan, which the player must describe.

### FALLS LIKE A CAT (MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)

The character is not injured by falls of up to three times his height, or six times his height if he can soften his fall by catching on windowsills, breaking through awnings, or hitting branches on the way down. At greater heights the character suffers Impact damage of +1 for every additional foot, if landing on a hard surface, or for every additional four feet, if landing on a soft surface.

### INDESCRIBABLE FACE (MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)

After meeting this character, other characters usually find it hard to describe him sufficiently well to separate him from others. Some forgettable characters are just average height and weight, with unremarkable features. Others have a particular feature which is so striking it crowds out other memories. He has an ostentatious hat. She was carrying a little dog. The characters can recall the striking feature, but little else. A player who selects this Virtue for his character needs to select which form of the Virtue his character has.



A character who is simply average is always forgettable. He can't turn the ability off and may use props when building a Reputation among other criminals. He may be "that guy in the black gloves who strangles people," for example, although no-one recalls precisely what he looks like. Intimately related characters can eventually become sufficiently used to the character's forgettable face that they remember it.

A character who distracts with a prop is memorable when she wishes to be. She can simply not use her devices of distraction if she wishes to make an impression. She can also switch her distracting prop. For example if she hears that someone is looking for a lady with a curious dog, she might switch to a baby, or a curious hat. A character who distracts with props is usually not recognized by random people in crowds (whose eyes also follow the prop, not the face), but this protection is less perfect than a truly forgettable face.

**JUST AN INSTANT  
(MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)**

A character with this Virtue, who has had a few seconds to look about a room, does not need to make Awareness checks to detect or remember anything of interest on the room's exposed surfaces. Some characters use this Virtue to discover the layout of a space so they can navigate it in the dark, while others use it to save time while stealing. Characters with this Virtue are also useful lab assistants, because they know where everything is, and are aware of experiments about to critically fail.

**FINDING HIDDEN LOOT  
(MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)**

A character with this Virtue gains a +9 bonus to Awareness rolls when searching a confined space for hidden items, provided they can move the contents of the space about undisturbed.

**RAT UP A DRAINPIPE  
(MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)**

Using a mixture of acrobatics, climbing and dodging, this character can run through urban areas as if unobstructed. This gives a substantial advantage

**New Sample  
Childhoods for Those  
Raised by Thieves**

If a player is using the Detailed Character Creation Rules given on page 31 of the core rulebook, she may wish to use these suggested childhood Ability sets.

**Child burglar:** Awareness 2, Bargain 2, Native Language 5, Stealth 2.

**Child grifter:** Charm 2, Guile 2, Legerdemain 2, Native Language 5.

**Child lookout:** Awareness 2, Legerdemain 2, Native Language 5, Stealth 2.

**Child runner:** Area Lore 2, Athletics 2, Legerdemain 2, Native Language 5.

in opposed Athletics rolls, which represent being chased.

**SCHOOLED IN CRIME  
(MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)**

The character has been trained extensively in the criminal arts, and has 50 additional experience to spend on Abilities related to thievery. Area Lore, Athletics, Awareness, Bargain, Brawl, Charm, Guile, Legerdemain and Stealth are all suitable, and other Abilities may be added to this list with troupe approval.

**SEES IN THE DARK  
(MINOR SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE)**

The character suffers no penalty for activities in low light, or even complete darkness, making Awareness rolls without penalty.

**SKILLED SMUGGLER  
(MINOR GENERAL VIRTUE)**

The character can hide one item on his person, and attempts to find it suffer a -9 penalty on Awareness rolls. The item cannot be larger than a dag-

**The Sons of Sāsān**

In Arabic folklore, including the Maghreb, there are stories of a shadowy organization that nurtures bandits, thieves, murderers, prostitutes and other criminals. It is said to have arisen when a Persian prince named Sāsān lost his kingdom, and in his wanderings and depredations drew about himself a family of evildoers as retainers. The descendants of this court of villainy form a tribe, the Banū Sāsān, and aid each other against outsiders. They are said to be ruled, in each city, by a Beggar King. They are said to have tainted blood which aids in their crimes, they are said to run schools for each other's children, and they are whispered to have unhallowed places where they perform dark rites, to gain the power to commit greater evils.

Most criminals claim to belong to this group, although how tight a family this clan really forms will vary between sagas. All criminals in the Magreb know an argot (called the *monōgāt Banī Sāsān*) which is based on Arabic, but filled with loan words, particularly from Persian and Kurdish. Much like Cockney slang in English, it allows people of a certain class to demonstrate kinship with other people of that class, and private communication of basic concepts while in the presence of outsiders. Much like Cockney slang, however, it is clear to listeners who speak only the more broadly used version of the language that the character is speaking an odd and incomprehensible dialect. Characters with a criminal background and an Arabic skill of at least 3 have the ability to speak the argot.

ger, and the character may swap which items are hidden with a few minutes of work. Wealthy characters often procure collapsible tools to use in conjunction with this Virtue.

## Vis Site: Molting Beetle Husks

In a hidden canyon wadi, a day's travel east of Marrakesh, scarab beetles of Virtue gather to shed their skins and dry in the bright desert sun. The husks are a sparkling indigo hue, and some Tuareg use them to dye their veils. When the husks are gathered in the late summer, after the sirocco has swept through the canyon, four pawns of Muto and Imaginem vis can be found. However, these husks also produce the most vibrant colored veils, and the nomads in the area prize them. Any magus attempting to acquire this source will need to come to terms with the tribe. It will not do to simply promise them the husks once the vis is removed, as this process destroys the useful properties of the shed carapaces. Aggressive actions may result in unpleasant future consequences for the magi, as this tribe often serves as guides to southbound caravans, and hold grudges across generations.

## Fes

Fes is the second city of the Empire, and has been invigorated by the arrival of refugees from Iberia.

### STORYGUIDE TIP: DESCRIBING FES

Fes has the oldest university-like school in the region, and was, for centuries, the Imperial capital of North Africa. Even the laborers of Fes are interested in quoting the sayings of the Prophet to each other and discussing what they mean. The color green is particularly prevalent in Fes. Mix that with areas filled with tiles of a deep blue, placed in perfect geometric shapes, so that as the sun washes across them they become reflective and luminous. When describing Fes, emphasize how venerable parts of it are.

Contrast this with how fragile it is. Three years ago Fes almost fell to the nomads. The last time a nomad tribe raided North Africa they pulled all the cities down, and destroyed all of the aqueducts, on the basis that cities were nothing but

## Al-Kairouine Madrasa

In the eighth century a pair of sisters, heiresses to a wealthy merchant, moved to Fes from Kairouan. One of these women used her inheritance to build a mosque. With the aid of other emigrants from her home city, this mosque was so well provided for that a school could be opened. By 1220, it is a great center of learning, drawing students from the Arabic world, and from the small communities in the Christian kingdoms of the Mediterranean.

Students are taught theology and Islamic law as core subjects. Many others also learn the Artes Liberales and practical subjects. Some stories suggest that a few teachers are astrologers, or in some other way magical. The traditional form of the lecture in these universities is that the teacher sits in a chair, and the students gather about to hear the lesson.

In times of plenty, the living costs of students at Al-Kairouine are covered by subsidies from the institution or donations from rich nobles or merchants. During the current difficulties, students need to find ways to supplement their income. They have many skills which are of use to Hermetic covenants. All are literate and are able to navigate mundane society. Many have useful Area Lore, and some have (Realm) Lore scores, generally favoring the Divine.

resupply points for their enemies. In other parts of the Maghreb the decline of the Empire has led to squalidness, as people temper their fatalism with hedonism. The faith of the people of Fes guides them away from the sordidness found in other towns.

The age of the Madrasa (a word which means "school" but in this case refers to something similar to a university) can also be contrasted with the new areas of the city. Many refugees from Iberia have settled in Fes. Aside from the Muslims is a vibrant Jewish quarter, and a surprising number of Christians. A local who wants diversion from his life can go to the new quarter. There, he hear music played on new instruments, discuss novel ideas, and eat food made with weird ingredients. This quarter is, in a very real sense, what rich locals do instead of bars and brothels.

## Vis Source: Figs of Two Colours

Outside Fes there is a fig tree which bears fruit out of season. Some of its fruit are white, others are black. If anyone eats the black fruit, horns emerge from his forehead (Monstrous Appearance Flaw.) The horns are also terribly sensitive, and cause the bearer great pain if struck. If the victim eats the white figs, the horns retract and disappear. It is said that a leper once married the daughter of the Sultan of Fes by tricking the ruler into eating the black figs, dressing as a foreign magician, the offering him the white ones as a cure. Some Hermetic hearers of this story may wonder if this leper was a magus, and where his tomb lies. The figs themselves contain Muto vis.

*Art and Academe*, which describes European universities, has many plot hooks suitable for play in Fes.

## Tunis

The city of Tunis is the largest port in the Maghreb. It has been a center of trade, and also of naval power, for the Almohads since they invaded this part of Africa in 1057. The loss of al-Andalus weakened the Almohads, preventing them from supporting the stronger navy they once possessed.

### STORYGUIDE TIP: DESCRIBING TUNIS

Tunis is strikingly white. Particularly under the sweltering African sun, the city's whitewashed walls seem unnaturally clean. The doors of many houses are painted ultramarine. The layout of the markets in this city has been carefully considered. The central mosque is surrounded by the markets for perfume (north), cloth (west), wool (south) and dried fruit and booksellers (east). Other markets circle outward in rings, becoming increasingly unsanitary as the characters enter poorer areas of the city.



## Saga Seed: Rebellious Governor

As described in the earlier section about the decaying empire, many Almohad governors wish to rebel. None, however, wants to spend men and treasure to exhaust the forces of Marrakesh, only to be conquered by another governor who has kept his forces intact. If your saga's history follows that of the real world, the most successful rebel is the governor of Tunis.

For the Hafsids, the governing family of this and several nearby towns, to gain independence, they need to keep circumstances favorable. This generates many stories for magi supporting their ascent to power. To successfully rebel the Hafsids must juggle many factors.

### ALMOHAD NAVY

The sailors of the Almohad Navy also serve as a large force of light infantry. It is impossible for the Hafsids to rebel without killing influential captains in the fleet, or luring them away from Almohad service. Ambushing captains on land is easy, but suspicious. Defeating them at sea is more difficult, but easier for a Hafsid puppet-ruler to cover up. This hook motivates stories of intrigue, assassination, and combat.

### TRADE WITH ITALY

Trade with Italy is vital to the hopes of the Hafsids: disruption for as little as a year could end any attempt at rebellion. Desert goods flow out to the Christian lands, providing money that is used to maintain armies and political support. At the same time, Tunis cannot support itself without wheat imported from Sicily. Without regular shipments, the people will starve, riot, and serve anyone who can promise an end to the famine. This hook motivates travel, to the sources of Italian and desert trade goods, and to clear up disruptions in supply. It also motivates diplomatic stories. In the real world, slightly after 1220, Italian city states started founding embassies in Tunis, to compete for shares of the market, and the favor of the ruler.

### CONQUER TRIPOLI

In the east of the Maghreb, two ports trade, in some volume, with Europeans: Tunis and Tripoli. To increase their power, the Hafsids could draw both ports under their suzerainty. This is less difficult than it appears, because Tripoli has only a weak navy, and no great agricultural hinterland. Tripoli is even more dependent on imported wheat than Tunis is: a blockade for six

months might be enough to starve out the Almohad governor.

Keeping Tripoli subdued is difficult, however. A trustworthy governor is particularly important, as is diplomacy or war with the desert tribes.

### STORY SEED: THE SERPENT OF BAGRADAS RIVER

Magi seeking a covenant site may research the stories of North Africa, and discover that a suitable place lies just over twenty miles north of Tunis, at the mouth of the Bagradas River. Historians record that during the first Punic War, a Roman general fought a serpent which had a lair there. The battle took hours, even though he deployed his entire force and their siege engines. Once the beast was slain, its skin was shipped to Rome, and measured 120 feet long.

Magical creatures, by their nature, prefer to make their homes in Magical auras. For a creature to rest inside an aura, it must be larger than the creature. Therefore, it's clear that a site of at least of moderate magical power, 3 or greater, and of sufficient size to build laboratories, exists at the mouth of the Bagradas River. Characters exploring the site may face lesser serpents, the ghosts of Roman soldiers, or their reanimated bodies.

This means that the settings in which scenes may take place become more steadily more physically sordid the further characters get from the rich center of town, in a way entirely predictable to the residents of the city.

Tunis faces a lake, and depends on the ocean, so proximity to the water is also an important thematic element. When you need to rapidly choose a character or setting, consider something to do with sailors, the navy, or the water.

## Tripoli

Tripoli is "the gateway to the Great Desert," the primary port in the gold and slave trade in the eastern Maghreb. It was originally a Carthaginian port called Oea, which eventually absorbed two neighboring cities and changed its name to reflect that it was three (tri-) cities (polis) combined into one. It is now the port most friendly to dhimmis, as it is dependent on their trade, even for sufficient bread to feed itself.

### STORYGUIDE TIP: DESCRIBING TRIPOLI

In most other cities in the Maghreb, people describe the medinas as filled with twisty, narrow streets, but Tripoli is an exception. Characters used to the cities founded by Romans in Europe will see many features in the layout of Tripoli that are familiar. For example, the city is divided into four quarters by two great roads that form a cross. At the center of the cross are a mosque and a fortress. Most of the city is the color of yellow sandstone, although parts are pink and the fortress is red.

Tripoli has the remnants of many cultures, layered one above the other. It was settled by the Phoenicians, refounded

## Kairouan

Kairouan is the fourth most holy city in Islam, and non-Muslims are forbidden to enter large sections of it, on pain of death. One of the oldest mosques, and certainly the largest, in North Africa stands here, believed to be the model for all of the other mosques in this region. This mosque acts as a focus of pilgrimages and religious study. Kairouan has the highest Dominion aura of any city in the Maghreb.

Kairouan's reputation as a center of learning, and as a court for the exilarchs of the Jews, was destroyed after the city was sacked in 1057. Reconstruction remains incomplete. The Jews have fled Kairouan, mostly to Egypt. Its scholars decamped to Tunis. Lost libraries may be found in the ruins, hidden in the sudden escape.

by the Greeks, traded with by the Egyptians, conquered by the Romans, taken by the Arabs, invaded by the Normans, and now is back in Berber hands. The practitioners of most Western schools of magic had time to establish colonies here. Given that the Normans were partially Christianised Norse warriors who had stopped off in northern France for a generation, even druids and Odinites might have made it to Tripoli. Magi, and other knowledgeable seekers, can find remnants of the various layers of mystical occupation in this city. Characters created on the fly should have some sort of link to ruins or artifacts from the earlier rulers.

## Other Communities of the North Central Tell

These are towns and communities located nearer to the northern coast of the Maghreb.

### SHARSHAL

Offshoots of the old Roman Northern road connect the main causeway to Caesarea, or Sharshal as it is now called, and Saldae, the current city of En Nassria. Both are busy ports along the Maghreb coast and have seen the bulk of their Roman structures recycled into the current buildings.

### TAHERT

In a high, central pass sits Tahert, a lightly-populated terminus of the slave trade better known for the many ruined stone tombs, called "jedars," to the south. It once supported a sizable community of Jews, though only a few remain. The people here never truly recovered after being conquered by the Fatimid Caliph in 933. Tahert is currently ruled by the Governor of Tlemcen.

### TLEMCCEN

Tlemcen, once the small fort town (castra) of Pomeria, has since grown into an influential terminus of the Great Desert caravan routes. Families, like the al Makkari, manage it and ensure the great wealth of the desert continues to flow into the coffers of the Caliphate. This wealth brings construction, and nearly all of the Roman construction in Tlemcen has since been reincorporated into the many buildings and the protective wall.

### ALGIERS

Initially a Phoenician city, then Roman, and currently occupied by the kasbah of Algiers, Icosium was founded by twenty companions of Heracles. Dominated by whitewashed architecture, and built right to the shoreline, Algiers has several Roman cemeteries in the sea-cliffs to the west, and a high wall. Like Tlemcen, the wall recycled large amounts of demolished Imperial masonry when Arabs rejuvenated the site in 942 AD.

## Story Seed: Lost Virgilian Magics

The mosaics and auras hint at the presence of a previously unknown cabal of Virgilian sorcerers who once called Hadrumetum home. Fleeing the onslaught of the Arab army, they left a number of their texts and handiwork in the catacombs for safekeeping. Unfortunately, they never returned and their lost notes may lead the characters to Soussa. However, as the magi begin their investigations, they learn someone else is also searching the crypts. Do sahirs, infernalists, renegade Hermetics or the Augustan Brotherhood stalk them within the tunnels?

### RUINS OF NOTE

Abandoned but spectacular ruins still stand in places like Djémila, located at the confluence of two rivers, where there are arches, partially standing basilicas, a pair of fora, crumbling houses and temples, as well as a beautifully preserved amphitheater, and the forgotten mountain fortress of Tifesh, with its 3-pace-thick outer walls and three crumbling basilicas. Either of these sites, with a remnant Magic aura of 3, might serve as a site for a covenant.

## Other Communities of the Eastern Tell

These are towns and cities located in the region near Tunis and its coast. The ruins of Carthage proper are discussed in greater detail later.

### QUSANTINA

Able to resist the Visigoths, but conquered by the Arabs in the seventh century and renamed Qusantina, the former city of Constantine now supports a prosperous market with connections to Pisa, Genoa and Venice. Fondly called



"the City of Bridges," Qusantina sits on a high plateau surrounded by a deep ravine, with several bridges and a treacherous natural rock arch crossing the cave-riddled gorge of the Rhumel river. The nearby hilltop ruins of Tiddis include an entry arch to a well-preserved complex of paved streets, a Mithraeum with a Magic aura of 3, cisterns, and a small forum. This site would serve as an excellent basis for a starting covenant in the area.

### SOUSSA

Founded in 1100 BC by the Phoenicians, Hadrumetum was one of the most important communities within the Roman territory in northern Africa because of its strategic location on the sea in the heart of Numidia. Now called Soussa, it allied with Rome early in the Third Punic war, and flourished until the Arabs arrived in the 6th century. The army of Oqba Ibn Nafii utterly destroyed the city, leaving nothing of the last 1700 years standing. The conquerors renamed the site Soussa and rebuilt using the debris, but the legacy of the Punic and Roman heritage was hidden under the new city. Many mosaics showing the poet Virgil, fantastic creatures, or Hellenistic gods survived, and the Roman and Christian catacombs still exist beneath the streets. Some areas of the catacombs strangely maintain a Magic aura of 4.

### BOUNA

Hippo Regius grew from a colony first settled by the Phoenicians in the 12th century BC; it garnered the appellation Regius, "of the King," after several Numidian kings erected pyramid tombs there. Situated near the mouth of the river Ubus, it became a major city in Roman Africa, famously known as the bishopric of Saint Augustine of Hippo in his later years. Many synods and councils convened in Hippo, helping establish the accepted books of the New Testament. It was conquered by the Arabs in 698, but they left the ancient site in the ninth century and moved a league north, calling the new city "Bouna Al Haditha," or Bouna the New. The abandoned ruins include the largest theater

### Story Seed: To Claim a Wife

In one of the villages south of Girba, the mosque is renowned for a very special reason. The locals always leave the mosque by dusk, lest they encounter the group of capricious jinn who appear in the early evening, always accompanied by their many beautiful wives. It is said that any man who can survive a night in the company of the jinn may take one of their wives for his own. The jinn demand any suitor succeed at a series of tasks which change for each hopeful. Sometimes they require feats of strength, other times they demand the answer to a medley of riddles, or the discovery of an out-of-place object, and occasionally they ask for an entertaining story they have never heard before. Those who fail become slaves of the Jinn, whisked away to serve them for seven years. The wives are sometimes jinn and at other times they are human slaves caught or purchased by the jinn, but they always remain beautiful, even after departing the mosque.

in Africa, and the mostly destroyed Basilica of St. Augustine. The shell of the Basilica still contains a saint's relic (with 3 Faith Points) beneath the rubble of the altar, and offers a Divine aura of 3 within the structure.

### TBESSA, LAMBAESIS, AND TAMAGUDI

To the south, military roads lead from Qusantina and Bouna to Roman Theveste, now Tbessa, and the nearby legionary town of Lambaesis; both possess extensive Roman remains. Tbessa is surrounded by a Byzantine wall with thirteen square towers, and its ruins include an amphitheater, a nearly complete Temple of Minerva, and the remains of the basilica of St. Crispinus, which include chapels, baptism urns, catacombs and gardens. Lambaesis is unoccupied, but has triumphal arches, undisturbed Roman graveyards, dry aqueducts and

### Vis Site: Heady Lotus Blooms

Found all over Djerba, the thorny lotus shrub grows very sweet berries, about an inch across with a hard seed. These are dried, processed into a sweet liquor, and eaten fresh. The berries grow from yellow or crème colored flowers with a distinctive five-petal and five-stamen bloom. The Lotophagi grow stands of the Lotus of Virtue, creating the narcotic fruits which held Odysseus' crew enthralled.

Hidden in a secluded gully along a nearly inaccessible stretch of the shoreline, an unattended copse of Lotus of Virtue thrives. Collecting the ripe berries here in the morning of the summer solstice yields three pawns of Herbam and three pawns of Mentem vis.

If three seeds of the Lotus of Virtue are enriched by exposing them to only the light of the full moon for a year, and then keeping them in a sealed amulet afterwards, the wearer gains the Clear Thinker virtue.

the skeletal remains of temples to Aesculapius, Minerva, Jupiter, and Juno. No Christian inscriptions exist in the town, and it still has a Magic aura of 4, centered on the temples. Of particular interest, a column in the encampment bears the complete text of Emperor Hadrian's address to the Legio III Augusta. Only Tamagudi, seven leagues to the west, has better preserved ruins in all of Numidia, although roughly similar remaining structures. Hermetic wizards seeking to establish a covenant might be able to make the site habitable with some effort.

## Story Seed: Cyclopskin Handiwork

A number of dolmens and ancient structures point to the race of single-eyed, sharp tusked giants which once lived on Malta. Their heavy wagons pushed deep ruts even into the stones all over the island. Occasionally, after a flood or earthquake, a skeleton of one of these enormous cyclopskin is found. Legends state they disappeared long ago, before the Romans ruled Malta, but they did not leave. The giants retreated into regiones, seeking out the caves, like Ghar Dalam, and living beneath the land. Some claim recent earthquakes experienced by the island are the result of the giants at war deep in the earth. These regiones can be entered when the night of the winter solstice coincides with a new moon; explorers must delve deep into the rock of Ghar Dalam without light sources, eventually emerging into the subterranean vaults of the cyclopskin. Can the giants be convinced to stop their war before the cities above are shaken to the ground?



## Islands of North Africa

There are relatively few Mediterranean islands along the Maghreb coast, but the two most prominent are Djerba and Malta.

### Djerba

Continuously occupied since the Phoenicians first settled it, this low lying island is one of the few along the north African coast. Once conquered by Roger of Sicily in the early 12th century, temperate and beautiful Djerba was the home of the Lotophagi, the magical lotus-eaters mentioned in the ancient tales of Odysseus. Known as Meninx by the Phoenicians and Girba by the Romans, villages and small communities litter

the landscape. On the north side of the island, the ghost town of Girba stands mostly unoccupied with its walls and structures in good repair; its only visitors are pirates and traveling merchants who meet with residents from the large village of Midoun to trade. El Kantara, known in antiquity as Meninx Proper, and Ajim, formerly the Roman town of Tipasa, occupy the opposite southern corners. Well-maintained Roman roads connect all three and a Roman era bridge stretches from El Kantara to the mainland. Local industries include weaving, agriculture, olive oil production, and ceramics. A very few craftsmen in El Kantara know the secret of creating the purple murex dye found only here and on the isle of Mogador.

Several diverse groups call Djerba home. A league south of Girba, large group of Jews have lived in the village Hara Seghira since before the fall of the Second Temple. Built with stones taken from Temple Mount, the Ghrība synagogue is their religious and social center. Considered a pilgrimage site for Kabbalists and those wishing to celebrate the

holiday of Lag BaOmer, the synagogue boasts a Divine aura of 5. An enclave of Ibadi Muslims, similar to those in the oasis of Ghardaia, live in Ajim but shun outsiders and worship in underground mosques. The Lotophagi disappeared long ago, retreating into a few isolated regiones scattered about the island and marked by clusters of lotus shrubs. They avoid the current residents and appear very rarely to collect Lotus Fruit of Virtue on the Summer Solstice.

### Malta

Currently a part of the Holy Roman Empire, as a holding of the House of Hohenstaufen, Malta is largely a fortified garrison, dedicated to its own protection at the detriment of nearly any other activity after alternately being mostly depopulated and then recolonized by Arabs before becoming a part of the Kingdom of Sicily. It has been a Phoenician, Roman, Vandal, Arab, and even Norman outpost over the years. Three main islands comprise the



archipelago. They are Malta, the largest, Gozo, and Comino, the smallest.

Tiny Comino is sparsely populated, with a few farmers and shepherds eking out a rough existence. Caves riddle the sheer limestone cliffs of the island, and a pious sorcerer named Kerrew often occupies them. However, he has a magic cloak which allows him to fly, and he occasionally goes to the main island of Malta for extended periods. Pirates sometimes use the caves to hide before ambushing sailing vessels. When a group stays too long, often Kerrew appears to rout them with his magics and reclaim his subterranean sanctuary. These caves have a Magic aura of 4.

Gozo is the second largest island of the trio. Local legends claim it served as the home of the nymph Calypso, daughter of the titan Atlas, who held Odysseus captive for seven years because of her love for him. While he was imprisoned there, she bore him two sons, Nausinous and Nausithous, as well as a daughter. His

Mythic bloodline occasionally surfaces amongst the population, with many of the women showing the Blessing of Venus or Great Presence, and at least one magus from this island claimed descent from Odysseus, bearing the power to manifest *Aura of Rightful Authority*. Evidence of Calypso's titan relatives is most apparent in the form of the enormous stone structure at Ggantija. Built by a giantess and enclosed by a boundary wall, the clover-shaped complex and nearby stone circle sport Magic auras of 4. The giantess herself has not been seen in living memory. Some claim she sleeps in a nearby cave, awaiting the return of her lover.

Malta has a strong Christian tradition, as Paul of Tarsus was shipwrecked on the island in 59 AD for three months and proselytized the inhabitants, healing the sick and founding the Christian community there. The Cathedral of Mdina, the capital, is dedicated to St. Paul and was extensively repaired after it

fell into disrepair during the Muslim rule of Malta. Both it and the nearby catacombs in the village of Ir-Rabat, where early Christians held their secret Mass, have a Divine aura of 5.

## The Eastern Coast: Cyrenaica

Settled by Greek refugees from the volcanic island of Thera in the Aegean, the plains below the Jebel Akhdar (*Arabic*: "the Green Mountain") were once known as the Pentapolis, a collection of small city-states initially dominated by the eponymous inland city of Kurene (known as Cyrene in Latin). After the Arab invasion of 643 the area became *al-Maghrīb al Adna* ("the Nearest West")

### Kura, the Nereid of the Sacred Spring

Once venerated by the citizens of Cyrene, the nymph Kura has retreated to within her regio. She can be reached only by following the rivulet from her sacred spring upstream from where it joins the river that passes through the local necropolis on its way to the Mediterranean. Currently the only human aware of Kura's ongoing presence is Zeynab, the youngest daughter of the village's headman. The girl stumbled into the nereid's regio last spring and has recently begun to visit the watery maiden regularly.

Kura is ancient enough to remember the true appearance of the herb silphium (see later) and her local knowledge of the surrounding region may prove invaluable with any search for the remaining wild silphium groves above the city. She can be flattered into helping with the quest through either sacrifice in her honor or restoration of her shrine, but as a *genius loci* she cannot leave the sacred precinct surrounding her spring. She may use Zeynab as her intermediary by using a Spiritual Pact and accepting the girl as her chosen Spirit Votary (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, pages 88–89)

This powerful nereid may potentially be coaxed into becoming a patron spirit

for a Theban style covenant (see *The Sundered Eagle*, pages 30–31) in Cyrenaica, but is wary of Hermetic magi, having encountered hostile Berber and Arab wizards previously. Her price for any long-term arrangement will include adulation or veneration, even to the extent of demanding one of the magi submit to a Spiritual Pact and a promise to restore her public worship. Although adulation could be concealed, the open establishment of a pagan community within the ruins of Cyrene risks breaching the Code of Hermes. Whether such an infringement can be policed on the edge of the Hermetic sphere of influence remains uncertain.

#### STORY SEED: THE REMAINS OF THE DAY

The ruins of the lighthouse on the small island outside the harbor of Apollonia occupy the centre of a small strength 3 Magic aura. Within the structure are the remains of a makeshift Hermetic laboratory, including a shattered oversized glass lens, a recently slain human corpse and signs of a struggle with a giant sea creature, such as loose scales,

scaly imprints on the corpse, or slithering tracks in the sand within the room.

Diurnum Lumen was a Flambeau magus who recently took part in a previous failed Hermetic settlement attempt in Cyrenaica led by Jerbiton magi from the Theban Tribunal, although the expedition was abandoned less than a decade ago. Diurnum remained behind at the pharos site, attempting to reconstruct it for use in recovering the secrets of the Lineage of Abydaros, a lost African mystery cult dedicated to Apollo and associated with powers drawing on the light of the sun.

The Hermetic wizard may have been the victim of Glaucus, a murderous *Makhai* (Theban variant of a *Muspelli*, see *Rival Magic*) who venerates the sea Titan Okeanos and his brood of sea monsters. Although the powerful non-Hermetic wizard has since moved on, searching the site reveals clues about his crime. Magi resettling the *pharos* site may be able to reconstruct some of Diurnum's experiments given time but risk drawing a return visit from the malicious Titan's proxy and bringing ruin on their fledgling covenant.

and has become a backwater apart from the small inland town of Barce, first the provincial capital of the Barqah region under the Fatimid Caliphate and now a town ruled by the distant Ayyubid sultans of Egypt.

The other main settlement of the region is on the site of the ancient Greek city of Balagrae, now known as the village port of Sidi Rafea, after a Companion of the Prophet, Ruwaifi bin Thabit al-Ansari, entombed in the city.

Despite their Islamic faith, the common folk of the area have inherited the ancient myths and stories of the original Greek settlers. The supernatural fauna

and flora of the region are therefore more similar to mainland Greece than the culturally Arabic or Berber desert areas further west, making the region seem somewhat more familiar to magi and other characters from Europe when compared to the remainder of the African littoral.

As an isolated area outside of an existing Tribunal but far from any significant Islamic settlement, the hills of Cyrenaica make an appealing location for a Spring covenant of Theban magi, with or without the sponsorship of the magi's elders. Magi interested in recovering some of the lost glory of the abandoned Greek colonies will find

much to discover here, although a recent attempt at settling the area by the Children of Olympos (see *The Sundered Eagle*, pages 125–127) failed under mysterious circumstances.

## The Ruins of Apollonia and Cyrene

Together with its port of Apollonia situated 8 miles to the north, Cyrene was a Roman metropolis and capital of the region until Diocletian favored its

### Muqadam, the Barbary Lion of Virtue

**Magic Might:** 40 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com -4, Str +8, Sta +3, Dex +2, Qik +0

**Size:** +3

**Season:** Winter

**Confidence Score:** 2 (6)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Animal, Magical Master, Essential Virtue (Brave); Improved Characteristics (x2), Piercing Gaze, Puissant Brawl, Second Sight, Self-Confident, Tough, Wilderness Sense, Difficult Underlings, Fury (lion captors), Proud (major); Infamous, Weakness (surrendering foes)

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Gigantic, Greater Power, Major Virtue (Magical Master), Ritual Power x2; Gift of Speech, Improved Abilities, Improved Initiative (claws), Improved Might x7, Improved Powers x3, Improved Soak, Lesser Power x3, Personal Power x2, Susceptible to Deprivation

**Personality Traits:** Brave +6\*, Proud +6, Fierce +3, Lion +3\*

**Reputations:** Fearsome (local) 4

**Combat:**

**Claws:** Init +3, Attack +17, Defense +13, Damage +12

**Bite:** Init +0, Attack +15, Defense +10, Damage +11

**Soak:** +10

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1–8), -3 (9–16), -5 (17–24), Incapacitated (25–32)

**Abilities:** Animal Ken 5 (felines), Area Lore: Maghreb 4 (auras), Area Lore: Great Desert 4 (auras), Athletics 5 (pouncing), Awareness 4 (prey), Bargain 4 (setting terms), Brawl 7+2 (claws), Concentration 3 (Trackless Step), Dead Language: Latin 2 (conversation), Etiquette 4 (Beasts of Virtue), Folk Ken 3 (first impressions), Guile 5 (misleading), Hunt 5 (gazelle), Leadership 6 (felines), Living Language: Arabic 4 (greetings), Living Language: Berber 4 (greetings), Organization Lore: Berber Tribes 3 (travel routes), Penetration 4 (Animal), Second Sight 4 (invisible things), Stealth 5 (stalking), Survival 5 (deserts), Wilderness Sense 4 (hazards)

**Powers:**

*Know Thy Subject's State*, 4 points, Init -14, Animal. R: Arc, D: Mom, T: Boundary. By concentrating for a few moments, Muqadam may learn the physical state of any Beast of Virtue whose token of loyalty he possesses. InAn 35 (Base 3, +4 Arc, +4 Boundary): Ritual Power x2 (35 levels, +15 Penetration) He can recover Might spent in this way by resting in a Magic Aura of 4 or higher.

*Routing Bellow*, 0 points, Init -3, Animal or Mentem. R: Voice, D: Diam, T: Sound. With a roar, Muqadam can cause those hearing him to flee in fear. This affects humans and animals. ReAn(Me) 30 (Base 5, +1

Diam, +3 Sound, +1 Mentem requisite): Greater Power (30 levels, -3 Might cost, +5xp Penetration)

*Circle of Beast Warding*, 4 points, Init -8, Animal. R: Touch, D: Ring, T: Circle. Muqadam can trace a ring in the earth which no mundane beast of Size +4 or less may cross. It finds use of this power for hunting to be distasteful, believing prey deserves the chance to run for its life. ReAn 20 (Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Ring, +3 Size): Lesser Power (20 levels, +5xp Penetration)

*Cowing Snarl*, 0 points, Init 0, Animal or Mentem. R: Eye, D: Diam, T: Individual (Size +3). By gazing into the eyes of a man or beast of equal size or smaller, Muqadam forces the target to kneel in fear. ReAn 25 (Base 4, +1 Eye, +1 Diam, +2 Size, +1 Mentem requisite): Lesser Power (25 levels), Improved Powers x3 (-5 Might cost, +10 Initiative)

*Trackless Step*, 2 points, Init -4, Terram. R: Touch, D: Conc, T: Individual. Sweeping behind him with his tail, Muqadam destroys his tracks as he walks. ReTe 10 (Base 4, +1 Touch, +1 Conc): Lesser Power (10 levels, +15xp Concentration)

*Hunter's Pounce*, 3 points, Init -3, Animal. R: Pers, D: Mom, T: Individual (+3 Size). Muqadam may leap for 50 paces. ReAn 25 (Base 15, +2 Size): Personal Power (25 levels)

*Sleep with Eyes Open*, 1 point, Init -2, Animal. R: Per, D: Sun, T: Individual



rival, Ptolemais, toward the end of the third century AD. It declined over the next century as the population and provincial governor shifted to the coastal site. Although a small Roman and then later Byzantine garrison survived in the fort converted from the forum at Cyrene for some time after, there has been no recorded civilian population since the Arab armies passed through in the seventh century.

The smaller town of Apollonia on the old Roman coast road about 20 miles from Sidi Rafaa was renamed Sozusa after the god Apollon Soter ("the Savior"). By the fifth century AD the

town was nominally Christian, however, and several abandoned churches are sited within the crumbling walls. Three small islands lie off the Mediterranean coast — the largest was the site of the original Theran shipyards, the smallest once acted as the end of the harbor's western mole, and upon the third island just outside the harbor stood an ancient lighthouse or *pharos*. The land around the town has subsided considerably, with much of the ruins lying partially submerged, and only a small village marks the stop on the old coastal road from Alexandria to Leptis Magna. The Genoese have recently established a

small outpost here, and started expanding trade in the area.

The unfettered Magic spirit of Kura, the water nymph of the sacred spring near the Temple of Apollon, still haunts the ruins of the inland site of Cyrene. A temple to the Faerie god Zeus lies near the track of the ruined Roman circus and shrines to Demeter and Dionysos are located within the old city walls. This inland site is dominated by a Faerie aura of 3 but the immediate grounds of the sacred spring have a Magic aura of 5 that leads to the regio where Kura dwells. The ruins of the Olympian temples have a corresponding higher

## Muqadam, the Barbary Lion of Virtue (Cont'd)

(+3 Size). Muqadam sleeps with his eyes open, so enemies have a hard time taking him by surprise. ReAn 20 (Base 4, +2 Sun, +2 Size): Personal Power (20 levels, -1 Might Cost)

**Natural Weapons:** Large claws: Init 0, Attack +5, Defense +3, Damage +4; Large teeth: Init 0, Attack +4, Defense +1, Damage +3. Its hide gives it a Protection of +2.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** There are eight pawns of Animal in Muqadam's mane.

**Appearance:** A great tawny specimen, Muqadam is much larger than a regular lion, nearly as big as a moose or aurochs. His massive paws end in carefully sharpened, dark claws and his mane is full of small objects tied to locks of fur. His tail often swishes when he is irritated, or if lying down, his left rear foot twitches. His flanks bear numerous scars and his right ear has a small notch in it near the peak.

Muqadam, the Barbary Lion of Virtue, is the greatest example of a creature often regarded as the largest and most impressive of lions. The Barbary Lion of Virtue exists to hunt and rule over the beasts of the Maghreb. He keeps a roaming court of creatures, attended by the lesser lords, weaker Lions of Virtue (See *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 60), Bears of Virtue, Jackals and Leopards of Virtue. Foxes and Griffon Vultures of Virtue often serve as his

heralds and spies, while Gazelles and Antelope regularly act as his messengers. His mane is covered in small tokens, Arcane Connections to members of the court and other vassals spread throughout his realm, given as a sign of their loyalty. A Barbary Ape of Virtue, Srba, acts as Muqadam's valet and ties the tokens to his lord's mane. The Lion tends to favor the Vultures over the Foxes, and the Antelope over the Gazelles. He considers the Leopards as peers, dislikes the Jackals' attitude but appreciates their role, and finds the Bears both enigmatic and erratic.

Muqadam distrusts humans, remembering the Roman practice of capturing Barbary lions for combat against gladiators. He hunts small groups of travelers, scattering their numbers and preferably taking mounts as a meal. Only when counterattacked does Muqadam strike out at people, but this has happened often enough that the tribes know to avoid certain regions if the Great Desert in the spring and autumn. Should Muqadam see a lion captured by travelers in the sands, his response would be absolutely furious and without mercy, with the captors' lives forfeit. This has been the law since two of his cubs were taken years ago. Otherwise, in almost all ways, Muqadam behaves like Pentule, the Lion of Virtue described in *Realms of Power: Magic*, on page 60.

### STORY SEED: AN ACQUIRED MENAGERIE

A group of Norman knights appear to

be tracking Muqadam across the countryside. Relentless, a powerful Jerbiton magus travels with them, providing the hunters with magical support, enabling them to survive the environment better than nearly anyone. They want to capture Muqadam, and place him within the menagerie of the Tower of London, where he will eventually suffer acclimation and likely die of shame. How do the characters react to this plan? Do they find a way to surreptitiously help Muqadam, and gain the respect and future assistance of the beast, or do they aid the Jerbiton, and gain the favor of a potent Hermetic wizard?

### STORY SEED: THE ROGUE VASSAL

A Lion of Virtue has begun hunting any and all men he can find. This is Syyd, and he has decided that the spread of men at the edge of the Great Desert can no longer be tolerated. The Lion has been subtly corrupted by a demon that has preyed on his solitude and engineered situations where Syyd felt he was justified in killing. Now, bloodthirsty and uncontrolled, the Lion is ravaging the countryside. Will the magi seek out Muqadam and negotiate for the surrender of Syyd, or find a way to acquire Syyd's arcane connection from Muqadam?

strength Faerie auras of 4. Myrtoessa, the Hill of Myrtles and site of Apollon's seduction of Kura, overlooks the site. A grove of Myrtles of Virtue grows on its northern slopes.

## Leptis Magna

Nothing in all of Africa compares to the unspoiled ruins of Leptis Magna. Built up by Septimius Severus, its native son ascended to Emperor, it has nearly perfect triumphal arches, a largely intact basilica, an expansive theatre and forum, and even a sea-side temple to Serapis with a Magic aura of 2. The harbor is guarded by a Byzantine wall, and a lighthouse still looks out over the water. Many of the structures are half buried in sand, further preserving them. Other than the occasional caravan encampment, Leptis Magna has no significant inhabitants. Since the desert swallowed it, there is simply insufficient agricultural land nearby to support a population.

## The Jebel Akhdar

These coastal mountains, a plateau covered in the forests that give its name, are riddled with wadis, rivers, and natural springs, and the highlands are one of the wettest areas in North Africa. Although isolated Muslim villages are found throughout the hills, the Faerie and Magic creatures found in the groves and valleys here resemble more the nymphs and fauns of mainland Greece than creatures elsewhere in the desert regions of Libya, where *ghul* and *jnun* dominate.

Myrtle trees and herbs grow in abundance here and, as a result, honey is easily harvested by the common folk. Tainted by the nectar of plants they have fed on in the many Magic auras scattered throughout the hills, the Bees of Virtue here produce honey with varying magical properties.

## The Altars of the Philaeni

These two pillars set upon a small hill overlooking the easternmost point of the coast of the Gulf of Syrtis mark the ancient border between Carthage and the Greek colonies of Cyrenaica, and then later the line of division between the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire. Legend claims the hill as the burial place of the two Philaenus brothers, athletic champions who set out in a running race to meet their Cyrenaican counterparts and thereby decide the border in Libya between the ancient powers. Accused of cheating, the heroes offered to be buried alive at the spot to confirm their claim, an offer the Cyrenaicans accepted.

From the nearby coast road, the tumulus containing the bones of the two Carthaginians appears as a simple hill-ock beneath the rise of the southern escarpment that is surmounted by two piles of broken stone. On the mundane level the site has a weak Magic aura of

## Silphium, Asafoetida or Fennel?

Silphium is perhaps the most famous herb of antiquity, once the lifeblood of the economy of Cyrene and found on all the settlement's coinage, but it is generally believed to be extinct in 1220. Related to common fennel although much rarer, it was once found only growing wild on the coastal plains of Cyrenaica, resulting in a virtual monopoly for the lucky Cyrenes. The Emperor Nero is widely held to have consumed the last stalk out of curiosity, much to the lamentation of ancient herbalists.

A similar but lesser herb, *asafoetida*, is still found in Arabia, Syria, Armenia, and Persia, and exported to Western Europe. It is so often used as a replacement that it is often confused with true Cyrenian silphium. Known for its rank smell and the nickname of "devil's dung" in many languages, this herb is a sticky resin extracted from the mature plant that imparts a delicious flavor when mixed with oil in cooking. Although it has the same culinary qualities, *asafoetida* lacks any obvious magical properties to European wizards,

leading some magi to speculate that the two herbs are the same species and that true silphium is merely the Virtuous form of this common fennel variant.

Asafoetida, known as tyib in Arabic, acts as a ward against jinn. A bag of the resin tied around a wearer's neck acts as a Traditional Ward for some lesser Faerie jinn. Asafoetida can substitute for myrrh in some contexts but has different Shape & Material bonuses:

**Asafoetida:** Protect against evil spirits +3

### SILPHIUM OF VIRTUE

Found now only in a handful of lost Magic regions in the coastal mountains of Cyrenaica, a Silphium of Virtue can be enriched to act as a ward against poison (as the Greater Immunity Major Virtue) for a year. However, as a consequence, the owner suffers from infertility (as a Lesser Malediction Flaw) for the same duration, a side effect that increased the herb's value

in antiquity as an effective contraceptive. Enrichment requires the owner to cut the stem, extract the faintly odored resin, and place it in a sealed jar of pine nuts for a season. The user must then consume a single pine each day throughout the year to obtain both the enriched effect and ongoing contraception.

If not enriched, the heart-shaped seeds of a Silphium of Virtue collectively contain 2 pawns of extraordinary Corpus vis and can be instead employed as a finite use Lesser Enchantment that is an effective abortifacient.

### Silphium Seeds of Corpus Vis PeCo Level 15

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Unborn Child

The seeds of a Silphium of Virtue can be crushed into a paste that can be smeared onto the belly of a pregnant woman, wounding her unborn baby and ending the pregnancy. If the mother is more than one month pregnant, a Stamina stress roll against an Ease Factor of 6



## Silphium, Asafoetida or Fennel? (Cont'd)

must be made for her, and if it fails she suffers a Medium Wound. Otherwise, the woman suffers no physical harm. (Effect: Base 5, +1 Touch, +1 Unborn Child (Part); Modifications: None)

This is based on the spell *Black Anne's Kiss* that first appeared in the Fertility Magic section of *Ancient Magic*, page 54–56. Target: Unborn Child is a unique Target that allows Hermetic magic to affect a developing human as Part of the pregnant mother. Investigating a Silphium of Virtue may provide an alternate source of Insight into integration of this style of magic into Hermetic magic at the storyguide's discretion.

### STORY SEED: WHEN SHALLOTS WILL SIMPLY NOT SUFFICE

A member of the Gastronomers' League, consumed with the desire to win the honor of holding the Millennial Feast

of 1248 to celebrate the anniversary of the founding of Rome, seeks to obtain a sample of true silphium rather than employ common asafoetida. As he wishes to keep his winning ingredient a secret, the magi or their grogs may be enlisted in the gourmet's quest.

The Gastronomer may be the head cook of Valnastium, a food-oriented magus from Normandy or the hedge magician Gervais d'Avignon. To make the search more interesting, the three contenders may assemble rival teams that uncover the sought after prize simultaneously or even inadvertently hire the same characters, providing opportunities for conflict, intrigue and negotiation.

### STORY SEED: END OF THE LINE

Beyond its use in Hermetic culinary disputes, the ready availability of silphium with its use as a contraceptive has the potential to disrupt the feudal

structure of Mythic Europe. As per *Lords of Men*, a lord's power is dependent on his serfs and their children, therefore any attempt to restrict the number of children is considered an act to limit a lord's wealth. Similarly, contraception is considered a sin by the Church and contrary to God's will.

Enterprising magi determined to meddle in mundane affairs may attempt to use the infertility caused by silphium to break the true lineages of noble families or disrupt mundane inheritance in their favor. Tremere magi may seek to prevent the recovery of silphium by the Gastronomers to prevent the attention such a find would bring to the order, to stockpile the herb for their own research, or to use the herb as a negotiating chip with the Redcaps of House Mercere. Unlike a Hermetic spell or invested item, using an enriched Silphium of Virtue does not leave the tell-tale trace of a magus's sigil.

2 but leads to a higher level 4 strength regio containing the twin pillars and accompanying blood-stained altars. Converted from a Carthaginian to a Mercurian site after the fall of Carthage, the regio is only accessible by using a *Key to the Mystic Veil* embedded in the northern pile of stone, and is sometimes visited to conduct initiations by the contemporary Cult of Mercury (see *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, page 114–117).

Together, the spirits of the Philaeni are considered inseparable daimonic Heroes with a pooled Magic Might 35, who can only be summoned through a combined theurgical rite performed by two wizards using *Wizard's Communion*. The ghostly twin athletes once guarded the border road linking the North African provinces and were called upon to grant swiftness of travel to the legions traveling along their protected stretch of road. These Punic daimons can also be asked to grant the power to duplicate a recently cast spell, to enforce that the truth be spoken, and to bring down a curse on oathbreakers.

## Siwa

This large oasis lies in a long depression at the northwestern edge of the Great Sand Sea, marking the ancient border between ancient Libya and the Kingdom of Egypt. In antiquity, the oasis was famous as Ammonium, the site of the oracle of Ammon, the Libyan god equated with Zeus by the Cyrenaican Greeks and consulted by classical heroes such as Hercules and Perseus, even Alexander the Great. Tracks lead north to the coast at Sallum (Baranis) and Matruh (Paretonium), northeast to the southern Ayyubid capital of Cairo and southwest across the sandy desert to the Tuareg outpost of Ghat. This site will be described in greater detail in a later supplement for *Ars Magica*.

## The Grand Plateau and the Atlas Mountains

The Grand Plateau is comprised of foothills and highlands that border the Atlas mountains. Some areas are sufficiently fertile to support large towns, but most areas are grazed by nomadic flocks. Storyguides should use the plateau to tell the sorts of stories usually told in remote, rural areas in Europe.

Although the Grand Plateau is close to the Tell, roads through it are poor, excepting a few major trade routes. The hilly nature of the country and the low population density have led locals to abandon the use of wheeled vehicles. Tracks through the plateau, suitable for riding horses or driving herds, are kept clear by locals.

## Azru, the Atlas Bear of Virtue

**Magic Might:** 25 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre 0, Com -5, Str +6, Sta +4, Dex +2, Qik 0

**Size:** +2

**Season:** Autumn

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Animal; Magical Champion; Essential Virtue (Brave); Ferocity (when injured), Improved Characteristics (x2), Tough, Wilderness Sense; Essential Flaw (Slothful); Anchored to the Mountains (Atlas), Greedy (minor), Reclusive, Weakness (sweet foods)

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Greater Power; Gift of Speech, Improved Damage (claws), Improved Initiative (claws), Improved Might x7, Improved Powers, Improved Soak x2, Lesser Power, Minor Virtue (Magical Champion, Puissant Brawl, Puissant Hunt, Wilderness Sense) x4; Susceptible to Deprivation

**Qualities:** Aggressive, Extra Natural Weapons (bite), Fast Runner, Grapple, Pursuit Predator, Hardy, Imposing Appearance, Large Claws, Tough Hide

**Personality Traits:** Brave +6\*, Slothful +6\*, Bear +3\*, Aggressive +2

**Reputations:** Ferocious (local) 2

**Combat:**

**Claws:** Init +3, Attack +17, Defense +13, Damage +13

**Teeth:** Init +0, Attack +12, Defense +10, Damage +7

**Grapple:** Init 0, Attack +11, Defense +9, Damage n/a

**Soak:** +13

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Maghreb 5 (mountains) Athletics 4 (sprinting), Awareness 4 (prey), Brawl 7+2 (claws), Etiquette 3 (Beasts of Virtue), Guile 3 (lying), Hunt 5+2 (boar), Living Language: Arabic 4 (conversation), Living Language: Berber 4 (conversation), Organization Lore: Berber Tribes 1 (campsites), Penetration 2 (Mentem ef-

fects), Survival 5 (foraging), Swim 3 (against the current), Wilderness Sense 4 (finding oases)

**Powers:**

**Terrible Roar**, 0 points, Init -3, Animal or Mentem. R: Voice, D: Diam, T: Sound. With a roar, the Atlas Bear cause those hearing it to tremble, frozen in fear. This affects humans and animals. ReAn(Me) 30 (Base 5, +1 Diam, +3 Sound, +1 Mentem requisite): Greater Power (30 levels, -3 Might cost, +5xp Penetration)

**Thunderous Swipe**, 0 points, Init -10, Animal or Corpus. R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Individual (Size +2). With a heavy blow, the Atlas Bear may knock any creature or man as big as itself for 5 paces, requiring a Dex roll against an Ease Factor of 12 to avoid being knocked to the ground. If flung straight into the air, or against a hard surface, the target takes damage as falling. (+1 per 2 feet traveled, +7 maximum) This power may be incorporated into a claw attack. ReAn 25 (Base 10, +1 Touch, +1 Size, +1 Corpus requisite): Lesser Power (25 levels), Improved Powers (-5 Might cost)

**Natural Weapons:** Large Claws: Init 0, Atk +5, Def +3, Dam +4; Teeth: Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1. The bear's tough hide and thick fur combine to give it a Protection of +3.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** There are five pawns of Animal in the bear's claws.

**Appearance:** The bear is a large, shaggy beast that weighs up to fifty stone (700 pounds) and stands over seven feet tall on its hind legs. Its coat may be light brown or yellowish in color to black; most often, it is medium brown. The bear has large claws and makes a deep, echoing roar.

Once hunted to serve in the Roman gladiatorial games, Africa's only native bear inhabits its namesake mountains and the surrounding areas, from Marrakesh to Tripoli. Brownish black in color with a reddish-orange belly, it

lacks the white mark on its short muzzle common to other brown bears. A stout, compact creature with powerful claws, it hunts wadis and brush alike, capturing anything it can to eat, but always on the prowl for a beehive.

The Atlas Bear of Virtue's claws may be Enriched by wrapping their hide around a dry river rock taken from a wadi in the Bear's hunting grounds and leaving them in the sun for 20 days. The resulting fetich grants the bearer the Tough Virtue.

### STORY SEED: UNINVITED GUEST

A Bear of Virtue has taken over a vital supply cache or an essential vis site, turning it into a den and preventing any from entering. The covenant's hunters, traders, or messengers need the cache to continue their travels, or the magi want to harvest the vis to continue covenant operations. Investigation reveals a group of Tuareg recently moved into the area, driving the Bear of Virtue from its previous home. Can the Tuareg or the Bear of Virtue move, or does the Bear need to be eliminated? Complicating matters is the fact the Bear is about to deliver cubs. Do the magi wish to try surviving without the site until the cubs depart, or do they want to neutralized the creatures for their own purposes?

### STORY SEED: LOST LEGACY

An inquisitive Bjornaer might seek out such a beast of Virtue, hoping to learn about forgotten pre-Hermetic shapeshifters through the shared Vandal history. What estranged Gothic magic lineages roam the desert and do they possess the secret of changing into exotic Heartbeasts or other non-Hermetic mysteries? Often ignored and left unstudied, hidden shapeshifter clans may roam across the Maghreb, descended from the tribes which crossed the straits, unwittingly awaiting a reunion or confrontation with the Bjornaer of Europe.



## Sijilmasa

### THE ATLAS MOUNTAINS ARE LIKE A FAERIE FOREST

The most significant town in this region is Sijilmasa. It acts as the gateway to desert trade in the west. A similar role is played by Tripoli in the east. This city is a great center of fruticulture: the finest dates in the world come from the region around this city. It remains the last cosmopolitan destination for people traveling south, before the oasis towns of the desert.

The wealth bought in through trade makes Sijilmasa a tempting target, forcing it to maintain heavy fortifications. During times of trouble, desert nomads raid it, so the locals fortify as a precaution. During times of peace, its rulers want to rebel against the central authority, and so improve their defenses. Stones face the brick walls of Sijilmasa. Currently ill-maintained, the walls are decaying from a high state of preparedness and sophistication. Much of the rest of the city is similarly ostentatious but dilapidated. Storyguides describing the city should imagine it was incredibly wealthy a century ago, but without necessary upkeep since that time.

An Almohad army took the city by force last century, and the municipality is currently under the administration of an Almohad governor. The Almohad desperately need the money from the desert trade to hold their Empire together. Locals believe the Caliphate will do virtually anything to control the city and loathe the Almohads for it. The Jewish community in Sijilmasa, for example, has vanished. Some fled abroad, but the rest died in a genocidal pogrom, motivated either by religious fanaticism or, more likely, economics.

Tall wooden wheels draw water out of the river Ziz, allowing most residents to maintain a household garden and filling a bathhouse attached to the largest mosque, where the Sufis come to discuss their philosophy. The Almohads jealously guard against popular Sufi mystics who might challenge them. They established many madrasas, which, combined with its great stone mosque, give the city a Divine aura of 4.

When no other inspiration strikes, player characters should seek the Atlas Mountains. Much as, for European characters, the forest is the blank space where stories can always be found, in the North African imagination, there is always something new to find in the Atlas. This region lies almost outside the law, and so it is a place for exiled princes to plot their return, bandits to recuperate between raids, and heretical sects to flourish. Strange faerie towns and magical caves exist here, as do the houses of ascetics, the meeting sites of diabolists, the towers of wizards, and the tombs of forgotten kings. The Atlas were, perhaps, the fortress of the Titans as they made war on the Olympians, and they may be the shelter of the last remnants of coastal civilizations who fled invasion by the Romans, Greeks, or Arabs.

The mountains seem limitless, and beyond the sudden drop at their southern edge, lies the Great Desert.



## Chapter Three

# The Great Desert

The Great Desert is not as impassable as it appears to the European imagination. Only about one quarter of the desert is actually sand, and travel across this part of the Great Desert is avoided whenever practicable. The remnant is a mixture of arid land, rock, and gravel; it is difficult to survive due to a lack of water. Characters who know the desert, however, find it arduous and unsafe, but passable, even using horses as mounts.

## The Landscapes of the Great Desert

*The country was like a leopard's skin, spotted with inhabited places (which the Egyptians call "oases") that are surrounded by waterless and desert land...*

—Strabo (Geography, 2.5.33)

There are six types of terrain encountered in the Great Desert. The kind most typically imagined by potential travelers is called *erg*, the rolling, windswept sand dunes nearly devoid of vegetation. In reality, roughly 20 percent of the desert consists of *erg*. More common are the stony plains called *reg*, long stretches comprised of sand and black, red, or white gravel. The actual desert is roughly 70 percent *reg*. The rest is divided between *bamadas* (s. *bamada*), or plateaus and mountainous regions scattered throughout the length of the desert, and *chott*, salt flats formed in the distant past, or when seasonal wa-

ter evaporates in a sandy region. True to Strabo's description, *wadis*, deep pools of standing water often fed by infrequent rains or springs, and *oases* (s. *wadi*, *oasis*) dot the landscape with life.

Even within the harsh environment, places exist where water bubbles up from the earth, or where the seasonal rivers and streams collect in a shady place. These sanctuaries preserve life in an otherwise inhospitable land where

the wind howls across the dunes to chew the very life from one's flesh. Nearly every source of water in the Great Desert is seasonal, a fleeting haven that lingers through the winter and spring only to gradually boil away through the summer and autumn. By comparison, oases offer established and constant sources of food and water, where Berbers, Tuareg, *jinn*, and an occasional exotic traveler may gather to trade, to talk, or to

## Hazards of the Great Desert

The Great Desert presents a range of hazards that must be overcome if characters are to travel safely within it.

The sun burns hot in the deserts, meaning that characters need to take precautions against heat and sunstroke. This includes covering their skin to avoid sunburn and carrying adequate supplies of water to stave off dehydration. The Deprivation check time for lack of water is reduced in the deserts to 4 hours, while the sunlight does +1 non-combat damage if skin is left exposed (see *ArM5*, pages 180–181).

Another (usually natural) hazard of the ergs is dry quicksands, which can swallow a man and his mount in seconds. If a character steps on one of these, he begins to sink immediately and is pulled under within two rounds. Death from suffocation follows if he is not rescued (again, see *ArM5*, pages 180–181). A character who is caught in an area of dry quicksand may make a Strength or Quickness stress roll against an Ease Factor of 9 in the first round to leap or pull himself free before he sinks a significant distance, with a botch indicating that his arms are trapped in the following round.

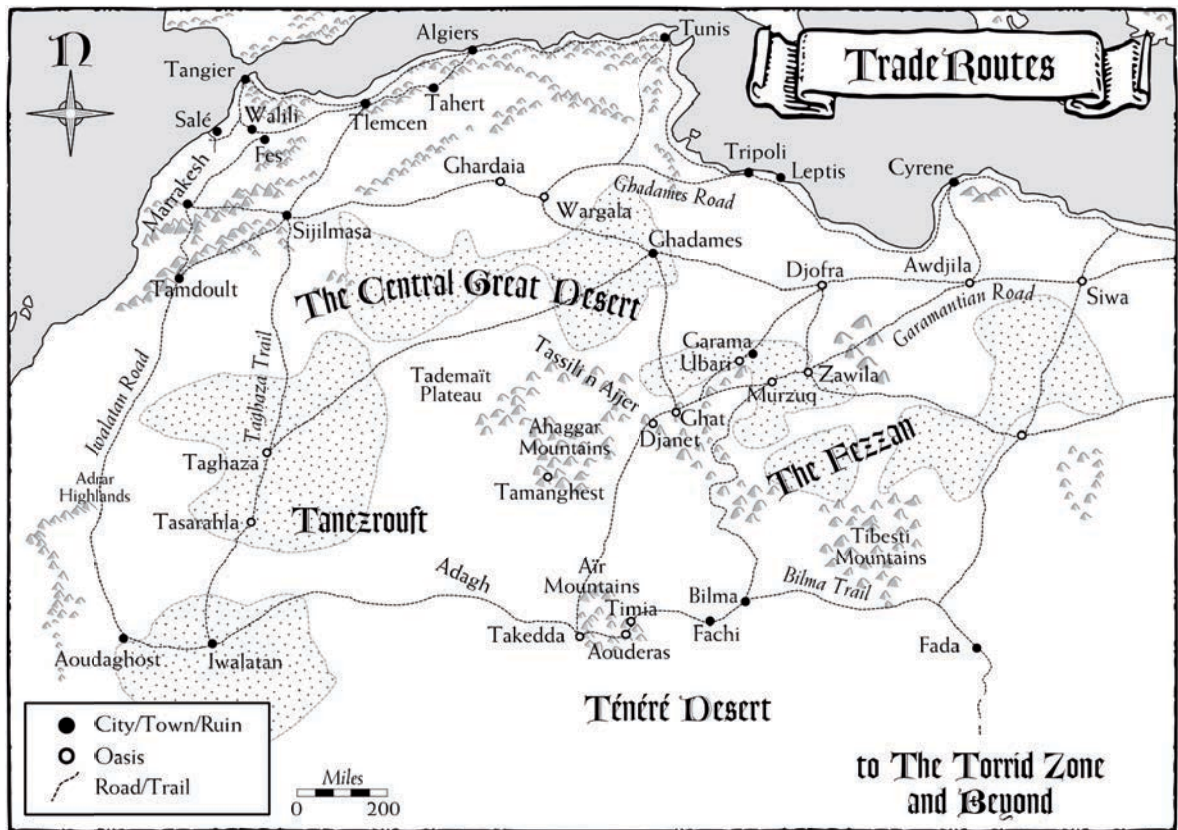
Thereafter it is up to his companions to help him escape its clutches, though if his arms are free he may assist in the second round, reducing any further Ease Factors that he may have to roll against by 3. Thereafter he has been pulled under and is not able to help.

Characters also must be wary of brigands, who prey on caravans crossing the deserts. Such robbers are likely to avoid a caravan that is clearly well guarded, but this depends on how desperate they are for goods to support themselves.

Sandstorms and dust-storms may suffocate travelers or even strip the flesh from their bones. These may be natural, created by the magic of malevolent sorcerers or the manifestations of elemental *jinn*. Some may even be witches in disguise.

Various other desert *jinn* and demons seek to harm unwary travelers. In some cases they may use powers that affect the mind or conjure illusions, presenting travelers with visions of lush, palm-filled oases where they may quench their thirsts. A character may only realize that she has been deceived when she takes her first long draught of water, only to find her mouth full of sand.





rest before continuing on to more hospitable locales.

Each of the regions of the Great Desert contains these terrains. There are the Fezzan, the Central Desert, the Tanezrouft Desert in the west, and the Ténéré Desert in the south. Some claim the Fezzan and Ténéré Deserts join with the fabled Nubian Desert, but most consider these to be the thirst-induced ravings of men driven mad by vicious *iinn*.

## The Fezzan

Sandy ergs comprise most of the Fezzan, though there are many areas of chott and saline depressions which sustain salt-adapted plants, like those in Siwa. In the west, Idehan Ubari Erg and the Great Erg form the boundary with the Central Great Desert. The Libyan Sand Sea forms the eastern boundary with Egypt, and the Al-Hamada al-Hamra (the Red Plateau) acts as a buffer between the desert and the Mediterranean in the north. In the south, the Ahaggar mountains and the Bilma Erg mark the beginning of the Ténéré. The

vast, dark field of the Haruj hosts several slumbering volcanoes in the south, their calderas boasting hidden lakes. The Waw an-Namus in the southeastern Fezzan is one such volcano, distinctive due to a layer of black ash which coats its slopes and the surrounding area. This region was once the land of the Garamantian culture (see later in this chapter), but they disappeared with the coming of Islam, leaving only ruins, cemeteries, and a trade route bearing their name as a legacy.

### AL KUFRA

Those arriving in the isolated Al Kufra oasis usually continue southeast, into the Nubian desert, and only rarely turn southwest toward Bilma. Awdjila lies 140 leagues to the north, and Murzuq is 180 leagues to the northwest. Al Kufra is a lonely oasis overlooked by the Tibesti mountains to the southwest and the Bilma Erg to the south. Some consider it a good departure point for distant Fada. The Berber people of Al Kufra live a quiet, simple life, and prefer their business left alone and their visitors transient.

Three villages share the oasis: Al Jawf with its rich gardens and date palmeries, the slave-occupied plantation of Ez-Zurgh, and Et-Tleilf, watching the sands from the southwest corner of the oasis, nearly four leagues from Al Jawf.

### AWDJILA

The oasis of Awdjila is home to the unusual conical domes of the Mosque of Atiq and the domes of Abdullah ibn Sa'ad ibn Abi as-Sarh, the foster brother of the Caliph Uthman and former governor of Egypt. The mosque is one of the oldest in Africa, naturally cool and pleasant inside, and it gives the oasis a Divine aura of 4. The people here remain mostly Berber, and speak the Berber language during everyday business within the oasis.

Awdjila serves as a crossroads of trails in the region. Caravans arriving from the southern trails or from Egypt to the northeast restock on dates and water before departing. Common routes lead to Al Kufra to the south, and Murzuq to the east-southeast. The route to Murzuq skirts the edge of the Haruj, avoiding

## Vis Sites

Several locations in the desert harbor vis, a reason for magi to brave its dangers.

### THE CHANGING LAKE

One of the salty lakes near Murzuq changes color over time. Twice a year, as the seasons melt into the next and the colors of the waters change, red sand blows across the lake on the wind. Some of this sand swirls and floats on the surface near the shore reeds, forming two pawns each of Imaginem and Muto vis. The residents occasionally collect it, incorporating the vis into the pots or bricks they fashion for use in the oasis.

### WALKING ON GLASS

In the Great Sand Sea, east of Al Kufra, there is an area of the desert filled with chunks of green-white glass. The most luminous and clear pieces revealed on the crests of windswept dunes hold

Ignem or Auram vis, and the best pieces hold both. Some very large pieces hold two or three pawns. The area containing these natural vitreous fragments has a Magic aura of 4, but will it remain if all of the vis-bearing glass is collected?

### THE FOREST OF THE JOBAR

Rising out of the sands is a copse of trees made entirely out of dark stone shot through with grey crystal. After terrible sandstorms, some of the trees fall, splitting open to reveal fragments loaded with Terram vis. Strangely, one in five pawns produced within the crystals is Herbam or Aurum vis, but only in vis found in the spring. Occasionally, a new tree is revealed from the erg. The Tuareg know of this place and avoid it, claiming a great lizard lives nearby. This beast, the "Jobar," skulks through the dunes under the cover of sandstorms and steals away children. The bones of a few of its kind lay sprawled out across the desert, used as landmarks for traveling nomads.

the vast field of volcanic cones and dark basalt stone, although those who must stop occasionally find wadis hidden amongst the black rock. To the north, on the coast, a small village outside some of the ruins of Cyrene has grown in recent years, as the Genoese increase their presence and trade with caravans arriving in the otherwise quiet town. A difficult journey to Egypt stretches to the horizon; Cairo lies 200 leagues to the east-northeast, and Alexandria is roughly 180 leagues to the northeast, both across the treacherous Sea of Sand.

### DJOFRA

The Djofra Oasis consists of three primarily Berber communities: the villages of Sokna, Hon, and Waddan. Sokna has a wall with 7 gates and 33 bastions, as well as a fortress, or kasbah, inside, but the kasbah is poorly maintained. Construction in Sokna consists of a combination of cut stone and un-

baked brick houses. Hon lies 7 leagues to the northeast of Sokna, and is a small market town. Seven leagues southeast of Sokna, Waddan rises out of an old Roman town with four mithraeums hidden beneath the streets. All three of these towns maintain palmeries of sweet dates, along with some figs and goats. Waddan occasionally hosts a slave market frequented by jinn, the wares brought from the south as caravans stop on their way north to Tripoli, east to Cairo, or south to Murzuq. Some rest here on their way southwest to Ghat.

### MURZUQ

The town of Murzuq is a popular stop on the Garamantian Road and the Bilma Trail, with caravans using this oasis town as a crossroads between Cyrene, Cairo, Ghat, and points south. It is just south of the Ramlat Dawada region, a swath of red sands, with eleven very salty lakes. One of these lakes is

renowned for regularly changing colors from red to green to blue and occasionally even yellow. Another is rich in reddish prawns, which local nomads consume. Thirty leagues northwest lies Ubari, and the ruins of Garama stand between the two. The Djofra oasis is a distant 90 leagues to the north, and Ghat is 75 leagues to the west.

### UBARI

With the dunes of the Ubari Erg looming to the south, this oasis consists of a group of twenty lakes ringed with date palms and rushes. Ruined villages crumble on the shores of several of the bodies of water, and the Tuareg who regularly camp here fish for small, red shrimp, which they grind into a paste and mold into cakes. While the water in the lakes is extremely salty, wells dug in the area provide fresh water. It is a 28 league journey to Sebha, but a mere 5 leagues to the east, the Garamantian cemetery of Hatya rises out of the sands.

## The Garamatians

*Men dwell there called Garamantes, an exceeding great nation who sow on earth which they have laid on the salt...these Garamantes go in their four-horse chariots chasing the Ethiopians.*

-Herodotus, *The Histories*, IV.183

### HISTORY

The Garamantian Kingdom once occupied the heart of the Fezzan, with settlements sprawling through out the central Libyan desert from 400 BC to 600 AD. They interacted little with those beyond the sands, raiding for slaves to the south and repulsing the mighty Roman legions until 15 BC, when the Legion III Cyrenaica under Lucius Cornelius Balbus the Younger sacked several of their towns. The Garamantians became a nominal client state of the Empire, existing in a detente with Rome and ruled by sorcerer-kings, who claimed the feather as their symbol, and an elite cadre of nobility, which hunted nomadic tribes for sport from horse-



drawn chariots. The Roman Maternus even wrote of accompanying a Garamantian slave-raiding party. Their slaves protected their borders, mined precious stones in the Tibesti mountains to the south, and created the foggaras, or water wells, used to irrigate crops. Their slaves also farmed barley, figs, grapes, and wheat, and tended herds of shaggy, long-horned oxen while their merchants traded salt, slaves, and wheat with the Romans. This commerce drove the first caravans traveling into the desert, acquiring the minerals and human chattel the Garamantians needed to maintain their state.

Even in death, slaves served their Garamantian masters. The lords of the Fezzan mastered potent necromantic magics allowing them to control hordes of walking dead, which did not thirst and ignored the biting winds of the desert. These dessicated corpses, blackened by the sun and the Garamantian magics, worked fields, dug the mines, and served until their forms no longer remained functional. All of this sustained a host of eight cities, scores of villages, and numerous fortresses throughout a line of one hundred kings; the final king was taken away in chains by Arab warriors in 668. The last remnants of their culture died out with the coming of Islam, as the Divine auras of worshipping slaves unravelled their rituals and the sharp blades of pressing armies caused most of their corpse-warriors to disintegrate on the wind.

Without the unliving legions to stop them, the slaves rose up against the Garamantian nobles, led by the soldier-slave caste. In acts of desperation and spite, the surviving lords commanded their few remaining corpse-miners to collapse the tunnels of their foggaras and deny their rebelling slaves the life-giving water that had been pulled from the earth for a thousand years. The remaining slaves and citizenry melted into the local nomadic tribes or emigrated, unable to sustain their kingdom. Without water, without leaders, without slaves or magics, the Garamantians faded away, their cities blanketed by dust and their monuments consumed by the desert.

### LOST SITES AND CITIES

The Garamantians built eight major towns and many other important settlements throughout their territory. They raised fortresses, constructed tombs, established cemeteries, and dug their water collection tunnels, or foggara, out of the rocks and sand, all fairly close to the Roman provinces to the west. Many of these sites are completely lost to the desert sands now, but a few still stand as mute testimony to the people who ruled the area. The bulk of their settlements stand around three oases stretching from Ghat to Murzuq to Djofra.

#### GARAMA

Garama is a crumbling ruin of collapsing mud-brick and cut stone structures surrounded by a ring of stunted palms. Residents abandoned the Garamantian capital following the destruction of the last sorcerer-king's palace and the collapse of its primary foggaras. Scavenging caravans have picked the ruins clean of most useful salvage over the last 500 years, and now only those capable of delving into the earth might find lost treasures worth discovering. With over 800 years of trade with Rome and a leg-

acy that outlasted the Empire by a little less than 200 years, who knows what the last Garamantians secreted away in the hopes of surviving the upheaval. This land was still primarily pagan in those waning years, and its now-ruined Roman temple, established after Balbus' campaign forced the Garamantians into a token client-state relationship, may have attracted wizards seeking both isolation and the comfort of a familiar setting.

#### ZINCHECRA

Built before Garama atop a small plateau on the shores of a small lake and spring just to the north of the capital, very little remains of this settlement. The lake is now a collection of salt flats, but the spring yields some water, keeping a cut-stone fountain partially filled with water year round.

#### GHAT

The Garamantian legacy is visible in the fortress overlooking Ghat, and the necropolis north of town. Dried mud-bricks compose the structures of the old town and the population persisted here due to the presence of the oasis, rather than reliance on foggaras.

### Garamantian Walking Dead

*Blackened by the sun, wearing nothing more than tattered rags, this creature moves with a deliberate, stuttering action*

**Characteristics:** Int -2, Per -2, Pre 0, Com -2, Str +3, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Qualities and Inferiorities:** No Fatigue, Improved Soak

**Personality Traits:** Persistent +3, Walking Dead +3\*

**Reputations:** Don't Exist (local) 3

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init 0, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage +5

*Grapple:* Init 0 Attack +3, Defense +6, Damage n/a

**Soak:** +11

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated

(16-20), Destroyed (21+).

**Abilities:** Brawl 3 (fist)

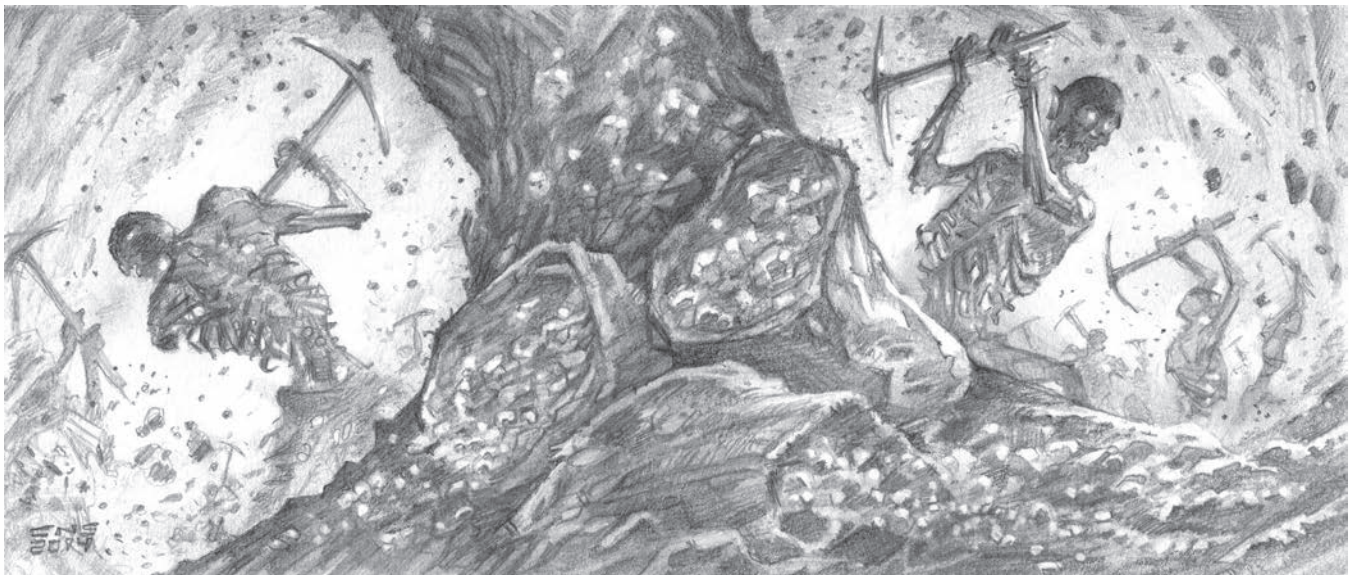
**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Equipment:** Ragged clothes, occasionally a mining implement of some kind.

**Vis:** There is no vis in a Garamantian Walking Dead.

**Appearance:** A shriveled, leathery corpse, blackened by the sun. Its eyes are pale, milky white and pupil-less.

These walking corpses lie motionless unless executing the last commands given to them. They repeat these actions until unable or until the conditions for more important commands occur. Garamantian Walking Dead, if studied for a season, can act as a source of Garamantian Lore or Insight.



**SARIR TIBESTI**

Following the narrow veins of tanos gemstones (called amazonite in the modern day), several ancient mines lie hidden in the Tibesti mountains, which demark the boundary with the Ténéré Desert. So remote are these tunnels that the corpse-miners of the Garamantians may still toil unceasingly in the miserable dark. Mindlessly following the ore and the mountain, the unliving bodies may be honeycombing the rock with passages while stockpiling uncut green-blue gems for masters who will never return. In antiquity, tanos was used for signets and seals and provides a +3 Shape and Material bonus when incorporated into such devices.

**ROYAL TOMBS OF  
AHRAMAT AL-HATTIA**

As many as 100,000 tombs stand in silent vigil across the Garamantian lands. Many of these tombs are enchanted with additional powers, giving the sorcerer-kings a distinct boundary marker in so many towns and villages as well as a repository for exquisitely preserved corpses to be animated to perform whatever emergency tasks necessary.

**WELLS & WATER**

Hundreds of leagues of tunnels were carved into the rock of the Fezzan, allowing the Garamantians to pull water from the earth. Sand now fills nearly all of these tunnels. In places, there are still fragmentary passages, but without magical excavation the vast majority of the Garamantian foggara are simply inaccessible. There might still be numerous silent warriors sealed within, waiting for a potent necromancer to command them and put them to good use.

**LANGUAGE OF  
GARAMANTIAN MAGIC**

The Garamantian sorcerer-kings used the Punic language and the Tifnagh alphabet, a script later adopted by the Berber nomads who absorbed their slaves and refugees. There are few remaining instances of this script, on random rock carvings in the Great Desert, some remaining ruins, and a few buried urns. Some murabitin and Berber elders know the language and could teach its rudimentary basics, but no one living in Africa has an effective score greater than 3. No texts regarding their necromantic secrets made it outside the kingdom when it fell, but may remain in a hidden stronghold. Summoned Garamantian ghosts effectively speak the dead language of Punic; however, nobles and merchants probably speak some Latin.

**GARAMANTIAN GODS**

The Garamantians venerated god Ammon, whom they called Aman, above all others. This was evident in their incorporation of his name in their own, and his priests in ancient Libya kept a temple at the oasis of Siwah. This temple and its oracle were still venerated and considered potent diviners in late antiquity, but there is little there now but ruins and a small village.

**Vis Site: The  
Forgotten Foggara**

Commanded to dig a new foggara as the rebellion began by a Garamantian noble with hopes of outlasting the turmoil, a group of corpse-miners disappeared from memory when slaves ambushed and killed their master before he could tell his fellows. Left to their task, they dug a vast reservoir beneath a rocky outcropping before water flooded their cave and left them unable to work further. The flowing foggara keeps a small wadi green, and, after rare storms, the overflow leaves 5 pawns of Aquam vis in the wadi. Held in the bone fragments of these lost workers which the current carries up to the surface, the vis litters the shore of the wadi. Is the noble's lost supply cache nearby?



## Story Seed: The Vexillation of the Fata Morgana

Acting upon visions seen by diviners in House Tremere of an impending Mongol invasion, a vexillation was created and sent into the desert of the Fezzan, using the cover of being a Genovese trading caravan. Charged with finding and establishing an emergency redoubt in the foggaras of the Garamantians, these Hermetic magi are fanatic about keeping their location and goals secret. What happens when the player characters accidentally scavenge one of their supply caches, or encounter the magi and discover their purpose amidst the crumbling ruins of the desert? Can a reasonable solution be found, or will the Tremere act with violence to protect the secrecy of the dedicated mission of their vexillation? Will a Wizard War conducted beyond the borders of Mythic Europe still follow the conventions of the Order, or can the two groups find a way to resolve the situation?

### TYPES OF GARAMANTIAN MAGIC

Garamantian magic was non-Hermetic and both very limited and erratic in the presence of the Divine. It focused on preserving bodies, animating corpses, sensing through a corpse, and commanding corpses. It also had a minor focus on sensing bodies of water.

If considered for the purposes of Hermetic research, the rituals allowing a Garamantian sorcerer to bind a horde of corpses without an Arcane Connection to each should be considered a Minor Magical Breakthrough. Success allows the researcher to perform a simple supernatural ritual adding a corpse to a horde which is bound to an object. The Garamantians often used a crown or headdress adorned with a feather. A caster wearing the bound object may use the Voice and Group levels of effect for spells affecting or working through the horde, even if they remain at an Arcane Connection distance or have numbers far exceeding a usual Group. This ritual has no Penetra-

## The Iter Praeter Caput Saxi

Outside of the ruins of Roman Lepcis lies the entrance to a thin linear level 5 Magic regio that crosses the Fezzan, bypassing the old territory of the Garamantes and stretching for hundreds of miles to reach the fabled mountains of Agisymba. The *Bab Ras al-Hammada* or "Road Past the Stone Heads" is mentioned by Pliny as the secret route taken by the Roman general Valerius Festus in the first century AD.

The northern and southern entrances to the regio lie within small Magic auras of strength 2 and are each marked by an overgrown Roman milestone radiating faint Mercurian magic. Unless entered from near the milestones, the narrow width of the magic road makes it impossible to find without the guidance of a Camel of Virtue (see Appendix: Mundane Bestiary). Although remarkably secure, the area within the regio consists only of a repeating loop of narrow desert track broken every few miles by a brackish well or watering hole, making it unsuitable for use as a hidden covenant site.

### A COVENANT IN AGISYMBA?

Agisymba itself lies deep to the south, a land of high mountains surrounding a vast lake, populated by giant creatures such as the legendary monoceros and cameopard, and rich with wild areas that contain abundant undiscovered vis sources. A small tribe of Plinian troglodytes inhabit the caves here, hiding from humans due to their collective memory of past Roman slave raids but, they may make useful grogs for a Hermetic settlement.

The distant mundane location, potential for untapped magical resources, and easy access via the Iter Praeter Caput Saxi may make this an attractive settlement site for isolationist magi seeking to distance themselves from the wider Order of Hermes. Alternatively, intrepid characters interested in constructing a menagerie of exotic creatures or seeking a unique familiar may be tempted to seek out this lost plateau.

tion, only works on mundane corpses, and cannot persist in a Divine aura. Any recovered bonded objects can be researched as a source of Garamantian Lore or Insight, depending on their state. (See *Ancient Magic*, page 8)

Hermetic Intellego magic far exceeds Garamantian methods for sensing water in the desert. However, relics of such sorceries may help a researcher better understand Garamantian methods or assist with the translation of works written in Tifinagh. Buried in an urn in a small cave near Zinchecra, an initiation script in Tifinagh Punic details the last recorded method for gaining the Garamantian ability to Dowse for water. (See *ArM5*, page 64 for the Dowsing ability.) To self-initiate this Virtue (Target Level 18), one must travel to the cut-stone pool of Zinchecra during the autumnal equinox (+3) after properly mummifying and entombing 10 individuals in Garamantian tombs (+3). There, one must take a purifying bath in the pool under the light of the moon while undergoing ritual scarring — which provides the equivalent of the Blatant Gift (+9). Upon exiting, if one's (Garamantian Lore + Presence + Initiation Script bonus) value is greater than 18, one gains the virtue of Dowsing for drinking water. However, locating and deciphering this script may prove to be full arc in itself. (See *The Mysteries: Revised Edition* page 13)

## The Central Great Desert

The Central Great Desert is bounded by the Mediterranean in the north and the Ahaggar mountains in the south. The Ubari Desert makes up its eastern border, the Grand Western Erg and the Tademaït Plateau account for its western. The terrain consists mainly of erg sand dunes, rocky hamadas, and dry valleys. More than any other part of the Great Desert, the Central dDesert is very dry, rarely graced with rain, and with scant vegetation, even in the wadis. The Ahaggar mountains are tall peaks of hard, black rock formed into pinnacles, towers and crests, like huge pieces of volcanic basalt splintered and carved with an unimaginably large knife.

## The Great Desert Regio Network

Deep within mundane deserts lie small nondescript Magic auras leading to higher regiones, unmarked except for slight shifts in the shape of the largest dunes and the shimmer of the air in the baking sun. Known to Camels of Virtue and the deep desert nomads such as the Bedouin of the Empty Quarter of Arabia or the Tuareg of the great Sahara, many of these regiones connect into one large regio network. Within the regiones lie similar landscapes to the deserts they touch on in the mundane world and travelers may encounter other wayfarers or fantastic desert beasts that act as guardians of the magical highway. Other paths lead only to dead ends or featureless expanses of sand where thirst and heat block the intruders from progressing or escaping.

Characters with the (Desert) Regio Network Minor Virtue (see *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 45) can use these

deep desert regiones to travel quickly across the desert sands from one location to another by entering into a regio and exiting at a different mundane location. The Tuareg call this phenomenon *tinariwen* (Tuareg: "the deserts"), referring to the multiple landscapes and geographic variation within the region. Some mundane Tuareg and the mysterious Blue Men can navigate them. This allows the nomads to engage in lightning raids and then retreat, seemingly to simply melt away into the deep sands.

Some travelers may even be able to move from one desert to another — the Sahara of North Africa, the Empty Quarter of Arabia, the Nefud of Syria, the Kyzylkum and Karakum of Transoxiana, the Taklimakan beyond the Roof of the World, and even other unknown deserts in lands outside of Mythic Europe may be linked in this way.

The Tuareg call the Ahaggar mountains "Atakor," the place of stone, but the high peaks create pockets of habitable land jealously guarded by nomadic tribes and hunted by packs of painted dogs. Just north of the Ahaggar rises the Tassili n Ajjer, the "plateau of rivers," with hundreds of natural rock arches, many stands of cypress, myrtle, and wild olive trees, and dozens of petroglyphs. The nomadic tribes consider the area sacred and the Wind Spirits (see later) often relax here.

### DJANET

This is a small Tuareg and Berber oasis tucked into a valley on the western side of the Tassili n Ajjer plateau. A community one might consider to be no more than an agglomeration of villages maintains the large date palmery for trade with caravans on the Garamantian or Ghadames Roads. More than a dozen natural rock arches stand within 7 leagues of Djanet, one of which very closely resembles an elephant, though it is far larger than any mundane elephant could ever be. A few rare and esoteric texts penned by lost scholars of the Fay claim these arches to be door-

ways into a regio network, but even if the tales are true, none have returned to tell where the paths lead. Djanet is roughly 25 leagues southwest of Ghat, and 125 leagues south of Ghadames.

### GHADAMES

Ghadames is controlled by seven clans of Berbers who have divided the city into as many districts, each with its own souk. The city is surrounded by a stout wall and the Ain al-Faras oasis lies at its heart. The Third Legion garrisoned the city for nearly 200 years and its crumbling, abandoned fort stands on a nearby hilltop to the southwest. Notably, covered walkways connect most of the buildings, creating a maze-like warren of alleyways which very effectively insulates the population from the worst heat, but conceals the activities of bandits and cutthroats who might prey on the unwary traveler. This also has the effect of creating a large number of lacunae in Ghadames, spaces where the city's normal Divine aura of 3 does not reach.

## Myrtle of Virtue

In some hidden wadis grow Myrtle Trees of Virtue. Their leaves and berries are highly valued by a number of people. The Sardinians make a liqueur from the crushed berries called Mirto. The murabitin find it augments their dream interpretation. Amongst Jewish scholars, myrtle is considered to be both the symbol and scent of Eden. Certain theurgic practitioners find a sprig of myrtle on their tongue enhances their casting technique.

A sprig of leaves with either a flower or berry contains 2 pawns of Mentem vis. It can be enriched in a number of ways. In its berry form, it can be fermented in a silver urn underground for a season, at which point a draught taken from the urn will provide the consumer a +3 bonus to all recovery rolls for a season. In its flower form, an enriched sprig provides the bearer with the Clear Thinker Virtue. To enrich the myrtle, the person who intends to use it must sleep with the sprig under their pillow for a season. Alternatively, some Jewish traditions dictate that the myrtle must dry in the Holy of Holies, and be struck by the light of the rising sun each day for a season. If a myrtle is kept soaking in seawater for a season in a place sacred to Aphrodite, it will remain supple and appear fresh, granting the bearer the Venus' Blessing Virtue.

### GHARDAIA

Ghardaia Oasis consists of five fortified villages, called ksours, configured with identical designs. The five villages are Ghardaia, Melika, Beni Isguen, Bou Noura and El Atteuf. Each boasts its own mosque with the minarets functioning as watch towers. The houses are built around the mosque in concentric circles and surrounded by a high wall, making each village more of a citadel. For protection, residents store grain and weapons in the mosque, but spend most of their time outside the citadel, tending the date palmeries during the summer months.

The unusual sect of Ibadi Muslims



founded the village of Ghardaia in the 11th century, venerating the female saint Daïa who inhabited a cave (ghâr) in the valley. While the other villages have Divine auras of 3 due to their close, enclosed construction with their respective mosques, Ghardaia's mosque, with its relics of Daïa, has an aura of 4.

#### GHAT

Often called "The Last Oasis" by those travelling the Garamantian Road, Ghat sits on the eastern edge of the Tassili n Ajjer, with the Idehan Ubari Erg to the north and the Bilma Erg to the south. This is something of a misnomer, as Djanet is just 25 leagues to the southwest, although Ghat is off the trade route's regular path to Bilma. Like Ghadames, it also utilizes numerous covered walkways between buildings to reduce the impact of the heat on residents. A small fort watches over the town from atop a rocky outcropping to the southwest and an ancient cemetery, filled with short Garamantian grave pyramids, stands to the north of the town.

#### WARGALA

This oasis is another of the few strongholds of the Ibadi Muslims, a sect which believes any Muslim may lead the community and reserves the right to revolt against an unjust or heretical leader. Many of their number fled here from Tahert after the fall of the Rustamid Imamate in the early 10th century. There are also Ibadis in the neighboring Ghardaia oases and on the island of Djerba. A large mosque occupies the town square and the city's protective wall boasts six separate gates. The souk is noted for its arcade, providing shade to many of the vendors and for its active slave market, patronized by the jinn of the area. Date palm groves, and fruit and vegetable gardens flourish all around the city, fed by the oasis and their products sold in the market.

## The Redoubts of the Tuareg

The Tuareg dominate an area in the southern central reaches of the Great Desert, centered on the great mountainous plateaus, but can be found anywhere within the confines of the sand. Within the Tazenrouft to the west and the greater expanse of the Tenere to the east and southeast, a string of waterless and otherwise inhospitable Magic auras almost encircles this cluster of mountains, except to the north where caravan route enters the Hagggar massif. This makes the Tuareg homelands almost inaccessible without access to the Great Desert Regio Network — a multitude of regions that are known to lead from the sands around the rocks and connect to other sites within the Sahara and perhaps other distant deserts (see the nearby insert).

#### AHAGGAR

This remote and uninviting plateau rising above the desert dunes, with its central cluster of peaks referred to in Tamahak as the Atakor, is the spiritual home of the Tuareg and their sanctuary against their enemies. The desolate peaks and valleys filled with cooled lava make the area seem a forlorn and forbidding region that shimmers lilac in the setting sun — a land seemingly abandoned by God as the nomads that call it home.

Despite its isolated location the massif is home to a variety of raptors such as eagles, but the soil supports only the grazing of the lesser caste Kel Ulli tribes' goats and sheep. The Tuareg of the Kel Ahaggar dwell predominantly in the dark canyons around the periphery of this range.

Within the central Atakor area stand the highest peaks of Tahat, Ilaman, Amjer, Tiouyen, and Iherhe. The Tuareg believe the spirits of the peaks are rivals in love and that their current positions are the result of their quarrels. At the base of Ilaman lies a spring formed when the jealous Amjer struck his brother's shoulder, the water of which is a liquid form of Terram vis.

The more remote and highest regions of the plateau are pocked with Magic auras. Within the more violently jagged clefts at their bases are nestled small Infernal auras, inhabited by demons and Infernal jnun of the Orders of the Aerial Powers and Furies that subject the *gueltas* or valleys to flash floods from paroxysmal torrents.

#### TAMANGHEST

A gem nestled in the bosom of the Ahaggar mountains near the edge of the Tassili n Ajjer plateau, Tamanghest is a rich oasis that supports groves of lemons, dates, figs, and almonds. Millet and wheat grow here, and the Tuareg keep small herds of goats for meat and milk. The herders of this village consider themselves the guardians

### The Cypressess of the Desert

The Tuareg hedge magicians use the wood from these cypresses to create their most powerful creations, but must beseech the spirits of the trees to sacrifice timber for their labors. A fallen limb from an individual tree contains Vim vis which grants different powers or Virtues to the supplicants as per the examples below:

Tin-Balanan	Puissant Leadership
Tin-Ambarak	Puissant Ride
Tin-Gaded	Wilderness Sense
Tin-Tamazast	Lesser Immunity: Thirst

The enrichment processes are known to wandering male inenden hedge magicians, who must be bargained with or coerced to give up their hedge secrets.

**Ancient Cypress wood:** +3 spirits, +3 necromancy

of the cypress in the Tassili n Ajjer, and have named all of the trees on the plateau, which is blanketed with a Magic Aura of 2. Many of the trees have their own genius loci spirits, which have similar protective feelings for the Tuareg. Few come to this tranquil place and its ochre-colored homes without the blessing of the region's nomads; it is an open secret, known among the tribes as a place to trade and rest, but no outsiders are invited to visit. Almost 17 leagues to the west lies the haven of Abalessa and the sealed tomb of Tin Hinan, reputed to have healing properties.

### TASSILI N AJJER

The northern massif known as the "Plateau of Rivers" is a rocky upland scored by deep gorges and hidden *gueltas*. Ancient cypresses, known to the Tuareg as *tarout*, cluster in the higher eastern uplands of the Tassili n Ajjer. Each is over 2000 years old, gnarled and twisted, with its own personality. The oldest stand in a grove in the stony Wadi Amazar. Led by Tin-Balalan (Tuareg: "the one with the pool at its feet"), the trees are each the physical manifestation of powerful genius loci. Knowledgeable beyond man, each tree is a Magic guardian of their local area, similar to the elder trees of the German forests (see Chapter 4: The Forest, *Guardians of the Forest*, or *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 106).

### Faerie Tuareg and the Jnun

Although some of the southern Tuareg tribes such as the Kel Ifoghas, Iwellemmeden, and Kel Geres have a large number of Faerie blooded individuals, it is the *Kel Asouf*, or "People of the Empty Spaces," that are the true Faerie jnun of the deserts. These Faeries generally resemble the varied *jinn* of the more Muslim dominated lands to the north but are wilder and generally darker in behavior.

### AÏR

This southern collection of nine circular volcanic outcrops is noted for its graven rock art, including a rock carved with pair of strange long-necked creatures that resemble the *cameleopardalis* mentioned in Pliny. Each of these sites marks the location of a strong Magic auras (at least strength 4) aligned to the Art of Animal or Terram, and they are valuable to Tuareg hedge wizards, although they unusually do not claim responsibility for creating the petroglyphs. The stone artwork seems to unduly attract packs of wild dogs with spotted hides that resemble jackals. The painted dogs must be dealt with or driven away to use the sites for magic rites.

The tallest peak of the plateau, Idoukal-n-Taghès, rises above the pilgrimage village of Abatol and hosts a Magic regio where the climate is similar to the Mediterranean. Within the Herbam-aligned aura grow a number of plants and herbs

### Saga Seed: An Atakor Covenant?

Isolated from the rest of the Order by mundane distance, the desert, and fierce nomad tribes, a the bastion of the Tuareg may at first seem an unlikely site for a Hermetic covenant or even a cooperative of sahir from the Order of Suleiman. But all these features may make it a desirable site for a group of wizards seeking to escape the political intrigues and mundane obligations of their traditional homelands, albeit at the price of extreme isolation.

Although aggressive and possessed with an unequalled sense of racial superiority, once they have been subdued or allied with the Tuareg nomads make excellent covenantfolk with their adaptations to desert lifestyle and familiarity with the shifting regions surrounding the massifs. The harsh geography and supernatural barriers provide a measure of protection against both mundane and supernatural interference and the abundance of untapped magical resources and powerful Magic auras provides a fertile base for magical experimentation or incursions into the Magic Realm.

not normally found in the desert, including examples of common European Herbs of Virtue.

### ADAGH

Lying beyond the feared waterless Tanezrouft to the north, this sandstone massif is pocked with predominantly Faerie auras rather than Magic auras like the other three massifs. Sometimes known as the Adrar Ifoghas after the Kel Ifoghas tribe that claim the area, its rock art shows mainly scenes from nomad life, and appears to move and change from one visit to the next.

## Tanezrouft, the Western Great Desert

Bounded on the west by the Atlantic, the Tanezrouft's long eastern border consists of the Western Erg, the Tademait Hadama and the Ahaggar Mountains of the Central Great Desert, and the Bilma Erg of the Ténéré. In the north, the Chech Erg pushes against the Atlas Mountains, and there are few in this lonely region except the caravans and the most hardy of Tuareg nomads. The winds often sweep away the tracks of fellow travelers, and those lingering behind easily become lost or prey to the hyenas or jackals, which need no water.

### IWALATAN

A wonder of cut-stone structures, the town of Iwalatan is the southern terminus of the Walata Road and the Taghaza Trail. The Massufa Berbers maintain a few groves of date palms here, growing melons in their shade and keeping herds of sheep. The many wells of this oasis produce crisp, clean water, water made all the more refreshing by the long, dry trip required to reach Iwalatan. Timbuktu is 100 leagues to the east-southeast, while the salt mines of Taghaza are 165 leagues to the north-northeast. The Walata Road leaves to the northwest, while the Taghaza Trail departs to the north. Several mosques grace the town, giving it a Divine aura of 3.



## Story Seeds

### WAGES OF SIN

The flies of Taghaza are, in fact, the physical manifestation of a horde of False God demons. The gold distributed to greedy souls throughout Mythic Europe must come from somewhere, and with so much gold passing through the hands of so many in a place where death is commonplace and theft between slaves often resolved with murder, demons leverage the situation to their advantage, making a harsh locale even more sinful and miserable. Whenever a sack of gold is needed to tempt a weak-willed fool, the demons whisk what they need from these awful hovels and transient caravans. A devout magus who discovers this vast stockpile of wealth must not only grapple with his own feelings of greed, but consider if a larger blow might be dealt to the plans of Infernal if an easy cache of gold were no longer available.

### BREAKING THE BONDS

The slaves of Taghaza are cruelly imprisoned – while free to roam unfettered, they are imprisoned by the surrounding waterless desert and their complete reliance on imported food and supplementary fresh water from the merchant caravans of the southern gold traders. Hermetic magi may seek to disrupt this status quo without realizing the true nature of the slaves and the salt trade.

Characters willing to provide a magical means of supplying food would greatly unbalance the economy here, but whether the salt slaves would welcome a change in overlord is questionable. The southern traders, also reliant on the salt produced here, may negotiate with gold or else resort to desperate violence to reclaim their prize.

Another large salt mine, Taodeni, lies undiscovered further south, but distant from the current trade route. Hermetic magi who discover and settle this new site, harvesting the salt

### SIJILMASA

Founded by Berbers in 757, Sijilmasa lies on the trade route to Tangier, struggling to survive on the caravans of salt, gold and slaves headed in either direction. The wealth garnered long ago in the large marketplace in the western quarter of the city translated into high, strong, ochre-colored walls protecting the many stately temples and Sufi madrasas in the city. For more regarding Sijilmasa, see Chapter 2: Coasts.

### TASARAHLA

Really no more than a place in the dunes where a spring of water oozes from the ground, Tasarahla has a few rings of stone for travelers' fire pits and a couple of low walls to help shield tents. The spring, such as it is, is marked by a moderately sized stone and small patch of mud. New arrivals must often dig to clear the well of windswept debris and wait for a short while before being able to gather water. The flow of water here is slow, but steady. Taghaza lies roughly 10 days journey north, about 53 leagues, and Iwalatan is about 75 leagues to the south-southwest.

### TAGHAZA

Not truly an oasis, or even a wadi, Taghaza is a barren mining town carved out of a rich chott. There are no trees, just salt pits, sand, and the homes of the Masufa Berber tribe's all-male slaves. Built from blocks of salt and roofed with camel hides, their thresholds all face west due to a tradition claiming evil jinn in the region cannot enter a structure from that direction. An Infernal aura of 3 lends credence to this belief. A slightly less rudimentary way-station for the foreign merchant caravans stands on the eastern edge of the settlement. The only food available is camel meat, or dates and millet brought in by caravans; many of the slaves perish when caravans are delayed. Taghaza seems perpetually plagued by flies and everyone considers the water brackish. Despite these miserable conditions, the town is awash with gold and exotic goods, brought by merchants from the south, which residents use in conjunction

with salt to trade with arriving caravans from the north for slaves and manufactured goods. The Chech Erg stretches to the north and the El Djouf desert makes the 165-league trip south to Timbuktu a foolhardy trek reserved for only the most dedicated caravans. Iwalatan is closer, only 125 leagues south-southeast. For those headed to the Maghreb, Sijilmasa is roughly 20 days to the north.

### TUWAT

This string of oases stretches for about 30 leagues at the edge of the Tanezrouft and the Central Great Desert. It boasts large stands of hundreds of date palms irrigated by seasonal pools and supplemented with foggaras, or wells carved into the rock to access the fossil water deep below. There are four fortified villages in the area, with thick walls and watchtowers, called *ksours* (s. ksour). The people in the small villages of Buda in the north and Reggane in the south maintain the foggaras. The other two ksours tend the date palm groves. The steep sandstone walls of the Tademaït Hadama, some rising to 500 paces, ring the oases along its southern and eastern edges, while numerous sand dunes slouch from the north and west, punctuated in places with sandstone outcrops. The sirocco wind often blows quite hard here and occasionally attacks caravans.

## Ténéré Desert

The nine massifs of the Air Mountains overlook the Ténéré Desert. A Tuareg stronghold since time forgotten, the Air range is pocked with many acacia-shaded wadis, full after the rains of early autumn. Painted dogs hunt in packs, trying to steal from the herds of goats and camels kept by the nomads. The Erg of Bilma lies at the heart of the Ténéré, swaddling the Air range, and the Tibesti Mountains separate it from the Libyan Desert. The Ennedi Hamada rises up out of its southern border, where some claim one can see the Nubian Desert or stare into the haze of the Torrid Zone.

AOUDERAS

This small oasis, nestled amongst the massifs of the Air, is populated mainly by Tuareg and their slaves, who trade for supplies with caravans in exchange for water, shelter, and palm dates. Most of the population lives within a hilltop fortress, protecting the well and their harvest from the raiding tribes and jinn who prefer bloodshed to trade. Timia is 15 leagues to the northeast, through the narrow and treacherous canyons of the Air Mountains. Bilma is 120 leagues to the east-northeast, across the Erg of Bilma.

BILMA

Nestled under the Kaouar Cliffs and protected from the desert dunes, Bilma is the largest town before continuing north to Siwa or east into Nubia. It is known for its gardens, for salt mines, and date palm groves. Caravans often consider Bilma the last destination of one of the caravan routes before either returning to Egypt and Cyrenica or plunging back into the reputed lands of the fabled Sorcerer-King. Those traveling north need only go fifty-five leagues before reaching the oasis fortress of Djaba. Fachi is due west through the rolling dunes.

FACHI

A lonely citadel carved from volcanic rock in the middle of the Bilma Erg, Fachi functions much like Aouderas — mining blocks of salt and trading water and palm dates for other supplies from caravans to survive. A few sweet lakes of fresh water mean most traders are more than willing to exchange their wares for the chance to replenish their supplies before pressing on the 65 leagues either east to Bilma or west to Timia. Fachi has a Magic aura of 4 due to its unspoiled nature and lack of a mosque.

Story Seeds (Cont'd)

with the aid of their magic, may similarly draw attention from the existing power brokers of the region. Due to the harsh environment, Taghaza and Taodeni are particularly inhospitable — any inhabitants suffer a -3 on any Aging rolls due to the terrible living conditions (see *ArM5*, page 170) in addition to any effects of Warping inflicted by the local aura, making it a difficult location to maintain for a covenant without magical means of easing the perils.

WHERE DOES ALL THAT SALT GO?

The rock salt is mined in pits beneath the merciless heat of the sun and cut into large slabs which are lashed onto either side of a camel for the annual salt caravan known as the *Azalai*. Once loaded onto the camels, the salt leaves to the south, but none of the miners or overseers are aware of its final destination. Two to three months later, the camels return with fresh slaves, gold, ivory, and other exotic goods bound for the northern markets of the Tell, which is good enough for the visiting northern traders of the Mafusa, who have learnt not to ask questions and just enjoy the profits.

Even the caravan guides are circumspect about their destination, seemingly unable to describe the exact proceedings

and negotiations that resulted in their new wares. The guides seem to become more distant and taciturn the more journeys they complete and finally they stop returning altogether, only to be replaced by distant relatives with similar names and remarkably similar physical features.

Although the majority of goods are mundane, some of the more exotic items are touched by Faerie or contain Faerie tainted vis. Is this because the *Azalai's* final destination lies within Arcadia, where the salt is exchanged or transformed into the other trade goods and captured humans have their memories altered and are transformed into black-skinned versions of themselves to be sent as slaves to the north? At least one of the salt caravan's merchants is a disguised Faerie with the Spirit Away power (see *Realms of Power: Faerie*, pages 23–24) and the caravan guides are either humans that become irreversibly Warped until they are lost to Arcadia themselves or minor associated faeries that help round out the story.

Alternatively, the caravan could be led by demons charged with punishing sinners — in this scenario the slaves retain enough of their former memories to recall fragments of their past lives but their exact origins are obscured by Infernal powers. Taghaza then represents a form of mundane purgatory.

THE MINES OF DESPAIR

The slaves mining the salt have had their wills broken by their imprisonment and nearly all of the mundane miners brought here develop the Weak Willed Flaw from Warping, due to constant exposure to the powers of the mining site's Infernal occupants. Most believe, equivalent to the possession of the Delusion Flaw, that they come from lands beyond the edge of the Great Desert but their accounts are fragmentary — the only common element is that they remember being brought to Taghaza to work incessantly in the gruelling pits, and that they miss their families. This belief is not true, but the truth cannot be readily discerned by either mundane or magical means.

Some of the miners and overseers are in fact incognizant dark Faeries (or demons), whose role is to continue the story and feed off the despair and the suffering of the true human slaves. The powers of these malevolent creatures further warp the memories of the mundane miners and female slaves.



FADA

This small Tuareg town is situated a day's journey north-northwest of the greatest stone pool of the Great Desert. While it is a wadi filled only by the seasonal rains, it never dries out because it lies at the foot of vast cliffs of water-carved stone. Ringed by trees, the wadi supports a population of camels, crocodiles, and other strange creatures. Ex-

tremely isolated, reaching Fada requires a 200 league journey east-southeast from Bilma. Only those seeking the fabled Nubian Desert or seeking to cross the Torrid Zone come here.

TAKEDDA

The last western outpost of the Bilma Trail, this Tuareg-occupied oasis

boasts copper mines and date palm plantations. It is rumored to owe fealty to a wizard named Sogolon Conde. Beyond Takedda to the west lie the "Lands of Thirst," the deep desert and the routes to the purported realm of the Sorcerer-King of Sosso. It is 45 leagues east across the Bilma Erg to the Air Mountains and the shaded havens of Aouderas or Timia.

Amur, the Pale Fox of Virtue

*Slim and tawny, it darted among the brush with the young gazelle in its jaws. Uriens cursed as the beast stole his kill, and I'm almost certain it laughed as it ran..*

**Magic Might:** 15 (Animal)  
**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per 0, Pre -2, Com -5, Str +1, Sta -1, Dex +2, Qik +2  
**Size:** +1  
**Season:** Spring  
**Confidence Score:** 0  
**Virtues and Flaws:** Perfect Balance, Nocturnal, Restricted Magic (Cannot use Gone to Ground while being observed)  
**Qualities:** Ambush Predator, Crafty, Good Jumper, Keen Sense of Smell  
**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Gigantic, Gift of Speech, Improved Abilities, Improved Attack (bite), Improved Damage (bite) x2, Improved Initiative (bite), Improved Soak x2, Lesser Power, Personal Power x2; Minor Flaw (Restricted Magic)  
**Personality Traits:** Fox +3\*, Sly +3  
**Reputations:** Wily (local) 3  
**Combat:**  
*Dodge:* Init +2, Attack na, Defense +5, Damage na  
*Bite:* Init +5, Attack +11, Defense +7, Damage +8  
**Soak:** +3  
**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious  
**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)  
**Abilities:** Area Lore: Great Desert 4 (oases), Athletics 4 (running), Awareness 3 (food), Brawl 3 (bite), Concentration 2 (Imaginem effects), Guile 4 (lying), Hunt 4

(prey), Living Language: Arabic 4 (conversations), Stealth 4 (stalking prey), Survival 4 (desert)

**Natural Weapons:** *Teeth:* Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1.

**Powers:**

*Give Chase,* 1 point, Init -4, Mentem. R: Eye, D: Sun, T: Ind. By gazing into the eyes of an individual, the Pale Fox can fill it with the desire to chase the Fox until the Sun rises or sets. ReMe 15 (Base 4, +1 Eye, +2 Sun): Lesser Power (15 levels, -2 Might cost)

*Gone to Ground,* 1 point, Init +0, Animal. R: Per, D: Mom, T: Ind. The Pale Fox may teleport to any place to which it has an Arcane Connection up to 500 paces away. ReAn 20 (Base 20): Personal Power (20 levels, -1 Might Cost)

*Unsporting Stalker,* 0 points, Init +1, Imaginem. R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind. The Pale Fox blends into the terrain, gaining a +3 to all vision-based Stealth checks. Mulm 3 (Base 1, +1 Diam, +1 Moving images): Personal Power (5 levels, -1 Might cost, +15xp Concentration)

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** There are three pawns of Animal in the fox's tail.

**Appearance:** Roughly the size of a pony, Amur has an elongated body, narrow head and short limbs.

The sandy colored fur of the Pale Fox of Virtue allows it to blend into the dunes as it ranges across the length of the Great Desert. It has large ears, short legs and a narrow muzzle. Its hide becomes a lighter ivory shade near the belly and its tail darkens to a sooty tip. Living in small family groups, the foxes enjoy hunting difficult

prey and managing elaborate ruses to steal kills from hunting tribesmen. Under the hot midday sun, the Pale Fox of Virtue rests in cool burrows extending 10 paces into the earth. At twilight, they venture out and forage. Able to survive without water, they often hunt from the deep desert.

Consummate tricksters, Pale Foxes of Virtue take great joy from a well-constructed deception or a lengthy chase, drawing out the pursuit with repeated, but brief, glimpses or "fortunately" discovered tracks. They seek out hunters, both to taunt and to steal kills.

The Fox's tail may be Enriched by lining the hood of a cloak or boots. The material of the hood or boots must be the finest gazelle hide and crafted only by moonlight. The wearer of such boots is granted the Puissant Stealth Virtue while the wearer of such a cloak gains the Puissant Guile Virtue. The tail may be fashioned into only one such item.

STORY SEED: THE STOLEN PRIZE

Having snatched an item, like a bow, a satchel, or a waterskin, from a traveling character, the Pale Fox of Virtue makes a bargain: if a lone character can catch it, it promises to show the group a vis site, a short cut through a regio, or perhaps a caravan once buried by the dunes and now uncovered by the wind. The Pale Fox of Virtue enjoys a good play on words as much as a proper chase, and so it will readily accept clever characters' attempts to reinterpret the rules of the challenge, as long as words remain unchanged. For instance, simply because a lone character must catch the Pale Fox, that does not mean only a lone character can chase it.



## TIMIA

Tuareg command this valley paradise, renowned for its enormous, deep stone well, which is filled with dark water and called a "guelta." The guelta never empties, and Timia supports small orchards of fruit trees. The road from Aouderas to Bilma passes through Timia, with 65 leagues of rolling sand dunes ahead of travelers before their next true rest in Fachi. To the west lies Takedda and Aouderas is just to the south.

## Trade across the Sands

A number of routes crossed the Great Desert on the backs of camels and slaves. The journey is performed in stages, each of roughly 7 leagues (21 miles), and a trip in one direction usually requires between two and three months. Trade flows into

and out of the desert, but gold, slaves, and salt drive the traffic north, and all manner of goods, but primarily slaves, glass and horses, go south. Some of the other goods taken north include ivory, gum arabic, ostrich feathers, kola nuts, ebony, and cloth. Caravans going south take dates, figs, sugar, cowries, copper, ironwork, paper, books, tools, weapons, cotton, and silk to serve as currency with the nomads, in addition to the highly prized commodities. The caravans also gather salt for trade in either direction, loading camels with two large slabs pulled from mines in the desert.

Thousands of slaves cross the sands every year, often forced to carry the other goods caravans intend to trade. Malnourished and rarely given enough water, many are expected to die along the way as a cost of doing business. Moorish pirates capture pagans from Rus, Christians from the Mediterranean and England, and the most unscrupulous even take Muslims from Iberia and the Levant, despite laws forbidding such practices. Slaves arriving from the south in the markets of the Maghreb are mainly women, and cost roughly 3–9 Mythic

Pounds each. Occasionally, however, a local leader decides to bolster his forces with slaves, like the founder of Marrakesh, who purchased 2,000 men to fight in his campaign to consolidate power in the Maghreb.

Berber and Tuareg nomads make up the majority of the traders from the south, bringing caravans with hundreds of camels and slaves into the markets twice a year, in March and November. Muslim traders also make this trip, bringing their wares into the desert and returning with gold and slaves. The Genovese have established a bustling trade all along the coast since the mid-11th century, with enclaves in Safi, Sale, Tangier, Orano, Algiers, Bona, Tunis, Mahadia, and Tripoli. There, they trade primarily for gold, timber, salt, cheese, wine, olive oil, and grain, but cannot help but partake in the slave trade. Many households have two or three slaves purchased from the markets here. However, it is illegal in many places to keep Christian slaves, and if these servants convert, their owners are supposed to free them. This helps maintain northbound demand.

Rumors from the returning merchants speak of a nominally Muslim kingdom across the sand, ruled by a powerful Sorcerer-King. Such stories are dismissed, however, as madness induced by howling winds and the solitude of the long journey. It is interesting to note, though, that something is demanding slaves for trade at the route destinations, and the merchants currently remain silent regarding their buyers.

## Arranging Caravans

Trade across the Great Desert is a lucrative process, but one filled with danger, so merchants must co-operate to survive. Each merchant chooses which city his goods will depart from, and where they will be traded away. He then loads them on camels, and travels to the city of departure. At this point he usually sells his camels to buy rested ones. All of the merchants interested in trading at a target city gather, and they select a caravan guide. This is a complex process, because the success of the caravan is almost entirely dependent on this man's skill. The guide chooses a day of departure, which must be during the colder part of the year (October to



## Story Seeds

This trade provides many opportunities for stories.

### MEN OF WAR

Soumaoro Kanté is the rumored Sorcerer-King of Sosso beyond the trade routes. The Caliph of Kanem, he is a shadowy figure feared by both the Berbers and Tuareg, who dare do no more than whisper his name, for it is said he can hear it spoken on the desert winds. However, if he exists, the Sorcerer-King seems to possess an insatiable demand for slaves to fight his wars, wars he supposedly prosecutes against his rivals and the jinn of the deep desert. Some claim he can use the salt and gold traded from his empire as an Arcane Connection, and perceive through the eyes and ears of the slaves he has sent into Mythic Europe, but all this cannot be true, can it?

### LOST...

Moorish pirates have captured members of the covenant while they travelled on business. Arcane Connections possessed by the magi indicate that they're bound for the Maghreb, but something seems to be masking the exact location of the prisoners. In order to

recover their covenfolk before they're sold as slaves and sent across the sands, they'll need to search the markets along the coast. Any missteps and they may have to plunge into the desert in pursuit of their friends. And just what is concealing the prisoner's whereabouts?

### ...AND FOUND

A group of grogs arrives to pledge their service to the magi, stating they have traveled from the south and seek employment. *Frosty Breath of the Spoken Lie* shows them to be honest, and the men are all pagan, meaning they require no mosque or church within the covenant grounds. Their martial skills are superior and they appear to be well-trained and disciplined. However, when members of the group are taken into civilization on errands or as escorts, they hide or abandon the group at inopportune moments. Eventually, it becomes known that this new turb was originally the slave-soldier cadre of a local leader, and killed a number of guards in their escape. How will the magi deal with the situation when the former owner demands the return of his property, and brings the matter before a local magistrate?

March). The guide's men check that all of the camels are properly loaded.

The merchant does not travel the desert himself: he places his goods in the care of a trusted slave, or a younger relative. When the caravan leaves, it may have two thousand camels. It is better, it is thought, for everyone who wishes to trade to a particular city in that year to travel as a single unit. The caravan averages one stage (21 miles) per day, traveling only at night and in the morning, following a circuitous route to avoid hazards identified by the caravan guide.

Most routes end with water each day. This is precautionary. Camels only need to be watered every ten days, so faster travel, using more direct routes, is possible. This is avoided because there is the chance that when a caravan reaches a particular well, it will be dry, surrounded by bandits, poi-

soned, hidden by sand, or not where the guide remembers it.

A caravan guide should have many Abilities. His Area Lore permits him to follow paths through the desert, even when the terrain is changed by sandstorms. His Language skills allow him to negotiate with the desert tribes. His Leadership keeps his staff of scouts and laborers at their duties when trouble strikes. He can navigate by the stars, which is important, because caravans carry limited supplies and water, to maximize cargo space. Many guides are skilled in dealing with creatures of the various Realms. The caravan guide is paid either in money or in shares of cargo.

When a caravan is estimated to be four days from its destination, a runner is dispatched to warn the Sudanese that it is approaching. Runners are always sent, at minimum, in pairs, because the demons

of the desert love to play with single runners, so that they go mad, die of thirst, or both. Runners are paid enormous sums: pounds of gold for a few days work. The Sudanese send agents into the desert, to deal with foreigners at oases, rather than allowing them to leave the desert.

When a caravan arrives at a Maghrebi city, if it is returning as a unit, everyone rapidly learns its departure date. Between the instant the caravan arrives and the moment it leaves, everyone who wants to sell must sell, everyone who wants to buy must buy, and every merchant needs to sell his current set of camels and purchase new ones. Some cities receive but a single caravan a year, or every ten years, so the pressure on all parties is intense. Crime against and by merchants, who leave when the caravan leaves, is lucrative.

### WESTERN ROUTE: IVALATAN ROAD

The Iwalatan Road often begins in Marrakesh and continues on to the great trading center of Sijilmasa, situated just north of the desert. It then turns south, through the pass guarded by the fortress of Tamdout and across the Tanezrouft to the fading city of Aoudaghost. In Aoudaghost, the path turns to Iwalatan. Caravans using this route often return with gold more than other commodities.

### CENTRAL ROUTES: TAGHAZA TRAIL

The Taghaza Trail departs from Sijilmasa, traveling twenty-five days south to Taghaza, then another ten days to the well at Tasarahla, and finally another fifteen days south to Iwalatan. Some caravans decide to go more south-southeast at Tasarahla, and continue on. Caravans on this route take gold and slaves north, returning with manufactured goods and salt. The largest expeditions consist of thousands of camels, and depart at the beginning of the cool season in November, with a smaller caravan departing in March. Other smaller and more foolhardy caravans make the trip at all times of the year. Once northbound caravans arrive in Sijilmasa, they disperse among Fez, Tahert, Tangier, Tlemcen, and Tunis to sell their wares and prepare for the return trip.

## Tales and Travelogues

Characters hoping to research potential routes and hazards before venturing into the sands may seek out texts written by one of many Muslim scholars. Some of the more common titles include:

### Book of Routes and Places (Classical Arabic)

Summa Area Lore: Maghreb (Level 3, Quality 10), Tractatus Area Lore: Great Desert (Quality 10)

**Author:** Abu Abdullah al-Bakri

**Availability:** The private libraries of merchants and nobles in Maghreb and Al-Andalus.

**Description:** Written in 1068 and drawn from the literature and reports of traveling merchants over two centuries, this book discusses distant empires across the Great Desert, the Almoravid dynasty, and the trade caravan routes.

### Kitab Sūrat al-'Ard, "Face of the Earth" (Classical Arabic)

Summa Area Lore: Maghreb (Level 5, Quality 11), Tractatus Area Lore: Provence (Quality 11), Tractatus Area Lore: Iberia (Quality 11), Tractatus Area Lore: Sicily (Quality 11)

**Author:** Moḥammad Abū'l-Qāsim Ibn Hawqal

**Availability:** The private libraries of merchants and nobles in Maghreb and Al-Andalus.

**Description:** This book, a revision and extension of earlier texts, included detailed descriptions of Muslim-held Spain, Italy and particularly Sicily. It mentions the area of Fraxinet in Provence as richly cultivated by its Muslim inhabitants, making some Hermetic scholars suggest that Ibn Hawqal was a follower of Jerbiton.

### On the Topography of North Africa (Classical Arabic)

Tractatus Area Lore: Maghreb (Quality 8)

**Author:** Yusuf al-Warraḡ

### Kitab al-Jaghrafiyya, "Book of Geography" (Classical Arabic)

Tractatus Area Lore: Maghreb (Quality 10)

**Author:** Mohammed Ibn Abu Bakr al-Zuhri

## Story Seed: The Archetypical Road

The trade across the desert presents a completely archetypical Faerie opportunity to steal the vitality of those crossing, as it is essentially a road story. The entire experience — the guides, the fearsome beasts, the bandits — all align with the fact these elements continue to survive despite the harsh conditions. So do the fay delight in the suffering of the slaves, or the misery of the travelers, or the greed of the merchants? Perhaps it is some combination of the three!

rock salt is mined in great quantities for trade. This is the shortest of the routes, and the preferred commodities remain slaves, salt, and ivory from the south in exchange for horses, weapons, and manufactured goods from the north. In Bilma, the trade route turns east, into the Nubian Desert, or west, into the Western Desert. Those seeking gold or more exotic goods must head to Takedda, as there is little gold for trade in Bilma. The trip from Bilma to Takedda is roughly 21 days, and it is the same amount of time from Bilma to Murzuq.

## CENTRAL ROUTES: GHADAMES ROAD

The Ghadames Road has two forks, both originating in Ifriqiya. The first departs from Tunis and the second from Tripoli. Both then proceed to Wargala before continuing to Ghadames, where caravans might choose either southeast to Takedda in the Ténéré or southwest into the Tanezrouft. Slaves, salt, and gold are all common on the northbound Ghadames Road and manufactured goods and slaves most often go south. This path remains west of most of the Ahaggar mountains, but is a long and dangerous path.

## CENTRAL ROUTES: GARAMANTIAN ROAD

The Garamantian Road, named after the former rulers of the land it passes

through, begins in Siwa, at the edge of Egyptian lands, before crossing the Libyan Sand Sea to Zaouila, continuing to Ghat and turning south to end in Tadekka. Many caravans traveling this road in the northbound direction continue past Siwa, and end in the souks of Cairo and Alexandria. Similar to the Ghadames Road, this is also quite dangerous, but remains mostly east of the Ahaggar mountains.

## SOUTHERN ROUTE: BILMA TRAIL

The Bilma Trail often begins in Cyrene or Cairo before plunging through the Great Sand Sea to arrive in Murzuq. From there, it turns south to snake between the Ahaggar and Tibesti Mountains, making for the Kaouar oases and Bilma. To reach Bilma, caravans pass over the great sand dunes of the Bilma Erg and the Ténéré, where

## CAMELS

Camels in North Africa come in two breeds, pack camels and saddle camels. Pack camels are larger, slower and can carry more. They are used for trade, and are by far the most common breed. Saddle camels are swifter and nimbler, and are combat mounts. Camels are seen as an intermediate choice: faster than oxen and able to carry more than horses. Most camel caravans travel between 15 and 25 miles per day, but this snakes past obstacles, and tacks between water sources, so that arriving at a destination takes far longer than this speed suggests.

Camels can be ridden either saddled, like a horse, or sitting in a small, enclosed canopy. The latter method is preferred by wealthy people and pilgrims. Many canopies allow two riders. This allows the riders to pass time in discussion, playing chess, or eating. A canopy



also provides protection from the sun and from wind-blown sand, without the need for extra layers of clothing.

The Ride Ability allows those familiar with horses to ride camels. Many warriors prefer to fight from horseback, and will ride their camel to a battle then swap over, much as a European knight might ride to a tournament on a courser and then switch to his charger. See the Bestiary Appendix for camel statistics.

## The Mystery of the Sudan

The Sudanese do not want foreigners in their cities, beyond the trade camps at the edges of the desert. They certainly do not want them traveling further south than the Sahel — the fertile southern shore of the desert — and in some places prefer to trade with them at oases in the

desert. Why this is so is unclear.

The story the Sudanese give is that they do not want foreigners to know where their gold comes from. This story sounds superficially convincing but, on reflection, it is not clear what harm telling merchants where the gold comes from could do. There are, apparently, no other routes to the gold, so they could not be cut out by another, more direct route. The Sudan has been invaded from the Tell once before, but it is difficult to see how it could be repeated now that a large community of merchants can warn the Sudanese, allowing them to guard waypoints, poison wells, and set ambushes.

Arabic thinkers suggest there's something about Sudanese culture that the locals don't want merchants to know. The most extreme theory is that the Sudanese are not human at all, but are faeries, but other theories are also passed around dinner parties in the Tell. These include:

- The Sudanese lifestyle is somehow

so repellent that the Arabs would cease to trade with the Sudanese if they discovered it. It's widely believed that the further one lives from the Mediterranean, in either direction, the more disgusting one's morals become.

- The Sudanese are the servant caste of another culture, which does not wish to interact with the servants of Allah — evil jinn, for example.
- The gold is made in a corrupt or demeaning way. For example, if the gold is the excrement of monsters, then it will be difficult to get Arabs to carry around bagfuls of it to pay for things.
- The Great Desert really is the edge of the world. The Sudan is in Faerie, and the faeries want the people praying five times a day to stay out of it.
- The Sudanese don't care about gold. Gold, to the Sudanese, is like sand. They have been getting all the goods they want for the equivalent of sand for centuries, and they don't want

## Axudad, the Deathstalker Scorpion of Virtue

*It scrambled over the dune, slate gray and strangely unfamiliar. Its spider-like eyes stared at me with a flat, inscrutable expression as its pincers flexed menacingly; it was a sight made more fearsome given the creature was roughly as big as a six-year old child. The tail arched over its body with a wicked stinger glistening with potent venom.*

**Magic Might:** 10 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Cun -2, Per -2, Pre -5, Com -6, Str -4, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +3

**Size:** -2

**Season:** Summer

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Animal, Lightning Reflexes, Magical Monster, Infamous

**Qualities:** Aggressive, Ambush Predator, Extra Natural Weapons, Grapple, Tough Hide, Venomous

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Gigantic; Ignem Resistance, Lesser Power, Personal Power; Susceptible to Deprivation

**Personality Traits:** Fierce +3, Scorpion +3\*

**Reputations:** Deadly (local) 5

**Combat:**

**Pincers:** Init +3, Attack +9, Defense +10, Damage +0

**Grapple:** Init +3, Attack +9, Defense +\*, Damage n/a

**Sting:** Init +7, Attack +9, Defense +2, Damage -3\*

**Soak:** +4

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Great Desert 2 (rock outcroppings), Athletics 3 (sprinting), Awareness 3 (spotting prey), Brawl 4 (sting), Concentration 2 (remaining still), Guile 1 (lying), Hunt 3 (small game), Ignem Resistance 4 (solar heat), Penetration 5 (Animal), Stealth 4 (ambush), Survival 3 (desert),

**Natural Weapons** The weapon statistics for a scorpion's pincers are Init +0, Atk +3, Def +3, Dam +4 and for its tail sting Init +4, Atk +2, Def -6,

Dam +1.

**Powers:**

**Venomous Sting**, 0 points, Init 0, Animal: When a scorpion attacks, compare its Attack Advantage to the victim's armor Protection (not his Soak). If the scorpion's advantage is higher, the victim suffers the effects equivalent to an exceptionally debilitating poison (Stamina roll against Ease Factor 6, Incapacitating), regardless of whether the bite inflicts an actual wound.

**Drive Berserk**, 1 point, Init -1, Mentem. R: Touch, D: Diam, T: Individual

With a touch, the Scorpion causes its target to become frothing mad, attacking anyone and anything nearby for a Diameter. CrMe 10 (Base 4, +1 Touch, +1 Diameter): Lesser Power (10 levels, -1 Might cost, 5xp Concentration, +5xp Penetration)

**Lie in Wait**, 0 points, Init +2, Imaginem. R: Per, D: Conc, T: Individual

When sitting still, the Scorpion of Virtue often appears to be a simple

people to stop bringing them useful stuff, essentially for free.

- The faeries that rule the Sudanese want the journey, not the gold. All of the trade goods that have ever been bought to the Sudan are sitting in a big pile just outside Kom-buh Saleh.

## Trade Goods Carried Across the Great Desert

Wheeled vehicles are not used to cross the desert, because roads cannot be kept clear of sand. This makes travel slower, more arduous, and reduces the amount of cargo each beast can carry. This in turn makes bulk trade across the Great Desert uncommon. Textiles, glassware, ceramics, paper, armaments, and horses are carried south to the desert communities. Gold and slaves are sent to the Mediterranean, along with cotton cloth, cattle hides, goatskins, and leatherwork, as lesser cargoes filling spaces in loads. Salt and copper are found in the desert itself, and travel south, purchased on the way by merchants traversing the Great Desert with other goods.

## HUMAN SLAVES

If Sudanese slavers, in your saga, are similar to those in the real world, then the majority of slaves exported to the cities of the Tell are women, who become domestic servants, and in some cases concubines. Islamic law requires that if a concubine gives birth to the child of a Muslim, the father must acknowledge the baby as his, and free its mother. Many males slaves work in agriculture or other industry, but a proportion of them are soldiers, and these tend to die in battle or be granted their freedom after great victories. Some Muslims also free their slaves in their wills. These routes out of slavery keep demand for replacements, and prices, high.

A swift breed of horse, the Barbary steed, has been bred in North Africa. These are prized throughout the world. The impetus for the development of these animals was as a tool for slavers to round up people in the far south, where horses are unknown, or small. The price of a Barbary steed is usually quoted in slaves: each costs between ten and thirty people.

## THE TIME-LOST

If the Sudan is a strange faerie place, not just a kingdom that excludes foreign-

## The Silent Trade

Those who barter for gold guard the sources of their wealth jealously. Locals claim that two plants have roots of pure gold, but most believe these to be stories to fool the gullible. In those places where traders exchange goods for gold dust and nuggets, a curious tradition has evolved. The northern caravan masters leave their manufactured wares atop a large designated stone or platform. Then, they retreat out of sight. The gold traders then emerge and leave an amount of gold they feel adequate for the exchange before signaling and returning to observe from hiding. The caravan leaders return, and either take the gold or signal the traders again, indicating the sum is too little. This back and forth continues until the caravan takes their gold or their goods and departs.

But who are these traders? Are they faeries who gain vitality from the exchange? Are they demons who breed the sin of greed amongst the caravan membership? Are they primitive tribesmen without language, or the emissaries of a lost kingdom, like Atlantis, Prester John, or the storied Sorcerer-King of Sosso?

## Axudad, the Deathstalker Scorpion of Virtue (Cont'd)

rock or small sand dune. Mulm 10 (Base 5, +1 Conc): Personal Power (10 levels, -1 Might cost, +10x Concentration)

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** There are two pawns of Mentem in the creature's stinger.

**Appearance:** A dull black creature with chitinous, crab-like legs, glossy obsidian eyes, over-sized pincers and an arched barbed tail hanging over the body.

The size of a healthy dog, the Deathstalker Scorpion of Virtue is cruel and belligerent, often hunting for warm creatures asleep near fires or resting on sun-drenched rocks. They enjoy lurking just beneath the sand, soaking in the warmth and lunging forward to sting

creatures which step over them.

The stinger of a Scorpion of Virtue can be Enriched by setting it on a handle of willow wood, anointing it with sap of the Alkhad gourd and leaving it plunged into a sand dune for month. When withdrawn and carried as a token, it provides the bearer with Greater Immunity to Venom.

The creeping root of the Alkhad, or Tadjalt, plant and its inedible gourds are claimed to be a cure for scorpion venom by the Tuareg. When cut, the gourd produces a milky-white sap said to purge the body of poisons.

## STORY SEED: THE BITTER FRUIT

A neighboring tribe of Berbers seeks out the magi. Their chieftain's son has been stung by a Deathstalker Scorpion of Virtue, and dozens of the creatures guard the only nearby source of Alkhad gourds in a hidden wadi. If the characters can acquire the gourds and treat the young man, the tribe may agree to serve for some time as grogs, reveal a local jinn's hidden external vis, or show the covenant a previously unknown spring. The sheer numbers of the creatures ensure that any plan to simply charge through them is doomed to fail, and their cruel nature means those who try to walk through them under the protection of a ward are likely to find the gourds hidden. The characters must find some way to deceive the deceivers.





## Demon of Thirst and Despair

The statistics for this demon use the rules given in *Realms of Power: Infernal*.

**Order:** Accusers (variant)

**Infernal Might:** 10 (Aquam)

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre 0, Com +1, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +1

**Size:** 1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Weak-willed

**Personality Traits:** Doubt +3

**Combat:**

**Trample:** Init +8, Attack +16\*, Defense +14\*, Damage +13

\*Includes Ability specialization

**Soak:** +7

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

**Abilities:** Brawl 6 (trample)

**Powers:**

**Coagulation,** 1 point, Init -1, Terram: Allows the demon to create a material form for itself. This form varies slightly, but most such creatures prefer a wave of grinding stones, using the Envisioning power to communicate with victims. Taking material form requires one round, although the demon may discorporate almost instantly. The demon may use its rocky body to hide trails and landmarks.

**Elemental Control of Water,** variable points, Init +1, Aquam: The demon may use any Creo, Muto, or Rego Aquam effect, at the cost of 1 Might per Magnitude. The demon is limited to minor effects, with level equal to its Might or less. It uses this power to taunt those dying of thirst.

**Envisioning,** 1 point, Init +0, Mentem: The demon may make subtle changes to a victim's dreams, to make them more ominous and depressing.

**Obsession,** 3 points, Init -5, Vim: When a human performs a venial sin and the demon responds by spending Might, this demon gains an opportunity to force the human to feel spiritual doubt. When next faced with a crisis of worthiness, the Storyguide makes a simple roll +3, to reflect the strength of the feelings of doubt, and the player responds with a simple die + and suitable Personality Trait - adjustments for exposure to harsh environment. If the character's total is higher, the demon has not been able to break the character's sense of self-worth. If the demon's total is higher, then the character gains a Doubt score of +1. If the character ever acts on this score, then he is in a state of

sin. The demon then coagulates and kills its victim, often by turning its body into a grave which it tempts the character to throw himself in. Those few demons of this type who have humanoid forms prefer to create pools of water and drown their victims.

**Weakness:** Protected Group (Can only prey on solo travelers)

**Vis:** 2 pawns tainted Perdo, body

**Appearance:** Often appears like an elemental made of grinding stones, but can also appear as a moving pillar of salt, or, on rare occasions, a human shape. These creatures are cowardly and do not appear in human form to characters strong enough to fight them. The demon may use the substance of its body to hide tracks and landmarks.

These demons dwell in the desert, and mislead travelers. The demons hope that, worn down with physical privation and the psychological strain of imminent death, their victims will lose faith. They then kill the victim, so that penitence is impossible. These demons only ever attack people who are on their own, which is why the runners from caravans always travel in pairs.

## Why Do People Remain Slaves?

Players used to modern stories about slavery may be tempted to think that the most immediate aspiration of a character who is a slave is to seek freedom. Non-player characters rarely attempt to free themselves by flight. There are several reasons for the seeming passivity of slaves in the region.

### GOD SENDS FLEEING SLAVES TO HELL

The belief that slaves who run from their masters are thieves and will be sent to Hell is held, at this time, by all three of the major religions in this area. Each says that it is wrong to enslave one's coreligionists, but all three believe there are evil spirits that tempt slaves to flee, in much the same way there are spirits which tempt men to murder, promiscuity, or other sins.

### PERMEABILITY

Many slaves are freed by their masters for various reasons. A slave who bears a child by her master must be freed and supported. Warrior slaves are often freed after campaigns. Many domestic slaves are freed in the wills of their employers, or as acts of charity. This means

its possible to be a slave for a certain period of time, and then be free, without taking the risk of running away.

### LACK OF OTHER OPTIONS

A slave who flees in the Maghreb may not know where to go to find new work, and so flight and starvation are synonymous. Slaves in the 19th century American context were fleeing to a country desperately short of cheap labor; slaves in Mythic Arabia are fleeing to other places where all the menial, and much of the skilled, labor is performed by slaves. Some slaves believe it is better to be a ghilman, a trusted slave given responsibility for his master's business, than to be free but poor.

### FATALISM

Maghrebi Muslims do not hold to the (entirely modern) belief that if one works hard, one's life should improve. Rather they believe much of a person's life, including much of the suffering, is the will of God and thus inevitable. Some people have fortune, some don't. Flight can't relieve suffering, because suffering is inevitably constant.

ers, then these slaves can't just come from a kingdom further south. Perhaps they come from a kingdom that fell into Faerie. Perhaps they are really from the distant islands near India. Perhaps they are Europeans from before the Flood of Noah. If a group of faeries has been collecting people during natural disasters and storing them, then as supplies dwindle, the origin and skill sets of the slaves may change. For example, the player characters may find a thousand slaves for sale, all speaking classical Latin and claiming to be from Pompey.

### FANTASTIC SLAVES

The slaves from south of the desert may, in your saga, not be human at all. They might be faeries, or magical con-

structs produced in strange factories. The Plinian races may be sold north as slaves. They could be spirits bound to solid forms, or the dead forced to labor for the living.

## Is The Great Desert Tied To A Realm?

The Great Desert can be interpreted in different ways, for various sagas, or to suit stories in a single saga. Troupes are encouraged to look through these

## Symbols of The Two Forces

The two forces have had various names. The Egyptians called the realm of the creative force the Black Land, and the realm of the destructive force the Red Land. Some spirits in the service of each side proclaim their loyalties with these colors. This detail, which has entered folklore, is copied by faeries. Many little details in faerie stories repeat the opposition of black and red: rival armies of ants, the chess pieces, and the clothes of feuding warlords each divide into black and red.

Other symbols for each side include

Red	Black
Desert	River
Mountain	Oasis
Sand	Soil
Chaos	Order
Foreigners	Africans
Fire	Water
The Set-beast	The Horus-beast

## A Traditional Way of Killing Ghouls

One traditional way of killing a ghou that is troubling you is to flee to your house. Ghouls almost always taunt you for the first few nights, or let you get away with being partially eaten. Some offer to spare you for a night if you put a finger through the keyhole so they can suck blood from it, or bite it off. The next day, dig a grain storage pit behind your door.

When the ghou returns, taunt the creature to frenzy. Let it bash down the door and rush at you. It then falls into the hole, which you rapidly fill with firewood. Roast the ghou, then fill in the hole. Even ghouls do this when they want to kill other ghouls. It is also a folkloristic way of killing lions.



## Aisha Qandisha

Aisha Qandisha is not designed as a player character. She is an ancient creature of sterility and temptation.

**Faerie Might:** 45 (Mentem)

**Characteristics:** Int +3, Per +1, Pre +5, Com +5, Str +0, Sta Tireless, Dex +1, Qik +1

**Size:** -1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Greater Powers (x3) (Guide, Hound, Pine Away, Steal Judgment, Invisibility, Silent Motion), Ritual Powers (x4) (Grant Major Flaw (Wildness), Grant Minor Flaw (Impotence)); Faerie Sight, Faerie Speech, Hybrid Form; Sovereign Ward (can't harm women); Incognizant,

**Personality Traits:** Destructive +3, Gleeful +2, Merciless +2

**Combat:**

*Clawed hands:* Init +1, Attack +11, Defense +12, Damage +2

Prefers not to fight, either seducing attackers or vanishing away, then sending enthralled men to kill her attackers.

**Soak:** -1

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16), Dead (17+)

**Pretenses:** Many, but notably Area Lore: Local 9 (riverbeds), Awareness 6 (victims), Brawl 6 (claws), Carouse 9 (victims)

**Allure:** 1 point, Init 0, Mentem: +3 on all rolls that involve impressing others. Costs 10 spell levels (Base 3 +1 Touch

+2 Sun)

**Grant Major Flaw (Wildness):** 10 points, Init -19, Vim: A character who has made love to this faerie becomes terribly vulnerable to the influence of all faeries. This feels like being washed away in a sea of uncontrollable passions and foreign emotions. A character under the influence of this power suffers a different Minor Personality Flaw, determined randomly, in each scene. This can be stilled briefly by ecstatic experiences. Dance and musical performance are popular, as is wandering dry riverbeds, hoping for another meeting with the faeries. Costs 50 spell levels. Special. No Hermetic Equivalent (R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind, Ritual)

**Grant Minor Flaw (Impotence):** 5 points, Init -9, Vim: The faerie makes her lover unable to have sex with others. Costs 50 spell levels. Special. No Hermetic Equivalent (R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind, Ritual)

**Guide:** 1 point, Init 0, Mentem: Draws a character into danger by a mechanism similar to the Common Sense Virtue, save that the advice serves the faerie's goals. Costs 30 spell levels (ReMe Base 5, +2 Voice, +1 Conc, +2 Group)

**Hound:** 2 points, Init -1, Corpus: Allows the faerie to know the direction and distance to its human quarry. Costs 20 spell levels (InCo Base 3, +4 Arc, +1 Conc)

**Invisibility:** 1 point, Init 0, Mentem: 2

points, Init -2, Imaginem: A personal version of *Veil of Invisibility*, as per *ArM5*, p.146. Costs 15 spell levels. (Base 4, +2 Sun, +1 for moving image)

**Pine Away:** 4 points, Init. -3, Corpus: This ability causes the character to slowly lose both the will to live, and the vitality that permits life. This is treated as a major disease, with an Ease Factor of 15 that causes a Light Wound, but either Faerie Lore or Medicine may be used to treat the effects. Costs 40 spell levels (Base 30 (5 +25 for virulence), +2 Voice)

**Silent Motion:** 1 point, Init 0, Mentem: 1 point, constant, Imaginem: allows the character to move without making a noise. Costs 10 spell levels (Base 3, +2 Sun, +1 constant)

**Steal Judgment:** 1 point, Init 0, Mentem: 2 points, Init -2, Mentem: The target believes almost any lie that the faerie tells, by diminishing their capacity for doubt. An Intelligence roll against an Ease Factor of 6 is permitted to resist, with easier rolls for truly incredible lies. Costs 15 spell levels (Base 4, +1 Eye, +2 Sun).

**Equipment:** Can have any of the trappings of a woman of wealth and dubious virtue.

**Vis:** 9, bones of a goat

**Appearance:** A beautiful woman, but with the legs of a goat. Her Presence and Allure powers combine so that this doesn't seem to stop her seducing men with ease.

ideas and use each as it suits the stories they wish to tell.

## Magical Interpretation: Two Great Spirits

Africa is the battleground between two great Magical spirits. These beings are so vast that magic is unable to affect them, and they cannot directly communicate with humans in any useful way. Each generates representatives and tools which it uses in the struggle against its opposite. These great spirits and their

servants may interact with magi. Some servants may become familiars, drawing their magi into the war.

### THE HUNGER, AND THE CREATURES OF THE RED

The destructive force at the heart of the desert has many names, but the few scholars who discuss it directly call it The Hunger. The Hunger endlessly seeks to consume the lands at the edge of the Great Desert. Its creatures poison wells and fill oases. The Creatures of the Red are often assisted by faeries who destroy crops and burn towns, which has

the useful side effect of preventing humans from irrigating land. Many more people know about the faeries that attack settlements than the spirits that command and support them.

The Red has many ambassadors. Its most powerful children are the spirits of place it creates as it consumes all life in each particular locale. It is, in addition, served by a race of spirits that look like men, but when seen with Second Sight, have the heads of fennec foxes. These tend an apparently limitless horde of Set-beasts. The Egyptians believed this force was strongest in the Hoggar Mountains, but that may just be where a powerful faerie tied to this

force claimed to be from.

Some spirits may serve the Red more by accident than design. Aisha Qandisha, for example, is a famous jinn from Morocco. She is widely known as a seducer of men who walks the dry beds of rivers. She benefits from the sterility brought by the Hunger, and in turn causes men to lose their vigor.

If the Red becomes more powerful, oases in the desert shrink, and the Plateau becomes less fertile. When this has happened in the past, tribes from the desert have pushed into the fertile land of the Tell. With the Almohads so weak, there would be little to prevent them conquering much of the coastal territory. The last time this happened, and the Beni Hallali invaded from Persia, they deliberately destroyed irrigation systems throughout the east of the region.

#### THE HOPE, AND THE CREATURES OF THE BLACK

The great destructive force in Africa is opposed by the great elemental spirit of the Nile. Player characters on the northwestern African coast are nowhere near the main area of conflict: they are deep within the Land of the Red and many local magical traditions favor the Red. The cities of the coast have survived because of the Dominion, which effectively favors the Black by protecting humans, who then reclaim and plant croplands.

In pagan times, the coastal cities were protected by powerful faeries, whose activities favored the Black. The Hope still has powerful lieutenants, but most of these are in Egypt. One, who was encountered by the Romans, called herself Africa, and she remains active in the area around Tunis. She has the form of a gigantic, ghostly woman, and has the power to utter prophecies which are fated to come true. Whether this power works on the Faithful is unclear.

Elsewhere in North Africa, the Hope is represented by the geniuses of great natural features, by spirits of rain, and by the enigmatic horus-beasts. Some of the crafter traditions draw on the power of the Black to call forth rain. Some say that a sect of sorcerer Blemmyes, who once tended the Temple at Philae, serve the Black. If this is

true, they also presumably look human except to Second Sight.

If the Hope suddenly becomes more powerful, rainfall in North Africa increases. The desert becomes easier to cross and many more slaves are needed for farming. Cities with strange cultures rise in new oases, and forgotten faeries are remembered when people re-inhabit ruins. Nomadic people switch to agriculture, which makes the kingdom richer and the population larger, making the Iberian Reconquista more difficult.

The Red and Black have powerful spirits as lieutenants, and player characters who seek them out may be Initiated into Mysteries that draw on the power of each side to harm the other. Red Initiations, like desiccation, are found in the following chapter of this book.

### Faerie Interpretation: The Land of Ghouls

In this interpretation, the edges of the Great Desert are guarded by spirits, who claim there is a vast kingdom of ghouls hidden within the miles of gravel and sand. Ghouls are generally evil, and crave the taste of human flesh. Occasionally they can be kind. There are recorded examples of girls rescued from ghoulish husbands sneaking away to return to the Kingdom of the Ghouls. There is a woman who lives there, to this day, with seven ghoulish brothers. She fled marriage with a sultan to return to her monstrous husband.

In *Ars Magica*, two versions of ghouls have been presented. *Realms of Power: Faerie* describes a cannibal spirit, while *The Cradle and the Crescent* describes a tribe of spirits who have, for the most part, fallen into the service of Iblis. Either might work in this Kingdom of the Ghouls, because, in a West African context, "ghoul" refers to a wide variety of faerie creatures. Folktales include ghoulish knights, giants, and animals. Storyguides are encouraged to rework existing faeries to create ghoulish variants.

Folklore calls the Land of the Ghouls a kingdom, but the king never appears. He, or she, might be an ancient ghoul of great power and experience. The ruler of the ghouls might, however, be any powerful

being, from an angel to a demon, from a mortal man skilled in telling tales to the ghost of a Criamon Primus. There may be no king, or the role of king may be taken by whatever spirit is nearby when a story is unfolding.

The treasury of the ghouls is a cave that opens, if asked to in the name of a mysterious person. Characters stealthy enough to avoid the ghouls, remembering their extra-ordinary sense of smell, may hide and overhear the name when guards command the vault to open. This name may be an Arcane Connection to the Ghoul King, or to the creator of his vaults.

### Infernal Interpretation: The Punishment of God

In the beginning the world was a paradise, a garden, and all men lived off its plenty. Then Man invented deceit. When the first lie was told, God was deeply affronted, and forbade lying. He said to the men "You must not lie; every time you do I will punish you by throwing a grain of sand from the sky onto the Earth."

And men, who were foolish, said "What harm could that do? You can barely see a grain of sand!"

The Great Desert, in this interpretation, has an Infernal aura of 2, but it is higher where people have hidden in the desert to commit crimes. Demons dance across the boiling sands of the desert, which is, in parts, almost like the Fiery Pit. Entrances to Hell are found in the mountains, and Infernal craftsmen make weapons for the war at the end of time at the Hoggar Mountains.

### High Fantasy Interpretation: The Crack Between the Worlds

The caravans that come out of the desert, in this version of Mythic Europe, do not come from a far-southern kingdom, but from other worlds, through portals deep within the desert itself.



THE CARAVANS  
ARE FAERIE MARKETS

In this variant, when a caravan arrives, filled with wealth and potential for social change, it is always a troupe of faeries. These creatures carry real goods, which they have exhausted, and trade them for vital things, or for a role in the stories of mortals drawn to their wares.

THE CARAVANS COME  
FROM WOUNDED WORLDS

In this variant, the Hope and the Hunger have been competing not only on this world, but in others. These are either hidden in a realm, or are parallel mundane worlds in other Creations. The conflict has damaged the worlds, but trade allows the people there to continue to survive. For example, the slavers with the gold from the heart of the desert might come from a place where the Hunger is dominant. There are many people, fighting over scarce resources, and they are willing to trade gold, which they cannot eat, and conquered peoples, who they do not wish to feed, for the resources of this world. Alternatively, perhaps the benign face of the Black is a disguise. The traders may come from a world so dominated by fecundity that life-giving salt, a desiccant, can no longer be found, so they come to trade it for the worthless gold which breeds beneath the surface of their Earth.

THE CARAVANS COME  
FROM UNKNOWABLE PLACES,  
FOR UNKNOWABLE REASONS

In this variant, the caravans come from deep in the Magical Realm, far beyond where magi normally go. They may be spirits, or the way the Realm is cleaned of material detritus left by travelers. Magi who follow the caravans go into the Twilight Void, and perhaps beyond, but never return to speak of what they have seen.

# The Sources of the Nile

This section presents you with some options when designing your version of Mythic Africa. Each of the following choices provides different plot hooks and saga ideas, suiting different styles of play.

## Actual Geography: Oasis Stories

In the real world, the Nile rises in central Africa, and has little influence on the region this book considers. South of the Great Desert is a fertile band called the Sahel, which means "shore," and it is fed in the west by two large rivers, the Senegal and the Niger. This area is called the *Bilad-es-Sudan*, "Land of the Blacks" by Arabs, but has a mixture of Sudanese, Berber and Arab inhabitants. The kingdoms in this area are small and war-tossed. If your game's history follows real history for the region, they are struggling through the period between the fall of the Empire of Ghana in 1204, and the foundation, in about 1240, of the Empire of Mali.

Troupes should use actual geography if crossing the desert is important to their character concepts or covenant design. Characters skilled in survival and negotiating with the spirits of the desert have their roles diminished if there is a Western Nile. The desert, as a setting, adds a more realistic tone to stories than the high fantasy alternative. At the same time it encapsulates places, making it understandable that a particular site has lain undisturbed for centuries, hidden in the desert.

### THE BLACK CITY

Deep in the desert is the city of a king who is in mourning. His people wear black, and have painted their houses black. The mosque and the wall around the city are likewise black.

The king discovered his wife was

drugging him each evening and sneaking out to see a lover. The king tricked his wife into swallowing the soporific intended for him. The king then dressed in her clothes, was welcomed into the house of her lover, and decapitated him. When he presented the lover's head to his wife the next morning she died of shock.

The king lives in mourning until a true woman can be found for him. He questions travelers, and subtly encourages talk about women. Ribaldry does not interest him. If a virtuous woman — particularly with a terrible husband — is mentioned to him, he may send her a gift. The treasure he chooses is a string of white pearls.

Any woman who wears the pearls is turned into a dove. It then follows its homing instinct to fly swiftly to his kingdom. When the dove arrives, the king removes the necklace and the woman regains her human form and mind. If the king ever takes a new wife, his people will celebrate by washing the town white.

### THE SILENT PRINCESS

There is a city in the desert which has a palace ringed with 100 stakes. Virtually all of them have the head of a young man impaled upon them. The daughter of the ruler is mute, and her father has sworn no man may wed her unless he makes her speak. Each man who fails is beheaded, and, as her father has said that no more than 100 men may die in this way, it seems likely this lovely girl will never marry.

Player characters can shock the girl into speaking by causing her to botch a Personality Trait roll. This may be done most easily through storytelling. Characters who think to ask her servants know that this approach has been tried before, but that love stories are ineffective. Stories in which outrageous things happen, and vices are rewarded, are likely to make her angry, so that she shouts at the player characters.

### ZERZURA

One line of Egyptian Pharaohs was from the southern kingdom of Kush. They lost the throne of Egypt, and the invader continued to push south, so that it become clear to the Kushites that their capital would fall. As they fought a delay-

ing action along the Nile, the young men and women of Kush were outfitted for an expedition. When the invaders took the capital, they were told that the young people had left for a refuge: a secret oasis far to the west, called Zerzura. The invaders did not chase them; the conditions in the desert were too harsh.

Arab writers have claimed to visit Zerzura once. The city is guarded by a tribe of black giants, although their relationship to the city's inhabitants is unclear. The people here worship a great bird, and a statue of it is found above the gate. The key to the city's gate is in the statue's beak.

Zerzura was built with obvious Egyptian influences. All of the people in Zerzura are asleep and unaging. They are ruled by a king and queen, and it is vital for robbers that they not stray near this couple, lest they wake. Provided the thief does not wake the inhabitants, and avoids the guards, he may take all the treasure he can carry.

Why the Kushites are sleeping, and what will wake them, is not recorded. No Hermetic magus has yet heard this story, but once it circulates, many Seekers will wish to find this outpost of Pharaonic civilization.

## Fantastic Geography: Stories for the Nile of the Blacks

Many Medieval Arabic geographers believe that the Nile rises in the Atlas Mountains and heads south across the Great Desert. There it intersects the Nil-es-Sudan, which roughly follows the path of the real-world Senegal, the Niger, and a few other rivers all joined together. The Nile then turns east. It splits in two, creating a vast island. It then rejoins. After it crosses almost all of the Continent, it turns north. At this point it is joined by water from southern Africa, even, according to some geographers from the Mountains of the Moon, which are debatably on the other side of the unlivable region close to the Equator. The Nile then flows through Nubia and Egypt. Troupes should consider this version of the Nile if a high fantasy game appeals, or if

they have character concepts or covenant designs which are better suited to a permeable Great Desert.

In the standard setting, used throughout the rest of this book, it's assumed that the Western Nile exists, but has faded from the world as the Red defeats the Black. It is now a regio, far from the mortal world and difficult to reach, but with a high Magic aura. It is filled with magical spirits sheltering from the mundanities of the world. It is also a battleground between the Red and the Black. If the characters triumph in the cause of the Hope, the regio draws closer to the world. A shattering injury to the Hunger, on the scale of the splitting of the European Forest (described in *Guardians of the Forest*), might draw the Western Nile back into the mortal world.

The seeds below are suitable for a Western Nile either in the mundane world, or in a regio.

### THE LONG VOYAGE: A SAGA HOOK

A covenant could be formed of magi who wish to explore the Nile. Beginning in North Africa, the group seeks out the Nile's headwaters. They travel for years, through the strange kingdoms beyond the desert, eventually emerging into Egypt, and dissolving their group beneath the Lighthouse of Alexandria.

### MAKING THE NILE FIT FOR TRANSPORT AND TRADE

The Western Nile can, at the troupe's discretion, be easy to navigate. This makes it the primary conduit for trade and travel through West Africa. Alternatively, the troupe can decide that trade along the Western Nile is currently difficult, and that a focus of the campaign is the covenant's attempts to make the Nile navigable.

The headwaters of the Nile are south of the Atlas Mountains. If the Nile is highly navigable, then a city may have been founded here that controls the passes leading to the rest of the Maghreb. If the Nile is not currently navigable from this point, the player characters may find a city here, and improve its accessibil-

ity. Passes or tunnels can be cut through mountains. Bridges and roads can be constructed through harsh terrain. Dangerous predators can be destroyed. Bandits and petty noblemen who harass the merchants must be defeated.

### A CITY IN THE ATLAS

A long time ago there was a sweet seller who became so poor he could not even afford the ingredients for his wares. He decided to leave his city, so that if he was forced into beggary, at least it would be among strangers, so his humiliation would be less. He took his final possession, a little lamp of tin and red glass, and walked over the Atlas Mountains. The passes of the mountains are confusing, and he lost his way, tracking back and forth for many months.

After this time, he found a green valley, and within it a rich city of stone. He approached two men in the market, who knew him for a foreigner, for he spoke Arabic. They were shocked to see him, for no people ever came to their city from outside. The sweet seller was taken to the palace of the Pasha, in which gold was used for common tools, and great piles of gemstones were strewn casually about, as a decoration. The sweet seller was entertained, as is traditional, for three days.

At the end of the three days, as is traditional, the sweet seller needed to take his leave, and gift his host a gift. The sweet seller had lived in greater luxury in the past three days than at any other time in his life, and so he was ashamed to be able to offer only his tin lamp. On a moment of inspiration, he offered it as all his world goods. He was surprised, and heartened, to see that the Pasha was mesmerized by his gift.

In this city, there was no glass. Windows were slits and cups were of gold. The sight of the candle through the sides of the lantern was fascinating. The Pasha, by inclination and tradition, was required to give a gift of similar value, and had nothing, by his estimation, to offer. With apologies, he had twelve camels loaded with treasure, and was gratified when the sweet seller seemed pleased to take such trifles in exchange for his treasure. The sweet seller headed home, and retired from business. He



built a mansion, planted an orchard, and took a beautiful wife, and his family resides in the city still.

Now, the tale goes on to say the sweet seller had a wicked brother, and that the brother sold all he had to buy goods to trade in the distant city. He was accosted by bandits who had ignored the poor sweet seller, as he had nothing worth stealing. Perhaps the wicked brother died there. Perhaps he made it to the city, and also had a glass object to offer to the fair-minded Pasha who, with great reluctance, gave his greatest treasure to his new visitor. The wicked brother returned home with nothing but a little lantern of tin and red glass.

A similar tale is told in many parts of the Near East, so perhaps these are merely faeries, playing a game of wealth and poverty. Perhaps though there really is a secluded valley in the Atlas, where simple tools are made of gold and gemstones are treated as shiny trinkets, but there is only one piece of glass, and it is valued more than all the rest.

### THE WESTERN NILE AS A TRADE ROUTE

The Nile in Egypt is a useful commercial route up until about Aswan, due to the cataracts (waterfalls), which ships cannot pass. As long as there is sufficient population to justify the expense, cargoes and small boats are portaged around the waterfalls. If the Nile in the West has similar hazards to navigation, they can be magically removed, or other methods of mitigating them developed. Portaging stations and canal systems are used in other areas of Mythic Earth, but player characters may opt for unnatural solutions, such as magical cranes to lift ships, portions of the river that flow through midair to jump over an obstacle, or tame elementals that carry ships safely up and over the rocks.

Characters who change the Nile to make it navigable are able to exploit many opportunities to trade. Bulk trade in millet and sorghum is the most voluminous, and perhaps the most lucrative, but goods of middle price require less initial investment. These include leatherwork, cotton cloth, tropical hardwoods like ebony, indigo dye, gum arabic, bronzeware, and brassware. The gold trade is likely to

divert to the river. If the characters dominate trade in the Western Nile, do they permit slaves to be ferried up "their" river?

### FANTASTIC CIVILIZATIONS

The Garamatian civilization, described earlier, collapsed in the real world because the subterranean aquifers on which it depended dried up. If there is a Western Nile, then there's no reason for this civilization to fall, provided its capital is in the fertile land which accompanies the river. The Garamates incessantly raided their neighbors and robbed merchants. The great export from their kingdom was "carbuncles" or carnelian, the Virtuous Form of which allows the holder to see in the dark. Bands of modern Garamates, whose battle chariots sweep out of the moonlit desert to carry away slaves, make useful antagonists. In this case, the ruins discussed in the Fezzan may simply be a lost colony.

The Kingdom of Prester John, in 1220, was believed to be in India; after contact with the Mongols, it became clear that it was not in the Near East. Europe's folklore changed and the Land of Prester John was often thought of as Ethiopia, or a neighboring state. Troupes who want to use the legend of Prester John, and the plot hooks provided for it in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, but who prefer to retain historical Mongols, can place his kingdom along the banks of the Western Nile.

Arabic geographers insist there is a kingdom on the Western Nile where a perfect aphrodisiac grows. A single dose allows a man to have sex as often as he wishes for the rest of the day. According to local law, any of these plants harvested belong personally to the king, who has two hundred wives. The king refuses to sell any of these roots into Muslim lands, as Allah permits men to have only four wives, and he does not wish to anger the deity by tempting men to sin. Many older rulers have asked for the plant and been refused, or have been offered herbs to treat impotence instead. The player characters may be asked to steal the herb, but what if it contains *Creo vis*? How do they stop their grogs using it and neglecting their duties? As a curio, this country is also home to land tortoises so large a man can stand up-

right in their tunnels, and when harvested for eating they must be pulled from the tunnels with teams of oxen.

Another kingdom in the Western Nile has a strange ritual for selecting kings. Notable men of each area form a semicircle around the mouth of a cave, which is decked in treasures and bright cloths. A dragon with the body of a serpent, the head of a camel, and the mane of a lion crawls forth, and after surveying the men, pokes one on the chin with its nose, then turns back to slither into its home. The selected king must swiftly run up to the creature and pull a handful of hairs out if its mane or tail. The number of hairs accurately predicts how many years the king will rule. This is represented by the Death Prophecy Virtue, although some few kings do not actually die at the conclusion of their reigns. A player character with the right magic items could pin the dragon down and shave it bare. Do the locals accept this king? Can the dragon retaliate?

## Chapter Four

# The Realms of North Africa

All four of the supernatural realms have an important presence in Mythic Africa, and they create many stories.

## The Magic

The Imazighen have a rich tradition of magic thanks to a late — and incomplete — penetration of Islam into Berber communities. In Arab folktales, the archetypal “evil wizard” is usually a Berber; ironically the most common stereotype in such tales is a Berber marabout or holy man (see later). Berber wonder-workers also include tattooists who use traditional symbols to invoke luck and health, and a witch-cult that serves a goddess with an ambivalent attitude towards mankind.

## The Winds of the Desert

The old tribes of the Maghreb worshipped nature and the various spirits which resided in the many sacred sites. Most of these spirits have faded away with the coming of Islam and the Divine, but one sort of Magical spirit has persisted, thanks to their wandering nature and their freedom from connection to any one unspoiled locale. These Magical spirits of the desert winds comprise a collection of eclectic and capricious entities who consider the region their home and demense, no matter what beliefs the men there espouse.

Seven genii loci and Daimon spirits make up the Council of Winds: the Chergui, the Gregale, the Haboob, the Harmattan, the Khamsin, the Simoon, and the Sirocco.

THE Chergui is the east wind, hot and dry, and often manifests as an Arab traveler with a quick temper and a wry sense of humor.

The Gregale is a strong, cool wind most often experienced south of Malta. It often manifests as a taciturn and muscular Arab or Greek sailor and seems detached from most of the events in Africa, though it insists on attending any gathering of the spirits.

The Haboob represents the howling dust storms, and often manifests as a pack of wild painted dogs which take turns speaking with the same voice, even within the same sentence. It is renowned for having torn apart the lost army of Cambyses II near Siwa in antiquity.

The Harmattan is the western trade wind, dry and dusty; it blows out of the south across the Western Desert. It manifests as an apathetic Berber caravaner, often leading a tired and





thirsty camel.

The **Khamsin** is a hot, dusty, dry wind which usually blows out of the south for fifty days, beginning after Easter and ending with Pentecost. It manifests as a vindictive and belligerent Egyptian warrior who ages rapidly over the course of the fifty days it rages across the northern coast of Africa. The wind carries a great amount of both dust and sand, as well as terrible plagues, which it takes great joy in spreading.

The **Simoon** is the desert cyclone, ex-

remely hot and dry, and locals call it "the poison wind." The Simoon manifests as a barely veiled woman who loves to dance; she is passionate, capricious, and casually cruel.

Finally, the **Sirocco** is the hot, dust-bearing wind that comes from the southeast and often reaches hurricane speeds. In Africa, it prefers to use its Arabic name, the Ghibli, but bitterly acknowledges that Europeans recognize "Sirocco" better. It manifests often as a veiled Tuareg raider, but always as some kind of

warrior with a biting falchion and a harsh temper. Sand swirls around its every step.

All of these winds roam, visiting the Levant or the Mythic East, occasionally conferring with peers in Iberia, Provence, or the distant North, learning the events of the world. When they gather to discuss matters of Africa, it is in the Kaf Ajnoun, the Hall of Spirits in the Fezzan, near the Tasili n Ajjer. Rising out of the sands, this high rocky mountain, with its citadel-like silhouette, is shunned by the locals for its high temperatures, lack of nearby wadis,

## Sirocco, the Howling Thirst of the Maghreb

*At first, I thought him just another Tuareg warrior sharing the oasis. Then he looked up at us. Never before had I observed a glance of such ferocious intensity, the air grew noticeably warmer, our guide cried out and stammered about tending to the camels. Even my veteran turb flinched, and this alone was enough to tell me the significance of the creature before me.*

**Magic Might:** 35 (Auram)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +0, Pre +1, Com -1, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Season:** Winter

**Confidence Score:** 2 (5)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Spirit; Magical Master, Ways of the Desert; Homing Instinct (Kaf Ajnoun), Improved Characteristics (x2), Piercing Gaze, Second Sight, Self-Confident, Wilderness Sense, Hunger for Auram Magic, Magical Air, Proud (major), Wanderlust; Anchored to the Desert

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Focus Power: Auram x2, Greater Power (Donning the Corporeal Veil, Eidolon, Presence), Major Virtue (Magical Master); Improved Abilities x4, Improved Might x5, Improved Powers (Focus Power, Master of Thirst), Lesser Power (Master of Thirst)

**Personality Traits:** Proud +6\*, Unyielding +3, Fierce +3, Wind +3\*

**Reputations:** Awesome Force of Nature (local) 5

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +2, Attack —, Defense +9, Damage —

**Falchion:** Init +3, Attack +12, Defense +9, Damage +5

**Fist:** Init +2, Attack +8, Defense +8, Damage +2

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** None.

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Animal Ken 3 (detecting fear), Area Lore: Maghreb 6 (caves), Area Lore: Great Desert 6 (ergs), Athletics 4 (charging), Awareness 4 (travelers), Bargain 3 (setting terms), Brawl 6 (dodge), Concentration 3 (Auram effects), Dead Language: Latin 5 (conversation), Dead Language: Punic 5 (conversation), Etiquette 4 (jinn), Folk Ken 4 (first impressions), Guile 5 (misleading), Living Language: Arabic 5 (warnings), Living Language: Berber 5 (warnings), Living Language: French 3 (warnings), Living Language: Italian 3 (bargaining), Living Language: Catalan 3 (bargaining), Organization Lore: Berber Tribes 5 (travel routes), Penetration 2 (Auram effects), Second Sight 4 (invisible things), Single Weapon 5 (falchion), Stealth 5 (stalking), Wilderness Sense 4 (finding oases)

**Powers:**

**Presence**, 0 points, Constant, Imaginem. **R:** Arc, **D:** Sun, **T:** Ind. By concentrating for a few moments, Sirocco may learn anything that happens within the boundaries of the Great Desert. InIm 35 (Base 2, +4 Arc, +2 Sun +1 Constant Effect, +1 non-Hermetic effects): Greater Power (35 levels, -3 Might cost, -1 Might cost from Improved Powers)

**Donning the Corporeal Veil**, 0 points, Init +1, Corpus: Sirocco can assume material form. Cr(Re)Co 25 (Base 5 +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 requisite): Greater Power (25 levels, -3 Might cost, +2 Init)

**Eidolon**, 0 points, Init +2, Imaginem. **R:** Touch, **D:** Conc, **T:** Ind. Creates an illusionary form that is visible and audible to material beings. The image can move and speak as directed by the spirit and lasts until the spirit has no use for it. CrIm 15 (Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Conc, +2 Move on command, +1 intricacy): Greater Power (15 levels, -2 Might cost, +2 Init; 15 levels surplus)

**Master of Sandstorms**, up to 7 points, Init 0, Auram. Sirocco may create non-ritual Creo/Muto/Rego Auram effects (with either Terram or Ignem prerequisites) up to 7th magnitude. (Focus power x2; 3 Mastery points spent on Initiative): Improved Powers (1pt-Ignem prerequisites, 1pt-Terram prerequisites, 2pts- +2 Init)

**Master of Thirst** 0 points, Init -8, Aquam. **R:** Voice, **D:** Mom, **T:** Part. Removes most of the water from any object. PeAq(Co) 25 (Base 5, +2 Voice, +1 Part, +1 Requisite): Lesser Power (25 levels): Improved Powers (-5 Might cost)

**Vis:** There are seven pawns of Auram vis in the dust on the Sirocco's clothes or in its cyclone.

**Appearance:** A Tuareg warrior in robes and veil, with sand swirling about his footsteps. There is a falchion at his side. Alternatively, Sirocco appears as a swirling cyclone of dust and sand.

and treacherous slopes. It has a Magic aura of 7, and a regio on its summit contains a sumptuous palace where the Wind Spirits are attended by smaller zephyr spirits. In its halls, they discuss the state of the desert and the peoples, and what role, if any, they may choose to take in current or impending events. Most recently, they have discussed the Crusade in Damietta, and how they should respond if the conflict spreads west. Other debated topics have included the pirates of the Maghreb, the Romans and Garamantians, and the numerous caravans crossing the Great Desert. They favor actions and individuals that they believe keep the Great Desert a dangerous and wild place. Jinn come here to meet with the Winds, to trade slaves, trinkets, and vis. The Tuareg say the lights and drums of their celebrations can be seen and heard for leagues.

## Cult of the Sun and Moon

In antiquity, the widespread worship of the Sun and Moon resulted in many small shrines being established throughout the Tell. Although the shrines were modest, this devotion was fanatical, recorded time and again by historians as an essential part of Ancient Libyan culture across the northern coast. Animal sacrifice was common. In some places, this Sun god was Sol Invictus, but in most, it was the goddess Tafuyt and the Moon was the god Ayyur. These beliefs persisted into the Christian era, with St. Augustine and Samuel the Confessor both reporting attempts by devoted local pagans to force them to sacrifice to the Sun Goddess. As part of the legacy of this, any non-Divine supernatural powers are commonly associated with the sun if practiced by a man, or the moon if by a woman. Berber magicians very often have the Cyclic Magic Virtue and/or Flaw associated with the appropriate planetary body.

Sun magicians are known to Berbers under the general name of *imbergi* (singular *amberg*), apart from *sahirs* (see *The Cradle and the Crescent*, Chapter 3) and elementalists (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, Chapter 2), who are known under the generic name of *asebbar* (the Tamazight

version of "sahir"). The sun is not a nurturing force to the Berbers, but instead a harsh mistress, the instrument of hardship and woe. Sun magic was taught, so it is believed, by Awettuf the Ant to protect against the world's evil. The practice of sun magic is academic and impersonal, a means to deflect harm and exploit natural forces for the good of humanity. Healing, creation, and summoning are also the sun's purview, and *asebharen* are considered sun magicians even if female. Many aspects of Hermetic magic would be considered sun magic by Berbers.

Female magicians amongst the Berbers are called *settuten* (singular *settut*) regardless of the magic they employ. The *settuten* are priestesses of the First Mother of the World, who created the world, but also all the evil that plagues mankind. Their magic was taught them by Ayyur, god of the moon and of sacrifices. Moon Magic is visceral and passionate; it is often destructive, or uses destructive powers for constructive purposes.

## The Cult of the Dead

For the Berbers, ancestors remain an active aspect of their culture, even in death. They maintain a cult of interaction and communication with their predecessors, calling on them to help guide the present by seeing the future from beyond the grave.

### ANCESTOR SPIRITS

Berber elders and marabouts use dreams to communicate with their honored dead, essentially creating a cult dedicated to the preservation of tombs and the interpretation of dreams sent by spirits. While not strictly necessary, the best place to communicate with an ancestor is within that ancestor's tomb. The dead maintain the scope of influence they possessed in life, and dead rulers are considered to watch over the whole of their people. The tomb of the former king of Mauretania, Juba II, is still visited by dream interpreters.

To better receive the ancestor spirits' dream guidance, Berbers construct special niches within their pyramid

## The Tomb of Tin Hinan

Set into the mountainside in Tilfilalt, the tomb is ten days south of Fes. The Ahaggar Mountains surrounding the tomb have spiritual significance to the *settuten*, since they are the center of the Great Desert, and may be the haunt of Lazz, "the Great Hunger." The Tuareg tribes take turns enjoying the honor of guarding the tomb and fanatically defend it from outsiders, although they do not halt *settuten*, regardless of their origin.

Tin Hinan's tomb is the only remnant of her former palace at Abalessa, a multi-chambered structure built on top of a hill. The tomb and the immediate area have a Magic aura of 5. The queen lies in state on a leather-covered bed, wearing seven gold bracelets on her right arm and eight silver bracelets on her left. She is still consulted, via the Divination Ability, for assistance and advice. If a character can understand the Libyan script and language, the inscriptions on her tomb can be studied as *summae* on all of the *settut* Supernatural Abilities plus Divination. The Level and Quality vary from 6 to 12 depending on the subject. Anyone resting in the entryway of the tomb with a token of *Corpus* or *Creo vis* often benefits from a magical healing sleep. Few realize their good fortune comes from the ghost of Tin Hinan herself.

tomb complexes in which to sleep and receive their advice. Called "dream houses," these niches are surrounded by a courtyard, square except for an extension in the middle of the side facing east. In the larger dream houses, the extension contains a small building modeled after the main pyramid tomb. Those who use such a structure gain a +3 bonus to Dream Interpretation checks made to understand dreams received while sleeping there. (See *Realms of Power: Divine*, page 137 for the Dream Interpretation ability)

The largest complex of these tombs sits atop two hills in Mauretania, where



## Tin Hinan the Shade

**Magic Might:** 35 (Me)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +1, Pre +5, Com +2, Str -2, Sta +2, Dex -3, Qik 0

**Size:** 0

**Season:** Autumn

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magic Spirit; Magic Master; Desert Regio Network, Extractor of Corpus Vis, Great Presence x2, Intuition, Voice of the Desert, Wise One; Crippled, Driven (Protect & Perpetuate the Tuareg), Magical Air; Ability Block (Martial), Anchored to the Desert, Baneful Circumstances (day), Visions

**Magical Qualities and Inferiorities:** Focus Power (Intellego) x2, Focus Power (Destruction) x2, Ritual Power x2, Vis Mastery; Improved Abilities, Improved Might x5, Improved Power, Lesser Power x2

**Personality Traits:** Driven +3, Reclusive +3, Nurturing +2

**Reputations:** Great and Powerful leader 5 (local), Potent Sorceress 3 (Maghreb)

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init +0, Attack +0, Defense -3, Damage -2

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** None.

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Awareness 2 (the living), Area Lore: Western Sahara 4 (oases), Area Lore: Central Sahara 4 (Tuareg Settlements), Bargain 2 (setting terms), Charm 2 (seduction), Dead Language: Latin 4 (commands), Etiquette 4 (nobles), Faerie Lore 5 (Jinn), Folk Ken 3 (discerning motivation), Guile 1 (concealing intent), Intrigue 2 (spotting conspiracy), Leadership 5 (maintaining alliances), Living Language: Arabic 4 (conversation), Living Language: Berber 5 (commands), Magic Lore 4 (Sahir powers), Organizational Lore: Tuareg Tribes 4 (Traditions), Penetration 4 (Corpus), Teaching 4 (single student)

**Powers:**

*Donning the Corporeal Veil*, 0 points, Init -2, Corpus: Tin Hinan can assume material form. Lesser Power; Improved Power (-5 Might cost)

*Focus Power (Divination)*, up to 7 points, Init (Magnitude -3), Intellego: Tin Hinan may create Intellego Corpus/Imaginem/Vim effects up to 7th magnitude. (3 Intricacy points spent on Initiative)

*Focus Power (Destruction)*, up to 7 points, Init (Magnitude -3), Perdo: Tin Hinan may create Perdo Animal/Corpus/Terram effects up to 7th magnitude. (3 Intricacy points spent on Initiative)

*Invisibility*, 0 points, Init -1, Imaginem. **R:** Touch, **D:** Conc, **T:** Ind. Tin Hinan (or someone she touches) becomes invisible when she wishes, but can still be seen by Second Sight. Pelm 15 (Base 4, +1 Touch, +1 Conc, +1 moving image): Lesser Power (25 levels, -2 Might cost)

*Ritual Focus Power (Healing)*, up to 7 points, Init ((2xMagnitude) -3), Creo Corpus: Tin Hinan may create Creo Corpus ritual effects up to 7th magnitude. (3 Intricacy points spent on Initiative); Tin Hinan may use appropriate available vis to power these ritual effects.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)

**Vis:** There are seven pawns of Mentem in Tin Hinan's bracelets. As long as her body lies undisturbed in her tomb, she uses her Extractor of Corpus Vis Virtue to draw 5 Corpus vis from the aura over the course of a season, effectively utilizing her tomb as her laboratory. At any particular time, she may have up to 20 pawns of Corpus vis available for her Ritual Focus Power.

**Appearance:** Tin Hinan manifests as a breathtakingly beautiful raven-haired Berber woman of noble mien, sitting cross legged, but with her legs covered. She wears white and blue robes, her lips and eyelids are blue.

Tin Hinan has access to some Intellego magics, but she also utilizes the network of Magic regiones in the Great Desert to travel vast distances during the night and learn some of the information she provides to petitioners. She retains some aspects of the destructive powers of her former life, but no longer needs amulets to perform her magics.

a collection of Berber kings, high priests, and renowned ancestors rest. It is located south of Tahert, and the Imazighen regularly send their best dream interpreters there to divine potential threats to the region and the Berber people. Many other ghosts also haunt the area, and it has a Magic Aura of 3.

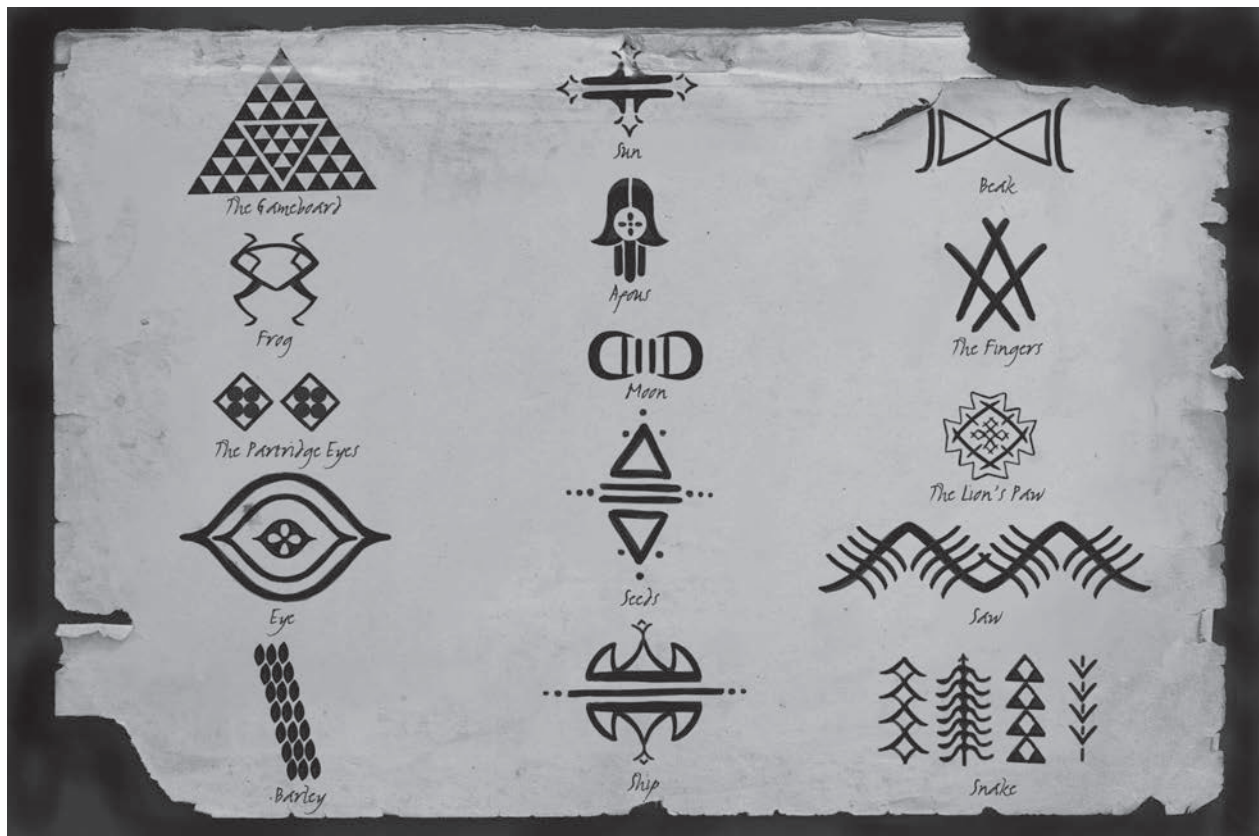
The one of the most famous tombs is Abalessa, the resting place of Tin Hinan, Queen of the Berber, Progenitor of the Tuareg, and a powerful settut. Tin Hinan originated in the Atlas Mountains, but was driven by a prophetic dream to travel across the desert. She rode on a white camel laden with millet and dates, and was accompanied by her servant Takama. Finding the land empty of inhabitants, she established herself at Abalessa in the Ahaggar Mountains, where she gave birth to three daughters Tinhert ("antelope"), Temerwelt ("hare"), and Tahenkot ("gazelle") who founded the royal tribes of the Imazighen and Tuareg. Takama was the progenitor of the servile caste.

Tin Hinan was unable to abandon her people even at her death, and her shade is bound to the desert. She answers petitions from the Brides of Ayyur and shares what information she can with them. Her overwhelming goal is to aid and protect the Imazighen, and so she remains until the tribes no longer seek her out.

## Tattoo Magicians

Most *imhergi* are drawn from a variety of learned magicians similar to Cunning Folk (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 101). Among Berber women are the *ngagef* (singular *neggafa*), cosmeticians who specialize in this type of sun magic despite being women.

Rather than verbal charms, *imhergi* and *ngagef* draw temporary tattoos called *tawzayt*, or else mark similar symbols into the ground or chalked onto buildings. An *amherg* character should take the Slow Caster Hermetic Flaw to represent this requirement. Instead of chartae and amulets, an *amherg* creates



a permanent tattoo (called an *abadjam*) or inscription which is activated once it is uncovered. Once exposed it continues to work until all charges have gone or the duration expires, at which point it fades. An amherg uses Craft: Tattoo rather than Artes Liberales in his Lab Totals, and can benefit from Design & Inscription Bonuses (see Insert) when creating chartae and amulets.

## The Settuten

The *settuten* ("witches," singular *settut*) are primarily a specific tradition of Berber and Tuareg sorceresses, although any female practitioner of magic is called *settut* whether she is a member of this tradition or not. Most (but not all) have The Gift, forcing them to live apart from their tribes. The tradition is almost exclusively female; those few men who have become *settut* act and are treated as women in all respects. *Settuten* proclaim their status by wearing indigo shawls embroidered with moons and other symbols, and paint-

ing their lips and lining their eyes with blue makeup. When appearing an official capacity — attending a client, meeting with peers, or officiating at a ceremony — they stain their foreheads with yellow ochre and saffron.

The Berber (but not Tuareg) *settuten* occasionally go by the poetic name of The Brides of Ayyur (in Tamazight, *Tisliten n Ayyur*); Ayyur is the Berber god of the Moon, and since the decline of the worship of the Berber gods, the *settuten* have taken on the role of keeping the old religion alive. Although they have a special relationship with the moon, they act as priestesses for all the Berber gods. *Settuten* are tolerated by most Berber communities as long as they serve the people; only those tribes with particularly pious members risk angering the local *settut*. Tuareg *settuten* are culturally different from their Imazighen cousins and have slightly different magics at their disposal. Tuareg and Berber *settuten* rarely co-operate with one another.

The magic of the *settuten* is that of the First Mother of the World, the primordial *settut*. Their magic relies on destruction and erosion. At a base level they can ruin material things: rusting

metal, evaporating water, quenching fires, and crumbling stone. More subtly, they can set men arguing with each other by destroying the social conventions that bind them together, ruining friendships and seeding betrayal into the hearts of men. This power extends into the magical arena: they can banish spirits and exorcise demons by negating the power that keeps them on earth. The most feared power of a *Tislit n Ayyur* is to sever the connection between a man and his magic, setting The Gift to flight and making a mundane out of a magus.

The *settuten* are opposed to practitioners of sun magic, particularly the *asebharen* (*sahirs*, members of the Suhhar Sulayman). To Berber minds, *sahirs* are associated with Arabs, who have been their blood enemies for many centuries, and the *settuten* consider it their duty to drive out any *sahirs* they encounter. *Settut* magic can be devastatingly effective against summoners, since the *settuten* can dismiss the spirits through which *sahirs* work their magic, and they can prevent the *sahir* from summoning more by negating their ability to use magic altogether. The *settuten* rarely seek to kill a *sahir*, but they can be relentless in



## Design & Inscription Bonuses

Design & Inscription bonuses are used like Shape & Material bonuses to increase Lab Totals. They are used by all settuten and imhergi, and they may also be employed by characters with the Craft Magic Virtue (*Houses of Hermes: Societates*, page 132) or the Craft Amulets Ability (*Realms of Power: the Divine*, page 138). Note that the total bonus gained from shape, material, design and inscription is still limited by the Ability the magician employs in Lab totals (Craft: Iharzen for settuten, Craft: Tattoos for cunning folk, and so on).

**Portraits:** Portraits usually depict a famous ruler, saint, or person, and the character may gain an additional +1 bonus if the figure pictured is particularly recognizable as great, or is particularly appropriate to the effect. *Bonuses:* +2 authority, +2 affect subject, +2 affect saint's patronage, +1 protection

**Writing:** For a writing bonus, the inscription must spell out what the caster wishes the effect to achieve, perhaps calling upon mystic forces or specific entities. An additional +1 is added if the writing names the target or the caster. *Bonuses:* +3 affect a limited type of person, +1 control, +1 affect wearer

**Seal or Symbol:** The item receives a bonus if it includes an official seal or symbol. This might be for a particular craft gild, a Hermetic House, an individual's family, or even the Order. It could also be used to represent people from a specific kingdom or religion. If the symbol is obviously very old, recognizable, or comes from a distant and exotic location, the item gets an additional +1 bonus. *Bonuses:* +3 affect only the indicated group, +1 authority, +1 secrecy

**Image:** A design can incorporate an image of any shape found on the Shape & Material Bonuses Table. This gives a design bonus of half the bonus that

shape would usually contribute, rounded down. For example, an item depicting a bell (+5 warning) would add a +2 design bonus to a warning effect in the device. *Bonus:* + (half the image's shape bonus)

**Traditional Symbols:** Some Berber symbols have particular significance due to long association in tattoo magic and inscriptions. Note these are not images of Shape bonuses, but symbols in their own right. There are many of these designs, the most potent are given below. *Bonus:* see list nearby

### DESIGN & INSCRIPTION BONUSES FROM TRADITIONAL SYMBOLS

Name	Bonuses
The Beak	+3 protect children
The Lion's Paw	+4 strength
The Fingers	+5 avoid disease
The Barley	+2 affect crops
The Partridge Eyes	+4 beauty
The Gameboard	+7 mystic visions, +3 confusion
The Frog	+1 enhance magic powers
The Seeds	+3 health of plants
The Eye	+3 luck, +5 versus natural disasters
The Saw	+5 versus <i>jnun</i> and spirits
The Snake	+3 recovery from injury
The <i>Afous</i> *	+5 avert bad luck, +7 protect against evil
The Sun	+2 affect men, +4 harm crops
The Moon	+2 affect women
The Ship+	4 water, +2 wisdom

\*Called *hamsa* in Arabic, or the Hand of Fatima, this is the most common protective amulet used in Africa

ties instead. Gifted Settuten do not have to subtract their total score in their Favored Abilities from the source quality to learn other Favored Abilities (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 9).

Initiation into the settuten tradition usually occurs sometime between seven and twelve, before the girl reaches puberty. The training provided by the settuten typically takes ten years, during which time the character receives 200 experience points. If the apprentice is Gifted, then part of her apprenticeship is the Opening of The Gift, which gives her all five of the tradition's Favored Abilities at a score of zero without needing to take the corresponding Virtues. Opening The Gift uses the Divination Ability (which is not part of the usual Abilities of the settuten, see later), and this usually takes place at a convocation (see later). A settut character can spend the experience points from her apprenticeship on any of these Supernatural Abilities, as well as on General and Arcane Abilities. UnGifted members of the settuten must purchase the tradition's Supernatural Abilities as a Virtues, and consequently they do not have a full complement of the tradition's powers. They can be Initiated into other Supernatural Abilities of the settuten after play has begun (*Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, page 13), but not all local convocations have access to Initiation Scripts for all the tradition's Abilities.

Infrequently, a settut shows a natural talent for prophecy, which is represented by the Divination Major Virtue. Such a character is called a *timeqiqit* ('seeress'), and is usually marked for greatness; a character is only eligible to become a leader of settuten if she has this Virtue. Characters taking this Virtue can apply apprenticeship experience points to increasing this Ability.

Settut may take certain Hermetic Virtues and Flaws that alter the way their magic manifests. This includes: Gentle Gift; Cautious Sorcerer; Cyclic Magic (positive, during the night), Fast Caster, Free Study, Harnessed Magic, Personal Vis Source, Quiet Magic, Side Effect, Special Circumstances; Blatant Gift, Necessary Condition, Painful Magic, Restriction; Careless Sorcerer, Cyclic Magic (negative, during the day), Deleterious Circumstances, Disorientating Magic, Susceptibility to Divine Power, Susceptibility to Faerie Power, Susceptibility to Infernal Power,

their hounding of one while he remains in Berber lands.

## Settut Characters

A settut may be Gifted or unGifted. If Gifted, the character usually takes

the place of a player's magus character, whereas unGifted members are companion characters. Berber settuten are a Hedge Tradition that has Dissolution, Disjunction, Dismissal, Dissidence, and Magic Sensitivity as its Favored Abilities. Tuareg settuten have Dissolution, Dislocation, Dismissal, Dismay, and Magic Sensitivity as their Favored Abili-

Warped Magic, Weak Magic, Weird Magic. Other Hermetic Virtues and Flaws may also be appropriate. Male settut must take the Transvestite Flaw.

Settuten must have a trade to support themselves; they often dispense both advice and health care to nearby villages, and act as exorcist, midwife, physician, and apothecary. Settuten may have the Herbalism Virtue (*Art & Academe*, page 55) to cover their folk medicine. This trade usually occupies two seasons each year, and settuten normally gain 15 experience points per year. All settuten require a Craft: Iharzen Ability to create the amulets that drive their magic, and usually have scores in Penetration, Finesse, Organization Lore: Settuten, Chirurgery, and a Profession Ability. They may take General and Arcane Abilities at character creation, but not Academic or Martial Abilities unless they possess a Virtue permitting such Abilities.

## New Virtues and Flaws

Accelerated Abilities were introduced in *Houses of Hermes: Societates*; they advance in the same way as Arts, but are otherwise treated as Abilities in all respects.

### SETTUT

*Free, Social Status Virtue*

The character has been trained as a settut. She may create amulets containing settut powers, and gains the magical defenses associated with her powers. She suffers from the Tamzawit Curse (see later) rather than regular Warping. She may take Arcane Abilities during character creation. She is a member of a local convocation of the settuten and may attend meetings. She must spend two seasons a year supporting herself — usually by performing magic or chirurgery for the local community; the Wealthy Virtue and Poor Flaw affect this as usual. This Virtue is incompatible with other Social Status Virtues and Flaws.

### DISJUNCTION

*Major, Supernatural Virtue*

The settut can remove magical powers from others. She has a score of 0 in the Supernatural Ability Disjunction, which is an Accelerated Ability. This Virtue is not taught to Tuareg settuten.

### DISLOCATION

*Major, Supernatural Virtue*

The settut can temporarily shorten the distance between two localities. She has a score of 0 in the Supernatural Ability Dislocation, which is an Accelerated Ability. This Virtue is only taught to Tuareg settuten.

### DISMAY

*Major, Supernatural Virtue*

The settut can destroy self-confidence with her scorn. She has a score of 0 in the Supernatural Ability Dismay, which is an Accelerated Ability. This Virtue is only taught to Tuareg settuten.

### DISMISSAL

*Major, Supernatural Virtue*

The settut can banish spirits, ghosts, and demons. She has a score of 0 in the Supernatural Ability Dismissal, which is an Accelerated Ability.

### DISSIDENCE

*Major, Supernatural Virtue*

The settut can sow discord between friends and lovers. She has a score of 0 in the Supernatural Ability Dissidence, which is an Accelerated Ability. This Virtue is not taught to Tuareg settuten.

### DISSOLUTION

*Major, Supernatural Virtue*

The settut can destroy physical objects. She has a score of 0 in the Supernatural Ability Dissolution, which is an Accelerated Ability.

### DIVINATION

*Major, Supernatural Virtue*

The settut can interpret signs and omens to learn hidden things. She has a score of 0 in the Supernatural Ability Divination, which is an Accelerated Ability.

### DUST DEVIL

*Minor, Supernatural Virtue*

This variant of the Skinchanger Virtue (*ArM5*, page 48) allows the character to adopt the shape of a *tamzawit*, or dust devil. This is similar to the transformation that takes the place of Wizard's Twilight for settuten (see Warping and the Tamzawit Curse, later), except that she becomes a dust devil of Size +1, can assume the form at any time, and can direct her movement rather than roaming at random. If she undergoes the Tamzawit Curse she loses these features and adopts those described later. This Virtue makes it more difficult for the settut to resist the Tamzawit Curse, and while under its effects she suffers a -3 to all rolls to end the effect. Rather than a cloak or animal skin, the focus object of this Virtue is a glass amulet formed from sand taken from a Magic aura.

This Virtue can be taken by non-settuten characters.

## Settut Magic

The magic of the settuten revolves around the Supernatural Abilities of Disjunction, Dislocation, Dismay, Dismissal, Dissidence, and Dissolution (Magic Sensitivity does not require amulets, but operates as described in *ArM5*, page 66). Using these Abilities requires the creation of amulets (called *ibarzen* in Tamazight, singular *ibarz*); these are usually made of fired clay, but some are made of other materials such as leather, metal, or even salt dough. An *ibarz* is impressed with symbols from Berber mythology, allowing anyone with the appropriate Ability to recognize their purpose. There are two types of amulet, Greater and Lesser.



## Settuten and Vis

Settuten are able to find and identify vis using Magic Sensitivity. They can use it to enhance their Casting Totals, gaining a +1 bonus for every pawn used, and can use a number of pawns at a time equal to the Supernatural Ability used. They also require vis for making Greater Amulets. They categorize vis according to their own magical paradigm. They favor Perdo and Vim vis, as these varieties can be used in any of their magic. They can also use Mentem vis for Dissidence and Dismay, Rego vis for Dismissal and Dislocation, any of the elemental Forms for Dissolution, and Intellego for Magic Sensitivity. They can detect other types of vis for what it is, but cannot use it in their magic.

## Studying Settut Magic

Experience points applied to the settut's magical Abilities usually comes from Practice; Gifted settuten can also study from vis. Settuten who hound Solomonian sorcerers from Berber lands or exorcise hostile spirits can also earn story experience. Rarely, a settut will agree to teach another in exchange for vis or Greater Amulets.

Certain grave sites in Imazighen lands have ancient inscriptions in Phoenician or Libyan, and settuten who understand these languages and read their scripts have found that they encode magical secrets. These texts are studied as if they are tractatus on one of the Supernatural Abilities of the settuten; the Quality is rarely more than 9, and often less if the text is exposed to sun and sand. Very rare and holy sites like the Tomb of Tin Hinan (see earlier) are superior sources of knowledge, and may be studied as summae.

## GREATER AMULETS

Making a Greater Amulet is a seasonal activity, but does not require a laboratory, just a sheltered spot in which to work and the necessary tools and materials. To make a batch of iharzen, the character gathers the materials she needs and performs rituals to the gods of the Berbers. The process is physically demanding, and the settut loses one Long Term Fatigue level for the whole season. A settut can take up to ten days absence from making Greater Amulets with no penalty; any more than that and she incurs a -2 penalty per day to the Potency of each batch.

A settut can make up to four batches of Greater Amulets in a season, one batch for each Supernatural Ability requiring them. Each batch has a base cost of one pawn of vis per five points (or fraction) of the Supernatural Ability, and she has to pay this cost for every three amulets she makes. She can make a total number of Greater Amulets equal to twice her Craft: Iharzen Ability, and these are divided however she wishes between the batches. A settut with insufficient vis may choose to make fewer amulets than her maximum.

*Example: a settut has Craft: Iharzen of 5, Disjunction 9, Dismissal 5, Dissidence 6, Dissolution 12. She can make ten Greater Amulets in total. She makes a batch of six Disjunction amulets for a total cost of 4 pawns of vis, and a batch of three Dissolution amulets for a total cost of 3 pawns. With her last pawn of vis she makes a single Dismissal amulet, although if her Craft: Iharzen were higher she could make three for the same cost.*

Each batch of Greater Amulets has a Potency, which is used to calculate a Casting Total. This Potency should be recorded on the character sheet. Greater Amulets benefit from the aura modifier of the place of manufacture rather than where they are used. A settut can incorporate Design & Inscription bonuses (see earlier) into a Greater Amulet; her total bonus cannot exceed her Craft: Iharzen Ability. Each amulet in a batch can incorporate different Design & Inscription bonuses.



## Durations Available to Settuten

The default Duration is Lunar Day. A settut can extend this duration by accepting a modifier to the Ease Factor. Other spell parameters (such as Range and Target) cannot be changed unless specified in the description of the Ability.

**Lunar Day:** The spell lasts until the moon sets. Thus if the spell is cast immediately after moonset, it lasts for just over a whole day; if cast just before moonset it ends immediately. See the nearby insert for the phases of the moon.

**Moon:** The spell lasts until both the new moon and the full moon have set.

**Lunar Year:** The spell lasts until the new moon and the full moon have set twelve times.

**Nineteen Years:** The spell lasts until the moon returns to exactly the same place in the sky, which takes nineteen years.

Duration	Modifier
Moon	+3
Lunar Year	+6
Nineteen Years	+9

**GREATER AMULET POTENCY:**  
**Intelligence + Supernatural Ability + Craft: Iharzen**  
**+ Design & Inscription bonus + Aura modifier**

**TOTAL AMULETS CREATED:**  
 equal to 2 x Craft: Iharzen

**VIS COST PER BATCH:**  
 (Supernatural Ability/5) pawns for every 3 amulets.

## LESSER AMULETS

Lesser Amulets can be made in a few minutes by a settut with the appropriate raw materials. They can be made from sand, clay, flour, salt, or any other dry sub-

## Phases of the Moon

Phase	Rises	Zenith	Sets	Duration
New	6 am	noon	6 pm	3 days
Waxing Crescent	9 am	3 pm	9 pm	4 days
Waxing Half	noon	6 pm	midnight	3 days
Waxing Gibbous	3 pm	9 pm	3 am	4 days
Full	6 pm	midnight	6 am	3 days
Waning Gibbous	9 pm	3 am	9 am	4 days
Waning Half	midnight	6 am	noon	3 days
Waning Crescent	3 am	9 am	3 pm	4 days

Note that these moon phases are approximated for simplicity.

stance mixed with a binding agent (such as egg white or glue), and marked with Berber symbols with a sharp tool. Every settut carries the necessary materials wherever she goes, and usually has a pouch full of prepared Lesser Amulets ready to be used. There is usually no need to keep a track of a settut's Lesser Amulets: their Potency is determined when they are used, and it can be assumed that under normal circumstances the settut has one to hand. The Aura modifier of a Lesser Amulet is whatever is applicable to the settut at the time she uses the amulet.

**LESSER AMULET POTENCY:**  
**Presence + Supernatural Ability + Aura modifier**

## USING AN AMULET

Each amulet has a single use — to use one of her four principal Supernatural Abilities, the settut employs the iharz (as described later under the separate Abilities) while uttering a brief incantation. Any character with the requisite Supernatural Ability can use an amulet created by a settut; she does not have to be the individual who created the amulet in the first place. Settuten rarely share their iharzen, although they do occasionally offer them to other settuten as tribute. The player must state what effect is desired before rolling the die; this sets the Ease Factor of the roll, described later. This Ease Factor may be modified for Duration (see insert); the range of effect and suitable targets are described for each Ability and cannot be altered unless stated otherwise. The size of a target is irrelevant unless

stated otherwise.

When the amulet is activated, the settut generates a Casting Total for it. Settut magic that needs to Penetrate to take effect uses the wielder's Penetration score rather than the creator's; Penetration Bonus is calculated in the usual manner (ArM5, page 84).

For the purposes of magical detection and dispelling, an amulet has a spell level equal to its Potency. Before it is activated, the amulet has a mere trace of magic to investigative magics; this magic can be dispelled, but its equivalent spell level is doubled. However, physically destroying the amulet also dissipates its magic. Once employed (in game terms, when the Casting Total is generated) it radiates magic at full strength.

**CASTING TOTAL:**  
**Amulet Potency + die**

**PENETRATION TOTAL:**  
**Casting Total – Ease Factor + Penetration Bonus**

**EQUIVALENT SPELL LEVEL:**  
**Amulet Potency**

The die used in the casting Total is a simple or stress die, as the situation warrants. A Greater Amulet with a Design & Inscription Bonus can be employed in situations where the bonus is inapplicable, but the bonus does not apply to its Potency.



DISJUNCTION

The power of the settuten most feared by other magicians is Disjunction: robbing a sorcerer of his supernatural powers. A settut devours the ability to use magic, rendering the target mundane. This Supernatural Ability works on Gifted and unGifted magicians alike, although the power is more difficult against a character with The Gift. It also works on characters with Faerie or Infernal equivalents of The Gift, but not on characters with True Faith, who are immune to the effects of this Ability.

The amulets crafted for this Ability are metallic in nature and heavy, but they are brittle and easily broken. The settut can affect a person in one of three ways: he must eat food or drink something that has had a dissolved amulet added to it; he must have it touched to his bare skin; or else he must be manipulated into breaking the amulet in the settut's presence. Once this happens, the amulet is employed and must Penetrate any Magic Resistance (using the Vim Form) and have a Casting Total equal or greater than the highest applicable Ease Factor to take effect. For example, a character whose Gift has been Opened and also has Supernatural Virtues has an Ease Factor of 21.

Ease Factor	Effect
12	Gifted character with no Supernatural Virtues other than the free one that comes with The Gift Virtue
15	unGifted character with Supernatural Virtues
18	Gifted character with Supernatural Virtues
21	Gifted character whose Gift has been Opened

A character successfully affected by this power no longer has The Gift or any other Supernatural Virtues for its duration, and therefore cannot use magic. He cannot access any of his spells, nor can he benefit from any Supernatural Virtues he possesses. He cannot perform any actions that require The Gift, but Disjunction does not cancel any ongoing effects. For example, a Hermetic magus retains his Parma Magica until the next sunrise or sunset, but cannot then re-establish it while affected

by Disjunction, since using this Arcane Ability requires possession of The Gift. A magus's Form Resistances are not affected by Disjunction since they do not need to be renewed like Parma Magica. A magus cannot perform any Laboratory activity that requires a Lab Total, but he can study the Arts and write about them. Other magicians are similarly affected. A positive side effect is that by removing The Gift, Disjunction also negates the social penalty it engenders in others.

If affected by a Disjunction effect for a year or more, an untrained Gift (that is, where The Gift has not been Opened) does not return when the Duration expires. Some characters appear to lose The Gift entirely, others gain the Latent Magical Ability Virtue instead. The accompanying free Supernatural Virtue is also lost unless it has a corresponding Supernatural Ability to which the character has already applied experience points; in this case The Gift Virtue is replaced by the appropriate Supernatural Virtue. Other Supernatural Virtues — those paid for with Flaws — are not lost along with The Gift.

DISLOCATION

Dislocation breaks down the physical distance between places. It allows the settut to cross vast distances in a single night, or escape pursuers. The *ibarz* associated with Dislocation is suspended on a sinew thong around the settut's neck or the neck of her mount. As she dons the amulet she must have a destination in mind (or else be able to see it), and must immediately commence moving towards that destination. She need not have been to the destination before, but she must be capable of clearly identifying it from its surroundings; this may require an Intelligence + Area Lore roll. Neither the departure point nor the destination can be within a regio; and the aura modifier included in the Casting Total for a Lesser amulet is the lowest modifier (or highest penalty) of the departure and destination points. Dislocation effects do not need modifiers for Duration; they last until the settut reaches her destination or until she comes to a premature stop. If it is not physically possible to reach the chosen destination using the current mode of

transport — for example, a locked gate to a city or a river with no bridge — then the Ability automatically fails. Dislocation does not work on any form of travel other than by foot or while riding a living mount. A settut can lead up to ten other travelers (conscious or otherwise) and their mounts by increasing the Ease Factor by 3, and up to one hundred others by increasing the Ease Factor by 6. These extra targets benefit from the effect as long as they continue to follow the settut. This Ability has to Penetrate the Vim-based Magic Resistance of any travelers; if the destination is protected from magic, then the settut must Penetrate as if trying to enter or cast a spell at the warded area.

The Ability somehow devours the distance between origin and destination rather than making the traveler move faster; to herself she seems to be traveling at normal speed, but she reaches her destination sooner. To observers she disappears into a mirage or heat haze. The settut cannot slow down her travel to interact with the landscape or other travelers, although she may end the effect at will by stopping moving. For simplicity the Ease Factor for this Ability is presented as a fraction of the time the journey would take by mundane means at the settut's normal speed.

Ease Factor	Relative Speed
9	one half of usual time
15	one fifth of usual time
21	one tenth of usual time
27	one twentieth of usual time
33	one fiftieth of usual time
39	one hundredth of usual time

Tuareg settuten have arranged for the erection of stone monuments in otherwise deserted locations to act as destinations for this Ability. In particular they mark the entrance points to the network of desert regions.

DISMAY

The Dismay Ability destroys the self-confidence of an individual, filling him with anxiety and doubt and making him more likely to fail a specified task

or activity. The amulets crafted for this Ability are usually brightly colored, for they must catch the eye of the target as the settut utters some withering indictment on the character's abilities. The victim must hear, but need not understand, the malediction spoken by the settut. The settut must Penetrate any Mentem-based Magic Resistance of the target.

Dismay effectively imposes the Ability Block Flaw on the target, for a class of Abilities that is the subject of the settut's disdain. For example, if the settut insults someone's logic, this can affect rolls involving Artes Liberales, Philosophiae, any Law, Medicine, and Theology. If she scorns his poor manners, he might be limited on Etiquette, Bargain, (Organization) Lore, and Folk Ken rolls. Should she denigrate his prowess in battle then all uses of Martial Abilities could be affected. Storyguides should ensure that the effect targets about five or six clearly defined Abilities directly related to the object of Dismay. A settut cannot affect Supernatural Abilities or Arts, but she can target Arcane Abilities such as Finesse and Penetration. Only rolls and totals that include the afflicted Ability are penalized.

Ease Factor	Effect
12	Target cannot spend confidence points on the specified activity;
18	As above, plus the target suffers three extra botch dice to do with the activity;
24	As above, plus the target suffers a -1 to all rolls to do with the activity;
30	As above, but the penalty is -3 rather than -1;
36	As above, plus the target must make a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 9 before even attempting the specified activity; this roll can be modified by any Cheerful, Proud, or Optimistic Personality Trait; and penalized by Depressed, Diffident,

42

or Pessimistic Personality Traits;

The target cannot even attempt the specified activity, so convinced is he of inevitable failure.

### DISMISSAL

The Dismissal Supernatural Ability forces supernatural creatures to flee the vicinity of the settut and not return to the area until the effect's Duration has expired. While dismissed, the creature must avoid the location described by the character or suffer pain and discomfort.

The *iharz* created for this Ability are large — about six inches across and an inch thick. They are used by crumbling them in the hand — a trivial matter taking a few seconds — and casting the resulting powder around the area to be protected. While spreading the fine powder, the settut must identify a specific realm through her incantation to the Berber gods. If the character omits or incorrectly states the source of the target's Might, her Dismissal attempt fails. The settut and the creature or creatures to be dismissed must be within the designated area when the Ability is used. She can also cast the powder on an object or person (including herself), forbidding creatures from the affected realm from approaching within the designated distance. However, Dismissal can Warp the warded creature, object, or area as a continuing mystic effect (ArM5, page 167–168; furthermore, if the Amulet Potency is 30 or more this counts as a powerful mystical effect). Dismissal cannot be used as a generic ward; it banishes the creatures present when the amulet is used and prevents those specific creatures from returning, but will not dismiss creatures not present when the amulet is used even if they are of the same type.

The player compares the Casting Total to the Ease Factor as described below. Multiple creatures of the same realm may be dismissed from the designated location without affecting the Ease Factor. The Dismissal must Penetrate the Magic Resistance of each creature from the designated realm that is present; those who fail are dismissed, those who succeed are unaffected.

Ease Factor	Area
3	An area ten paces across
6	Structure
9	Boundary

A successful Dismissal attempt expels all affected creatures from the designated area, whether the character is aware of them or not. The only way to avoid Dismissing friendly creatures of the same realm as the one targeted is to include the True Name of the target of the banishment (see *Realms of Power: The Infernal*, page 34). The Dismissal remains in effect for the Duration of the effect. If a person or object is the focus of the Dismissal, the effect travels with her, and affected entities must flee the area, structure, or boundary she currently occupies; if the latter two areas are inappropriate (not in a building or area with clear boundary), then the area defaults to ten paces across. The area cannot be extended beyond a standard Boundary.

A dismissed creature must depart the designated location by the quickest means available to it. The creature may attempt to return to the designated location by succeeding in a Stamina + (Realm) Lore roll against an Ease Factor of 12, where the applicable (Realm) Lore is the origin of the character's Dismissal Ability (the Magic Realm for most settuten). If the designated location is within an aura that is aligned with the character's Dismissal Ability, the creature's roll is modified by the Realm Interaction Table (ArM5, page 183). If the creature succeeds, it may enter the designated location, but its Might Score is reduced by one-half the character's Dismissal score. If the creature's Might Score would be reduced to zero or lower, the creature may not enter. If the creature leaves the designated location, its Might Score returns to normal.

While an affected creature is in the designated location, it also suffers overwhelming pain and discomfort (and the negative modifiers) as described in *Weight of a Thousand Hells* (ArM5, page 148). This extreme discomfort causes most creatures to develop a deep enmity for the character who banished it. Infernal and other creatures of appropriate temperament may develop an obsession with exacting revenge on the character. If the creature is unable to avenge the banishment, it seeks allies or assistance in punishing the character. Friendly creatures may not go to these



lengths for revenge, but few will be pleased at suffering the torment of banishment.

**DISSIDENCE**

Dissidence breaks down the social bonds that keep society together. It can be used to break a peace treaty, set brothers against each other, or ruin a merchant's business. It is said that with this power, the settuten caused a war between the Umayyad summoners and their servile jinn. The Ability cannot destroy the affection resulting from the True Love or True Friend Virtue or Flaw, nor can it affect a character with True Faith, although those who interact with such a character may be affected as normal. Furthermore, like all settut magic, it cannot weaken that which is already broken; preexisting dislike or hatred cannot be strengthened.

The iharz created by this Ability looks like bread or hard tack and made from flour paste. Although unpalatable, it can be passed off as poor quality food, or softened in wine to make it edible.

Dissidence affects just one individual, although settuten often affect both partners in a relationship with a dose each. The settut specifies the target-partner pair when using the magic; the target is the one affected by her magic, and the partner is the individual for whom the target's feelings will change as a result of Dissidence. This must be a personal relationship between two individuals, not between an individual and a group of others. The target must touch the amulet in the presence of the settut, while thinking about the partner to be affected. A settut typically engages the target in 'innocent' conversation about that individual before offering him the iharz as food.

<b>Ease Factor</b>	<b>Relationship</b>
12	Affect characters with no prior relationship, such as between two strangers, or a sahir and a jinn he has never summoned before
18	Affect a casual relationship, such

24

30

36

42

as between a merchant and his regular customers, or a sahir and a jinn he regularly summons  
 Affect a trusted or long term acquaintanceship, such as between a master and his pupil, or between cousins, or a sahir and his *khadim*  
 Affect a close friendship, such as between childhood friends or siblings  
 Affect a loving relationship, such as between husband and wife, or parent and child  
 Affect devotion, such as between man and God

The base effect makes the target dislike the partner, leading to slander, resentment, and a refusal to cooperate with her. The affected individual always thinks the worst of the partner in any given circumstance, and the partner suffers a -3 penalty to all social interaction rolls with the target. Increasing this animosity to hatred adds +3 to the Ease Factor. Targets made to hate the indicated partner desire to do some kind of harm to her, but stop short of killing the person. The target treats his partner as if she were responsible for some horrible moral turpitude (much like the effects of The Blatant Gift). The target might destroy his partner's fields, ruin a business opportunity, wreck their marriage, or perhaps wound them in a duel. The partner suffers a -6 to all social interaction rolls with the target. Increasing hatred to loathing adds another +3 to the Ease Factor, and infects the target with a consuming passion to destroy everything the partner has wrought, resulting in him attempting to slay her. All effects are cumulative with the effects of The Gift.

Dissidence must Penetrate the Magic Resistance (as a Mentem effect) of the target to have its desired effect, and lasts until the Duration expires. However, once the effect ends, the intensity of the former relationship is often diminished as a consequence of actions taken

while under magical compulsion. This cooling off lasts at least as long as the Duration of the effect, but the relationship may be damaged permanently.

**DISSOLUTION**

Dissolution destroys physical matter. The Ability can affect large quantities of raw materials like stone and water, or smaller amounts of processed materials like leather or wine. A settut can use this power to kill living plants, but not living humans or animals. Dissolution cannot affect matter that has already been broken or spoiled by magical or mundane means. If the matter destroyed would naturally replenish, such as plants regrowing or a spring renewing, then the Duration of the Dissolution effect represents the time that must elapse before natural regeneration takes over. For example, a Duration: Lunar Year effect can stop plants from growing in the affected spot for a whole year.

The amulets created for this power must touch the affected material. They are either burnt in a fire, dissolved in a liquid, or pulverized and scattered over the object affected.

<b>Ease Factor</b>	<b>Effect</b>
12	Weaken perishable matter like cloth, leather and wool
15	Destroy perishable matter like cloth, leather and wool; extinguish flames; wither herbaceous plants
18	Weaken strong materials like wood and bone; spoil liquids
21	Destroy strong materials like wood and bone; evaporate liquids; kill woody plants
24	Weaken durable materials like stone, metal and magical objects
27	Destroy durable materials like stone, metal and magical objects; dry up springs

## Example Divinations

### IS TINITREN JUST MISSING, OR IS SHE DEAD?

An Intellego Corpus base 4 allows the settut to "sense general information about a body." Assuming she is holding an Arcane Connection, then the Ease Factor is 5 (Base 4, +1 touching Arcane Connection). The divination must Penetrate Tinitren's Magic Resistance, if any.

### DID IZEMRASEN STEAL MY SHEEP?

This is an Intellego Mentem base 10 "discover the truth of a statement." The divination must Penetrate Izemrasen's Magic Resistance, if any. Ease Factor 15 (Base 10, +1 Eye)

### WHO STOLE MY SHEEP?

This uses the same base as above, but the Target must encompass the number of suspects. A village might have 100 souls, and have an Ease Factor of 30 (Base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Group, +1 Size). If thief has Magic Resistance and the effect does not Penetrate, then the settut fails to get an answer, unless someone else knows he did it.

### IS THERE A VIS SOURCE ON THAT MOUNTAIN?

Ease Factor is 20: Intellego Vim base 1 "detect the presence of vis," +3 magnitudes for Sight Range and +4 magnitudes for Boundary Target. If the settut has an Arcane Connection to the mountain, the Range drops to Touch for Ease Factor 10.

### WILL THE CROPS GROW NEXT YEAR?

As it stands, this question breaks the Limit of Time. However, it could be conceived as "are the plants healthy enough to grow?" in which case this uses the base 3 Intellego Herbam "learn a single specific fact about a plant," adjusted to Ease Factor 20 for Range Touch and Target Boundary. Alternatively, it could check for sufficient water using the level 2 Intellego Aquam "get an image of water within range," at Ease Factor 15 (Base 2, +1 Touch, +4 Boundary); or check if the soil is fertile using the base 4 Intellego Terram "learn one mundane property of an object" at Ease Factor 25. All three of these would give the closest answer possible, but cannot account for upcoming drought, disease, or disaster.

The amount of material destroyed depends on the type: one cubic pace of raw matter like plants, natural stone, water, or fire; or one cubic foot of processed materials such as cloth, leather, wood, dressed stone, metal and processed liquids, although the settut can disintegrate part of a larger object up to this size. The settut can affect a greater number of individuals (or parts of the same individual) in a single use of this Ability as long as they all have the same source. So she may destroy all the water drawn from the same well, all the barley grown from the same batch of seed, all the stones from the same quarry, all the leather from one workshop. All affected objects must be covered by the dispersal of the amulet. For each +3 to the Ease Factor, increase the number of individuals tenfold. Berber communities tend to build walls from stones drawn from many different sources to ward specifically against this magic.

If the settut desires precise Dissolution (such as carving a statue with this power), this requires Dexterity + Finesse rolls against an Ease Factor of at least 9, but it could be higher for complex or large projects.

## DIVINATION

This is a variant of the Virtue found in Chapter Seven of *The Mysteries Revised Edition*. More information can be found

## Ceremonial Bonuses for Divination

Only those divination methods commonly used by settuten are listed here, see *The Mysteries Revised Edition* page 61 for more options.

Divination method	Description	Ceremonial Bonus
Aleuromancy	burning or cooking flour	Herbam +2, crops +5
Alomancy	patterns in thrown salt	Aquam +1, Terram +2, weather +3
Ashagalomancy	casting bones	Ghosts +3, Corpus +4
Capnomancy	fumes from burning poppies	Imaginem +2, dreams +2, mental illness +3
Eosophoromancy*	movement of Venus	Romance +5, beauty +3
Geomancy	patterns in earth or dust	Kingdoms +2, Terram +5
Necromancy	the body of Tin Hinan**	+10 events affecting the Imazighen as a whole
Ophidomancy	behavior of serpents	Supernatural creatures +3, health & medicine +4
Ornithomancy*	behavior of birds	Elections +3, judgments +2
Pyroemancy*	movement of Mars	Ambition +3, war +5
Scapulomancy	roasting shoulder blades	Farming +2, herds +5

\*used only by Tuareg diviners

\*\*see the Tomb of Tin Hinan, earlier





there. Divination allows interpretation of signs and connections to answer questions. The divination is inherently interpretive rather than predictive, and is still subject to the Limit of Time. It is possible to make judgments about future events, but only based on current knowledge. Divination produces results equivalent to non-Ritual Hermetic Intellego spells of any Form. Divination cannot provide magical senses or allow the character to communicate with animals, plants, rocks, and the like. The Duration is always limited to Momentary, enough to answer a single question, although the answer need not be brief (ArM5, page 149). If the character has an Arcane Connection held in her hand when performing a Divination, this counts as Range Touch rather than Range Arcane. Finally, Divination may answer questions about Boundary Targets without the normal ritual requirement or Size modifiers (although Size may be needed for other Targets).

Divination does not employ amulets like other settuten magic. There are two types of Divination available. Casual Divination takes one round, and allows the character to observe casual signs in her immediate environment. The storyguide may add an *Omen Bonus* of +1 to +3 if the omens observed are particularly relevant; for example, watching cloud patterns for a divination about weather.

Ceremonial Divination takes 15 minutes per magnitude of the spell being duplicated. The diviner can incorporate two types of bonus. A *Ceremonial Bonus* is deter-

mined by the relationship between the phenomenon observed and the nature of the question. A diviner knows one divination method for each point of his Divination Ability. See nearby table for typical Divination methods. A *Sympathetic Bonus* is the sum of any multipliers from Arcane Connections and sympathetic connections to the target (ArM5, page 84).

CASUAL DIVINATION CASTING TOTAL:  
**Perception + Divination + Aura bonus  
 + Omen Bonus + stress die**

CEREMONIAL  
 DIVINATION CASTING TOTAL:  
**Intelligence + Divination + Aura bo-  
 nus + Ceremonial Bonus  
 + Sympathetic Bonus + stress die**

EASE FACTOR:  
**Spell Level**

PENETRATION TOTAL:  
**Casting Total – Ease Factor + Pen-  
 etration Bonus**

## Dispelling Magic

Unlike other magical traditions, the settuten lack passive Magic Defenses. Instead, they avert hostile magic (from any Realm) through the active dispelling of incoming spells. Dispelling calls upon the settut's tradition's Supernatural Abilities through a durable talisman called a *jedwel* made out of metal or stone; these *jedwel* are commonly worn on a headband on top of the settut's shawl, and she loses the ability to dispel the corresponding type of magic if she no longer carries the *jedwel* (although the ability is not transferred to anyone who wears it instead). She can create a replacement *jedwel* in a few days if the appropriate materials are available.

Dispelling is similar to Hermetic Fast Casting. The settut must be able to make an incantation to the Berber gods and must have her *jedwel* on display. With the exception of Disjunction dispelling (see below), she can only dispel a spell or power as it is being cast, and she must be aware of the casting: she must see or hear the caster, or perhaps use her Magic Sensitivity to detect an incoming spell. The effect must be targeted at herself or a single individual or object that she is touching. She must also equal or exceed her opponent's Initiative Total on a roll of Quickness + Finesse + stress die. Failure means that her dispelling attempt occurs too late to affect the magic directed at her.

Secondly, she must choose which

## Story Seeds: The Settuten

Many stories could revolve around the powers and activities of the settuten.

### THE BROKEN GIFT

A boy intended to become a magus's apprentice is kidnapped by a cadre of veiled women and taken to be subjected to Disjunction. Can the magus get to the boy in time to prevent the quenching of his Gift? Can he negotiate with the settuten, or is magical warfare the only option?

### SUN VERSUS MOON

A covenant that manages to offend the local settuten might find themselves blacklisted, and the target of hostile magics. The structure of the covenant is probably protected from Dissolution by an *Aegis of the Hearib*, but its source of water or its crops might not be. The covenant could be cursed with Dissidence, destroying any lasting relationships with the local community.

Some characters might seek to destroy their hedge wizard enemies, but find themselves opposed by numerous foes as well as the local Berber community. Other characters might prefer to attempt rapprochement, although this could be a struggle due to the effect of their Gift on their enemies.

### FOREWARNED IS FOREARMED

A cabal of sahirs, perhaps as a prelude to an Arab invasion of Berber territory, concoct a plan to murder the tineqiqqiten at the grand convocation. Without these individuals, the settuten can no longer Open The Gift, and they may lose some or all of the Initiation Scripts. Through premonitions and omens the tineqiqqiten have an inkling of their fate, and are seeking allies. Of course, the settuten do not reveal the reason for the proposed alliance to the characters, at least not all at once.

dispelling effect to invoke since she only has time to activate a single *jedwel*. If she is not familiar with the magic being used against her, she can either guess, or discern the effect by making a roll of Perception + Magic Sensitivity + stress die against an Ease Factor of (21 – spell magnitude), or (21 – Ease Factor/3) for Supernatural Abilities, or (15 – Might/5) for supernatural creatures. If this roll fails she must resort to guessing; if the roll botches she chooses an ineffectual *jedwel*.

Next calculate the *Jedwel Total*, which is a roll of Stamina + Supernatural Ability + stress die. The Ease Factor for this roll is equal to the spell level or Ease Factor of the effect to be countered, or (5 x Might cost) of a supernatural power, with a minimum of the creature's Might. Note that dispelling targets the magic itself rather than the producer of the magic, so Penetration is not normally necessary. If the *Jedwel Total* equals or exceeds the Ease Factor, then the effect is dispelled, and does not take effect.

**DISPELLING SPEED:**  
Quickness + Finesse + stress die  
against Initiative Total

**DETERMINING EFFECT:**  
Perception + Magic Sensitivity + stress die  
against Ease Factor of (21 – spell magnitude)  
or (21 – Ease Factor/3) or (15 – Might/5)

**JEDWEL TOTAL:**  
Stamina + Supernatural Ability + stress die  
against Ease Factor of spell level or Ease Factor

Each *jedwel* is tied to a particular Supernatural Ability of the settuten, and can only affect a certain type of magic. The *jedwel* themselves take the form of traditional Amazigh symbols; see the insert earlier for their form.

*Dislocation:* The Lion's Paw in onyx or black enamel. It can counter any aimed spells by sending them to a harmless location.

*Dismissal:* The Saw, made in gold or enameled in yellow. It can counter the offensive powers of any supernatural creature. It cannot affect powers that are Range: Personal or of continuous Duration.

*Dissolution:* The Eye, made from greened copper or green enamel. It can counter any effect that creates a magical medium by dissolving, evaporating, quenching or otherwise destroying the material.

*Dissidence or Dismay:* The *Afous*, usually from blue stone or using blue enamel. It can counter any spells that directly affect the mind or body of the settut, or the substance of the touched object.

*Disjunction:* The Snake made in silver or white enamel. This *jedwel* acts differently to the other four varieties, in that it can dispel preexisting magic of any type. It cannot be used to counter magic as it is being cast, and so does not require a roll for Dispelling Speed, but instead takes place in the settut's usual turn. The settut must be able to touch the target of the spell, and this dispelling method is usually used to break curses rather than used on a creature under the influence of beneficial magic. The Ease Factor for a Disjunction *Jedwel Total* is halved if the settut created the effect herself.

## Warping and the Tamzawit Curse

A settut gains Warping points through the usual methods, although she does not take Warping points from living within a strong Magic aura, as normal for characters with Magic abilities. However, a settut does not suffer the same effects of Warping as regular folk. Instead she suffers a unique form of curse, causing her body to dissolve into a whirling column of sand and wind called a *tamzawit*. Berbers believe that all sandstorms and dust-devils are the ghosts of witches, and they might not be far from the truth. Old settuten with a high Warping Score become immense storms incapable of returning to human



form, and cursed to wander the desert wastes.

The change comes upon her whenever she gains enough Warping Points to increase her Warping score by 1, and lasts for at least a month. While under the curse, she takes the form of a dust-devil of a Size equal to her Warping Score. The settut cannot use any of her Abilities or magic, although she is immune to aging, damage, fatigue, and deprivation. She can only really be harmed with magic, and is treated just like a mundane weather phenomenon. If destroyed she reforms at the next moonrise. She has no control over her form, but travels the land at random. She is aware of the world about her for the duration of the curse, and can be spoken to with appropriate magic. Wilderness Sense also allows a character to communicate with a settut tamzawit. A settut gains no experience points for the time spent as a tamzawit.

After a lunar month as a tamzawit, a settut can try to end the curse. She makes a Stamina + Concentration roll against an Ease Factor equal to (6 + Warping Score); if she succeeds, then the curse is at an end. If the roll fails, then she must spend another month as a tamzawit before trying again. If she botches, she gains additional Warping points equal to the number of zeros on the botch dice.

**REFORM HUMAN SHAPE:**

Stamina + Concentration + stress die

**EASE FACTOR:**  
6 + Warping Score

**EFFECTS OF THE TAMZAWIT CURSE**

When a settut recovers from the curse, she gains some kind of a mark from the experience. If she took more months to recover than her (new) Warping score, then the experience is bad, and she suffers one of these effects:

**Lost Knowledge:** She loses 2 experience points in a Supernatural Ability for every Warping Point gained when the event was triggered. This cannot reduce the Ability to less than 0.

**New Mystical Flaw:** The settut gains a

Minor Flaw.

If she spent equal or fewer months than her Warping score under the Tamzawit Curse, then the experience, while annoying, was beneficial. In this case the storyguide should select one of the following effects:

**Increased Knowledge:** The settut gains a number of experience points in one of her Supernatural Abilities equal to 5 x number of months spent under the curse.

**New Mystical Virtue:** The settut gains a Minor Virtue.

**Settut Culture**

The settuten are an integral part of Imazighen culture, a situation that is alien to magi of the Order of Hermes, but which is familiar to the Order of Solomon further east. They often use their magical powers on behalf of their community; although if treated badly, a disgruntled settut can be a true curse. Gifted settuten live apart from towns and villages, often within an ancient tomb or that of a local marabout. The unGifted settuten are not forced by circumstance to separate themselves in this manner, but often do; either way the

settuten do not marry, which is mildly scandalous within Berber society. They typically use herbal remedies to avoid pregnancy in emulation of their sterile goddess. When not using their magic, they teach women how to read and write, or act as healers, bone-setters and apothecaries. Some settuten (usually the unGifted ones) become prostitutes as a quick route to wealth.

The advice of the local settut is sometimes sought, most often by the *tala* (the women's court); although it is always kept in mind that the settut are devotees of Yemma-t n Dunit, who is the dispenser of evil counsel. The settuten are also the priestesses of the pagan Berber religion; despite having small congregations, they are often asked to perform folkloric rites such as blessing a birth and burying the dead even within a predominantly Islamic area. They keep a close look-out for Gifted children during these rites; a male child is usually 'cured' of The Gift by a Disjunction effect lasting a Lunar Year, whereas a female child may be adopted as an apprentice when she is of sufficient age. Of course, not all children manifest The Gift at birth, so inevitably some escape these fates.

The *Tisliten n Ayyur* have irregular meetings between local practitioners; there is also a grand convocation held every nineteen years. When attending

**A Note on Tuareg Males with Settut Powers**

As Tuareg settuten lack the Disjunction power of their cousins, Gifted Tuareg boys cannot be magically neutralized as easily. If discovered early such children are either raised as girls and inducted as settut, growing up with the Transvestite Flaw, sold as slaves to northern traders, or abandoned in the southern deserts in the hope they will be adopted by the Faerie jnun of the Kel Asouf or die of exposure. Some of these abandoned males are found and assimilated by the Blue Men, accepted by the outcast *inenden*, or perhaps even adopted by wandering sahir and Hermetic magi as apprentices.

Some male Tuareg with long experience in the deep desert and some of the Magic-kin referred to as Blue Men

(see later) have also developed the settuten power over distances referred to as Dislocation, either from a Mystery initiation or as a gift from the spirits of the deep desert. Males with this power can create either Lesser or Greater Amulets using the rules presented earlier but the amulets produced take the form of finely carved cypress wood or metal objects set with ancient Libyan runes. The menfolk keep this magic secret from the settuten and their warrior comrades for fear of being accused of witchcraft. Unlike their magical womenfolk, Tuareg men with this Accelerated Ability do not gain any magical Defenses, unless they are raised as a true settut and possess the Transvestite Flaw.

one of these meetings, a Gifted settut uses a Disjunction amulet on herself to negate her Gift or Supernatural Abilities. These amulets are provided by stronger sorceresses to those incapable of negating their own Gifts. This has a double advantage: it negates the social penalty of The Gift, and also prevents rivals from using magic to attack each other. The *tineqiqqit* use Magic Sensitivity to ensure that everyone has completed this requirement before negating their own magic.

Local convocations take place on the instigation of one of the informal leaders of the settuten, the *tineqiqqit* (those who possess the Divination Ability). These seeresses are the last to use Disjunction on themselves, as their first task is to Open The Gift of any new members and assist unGifted settuten in Initiation into the tradition's Favored Abilities, both of which require the use of their magic.

At a convocation, the settuten swap news, trade knowledge, and report on prior divinations. The local meetings also vote to blacklist individuals or towns who have treated a settut poorly, or to lift an existing ban. Blacklisting prevents the named person or persons from receiving help from any settuten, and makes them fair game for any malicious individuals wanting to practice their curses. Local meetings also report any sightings of Aseharen (sahirs), to whom the settuten are particularly opposed. Encroachment of a Solomonic summoner into Berber territory normally provokes the local settuten to band together to hunt him; they Dismiss his spirits and Disjunct his magic, then turn a warrior band on him to chase him out of the tribe's lands. The settuten of nearby tribes are also warned of his presence.

The grand convocation takes place when the full moon returns to the constellation of Cassiopeia on the shortest day of the year, an event that takes place every 19 years. The timing of the next grand convocation is left for the individual storyguide to decide. The convocation takes place at the Tomb of Tin Hinan, and many settuten try to make at least one of these meetings in her life; the *tineqiqqiten* are expected to attend every one. Apart from being much bigger, the grand convocation is not much different from a local one, although there are opportunities to meet with settuten

from far away, along with other exotic sorceresses and occasionally supernatural creatures that attend as guests. Before each grand convocation all the *tineqiqqiten* gather to independently seek the fortune of the settuten with Divination, and they repeat the divination until all have reached a consensus on what the future holds. Since they are all still influenced by the social tension engendered by The Gift, these divinations can be fraught with strife, and it is usually the strongest or most aggressive settut whose opinion holds the most weight.

### TUAREG SETTUTEN

The Tuareg have their own settuten. For the most part these settuten are the same as those found amongst the Ima-zighen; the two groups recognize the common origin of their powers, but do not consider themselves to be members of each other's tradition. A Taurgi settut has the Dislocation Ability rather than Disjunction, and the Dismay Ability instead of Dissidence. They transform into a waral lizard instead of dust-devil form when suffering from the Warping effects of the tamzawit curse and may possess the common Skinchanger (Waral lizard) Virtue rather than the Dust Devil Virtue. Tuareg settuten are usually adept at the Geomancy variant of Divination. The rare Tuareg seeresses are considered the appointed guardians of the shrine of Tin Hinan at Abalessa and the designated representatives for the southern settuten as a whole. Character creation is otherwise the same as for other settuten, taking into account Tuareg culture.

Tuareg settuten cannot suppress their Gift as can other settuten. As a consequence, they tend not to co-operate with one another, and there is usually a single settut attached to each band. They use their powers to move the band across the vast spaces of the desert, and to make lightning raids on caravans and villages. Many Tuareg settuten disguise themselves as men to accompany these raids, wearing a *libham* veil to blend into the warrior band, and some possess the Transvestite flaw.

When Taurgi bands meet, they may trade their settut with another band that has need of her services; the settut usually has little say in this. This exchange ac-

tually protects the settut from feelings of resentment engendered by her Gift, but also prevents close associates becoming inured to its effects. If ill-treated, a settut can be a dangerous foe, and this usually prevents her from being treated like a possession rather than a person.

Tuareg settuten do not hold local convocations. Whenever bands meet, their settuten share any information they have gleaned with their sisters, but that is as much social structure that they have. However, Tuareg settuten do attend the grand convocation, where they form an exotic spectacle, keeping themselves aloof from the other magicians and sneering at the lesser humans. Settuten who prefer the raider lifestyle rarely attend the regular convocations for fear of being accused of being *asebharen* (sahir). They deign only to speak with the *tineqiqqiten*, and only then in their own dialect of Tamazight. Distrustful of Berber 'witchcraft', they must nevertheless accept a Disjunction effect or be refused attendance.

### Entrancement and Induction

Entrancement and Induction appear similar, because they have a similar scale of Ease factors, but they differ in practice. Entrancement takes control of a character's will, and dictates their actions, but does not affect what they believe or experience. Induction causes a character to sense things which are not real, and may convince them of things which are not true, but does not force them to act.

It is possible for characters to have both Entrancement and Induction, and to use each to bolster the other. For example, "Speak to me" is an innocuous Entrancement, which allows Induction to begin. Inductions that convince a character that something is less risky, or more necessary, than it truly is alter the Ease Factors for Entrancement.



## Daughter of Four Fathers Virtue Package

The daughters are a small, close knit, family of women with supernatural abilities. All known Daughters have the following Virtues and Flaws.

### SKINCHANGER (DOVE), MAJOR SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE

This is a more powerful variant of the Minor Virtue described in *ArM5*, pages 48–49.

Daughters do not need to carry a bundle of feathers to use as a skinchanger's cloak. A Daughter can, over the course of a week, prepare any artistic representation of a feather, or a single real feather, to act instead of a bundle of feathers. A Daughter may have several feathers prepared at one time, and may use feathers prepared by any other Daughter. Most own several small pins or brooches, and in the city where the Daughters are active, they have hidden additional pins in accessible places, like the baths. A few daughters have little pieces of stone with feathers engraved on them, which they swallow. These lodge in the crop of the dove form, and can be regurgitated into the mouth at will.

A daughter's garments and equipment change into feathers when she shifts shape, so she appears modestly

clothed when the transformation ends. This also allows the daughters to carry tools and weapons in dove shape, although they cannot be used until the human shape is resumed.

A Daughter has the statistics of a common dove when in animal form, save that her Soak is +3 higher than usual.

### FEATHER MESSENGER (MINOR SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE)

A daughter can painlessly separate a feather from her body, and use it to write as a quill, controlling its movements telepathically while it remains within Sight. The quill doesn't need ink; it provides it magically. After she finishes writing, the daughter can reattach the feather if in dove form. The quality of the daughter as a scribe does not differ between human and dove forms. Daughters can also pull off feathers in bird form, turn into humans, and still mentally control the dropped feathers.

### WEALTHY (MAJOR GENERAL VIRTUE)

As *ArM5*, page 50. The Daughters are the children of a wildly successful thief

and have been raised as if the daughters of a rich merchant or minor nobleman. The new Virtues for thieves in the Marrakech section may suit some Daughters.

### OTHER VIRTUES

The Daughters, when they appear in stories, seem to be highly educated, indeed to such an extensive degree that some theorists suggest that they are faeries who have manufactured the stories themselves. Some are clearly Well-traveled. Some chroniclers suggest they have a seductiveness best represented by the Venus's Blessing Virtue, but it may just be that the heroes in their stories are usually young men, and the daughters are comely, wealthy, young women.

### CLOSE FAMILY TIES (MINOR SOCIAL FLAW)

The Daughters are extremely interested in each others' welfare. The flocking instinct of the daughters takes their sociability beyond even that normal in the Maghreb, so that they almost always live in groups.

## Minor Magical Traditions

There are many minor magical groups whose members are found in the Maghreb.

### The Daughters of Four Fathers

This group of shapeshifters claim they all descend from a single mother. The origin story they tell is that there were four friends were traveling on a long journey, and missing the company of women. The carpenter, who had

the first watch, made a perfect model of a woman from wood. The tailor, who took the second watch, clothed it in a beautiful raiment. The magician, who had the third watch, gave it life. They always stop the story before they say what the thief did.

Each daughter can take the shape of a dove at will. While in dove form a daughter can communicate by having one feather fly free, act as a quill, then rejoin her body. They are keen observers, have great wisdom, and are highly educated. Each is, in human form, supernaturally beautiful.

## Inducers

Scholars in the Maghreb say that there are three types of magicians. The least powerful are those who cannot change the material world, but instead work upon the mind of a victim, to make it seem that they have. These are not illusionists in the Hermetic sense, because they do not manipulate species. A Hermetic magus creating the illusion of a diamond necklace generally creates something everyone can see. The diamond necklace created by an inducer can only be seen by the victim: even the inducer cannot see it.

### INDUCTION (MAJOR VIRTUE)

Each inducer has a supernatural abil-

ity, called Induction, which starts with a score of 1. Each attempt at induction requires the inducer to talk with the victim for at least one minute. Characters who cannot hear the inducer are immune to his powers.

Attempts at induction require a die roll of Communication + Induction. Induction is not made more difficult by the complexity of the illusion: it is made more difficult as the risk the victim takes by believing the illusion increases. On some level the victim is aware of the real world, and can snap out of the induced state if threatened.

The Ease Factors for Induction are:

Innocuous	3
Potentially Shaming	6
Potentially Dangerous to Others	9
Potentially Dangerous to Self	12
Potentially Suicidal	15

Roll Modifiers (pick only one)

- Victim is drunk, drugged, exhausted, or critically ill +3
- Victim knows and trusts the inducer +3
- Site of induction has been carefully prepared with expensive props, in advance +3.

If an Inducer has successfully snared a victim, the Inducer may roll again to try and bump the effect up to the next level of risk. This requires at least fifteen minutes, and on the second roll, the Ease Factor is reduced by 3. An inducer can take a great deal of time, and several rolls, to work a victim up through the levels of danger to potentially suicidal.

A victim of induction realizes they have been affected by magic if the roll above does not exceed the Ease Factor by (6 – 1 per factor from the list below).

This value can be reduced by 1 by each of the following factors: choose no more than 3.

- Careful use of props (clothes stained, souvenirs provided)
- Illusion includes brush off (character in illusion returns character home, character falls asleep inside illusion and wakes up in bed)
- No lost time (character in illusion explains it is all happening in

one night, no servants notice the character gone)

- Real world effects (character's actions in illusion seem to have altered the real world in verifiable ways)
- Follow up (the character has been convinced previous illusions were real, and this one is part of that larger story).

## Potteresses

There are several traditions of magical potteresses in Africa. This section deals with the weaker lineages of potteresses. Many have traditions concerning the gathering of clay. Some sacrifice chickens or rice before collecting their raw materials. Others will not gather clay on a Monday or Friday. Others have traditions concerning the use of clay. Most make pots by pressing clay over forms, and in some tribes the forms must be made by men whose first wives have died. A form made by a man whose wife has not died will curse, and even kill, a potteress who uses it.

Each time a vessel is made, the potteress feels drained for the rest of the day. Each new vessel costs a Long Term Fatigue level. Characters who lack the gifts, training, and blood of the potteresses who attempt to make these magical water vessels suffer a crippling break in their health which persists lifelong. This is represented with the Enfeebled Major Flaw.

### MAKER OF WATER VESSELS (MINOR SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE)

A character who drinks from a magical water vessel made by a potteress of this tradition, may swap one Ability score for the Craft score of the potteress, at the time the vessel was made. This effect lasts for one scene or three minutes, whichever is longer. Each vessel is tied, at its creation, to a particular Ability, by its shape.

Each potteress knows a variety of vessel shapes, each shape corresponding to a single Ability. A starting character knows a number of shapes equal to her Craft: Potteress score. The character takes one

season to learn a new shape when her Ability increases, and requires the assistance of someone who already knows the new shape desired.

After a vessel is drunk from the first time, it takes the drinker as its owner. Other drinkers gain no benefit from the vessel, and it becomes an Arcane Connection to its owner. Characters with Magic Resistance cannot be claimed by vessels. The first drink from an unowned vessel, which establishes ownership, causes Warping, unless the drinker has Supernatural Virtues. Similarly, drinking from a vessel one does not own causes Warping, unless the drinker has Supernatural Virtues.

### MAKER OF TEXTURED VESSELS (MINOR SUPERNATURAL VIRTUE)

Textured vessels are those which have mystical patterns impressed into their surfaces before firing. A potteress with this Virtue has a repertoire of shapes: one shape per level in the Craft Ability. Each shape corresponds to an Ability, although there are some Abilities for which the potteresses have not learned a shape. The potteress gains additional shapes as the Craft skill increases. The character takes one season to learn each added shape when her Ability increases, and requires the assistance of someone who already knows the new shape desired.

Each vessel grants a +3 bonus in a single Ability. The materials used while attempting the roll must have been stored inside the vessel. Storing materials for Abilities in pots does not cause Warping. The first time a character uses a pot in this way, it accepts the user as its owner, and provides no bonus for anyone else. A pot is an Arcane Connection to its master. Characters with Magic Resistance cannot be claimed by pots, and gain no benefit from them.

### THE LEADERS OF THIS TRADITION

Potteresses gather for annual ceremonies. During these, animal sacrifices, or those of cowrie shells, are made. Dances are performed and lore is passed down. Young women are welcomed into the



adult state, often through the practice of genital excision. During these ceremonies, the leaders of this tradition demonstrate their awesome powers.

The eldest women in this tradition can produce many magical effects. When they slap the earth, water rises from it, so that women can wash before they dance. The women can lead trees about using bridles of string, and make mounds of earth gather, to prepare the dancing ground. They can control the weather, and breathe fire. These senior potters are best represented as an oral tradition of Elementalists, as described in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, pages 17–33. As a purely cosmetic element of this tradition's magic, effects often appear to originate from the caster's mouth, rather than her hands.

### LEATHER-WORKERS

Leather work and pottery are, in many sense, twinned arts in Desert Africa. Leather work is the male version, and pottery the female version, of the same tradition. A leather worker may create water vessels, or textured vessels, of leather, just as a potter makes them of clay. The Virtues are the same, but one Virtue applies to either clay or leather, not both.

The highest calling is of the leather worker's art is the making of saddlery. Saddles often improve Ride rolls. Many bridles improve the stamina and pest resistance of the horse, by boosting its Athletics. Many halters and hobbles improve the Craft: Groom skill. North African tack has many more tassels than its European equivalents, and bridles often include a headband that crosses above the eyes. These keep away flies, but are often also enchanted with various effects to protect or empower the horse, or its rider.

## Rippers

This type of minor magician is found in greatest concentration in the area around Tunis, although they have been reported as far away as the Muslim settlements in Iberia and Sicily. A ripper's powers are very limited. He can cause things to tear open using his mind. This power does not work on people, so most rippers make a living as standover men in the markets of the large cities. Each cloth or livestock merchant pays the ripper a little, on a regular basis, and in exchange he does not destroy their cloth, or tear open the bellies of their beasts.

Rippers can pass their talent on to their children. Some scholars think that rippers all come from a single bloodline. Some think the power comes from an Initiatory Ordeal known by the family. Some suggest the rippers are acolytes of a murabit. Yet others suggest that there are many types of ripper, and that each may gain power in a different way.

### RIPPER (MINOR VIRTUE)

The most described form of ripper has two powers. He can destroy a single piece of cloth, or disembowel a single animal, by spending a Fatigue level, at Sight range, without words or gestures. These are a PeAn(He) 25 and a PeAn 45 effect, each with +0 Penetration. Note that this description is deliberately limiting: a ripper can't break a horse's leg or send it blind. A ripper cannot sever a rope. A ripper cannot cleanly slice things with his mind. The ripper has two, entirely inflexible, effects.

Troupes may decide to add a little leeway to folklore, to make a ripper a more interesting player character. Examples are included here, and various types of ripper may share the setting.

### FABRIC RIPPER (MINOR VIRTUE)

This type of ripper can tear any manufactured thing made from plant or animal fibers. This allows her to destroy sails, break the strap holding on individual pieces of armor, snap the tack of a horse, burst a sack, and tatter a pair of pants with her mind. She may only tar-



get one object per Fatigue level spent. This is a PeAn(He) 25 effect with +0 Penetration. This type of ripper cannot eviscerate animals.

### LEATHER RIPPER (MINOR VIRTUE)

This type of ripper cannot affect any fabric except leather, and cannot eviscerate animals. His advantage is that a single fatigue level allows him to destroy a group of leather objects. This causes metal armor to fall away, as the strips holding it together disintegrate. It destroys the tack of a horseman, forcing a Ride roll, with penalties of up to -9 depending on how dangerous his current maneuvers are. It can destroy the scabbard, belt and boots of a foe, allowing the ripper to flee or attack. This is a PeAn(He) 30 effect with +0 Penetration.

## Geomancers

Geomancy, known in Arabic as *ilm al-raml*, or the "science of the sand" is a divinatory practice based on repeatedly and seemingly randomly inscribing a series of marks in sand or earth. One Muslim legend states that the angel Jibril (Gabriel) taught the art to Idris, who began the tradition in pre-Islamic times. Another account ascribes this form of divination to an apocryphal eastern figure, Tumtum al-Hindi, who wrote a book on geomancy passed down through the ages by pre-Islamic prophets until it passed into the hands of one Khalaf al-Barbar of Medina, who became an early convert to Islam. The practice remains popular with the Tuareg, the semi-literate Arabic and Berber hedge magicians of the Maghreb, and with some lineages of Andalusian Ex-Miscellanea magi. It is thought to be less refined and sophisticated than astrology by most Hermetic magi and generally considered beneath the notice of more academic hedge wizard traditions.

True geomancy is a Major Supernatural Virtue detailed below. Other lesser diviners and soothsayers may use geomantic methods or techniques but lack the ability to answer general questions about targets and are limited

to only one or two areas of enquiry. The skills of these lesser geomancers may best be reflected by choosing the Lesser Geomancy detailed below or by choosing the Dowsing or Wilderness Sense Virtues, often coupled with the Premonitions Virtue or the Visions Flaw. Some settuten and Hermetic magi practice a form of geomancy as part of the Divination Ability or the Augury and Divination Mystery Virtue, but these powers differs greatly from the techniques described here.

### NEW SUPERNATURAL ABILITY: GEOMANCY

Geomancy requires nothing more complex than a flat space of sand or dirt and some form of stylus to make the marks. The stylus can be as simple as a human finger but a knife, a bone or another object can be used instead and may provide Stylus Material bonuses to particular enquiries.

To answer a particular enquiry, the geomancer randomly creates 16 lines of marks of different length, sketching from right to left. Depending on whether the line formed contains an even or odd number of marks, he places either one or two dots in a regular pattern known as a shield chart. From this shield chart, the dots are grouped into fours, creating four *ummahat* (Arabic: "mothers") and four *banat* (Arabic: "daughters"). By adding the dots of pairs of these eight groups together, four *banat akb* (Arabic: "nieces") are formed, which when then added form two *shubud* (Arabic: "witnesses"). Further summation results in a penultimate figure known as the *qadi* (Arabic: "judge") and a final figure formed by adding the first *umm* and the *quadi* known as the *mufattiq* (Arabic: "reconciler"). Interpretation of the *qadi* figure provides the answer to the geomancer's question, although the exact information provided for more complex questions also depends on the contents of the shield chart as a whole and particular patterns during the calculation process.

Geomancy takes about an hour to perform. The character must have a firm question in mind about an event affecting a person, and she must have a symbolic connection to the subject of the enquiry in the form of an Arcane or

Sympathetic Connection. The question must pertain to an event in the present, within the last 12 hours or so. To use this Ability, the character must surrender to the vagaries of fate rather than trust in her own capabilities; in game terms she must spend a Confidence Point per Geomancy attempt, and does not get the usual +3 bonus to her roll for this point.

Geomancy needs absolute focus from the character; any outside event that would normally provoke a Concentration roll (even an easy one) breaks the meditative state required for the calculations and the character must begin again.

Successful Geomancy results in an allegorical answer that addresses the desired question. Geomancy never results in a simple and clear answer, no matter how high the Casting Total. A failure, or a success that fails to penetrate Magic Resistance, results in a pattern that is simply meaningless. A botched Casting roll grants an irrelevant or false interpretation. For these reasons, the storyguide should always roll the stress die in secret and inform the player of what her character deduces. A target of Geomancy who possesses the Premonitions Virtue has an opportunity to receive a vision of the character employing Geomancy, if he makes a successful roll on that Ability.

**GEOMANCY CASTING TOTAL:**  
**perception + geomancy + inscription**  
**bonus**  
**+ aura modifiers + stress die**

It is easier to gain answers about major events that affect the lives of many people than ones concerning trivial issues. Further, the consequences of those events for the lives of the affected people are important.

**Importance: Major**  
 Ease Factor: 9  
 Example: Crop failure at a village.

**Importance: Minor**  
 Ease Factor: 12  
 Example: Disappearance of the local priest.



## Stylus Material Bonuses for Geomancy

Basic geomancy is performed using just one of the diviner's fingers as the stylus; some more primitive African traditions even use throwing sand into the air and interpreting the patterns formed as a substitutes for making the actual marks. Characters employing the following items to sketch marks in the earth with Geomancy receive a +3 bonus to their Casting Total if the subject matter of the question is appropriate.

**Item:** dagger  
**Subject Matter:** war, physical conflict

**Item:** human bone  
**Subject Matter:** health

**Item:** broken glass or mirror shard  
**Subject Matter:** locating things

**Item:** wooden stick  
**Subject Matter:** natural places, crops

**Item:** metal nail  
**Subject Matter:** structures, habitation

**Item:** animal bone  
**Subject Matter:** *jnun*

More academically inclined geomancers sometimes use a wax tablet or paper as a surface as a medium for the

randomly inspired marks, but do not gain Stylus Material bonuses as a result.

### GEOMANTIC OBJECTS

Some *inenden* can carve dice marked with geomantic figures from cypress wood to use instead of a stylus; these dice grant a bonus of +3 to enquiries about ghosts, and dice carved from other types of wood may have different bonuses depending on the wood's usual Shape & Material bonus.

An alchemist in Syria has reportedly created a brass instrument composed of numerous dials that produces random dots and geomantic figures. This object can be used instead of the traditional sketching technique. Although non-magical, the superior craftsmanship of this Item of Quality grants a +3 bonus to all Geomancy Casting Totals when used, although the geomancer cannot benefit from additional Stylus Material bonuses.

### LEARNING GEOMANCY

As an illiterate tradition of divination, major books on Geomancy are rare. Gaining the Geomancy Virtue is usually done through an Initiation Script, although Gifted characters can learn it as a Super-

natural Ability from a teacher using the usual method (see *ArM5*, page 166).

#### *Kitab al-Raml*

Believed to be a translation of the ancient book written by Tumtum al-Hindi mentioned in the legend earlier, this rare manuscript is one of the few written sources on Geomancy, equivalent to a summa of Level 4, Quality 10. Poorly transcribed Arabic copies or mistranslated derivations of inferior Quality (Quality range 5 to 8) are numerous, but occasional correctly translated texts written in Berber, Persian or Greek (Quality 9) can also be found.

#### *Experimentarius*

This work is a defective Latin translation in verse of an original untitled Arabic text dealing with geomancy, created by Bernard Silvestris, a late 11th century philosopher and poet best known for his *Cosmographia*. Sometimes found in northern European libraries from the 12th century onwards, this book is a tractatus with a Quality of 8, and may provide Hermetic magi with their first exposure to Geomancy. A copy of the original Arabic text would be equivalent to a Geomancy tractatus, Quality 9 and might be sourced from a Maghrebi bookseller's stand or found in an Andalusian library.

**Importance:** Trivial  
**Ease Factor:** 15  
**Example:** A theft from a farmer.

The Ease Factor is also modified according to the simplicity of the question. While the character receives an answer by interpreting the pattern created, the complexity is judged according to how simply the question could be answered in plain language. Use the highest modifier that applies:

**Complexity:** Could be answered by a single word.  
**Modifier to Ease Factor:** +0

**Complexity:** Could be answered by a short sentence.  
**Modifier to Ease Factor:** +3

**Complexity:** Answer requires a proper noun.  
**Modifier to Ease Factor:** +3

**Complexity:** Would require a lengthy explanation.  
**Modifier to Ease Factor:** +6

**Specialties:** deaths, wars, love

### GEOMANCY VIRTUES

The following Virtues are applicable when creating geomancer characters. The Astrological Geomancy Virtue is currently unknown in Africa and Mythic Europe, and may only be taken by characters taught geomancy in the Mythic Middle East without a specific story to explain how the character learnt these advanced techniques.

#### Astrological Geomancy

##### *Minor, Mystery*

The character has learnt how to incorporate basic astrological techniques into his geomantic techniques by using a so-called "house chart." He can incorporate Sympathetic bonuses by using Artes Liberales (astronomy) to calculate his target's nativity horoscope. On a successful Int + Artes Liberales + die roll against an Ease Factor of 9, the geomancer may add 3 to her Casting Total for questions regarding a particular target.

#### Geomancy

##### *Major, Supernatural or Mystery*

The character is skilled in the semi-literate divinatory art of geomancy and can discover the answer to questions by scratching marks in the earth and

## The Inenden

interpreting the patterns through calculation. Choosing this Virtue confers the Supernatural Ability Geomancy 1 (see above).

### Lesser Geomancy

*Minor, Supernatural*

The character is capable of performing very minor acts of divinatory magic through an incomplete knowledge of the art of geomancy. Choose one (Realm) Lore that is the key Ability for this magic; he may learn this Ability at Character Creation even if he is normally unable to take Arcane Abilities. The choice of (Realm) Lore also determines to which supernatural realm his power is aligned for the purposes of aura modifiers. He can only reproduce effects in one narrow area; he can effectively use geomantic methods to acquire magical senses that detect health, wealth, and mental state using Intellego Corpus, Intellego Mentem, and Intellego Terram guidelines.

To construct a shield chart the character must expend a Fatigue level, whether the divination succeeds or fails. He must also spend at least 15 minutes preparing the shield chart, during which time he needs unbroken concentration and makes the random marks necessary to create the basic geomantic figures. Unlike true geomancy, this lesser technique does not benefit from styluses made of different materials.

The lesser geomantic question is designed exactly like a Hermetic spell. The Casting Total is equal to (Stamina + (Realm) Lore + aura modifier + stress die) / 2. Penetration is calculated in the normal fashion: Casting Total – Spell Level + Penetration modifiers.

### Skilled Geomancer

*Minor, General*

The character is particularly skilled with diving using geomantic techniques. The character receives 50 experience points that can be put into Divination (geomancy), Dowsing, Geomancy, (Realm) Lore, Profession: Soothsayer and Wilderness Sense. This Virtue does not grant any Supernatural Abilities; these must be purchased separately.

This lower caste of craftsmen-pariahs exist outside the usual Tuareg “drum group” social structure and speak their own dialect of Tamazight called Tenet. Commonly feared as magicians unaligned to either the Sun or Moon magic of the northern Berbers, they suffer from the Outcast Flaw. Although unGifted, many inenden have the Offensive to Animals or Magical Air Flaws and suffer social penalties like other wizards. Their role superficially resembles that of the *bouda* of Morocco detailed below, but they lack shapeshifting powers.

Inenden have craft powers similar to Potteresses or Leather-workers as detailed earlier, but use different materials to work their magic. Men produce either metal or carved wooden tools, including the famous wooden Tuareg saddles, while the women fashion ornate metal and glass jewelry imbued with magical effects.

### SUPERIOR AND WONDROUS ITEMS

The exceptional mundane items that these crafters make come in two types. The most common are superior objects, which grant a +1 bonus on a particular die roll, in a particular circumstance. For example, a superior sword might grant +1 to Attack rolls in combat, or a set of boots might allow a +1 bonus while hunting. Superior items can be made without a specific user in mind. The rarer type of mundane item, excellent items, grant higher bonuses, to two or more rolls within a particular situation, but must be personally tailored for the user. As an example, an excellent cloak is made for a diplomat may improve his Charm and Intrigue rolls by +3. If, however, his cloak is stolen, then for any other user it is merely superior, adding +1 to a single Ability.

Some possess additional crafting powers represented by the Mythic Saddle-Maker (also Mythic Blacksmith, Mythic Woodcarver or Mythic Jeweler) Virtue limited to use with one Craft Ability as detailed later. Rare inenden possess the Major Virtue Touched by (Realm) (usually Magic but sometimes Infernal) and can create items using any Craft Ability they possess. These magical crafters

## Greater Inenden Craft Magic

Rare Gifted inenden may exist and possess more advanced magic at the troupe's discretion. Relying on amulets created from leather and metal work, rather than the henna based tattoos of their northern Berber equivalents, the *imerghi*, they may be similarly modeled using the mechanics for Cunning Folk presented in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*. Unlike their European counterparts, they cannot use spoken charms (equivalent to the Flaws Laboratory Magician and No Text Casting), but may have skill in Mythic Herbalism.

also have the ability to make wondrous items. A single crafter is generally able to only make items which draw powers from one or two Hermetic Forms (and any Techniques), depending on whether they possess the appropriate Major or Minor Virtue. These magical effects have a Penetration score of 0.

Detailed rules for creating wondrous items are found in *City and Guild* on pages 70–73. The character can incorporate Design & Inscription Bonuses into their creations (see earlier), but only up to the limit of their relevant Craft: Woodcarver, Craft: Jeweler or other relevant Craft score.

### INENDEN CRAFTER

*Major, Supernatural*

This character belongs to the minor *inenden* craft tradition of the Tuareg. The character possesses equivalents of the Maker of Water Vessels and Maker of Textured Vessels Minor Supernatural Virtues (detailed earlier), but produces wooden or metal tools if male or glass and metal jewelry if female. This Virtue also includes the effect of the Crafter's Eye Minor Virtue detailed below.



TOUCHED BY (REALM)

*Major, Supernatural*

Through membership of the inenden caste, the character has a small amount of magic in his blood. This allows the inenden to craft non-Hermetic magical items limited to only two Forms (Terram and usually Animal, although some have ability with Corpus, Herbam, or Mentem).

This supernatural ability does not interfere with any type of social interaction. You must determine the source of this power: Divine, Faerie, Infernal, or

Magic. He is considered to be affiliated with the realm you choose, and thus immune to Warping due to prolonged exposure to auras of that realm.

MYTHIC SADDLE-MAKER

*Minor, Supernatural*

The character may craft wooden saddles and other wooden items with magical effects, using the guidelines for a single Hermetic Form chosen at character creation. Animal is a popular choice, although Terram is also common. The

powers of the saddle can only affect the camel itself, or its immediate environment. A Terram effect, for instance to make the sand which the camel touches stable is permissible, but an Auram power to change the weather isn't.

To calculate the Craft Total, add the controlling characteristic to the Craft: Woodcarver Ability. As this field of work requires wit as well as deftness of hand, either Intelligence or Dexterity may be used; this is a permanent choice that must be made at character creation. This ability is most often aligned to the Magic or Faerie realm, but an In-

Merin ag Gwafa, the Inenden Saddle-Maker

This example Tuareg craft magician is designed as a Companion level character and balanced for use in play as a starting character. Deathly afraid of the spirits of the desert, Merin trades many of his wares for trinkets designed to ward off magic, although many of his supposed charms are in fact useless. His minor craft magic is aligned to the Magic realm. He uses his hedge magic abilities to create individualized saddles that impart a +3 bonus to ride skills or a score of Ride 8 (camels), or carry minor Animal aligned enchantments that calm a distempered animal, help a beast to go without water for a longer period or allow the mount to cross the shifting sands at greater speed. His wares are valuable to the nobles he serves but his pariah status prevents his permanent acceptance into a drum group for protection, forcing him to wander the Ahaggar.

To convert Merin into a Mythic Companion, choose an extra 11 points of Virtue to describe his greater craft magics and wider skills. Appropriate additional Supernatural Virtues may include: Geomancy, Mythic Herbalism, Leather Ripper, Premonitions, Touched by (Realm). Alternatively, he may be recreated as a Cunning-Man or Elementalist magus-level character using the rules detailed in *Hedge Magic: Revised Edition*.

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +1, Pre -2, Com +1, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik -2  
**Size:** 0

**Age:** 33 (33)  
**Decrepitude:** 0 (0)  
**Warping:** 2 (2)  
**Confidence:** 1 (3)  
**Faith:** 1 (1, from relic carried)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Inenden; Arcane Lore, Gossip, Herbalism\*, Minor Relic, Mythic Saddle-Maker, Puisseant Craft: Woodcarver, Rapid Convalescence; Outsider, Poor; Fear (*Kel Asuf*), Vow (constantly wear *litham veil*).

\* acts as Medicine, see *Art & Academe* page 55-56 for further details.

**Additional Flaws\*\*:** Disfigured (indigo skin), Short Attention Span  
\*\* from Warping due to constantly wearing magical *litham veil*

**Personality Traits:** Cowardly +2, Touchy +2, Sly +1

**Reputations:** Pariah 2 (Tuareg)

**Combat:**  
*Fist:* Init -2, Attack +2, Defense -2, Damage +2

**Soak:** +2  
**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Animal Handling 2 (camels), Arabic 2 (trade goods), Area Lore: Ahaggar 2 (markets), Bargain 3 (raw materials), Brawl 2 (fists), Chirurgery 3 (bind wounds), Concentration 2 (craft work), Craft: Blacksmith 4 (tools), Craft: Woodcarver 6 +2 (saddles), Faerie Lore

2 (jnun), Folk Ken 3 (customers), Herbalism 3 (antidotes), Inenden Lore 3 (traditions), Infernal Lore 3 (jnun), Magic Lore 3 (items), Profession: Apothecary 2 (raw materials), Survival 2 (deserts), Tamazight 5 (Tenet), Teaching 2 (wood carving).

**Powers:**  
*Brave the Sandstorm*, ReAu 25, Init 0; **R:** Personal, **D:** Sun, 2 uses per day. This effect protects the wearer from sandstorms by repelling the breeze that carries the dust.

**Equipment:** *litham veil*\*\*\*, wood-carving and blacksmith tools, various amulets\*\*\*\*

\*\*\* see Powers above for effects enchanted into the Targui's indigo veil

\*\*\*\* only two of Merin's amulets are actually potent — the first is a minor relic that confers 1 Faith point and a Magic Resistance of 10, the second is an *imerghi* Vulnero Magicam charm with 2 remaining charges that wards against creatures of the Faerie Realm with a Might of less than 15.

**Encumbrance:** 0 (0)  
**Appearance:** Merin is a worn faced Targui who wears a tattered light veil and a dirty white robe. He is notable for being covered with small metal amulets, glass jewelry, and other trinkets designed to protect him against the jnun and malicious desert spirits.

## Common Wondrous Items of Africa

Here is a suggested list of some of the supernatural effects that African wondrous items can have. They can serve as guidelines for your troupe in creating such minor enchantments. Each item works once per day. Craft Levels have been included in the examples, determined by the magnitude of the Hermetic effect + 12.

**The Etebel of the Chief:** Carved from wood with a gazelle-hide skin, this drum creates the effect of an *Aura of Ennobled Presence* when struck by an amenoukal or Tuareg chieftain. Craft Level: 14: Magnitude 2 (Muto Imaginem Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun)

**Odili of Soothing:** This child's flute of sorghum wood holds an animal motionless as long as the flute is played, as per *Viper's Gaze*. Craft Level 15: Magnitude 3 (Rego Animal Base 5, +1 Eye, +1 Concentration)

**Saddle of the Temperate Camel:** This carved wooden Tuareg saddle, when placed upon a stubborn camel, makes the animal follow commands as if well trained, as per *Mastering the Unruly Beast*. Craft Level 17: Magnitude 5 (Rego Animal Base 15, +1 Touch, +1 Concentration)

**Jar of Potable Water:** Filling this clay vessel with salt water triggers an effect which removes all salt, making the water refreshing and safe to drink as long as there are no other toxic impurities. Craft Level 15: Magnitude 3 (Perdo Terram (Aquam) Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Mineral, +1 Complex).

**Bukar of Clear Sight:** This simple black turban enhances the wearer's long distance vision as per the effects of the spell *Eyes of the Eagle*. Craft Level 17: Magnitude 5 (Intellego Imaginem Base 3, +2 Sun, +4 Vision).

**Boots of the Tahr:** These strong leather boots allow the wearer to climb like a goat, gaining a +3 to all rolls to climb and descend steep cliffs. Craft Level 13: Magnitude 1 (Rego Corpus (Animal) Base 2, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, requisite free).

**Hyena Pelt:** This mantle and hood allows the wearer to change into a hyena. The pelt, but not his other clothes and items, change with the transformation. The wearer remains a hyena until the effect ends, at either sunrise or sunset. Craft Level 17: Magnitude 5 (Muto Corpus base 10, +1 Touch, +2 Sun).

fernal saddle-maker is possible.

You may take this Virtue twice, but no more. Taking the Virtue a second time adds either a second Form to use while enchanting, or allows the character to use it with another Ability, but not both. For variations of this Virtue, simply rename it Mythic (Professional), and replace Craft: Woodcarver with another Craft Ability. Retain the limit of a single Ability and a single Hermetic Form.

### CRAFTER'S EYE

*Minor, Supernatural*

The character can innately tell the quality of a manufactured item. If the item is somehow flawed he is instantly aware of that by merely touching it. He also has a chance to tell if an item is magical. For supernatural items made by a craftsman, make a Perception + Awareness + stress die roll against an Ease Factor of 9. If successful, the character knows the power of the item. For Her-

metic enchanted items, or those made by other sorcerers, make a Perception + Awareness + stress die roll against a 12. If successful, the character knows the item is enchanted, but has no idea how, or what its powers might be. Botching either roll results in false information. This Virtue does not offer any information about the actions or commands necessary to trigger an item's powers.

This Virtue is identical to the Eye of Hephaestus Virtue presented in *City & Guild*, page 71.

## Wondrous Items

Magic abounds in Africa, and has left its mark in the blood of some craftsmen. Certain such individuals can instill minor magical enchantments into their creations. These items are called "wondrous" by their crafters and the buying public; Hermetic magi find this title grandiose. This magic-work is not

Hermetic magic, although many of the resulting effects can be easily mirrored by minor formulaic spells.

There are a number of styles of craft magic in Africa, and that used by crafters with a drop of magic in their blood is just one of the many varieties. Most produce items that are too minor to qualify them for membership of the Order of Hermes and have remained on the fringes.

To create wondrous items, a character must have the Major Supernatural Virtue Touched by (Realm). You must also select two Hermetic Forms for the character at character generation. The powers of every wondrous item the character creates must fall within those two Forms, although you may use any Technique when determining the exact nature of the power instilled.

While these effects and their use are similar to Hermetic magic, the power that a craftsman instills is based on less predictable forces. There are essential differences between wondrous items and Hermetically enchanted items, namely the latter's predictable operation and ability to affect other magical entities or items. Wondrous items have no Penetration scores and cannot affect anyone with even the slightest Magic Resistance.

Wondrous items are made for a specific customer. A blacksmith does not have a collection of wondrous horseshoes available for ready sale, but must create a set designed for a specific animal. Because of this close association, each wondrous item acts as an Arcane Connection to the person it was made for, rather than to its maker. The Arcane Connection lasts until the recipient dies, and for a number of years after that. Roll a simple die on the recipient's death to determine how much longer the connection persists. This connection can be broken like any other, but if it is the item loses its powers.

It takes a least one season to create a wondrous item, during which a character cannot perform any other seasonal activities, although he can work alongside his staff while they are engaged in the regular operations of the workshop. He may be assisted by one helper for every two points he has in his Leadership score. The assistant need only have a score in the specific Craft Ability. The process begins



## The Hunger and the Dessicated Men

Deep within the Tanezrouft, the "Land of Thirst," wander the Dessicated Men, a darker variant of the Blue Men. Variants of the Drowned Men presented in *Realms of Power: Magic* (see pages 96–97 for details), these Transformed Humans are created from Tuareg on the brink of death from thirst, heat and exposure. At the point of death, a magical pact is forged with the desert Daimon known as the Hunger or the Red and the nomad is brought back in a semblance of unlife as a servant of the greater spirit.

Superficially similar in appearance to the true Blue Men above, the Dessicated Men possess the following Virtues and Flaws: Transformed Human and the Major Story Flaw: Servant of the Desert. Neither free nor proud, although these unliving men have lost much of their humanity, they commonly use the patronymics Ag Lazz or ibn al-Ju' to denote their supernatural allegiance to their Daimonic overlord. Dessicated Men appear to be aligned to Aquam, but in a negative sense, exhibiting powers over creating thirst and evaporation of water. Some possess additional powers and can control heat, create sandstorms, or summon swarms of desert creatures to do their bidding.

by taking exact measurements and weights of the item's recipient, as well as collecting her hair, blood, and other bodily excreta. After selecting the finest raw materials available, the character begins the enchantment process.

The Craft Level of a wondrous item has a base of 12. Like other finished goods, the Craft Level can be modified by the storyguide according to the situation. Next, estimate the level of effect a Hermetic spell that mirrors the power the character wishes to instill would have, and add the magnitude to the Craft Level. The powers of a wondrous item are not as flexible as Hermetic enchanted items. The Range of the effect must be Personal or Touch, since wondrous items can only affect themselves or the bearer of the item, the Duration cannot be

greater than Sun, and the Target must be Individual. The craftsman must also determine how often he wishes this power to occur. Consult the Effect Frequency Table (*ArM5*, page 98) and add this number to the Craft Total. A wondrous item can only have one instilled effect.

**WONDROUS ITEM CRAFT LEVEL:**  
**12 + Magnitude of Hermetic Effect**  
**+ Modifier for Number of Uses per Day**

To make a wondrous item the Workshop Total must be higher than the Craft Level.

**WORKSHOP TOTAL:**  
**Characteristic + Craft Ability + aura modifiers**

If the craftsman has a helper, add half the helper's Craft Ability score to the Workshop Total. The crafter of a wondrous item can only have one assistant. For each point the Workshop Total is above the Craft Level, the craftsman accumulates one point toward the item's completion per season. Once the accumulated points equal the Craft Level, the item is finished.

The craftsman may add any applicable bonuses listed on the Shape and Material Bonus chart (*ArM5*, page 110) for his wondrous item to his Workshop Total. This bonus is limited by his Craft Ability score. If starting with an excellent quality item, the bonuses from the excellent item may be added to the Workshop Total if the enhanced features of the wondrous item are similar to its final instilled power. For example, an excellent quality cloak that provides a +2 bonus to Charm rolls can be added to the Workshop Total to make it a supernatural item with a power similar to the spell *Aura of Ennobled Presence*.

A wondrous item can only be used by the person for whom it was crafted. Hermetic magic can learn this if the item's enchantment is investigated in the laboratory.

Wondrous items have verbal triggers to activate their power. The bearer touches the item and recites a specific word or phrase determined by the crafter during construction. Divine wondrous items are



triggered by saying a small prayer, Infernal wondrous items by an unholy name, Faerie wondrous items by a quick song or pagan prayer, and Magic wondrous items by a special phrase or arcane word.

## The Blue Men of the Desert

Some of the Tuareg nomads who roam the deep desert are Warped over time by repeated exposure to the powerful Magic auras of the deep desert and the constant wearing of their enchanted *litham* veils, acquiring new Virtues and Flaws and ultimately transforming into a type of Magic Human known as the Blue Men. Nominally aligned to the great spirit known as the Black, these wanderers act as guardians against the more malevolent magical creatures that rise from the deepest deserts or cross through the thin boundaries between the mundane and Supernatural realms in such places.

Blue Men that have undergone such an apotheosis have the Transformed by Magic Virtue and are distinguished by being larger and more magical than their lesser human cousins, commonly possessing the Large or Giant Blood Virtues, a greater selection of the Virtues and Flaws listed below taken as Magical Qualities or Inferiorities, and additional magical powers.

There appear to be naturally born lesser Blue Men found in the deep desert who are a form of Magic-kin — these humanoids lack Magic Might and do not suffer from the Monstrous Appearance Flaw, and may be more suitable as grog or companion characters. Alternatively, players desiring an exotic origin for their magus may consider the template for a Magic-kin Blue Man as a starting point for an Ex Miscellanea magus concept or as a potential magus-level Mythic Companion designed as a Spirit Votary of the Black.

**Inherited Virtues:** Dislocation, Geomancy, Greater Immunity: Deprivation, Lesser Geomancy, Lesser Immunity: Thirst, Personal Power: *Aura of Rightful Authority*, Desert Regio Network, Skinchanger (waral lizard), Ways of the Desert, Voice of the Desert.

### Story Seed: Predators and Prey Alike

A pack of *bouda* has begun hunting the local countryside and acquired a taste for the covenfolk of the magi. Will the magi discover the source of these killings and obliterate the *bouda* or bind them to their service? What happens if the *bouda* manage to infiltrate the covenant and start hunting from the inside? If the *bouda* do serve the magi, will their new masters satisfy the shapeshifters' hunger for human flesh with slaves or make true scavengers out of them?

**Required Flaw:** Vow (constantly wear *litham* veil).

**Inherited Flaws:** Anchored to the Desert, Delusion (Tuareg superiority), Disfigured (blue dyed skin), Dutybound, Feral Scent, Obsessed (camels or racial purity), Overconfident, Oversensitive (appearance), Poor Concentration, Proud (Major or Minor), Social Handicap (poor hygiene), Short Attention Span, Wanderlust, Weak Senses (Cold Sensitivity).

Blue Men characters with Magic Might should be created using the rules presented in *Realms of Power: Magic*, Chapter 4.

## The Shapeshifters of the Maghreb

There are numerous kinds of hyena shapechangers in the Maghreb: a magical kin, a faerie, and a folk witch tradition.

### The Magical Bouda

Shapeshifting hyena-men who delight in preying on children, the *bouda* are a magical kin aligned with Animal and Corpus magic (*Realms of Power: Magic*, page

89), blending into communities throughout the Maghreb and the Tell. They live and hunt with equal comfort in human or hyena form, but most of them only transform at night and return to human form with the dawn. Particularly potent *bouda* can take a hybrid man-hyena shape. Even while in hyena form, a *bouda* can speak with a human voice, using this ability to lure the unsuspecting into an ambush. Often running in packs led by women, *bouda* can terrorize an area with the constant threat of death for those traveling or working outside. Lovers attempting secret trysts often fall to their hunger.

A few traits can help identify a *bouda*. They often have red-tinged eyes, very hairy bodies, or a nasal voice and terrible breath. Domesticated animals hate *bouda*, and refuse to be touched by one. A *bouda* casts the shadow of a hyena, even in human form. Rumors of whole villages, or clusters of villages, populated by nothing but *bouda* persist.

### BOUDA STATISTICS

**Inherited Virtues:** Personal Power: *Deceitful Tongue*, Lesser Power: *Trembling Fear of the Predator's Gaze*, Skinchanger (this does not require an item, but the *bouda* may only change into hyenas, and only at night), Wilderness Sense

**Common Virtues:** Personal Power: *Rending Fangs*, *Ripping Jaws*, *The Beast Between*

**Common Flaws:** Driven: Terrorizing communities (Major), Dark Secret, Offensive to Animals.

#### Deceitful Tongue

0 points, Init (Qik+3), Imaginem

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

The *bouda* may alter its voice to sound like another person or creature, speaking with a human voice in any language known to the creature, regardless of form.

Mulm 3 (Base 1, +2 Sun): Personal Power (5 levels, -1 Might cost, +3 Init)

#### Rending Fangs

0 points, Init Qik -3, variable Form

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

The bite of a hyena can destroy leather, bone, wood, cloth, stone, and metal with equal ease, as long as they can get their teeth around the object. In combat, they can use this power at the same time



## Faerie Bouda (Werehyena)

These nocturnal predators of North Africa are renowned as grave-robbers but assume the role of blacksmiths, healers or wizards during the day. Unlike many Faerie creatures they appear to suffer pain, fatigue and hunger like their human neighbors.

This *bouda* is designed as either a powerful companion or weak magus-level character with 6 points of Virtues and 3 points of Flaws remaining to assign. Less powerful versions exist which lack some of the more powerful supernatural powers detailed below and more powerful versions possess Entrancement, additional smithing magic such as the Touched by Faerie Realm Virtue, and other supernatural powers of mind control or shapeshifting.

### Faerie Might: 15

**Characteristics:** Int 0, Per +2, Pre -4, Com -1, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +2

**Size:** 0

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Crafter's Healing or Focus Power (*Blacksmithing*), Faerie Beast (hyena), Faerie Speech, Greater Powers, Improved Characteristics, 2 x Increased Faerie Might, Keen Vision, Narrowly Cognizant, Passes for Human, Personal Faerie Power (*Transform into Human*), Puissant: Craft: Blacksmith; Feral Scent, Restricted Power (*Transform into Human*), Role Requires Suffering, Slow Might Recovery, Susceptible to Deprivation.

**Qualities:** Crafty, Keen Eyesight, Large Teeth, Mimicry, Pursuit

Predator, Thick Fur

**Personality Traits:** Untrustworthy +3

**Combat:**

*Hammer:* Init +3, Attack +7, Defense +5, Damage +9

*Bite:* Init +2, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage +8

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Pretenses:** Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (food), Brawl 3 (bite), Craft: Blacksmith 4+2, Guile 1 (feign death), Hunt 4 (tracking), Single Weapon 2 (hammer), Survival 3 (desert)

**Natural Weapons:** The weapon statistics for a hyena's bite are Init 0, Atk +4, Def +1, Dam +3.

**Powers:**

*Blacksmithing:* 1 point per magnitude of the effect, Init variable, Terram. Duplicates any non-Ritual Creo, Muto, Rego, or Perdo spell pertaining to the Terram Form, at a cost of 1 Might point per magnitude of the effect limited by their motif as blacksmiths.

OR

*Crafter's Healing:* as the Major Supernatural Virtue of the same name (see *City & Guild*, page 71).

*Looked at Thrice:* as Trembling Fear of the Predator's Gaze

*The Shadow Stays the Hound:* Paralyzes a

dog that the werehyena's shadow falls on (Base 5, +2 Sight, +1 Conc)

*Transform into Human:* 1 point, Init -1, Animal (1 intricacy point on cost).

This power transforms the character into human form for Duration: Sun but only works at sunrise (Restricted Power). It is treated as a Personal level 20 MuAn(Co) effect.

**Equipment:** Blacksmith tools, apron

**Vis:** 3 pawns of Terram vis in tools

**Appearance:** In its human form, the *bouda* has a disturbing odor, a nasal voice, and an ugly hairy body.

## BOUDA BLOOD

The Faerie Blood template reflects a character descended from a Faerie *bouda* or belonging to their legendary tribe. See the rules for Faerie Blood (*ArM5*, page 42) and Faerie Legacy (*Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 112) for further details. Not all humans with *bouda* blood are Folk Witches but most *bouda* hedge magicians have this Minor Virtue.

**Benefits:** +1 to Strength or Intelligence, but not to more than +3

**Legacy:** +1 bonus to Strength or Intelligence, can go as high as +4

**Sympathies:** Wastelands, Cruelty, Mimicry

**Other Virtues and Flaws:** Entrancement, Puissant Guile, Skinchanger (hyena); Disfigured, Feral Scent

**Appearance:** Hairless except for back, hunch-backed, always have red eyes

as an attack to remove a point of Protection from their opponent's armor. They can also deliberately attack an opponent's weapon or shield to destroy it. Resolve such an attack against weapons or armor as normal, and it succeeds if the hyena beats the opponent's Defense Total by 3 or more. No damage is inflicted, and this power cannot be used at the same time as the Ripping Jaws power.

PeTe(An, He) 30 (Base 5, +1 Touch, +2 affect metal, +2 Requisites) Greater Power (30 levels, -3 Might cost)

### Ripping Jaws

0 points, Init Qik-2, Corpus

R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

The wounds inflicted by a hyena's dreadful jaws are truly heinous, and take longer to heal. Chunks of flesh are often ripped off, bones broken and organs ruptured. A character injured by a *bouda* with this power has a -3 to all recovery rolls, even those for wounds not inflicted by the *bouda*, until fully healed (*ArM5*, page 179). Incapacitating Wound recovery rolls remain unchanged, except that they should be described as being horrific injuries with scars that never fade;

Fatal Wounds often result in the character being literally ripped apart.

PeCo 20 (Base 15, +1 Touch) Greater Power (20 levels, -2 Might cost)

### The Beast Between

3 points/Fatigue, Init Qik-2, Corpus  
R: Per, D: Sun, T: Part

The *bouda* can change into a part-human, part-hyena form, with the head of a hyena, the rough musculature and upright gait of a man, and the claws, fur, and tail of a hyena. When in this form, the *bouda* keeps the mental Characteristics of his human form, but acquires the physical Char-

## New Virtues and Flaws

The following Virtues and Flaws are often possessed by folk witch *bouda*.

### SEX SHIFT

*Minor Virtue, Supernatural, Tainted*

Each midnight, the character may choose to change sex. The character's male and female forms are consistent across transformations, and usually appear to be blood kin of each other. The character's Personality Traits may vary slightly between forms. Pregnant characters may not use this Power.

### THERIOMORPH

*Minor Virtue, Mystery or Supernatural*

Using this Virtue, a hedge wizard may apply any Quality or Virtue possessed by a single animal chosen when the Virtue is taken to her human form on a Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 6. This process takes a whole round. She gains all the benefits for that Quality, but also undergoes a physical change to reflect the abilities acquired. For example, if Crushing Jaws is added to the human form, the hedge wizard acquires the muzzle and teeth of her chosen animal. If she adds Keen Eyesight, her eyes change to red or another unusual color. The maga may acquire natural weapons in this fashion, employing them using her human Brawl Ability. To rid herself of the Quality or Virtue, the hedge wizard must make another Stamina roll against an Ease Factor of 6.

Use of this Virtue counts as a con-

stant mystical effect with respect to Warping. Use of this Virtue in front of others (particularly mundanes) may have a strong psychological effect; a Brave roll (Ease Factor 9+the character's Warping score) may be required to face such a creature.

This Virtue can only be taken if the individual possesses either the Shapeshifter or Skinchanger Virtue, or the Lycanthrope Flaw.

A similar Bjornaer Minor Mystery, Theriomorphy, is described in *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 29. Most Bjornaer magi dislike the Mystery and hedge wizards that employ this Virtue, but some manage to overcome their revulsion for shapeshifting in return for its utility.

### FERAL SCENT

*Minor Flaw, General*

Perhaps due to his beast blood or feral upbringing, the character has the strong natural smell of a wild animal. Humans tend to avoid being too close to him, and may be on edge in his vicinity without knowing why. He may well spook domesticated animals if he surprises them. He suffers a -1 penalty to social interactions (which stacks with the penalties imposed by The Gift, if he has it), and develops a negative Reputation of Unclean at level 2. However, if he has Initiated the Sensory Magic Mystery, any spells he casts with a Scent Target have twice their normal area of effect. (From *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 38)

### Trembling Fear of the Predator's Gaze

0 points, Init (Qik-2), Mentem

R: Eye, D: Conc, T: Ind

While the *bouda* locks eyes, the target cannot run. The target may still use his hands or call out, but cannot move. He may not dodge or flee, and loses any benefit of his Quickness to Defense, and suffers a -3 penalty to his Defense

ReCo 5 (Base 2, +1 Eye, +1 Conc, +1 to affect both legs): Lesser Power (5 levels, -2 Might cost, +2 Init)

acteristics of a hyena. He has a bipedal stance and usable hands, and has the bite attack of a hyena (Weapon statistics: Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +4). The *bouda*'s hide provides a Protection of +2. If the *bouda* has the ability to change shape, it can end this power prematurely by transforming; otherwise the hybrid form lasts for Sun duration.

MuCo 25 (Base 10, +2 Sun, +1 Part, free Animal Requisite) Personal Power (This effect uses the standard guideline for turning a human into an animal, with Part Target to transform only part of the target.)

## The Plinian Races as Faeries

Stories are told of the existence of the Plinian races, although they rarely fulfill any specific role in those stories other than as a wonder to behold. Nevertheless, a storyguide might prefer to use some or all of the monstrous races presented here as faeries rather than Magic Humans. This is a simple process, as most Magic Qualities have analogs amongst the Faerie Virtues. Faerie Powers are calculated the same way as Magic Powers. Faerie monstrous races will mostly be Incognizant of their status.

## Faerie Bouda

In folklore, werehyenas have the following characteristics: larger than a normal size (Size +1 at least, Large), hairy and hunch-backed with hind legs shorter than forelimbs (Disfigure, Repellant and/or Hunchback) and glowing red eyes (Piercing Gaze).

Many North African *jinn*, both Faerie and Infernal, have the ability to assume the form of a hyena and are often confused with magical *bouda*. Another form of the *bouda* is detailed below, a Dark Faerie creature found from Morocco to the Sudan that wears human shape during the day and reverts back to its hyena form at night. Although only narrowly cognizant, these Faerie *bouda* are intelligent and develop Pretenses to fit into the village societies they secretly plague, mimicking the magical *bouda*.

## Folk Witch Bouda

Some human *bouda* of Morocco claim to belong to a legendary clan or tribe — their magic is believed to be passed down by their parents. Unlike the Folk Witches detailed in *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*, pages 33–54, these magicians are usually male (although their Gender Shift ability causes confusion) and have a more limited set of Favored Abilities aligned to the Faerie realm rather than the Magic realm. This is offset by en-





hanced control over their hyena form and gender, mind control powers, and either blacksmithing or woodcarving magic (typically Muto Terram or Muto Herbam effects). Some *bouda* have additional powers such as Animal Healing, Summon Animals, or additional smithing powers. Most human *bouda* are Gifted, but unGifted characters descended from *bouda* or Faerie-touched individuals can be initiated into the tradition using Initiations, following the rules presented in the Introduction of *Hedge Magic Revised Edition*. The Ordeal Flaws inflicted by these variant Folk With Initiations generally relate to the unsavory qualities of the hyena and their poor reputation or physical deformity: Feral Scent, Disfigured, Hunchback, Tainted by Evil, or Repellent.

**Required Virtues:** Folk Witch, Gender Shift, Theriomorph, Touched by Faerie Realm.

**Required Flaws:** Judged Unfairly, Short-Ranged Curses, Primitive Tradition.

**Favored Abilities:** Animal Ken, Cursing, Entrancement, Healing, Second Sight, Skinchanger (hyena).

Human *bouda* accumulate Warping in the same manner as other hedge magicians, but as their Warping Score increases they transform slowly into an inhuman Faerie *bouda*, similar to the way a grugach transforms into a troll (see *HMRE*, page 71–72). This replaces the usual Witch's Moon rules for this tradition.

## The Awful Truth About Anthropophagi

Anthropophagi share a Greater Male-diction that prevents them from avoiding Acclimation through staying in a Magic aura; instead, they must conduct a ceremony at least once per year in which they eat human flesh. Without this ceremony, they lose a Magic Quality each year until they have none left and become an ordinary (if hideous) mortal. Some are fortunate enough to have a family member die, and they can partake in feasting on his body: one corpse can feed five individuals. Failing that, an anthropophagus has to take matters into his own hands to keep his family alive. Those who tire of the constant quest for human meat and allow themselves to succumb to Acclimation are usually the first to be preyed upon by their fellows. As a last resort, anthropophagi turn to nearby human settlements for their sustenance.

A well-kept secret of the anthropophagi is that not all of them were born into the race. A human who partakes in the ceremony gains the Transformed Human Virtue balanced with the Greater Malediction Flaw. A village of anthropophagi sometimes spares a victim's life and share this secret, granting him continued immortality on the condition that he returns to his home and works to procure the sacred meal for them each year. A Transformed Human only gradually acquires the physical appearance of an anthropophagus: after partaking in five ceremonies he takes on the Disfigured Flaw to represent a degradation of his human features towards the horrid mien of an anthropophagus; after fifteen ceremonies he has become sufficiently monstrous that he must leave human society and take up residence with his new kin.

## The Monstrous Races of Africa

Africa is home to numerous tribes of monstrous races. These were mentioned, along with similar races in India, by ancient historiographers like Ctesias, Megasthenes, and Pliny, and are sometimes referred to as the "Plinian races." In the main these peoples keep to themselves, living their lives much as their

human neighbors do. On occasion they come into contact with humans, either through encounters in the wilderness, or because they visit towns to trade. While this is sufficiently uncommon to be a spectacle, knowledge of the existence and nature of these creatures is widespread, and they do not automatically provoke fear or hatred.

In *Ars Magica Fifth Edition*, most of the Plinian monstrous races are Magic Humans (*Realms of Power: Magic*, Chapter 4). For sagas based in North Africa, they can be a curiosity born from the exotic

## Astomus Power

### The Tongueless Voice

No cost, constant effect, Imaginem

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Ind

An astomus can cause any noise to issue from her head. This include speech, song, and music, as well as any other noise. Volume is limited to that possible for a human. She can only be silenced by suppressing this magical power.

CrIm 10 (Base 1, +2 Sun, +1 intelligible speech, +1 intricacy, +1 constant effect) Personal Power (10 levels, -1 cost)

backdrop of this land of fable, or central characters in the saga. Alternatively, players might use a member of the monstrous races as an unusual character. For a more exotic saga, the whole troupe could be drawn from one or more of these races.

To create a character from a monstrous race one should follow the usual rules for Magic Characters (*Realms of Power: Magic*, Chapter 4). Most characters will be Spring season. Magic Might should be chosen according to the type of character and the saga constraints: a grog typically has a Magic Might of 0 to 5, and a companion character a Magic Might of 5 to 15. Each of the templates below have a set of Magic Qualities and Inferiorities that describe the race's key characteristics; these are balanced for a net cost of zero. Note that in some circumstances not all the permissible levels of Lesser and Personal Powers have been spent. If created as Magic Kin (who have no Might score), any Powers can be translated to the appropriate Virtue.

In common with all Magic Humans, the Plinian races have the Monstrous Appearance Inferiority for free, and like all magical entities they are immune to deprivation (hunger, thirst, and suffocation) unless stated otherwise. None of the races have their own language; they speak whatever languages are used by their human neighbors.

## CHOOSING A SOCIAL STATUS VIRTUE OR FLAW

Magic Humans usually take one of the special Social Status Virtues or Flaws given in *Realms of Power: Magic* (Magical Master; Magical Champion; Magical Covenfolk; Magical Friend; Magical Monster) to represent how they are treated by human society. The monstrous races are better integrated into North African society due to long association, and as such the choices of a player in this regard are expanded to include many Virtues and Flaws available to regular humans. A Magic Human who moves into a town or city usually has the Outcast Minor Social Status Flaw: he is not human, and will never be completely accepted as human by his neighbors. However, at the option of the troupe, the character (or his family) might have a long association with the community in question, and may be able to choose a Free Social Status Virtue instead. Only in exceptional circumstances can a member of a monstrous race have a Major or Minor Social Status Virtue. One place where this might occur is at a covenant or amongst other supernatural characters. If a saga is set in the tribelands of a monstrous race, then a Magic Human could have any conceivable Social Status Virtue or Flaw. Note that a Magic Human who lives amongst humans needs some means of avoiding Acclimation (*Realms of Power: Magic*, pages 52 – 54); tribes of the Plinian races usually choose their homelands based on the presence of a Magic aura.

Regardless of how he is treated by locals, when visiting a different region a Magic Human is treated as an Outcast. The exception is if his race is unknown or hostile to the populace, then he is treated as if he has the Outsider Major Social Status Flaw instead.

## ANTHROPOPHAGUS, OR MAN-EATER

**Magic Qualities:** Improved Attack (Bite), Improved Damage (Bite) x 2

**Magic Inferiorities:** Major Flaw (Greater Malediction)\*

\*See insert

A particularly repugnant race, the anthropophagus has the shape of a man

with an immense pot belly. His mouth is crowded with the tusks of a hippopotamus, and he has small piggy eyes and sparse hair. However, it is not their appearance that repulses their human neighbors, but the anthropophagi's habit of eating the flesh of their dead. Any of their members that succumbs death through misadventure is ritually consumed by their friends and family. They avoid eating those who have died of disease, unless the malady is clearly limited to a single organ. The anthropophagi makes drinking vessels from the skulls of the most famous members of each family, and adorn themselves with other body parts.

Unlike other Magic Humans, an anthropophagus is not tolerated in human settlements, for all they protest that they have no interest in eating those not of their own family.

Modified by his Magic Qualities, the weapon statistics for an anthropophagus's tusks are: Initiative 0, Attack +6, Defense +2, Damage +11

## ASTOMUS, OR MOUTHLESS

**Magic Qualities:** Minor Virtue (Enchanting Music), Minor Virtue (Puissant Music), Personal Powers

**Magic Inferiorities:** Minor Flaw (Fragile Constitution), Minor Flaw

## Maritimus Power

### Double Sighted

No cost, constant effect, Imaginem

R: Per, D: Sun, T: Vision

A maritimus can see distant things clearly. No matter how far away something is, he can make out details as if it were only a foot away. Things do not all appear to be a foot away, he can simply make out details as if they were. He can still judge distances accurately, in fact more accurately, than normal, to within an inch or so at a distance of several miles.

InIm 30 (Base 3, +2 Sun, +4 Vision, +1 constant effect) Personal Power x2 (30 levels, -3 cost)



### Panotius Power

#### Auricular Flight

1 point, Init equal to (Qik -2), Corpus

R: Per, D: Conc, T: Ind

At the cost of one short term Fatigue level, a panotius can take flight. He can travel at about the speed of a running horse. Instead of the normal Concentration roll to maintain the spell, he must make a Stamina + Concentration roll against an Ease Factor of 6 every minute or lose a further Fatigue level. A panotius cannot fly when at the Dazed Fatigue level. They use the Athletics Ability to maneuver while flying.

ReCo 20 (Base 15, +1 Conc) Personal Power (20 Levels, -1 cost)

(Warped Senses: Sensitive Smell), Reduced Fatigue

The astomi have no mouth, but they have no need to breathe, eat, or drink. They get some form of sustenance through their sense of smell; they particularly like apples and often carry them around with them, from which they get their other name of "Apple-Smellers." It is said that a particularly bad odor can kill them; this may not be true but it can certainly incapacitate one. An astomus is covered all over by soft and silky pale hair, but wears garments made of a soft cotton or down that is harvested from trees. Despite having no mouth, an astomus can still speak; they have high, trilling voices and superb singers. Emperor Frederick Barbarosa kept a choir of three astomi to entertain his court, although they did not thrive in the European climate, and soon sickened and died.

### BLEMMYA

**Magic Qualities:** Minor Virtue (Puisant Bargain), Minor Virtue (Tough)

**Magic Inferiorities:** Minor Flaw (Hunchback), Minor Flaw (Poor Hearing)

The blemmyae are a race of merchants who live mostly in the deserts of Libya, although there is a large tribe living in the upper reaches of the Nile. They make very little produce themselves, but

### Tripithamus Powers

#### The Sun's Glance

No cost, constant effect, Ignem  
R: Touch, D: Sun, T: Ind

The eyes of a tripithamus constantly shed beams of light much like a lantern, illuminating an area up to five paces from her face. This is barely noticeable during the day, but obvious at night. The tripithamus can only shut off the light by closing her eyes, or spending a Confidence point (if she has any). Her sight is not impeded by this power.

Crlg 15 (Base 3, +1 Touch, +2 Sun, +1 constant effect) Greater Power (10 levels, -2 cost)

#### The Sun's Breath

1 point, Init equal to (Qik - 1), Ignem  
R: Touch, D: Mom, T: Ind

A tripithamus can heat objects by breathing on them. This is sufficient to cause metal to glow red hot, cause water to instantly boil, or to ignite flammable substances. Objects heated with this power cool normally. The object affected can be no bigger than the tripithamus's head.

Crlg 10 (Base 5, +1 Touch), Greater Power (10 levels)

#### The Sun's Shout

1 point, Init equal to (Qik +1), Ignem  
R: Voice, D: Mom, T: Ind

A tripithamus can spit a dart of fire at any object within Voice Range. The flames inflict +5 damage if the effect Penetrates Magic Resistance.

Crlg 10 (Base 4, +2 Voice), Greater Power (10 levels, +2 Init)

are consummate bargainers, and good at buying low and selling high. They lead camel trains across the sands, relying on their immunity to thirst to make longer treks than their human competitors.

Blemmyae have faces on their chests, lacking heads and necks. The shoulders of blemmyae are spaced wide apart, leaving their faces larger than those of a nor-

### Troglodyte Power

#### Eyes of the Bat

No cost, constant effect, Auram  
R: Per, D: Sun, T: Hearing

A troglodyte can move around in complete darkness, as per the Hermetic spell of the same name (ArM5, page 127).

InAu 30 (Base 4, +2 Sun, +3 Hearing, +1 constant effect) Greater Power (30 levels, -3 cost)

mal human. Their hearing is poor, since their ears are positioned beneath their arms. Blemmyae have hairless bodies, and wear no clothes on the upper part of their body. Fortunately for them, their bodies are naturally more resistant to damage. Blemmyae who wish to wear armor must devise some means to permit themselves to see; this normally requires them to wear rigid armor like boiled leather or plate-and-mail with eye holes or a visor. They cannot use large shields effectively. Blemmyae warriors tend to be mounted skirmishers armed with slings rather than front-line fighters.

### CYNOCEPHALUS, OR DOG-HEAD

**Magic Qualities:** Gigantic, Minor Virtue (Sharp Ears)

**Magic Inferiorities:** Major Flaw (Age Quickly); Susceptible to Deprivation

The cynocephali are a race of dog-headed giants who can be found throughout the coastal region of North Africa. They are most common in Cyrenaica; some say that the Canary Islands are named after ancient Dog-Head inhabitants. According to lore popular in the Eastern Church (but known in the West), Saint Christopher was a cynocephalus born under the name Reprobis; upon baptism his fur turned white.

A cynocephalus is of gigantic stature, reaching up to ten feet tall. Their bodies are human in form except for the covering of coarse black fur, thicker on the back and arms. Their heads are those of dogs, with erect ears and long snouts filled with dagger-like teeth. As well as having good hearing, a cynocephalus has an exceptional sense of smell, and receives a +3 to all rolls involving

## Other Monstrous Races

An Amyctyra has a lower lip that protrudes so far it can be used as an umbrella against the sun. They live entirely on raw meat, and are unfriendly toward outsiders.

The Androgynus, or Man-Woman has the anatomy of both sexes, and maintains a society that is independent of gender roles.

An Artibatira walks on all fours, having shorter legs and longer arms than most humans, and a longer neck. They are otherwise human in form, but lack the power of speech.

The Erythropodes, or Red-Foot, are twenty four feet tall. Their arms are white to the shoulders, and they have black ears, red feet, a round head, and long noses. They live near the river Brixon, a tributary of the Nile

The Gorillae are a race of hairy humans mentioned by Hanno the Navigator, a Carthaginian explorer. They have six fingers on each hand and boar's teeth. The menfolk have tails in most tribes, although there are some tribes where both male and female gorillae are tailless.

A Hippopod or Horse-Foot has just two long toes like those of an ostrich, and two broad fingers like the claws of a lobster. They are exceptionally swift runners

The Monoculus, or One-Eye, is often confused with cyclopes; while the race shares the single eye in the center of the forehead, the monoculus does not have the same gigantic stature.

scents, including finding and following a trail. A Dog-Head often has the Afflicted Tongue Flaw, since his mouth and long tongue are not ideally suited to the production of words, although others of his race can understand him perfectly.

The Dog-Heads have a primitive society that revolves around hunting with spears. Both males and females take part in this activity, and their prey are antelopes and wild goats. Occasionally they take livestock bringing them into conflict with humans. They do not cook

their meat; although capable of making fire they have little use for it. They wear clothes made from the skins of their prey animals, and jewelry made from the bones; they occasionally trade skins and leather for wool garments, clay pots, and other consumables. Most cynocephali are pagan, worshiping the jnun and other spirits. Arab culture and Islam in general is hostile towards dogs, and this distaste carries over to the Dog-Heads.

### MARITIMUS

**Magic Qualities:** Lesser Powers x 2, Minor Virtue (Keen Vision), Minor Virtue (Sense Holiness & Unholiness)

**Magic Inferiorities:** Major Flaw (Age Quickly); Susceptible to Deprivation

The maritimi are a race with a second set of eyes placed above their normal ones. Unsurprisingly, the Maritimi have particularly keen sight, and are expert archers. It is said that they turn one eye to God in order to live rightly, one eye to the world to avoid sin, one eye to the Devil which they ought to flee, and one eye to the flesh which they ought to punish. True to this homily, nearly all the maritimi are Christian, having been converted during the days of the Vandals. Not all of them are particularly good Christians, since one can occasionally be found serving as lookout on the pirate ships that ply the Barbary coast.

Most maritimi live in the coastal regions of Mauritania where they make a living from the sea, fishing and collecting shellfish.

### PANOTIUS, OR ALL-EAR

**Magic Qualities:** Improved Abilities, Improved Fatigue, Minor Virtue (Sharp Ears), Personal Powers

**Magic Inferiorities:** Major Flaw (Age Quickly); Susceptible to Deprivation

The most obvious feature of the panotii are their remarkably long ears, which reach down to the ground. They normally loop their furled ears around their arms to prevent them from trailing in the dirt. When cold, they can fold their ears about their bodies to keep themselves warm. Panotii are timid beings, and usually flee upon seeing strangers. This is when the most useful feature of their ears becomes

obvious — when unfurled, they can be used as wings and enable the panotius to fly. The panotii have skin as white as milk, but they are otherwise human in appearance, and dress in clothing typical of local humans.

The panotii are a peaceful race who grow fruit trees in secluded valleys and oases, preferably in the shelter of tall cliffs. They do not eat meat or work metal, but are considered knowledgeable in legends and lore, and occasionally sought out for their wisdom. Most of them have the Noncombatant Flaw, and prefer to flee to an inaccessible vantage point rather than fight

### TRIPITHAMUS

**Magic Qualities:** Greater Powers, Ignem Resistance, Improved Damage x 2\*, Improved Initiative\*

**Magic Inferiorities:** Miniature, Major Flaw (Age Quickly); Minor Flaw (Small Frame)

\*These Qualities apply to the copper swords carried by warriors, see later.

Only three spans high (27 inches, Size -3), the Tripithami come from the far south, on the edge of the torrid zone. They are also known as Pygmaei, ultimately from the Greek word for the length of the forearm. Their skins are black from being charred by the sun. They absorb the heat and light from the sun: their eyes shed light like a lantern letting them see in the dark, their breath is hot enough to boil water, and they can spit forth a bolt of fire. They do not make any clothes, instead they braid their long hair into garments using grasses and beads. Tripithamus warriors carry a copper sword that bursts into flame whenever drawn; these are prepared by the tribe's priests, and only work in the hands of a tripithamus. Use the statistics of a short sword (ArM5, page 176) but increase Initiative by +3 and Damage by +6.

Tripithamus society is matriarchal, and the involvement of their menfolk varies from tribe to tribe. In some tribes the men are little more than slaves, while in others they are almost equal to the women. Tripithami are mostly pagan and build shrines in honor of fire and the sun. Tripithami grow crops and raise proportionally diminutive cattle for milk, and normal-sized goats or ostriches for mounts. They are at constant war with a race of supernatural cranes, who steal their grain.



## A Note on Jinn and Realms

Jinn of the wild are elemental spirits of the land, usually tied to some natural feature such as an oasis, a mountain, or a stretch of desert. It is said that when you are alone in the Sahara, you can hear the whisperings of thousands of invisible jinn. This sort of jinni is a true *genius loci* aligned to the Magic realm. As such, it cannot venture far from the land it is bound to unless it forms a magical bargain or is somehow coerced. These are the sorts of jinn that are of the most interest to sahir (both Hermetic and non-Hermetic), and they are easy to identify as jinn using Magic Lore or an appropriate Area Lore. These wild spirits are the most primal manifestation of the jinn.

All true jinn have the Free Virtue Jinn, which marks their susceptibility to Sihr and the arts of the sahir. Nearly all jinn also have the Major Virtue of Ways of the (Land) plus the Major Flaw of Greater Malediction: Bound by Bargains. Jinn often possess a wide variety of powers that involve deception, including assuming different material and bestial forms, flying, invisibility, and conjuring wealth and other items. Jinn aligned to the Magic realm often possess powers with one or more elemental Forms (matching the alignment of its Might score).

Not all jinn in Africa are aligned with the Magic realm. There are many Faerie jinn that ape the customs and manners of the local Berber, Bedouin and Tuareg cultures they adjoin, such as the Siadna and Kel Asouf. There are also jinn affiliated with the Infernal Realm such as the Shayatin and the Ghuls. Further details, as well as guidelines for creating jinn aligned to other supernatural realms and additional examples to use as templates, are provided in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, Chapter Four.

### JNUN AND THEIR ANIMAL SHAPES

Some *jinn* can only assume an incorporeal, single humanoid or designated animal shape but many *jinn* can assume multiple animal shapes or have an additional animal shape in addition to a corporeal humanoid form created by *Coagulation*, *Donning the Corporeal Veil*, or an equivalent power for Faerie *jinn*. Although multiple animal shapes may be easily represented by multiple selections of magical Powers, it can be difficult

to construct a low Might *jinni* with multiple powers, and there are other means to reflect these multiple shifting shapes.

One approach is to use the Skinchanger Virtue for additional animal shapes, a selection which is generally cheaper than selecting multiple Virtues to build up levels for Magical Powers. This Minor Virtue ties the additional shape to a trinket linked to the animal form that can be lost or stolen, and may be particularly appropriate to Faerie *jinn* that have a primary humanoid physical form and interact with human society closely, mimicking the behavior of humans. This trinket can also be linked to other Flaws or be the focus item for either the Minor or Major version of the External Vis Flaw.

At the troupe's discretion, another approach is to link the *Donning the Corporeal Veil* power (or Faerie Equivalent) with the Shapeshifter Ability (taken as a Major Quality, or as a Major Virtue for Faerie *jinn*) using the Restricted Power Flaw, allowing the *jinni* to manifest in a number of additional forms equal to the ability score. The *jinni* doesn't need to roll to switch forms; it simply discards one form and manifests in the shape desired. Each form is considered part of the *jinni's* Essential Nature and the power isn't limited to just animal shapes. Individual *jinni* may choose variants such as an elemental form, a more regal (or more humble) version of their normal self, or even an inanimate object. The *jinni* can vary the size of their manifestation, to as large as their base size + Shapeshifter score, or as small as base size - (twice Shapeshifter score). So, for example, a larger than human sized *jinni* with a Size of +1 and a score of 3 in Shapeshifter can appear as large as Size +4 or as small as -5. The Restricted Power Flaw manifests in that, no matter what the alternate form, there is always some tell-tale sign of the *jinni's* true identity. Beast forms have certain distinct similarities and contribute features to other shapes. An elemental form may take the shape of the *jinni* or bear his likeness somehow. Even an alternate human form still exhibits a signature quirk or carries a trademark object. The *jinni* also cannot lie about his identity, though he may introduce himself by any one of the different parts of his true name, use a recognized nickname, or spell the name backwards.

### HYBRID ANIMAL SHAPES AND A NOTE ON THERIOMORPHY

Hybrid shapes composed of human and animal elements are also a common "natural" form of Faerie *jinn* when they appear in their physical form or as a secondary physical form. Such *jinn* forms can be created by incorporating and combining various elements of the animals listed here or in the *Book of Mundane Beasts*. Examples in the tales include the *jinni* that piloted the boat that carried Khidr, who was a giant with the head of an elephant, lifting its passengers with its trunk into its craft from the dock, and some *ghul* are described as having the ears and feet of a donkey but the jaws of a jackal. Other more outlandish chimeric shapes are possible using various combinations of existing animals or combining a number of non-magical Qualities in unique ways.

The Minor Mystery Virtue Theriomorphy (see *Houses of Hermes: Mystery Cults*, page 27) or the Theriomorph Virtue earlier, may be applicable for Faerie or Magic *jinn* with both a humanoid and an animal form that wish to change only part of their human form into an animal feature, thereby gaining one of the non-magical Qualities or Characteristics of that animal.

As an example, a *jinni* with both the ability to shift into lion form and this Virtue may choose to assume a hybrid shape with a lion's head, and thus gain the use of the lion's bite or the benefit of its Imposing Appearance Quality. A dark Faerie *ghul* with humanoid and jackal forms may similarly use this effect to leave it's legs that of a jackal and gain the jackal's Quickness score or Fast Runner Quality. A dark Faerie *'afrit* able to assume the forms of an adder and a red-skinned horned humanoid may use this Virtue to appear with a snake's head and gain the benefit of the creature's Loathsome Appearance Quality or become more flexible and scaled to reflect using the snake's Slippery Quality.

This Virtue may also be applicable to Infernal *jinn* with humanoid and animal forms, although the example Infernal *ghul* on page 73 of *The Cradle and the Crescent* uses the *Change Form* power common to the Order of Furies to shift between multiple animal and human shapes with ease, and choosing this power for Infernal *jinn* may be more appropriate.





### TROGLODYTE, OR HOLE-CREEPER

**Magic Qualities:** Major Virtue (Greater Power); Minor Virtue (Great Quickness) x 2

**Magic Inferiorities:** Major Flaw (Mute); Minor Flaw (Warped Senses: Sensitive Sight), Minor Flaw (Small Frame)

Troglodyte tribes have been encountered by those clans of Berbers who dig caves in which to house their members. Whilst excavating new tunnels, the Berbers have broken through into preexisting caves, and come into contact with the troglodytes who have been dwelling in the darkness since time immemorial. Sometimes these encounters are peaceful and the two tribes live in harmony, with the troglodytes remaining in the depths and the Berbers living nearer the entrance. Occasionally, the first meeting between human and troglodyte erupts into violence, which does not end until one side has been exterminated.

Troglodytes are thin and pale. They have tiny eyes that cannot tolerate bright light, but huge pink ears. They naturally go naked, but after encountering humans tend to adopt clothes traded with them, or else made from the animals that live in the cave depths; leather made from pale fish skins or mangy rat pelts, mostly. Troglodytes cannot speak; whether they have any capacity to learn speech is debatable, but none have ever heard them utter a single sound. They communicate with each other through touch and sign language, but this is unknown to humans and they use simple gestures to trade. Troglodytes are exceptionally fast, although humans usually only experience this as they flee from the light. They have a great hatred for snakes, and kill them wherever they find them.

## The Jnun

The *jnun* are an important class of supernatural creatures in Mythic Africa. While many of them are aligned with the Faerie realm, there are also many exceptions. The inhabitants of this region think more in terms of *jnun* than in terms of the supernatural realms to which these crea-

## The Awwlad al-Hut

A secret brotherhood drawn from a select group of Tunisian fisherman commonly known colloquially as the *Ouata* ("fishermen"), the *Awwlad al-Hut* are a small society of men who cling to pre-Islamic totemic beliefs amidst the orthodox emanating from Mahdia. Fisherman belonging to the society are initiated into a non-Hermetic Mystery Cult. They are predominantly unGifted, but some of their leaders may belong to hedge magic traditions and have the powers of Mythic Alchemists or Water Elementalists, seemingly aligned to the Faerie rather than Magic Realm (see *Hedge Magic: Revised Edition*).

tures belong, which may cause confusion as magi try to learn about these beings.

## Jnun or Jnoun? — African Jinn and non-Jinn

The terms *jnun*, *jnoun* and *jinn* are considered almost interchangeable, being just local dialect variations across the length of the Maghreb — the plural term *jnun* is used more commonly the further west one travels, whereas *jnoun* is used in the lands once dominated by the Carthaginians and the purer usage of *jinn* is heard more often in Egypt or spoken by Arabic merchants visiting from the east.

In mechanical terms, a *jinn* is a specific class of creature subject to the Art of Sihr and its legacy of command passed down from the wisdom of Suleiman. Although many *jnun* (and *jnoun*) are *jinn*, there are many exceptions, giving rise to tales of Libyan and Tunisian "jinn" being much more difficult to control than their eastern counterparts.



## Al-Maghrebi: the Dark Magicians of Morocco

Throughout the *Thousand Nights and One Nigh*, the motif of the evil Moroccan magician runs like a sinister thread linking together tales of foolish trusting youths transforming into wise heroes after falling foul of the wiles of Moorish enchanters. These Faerie wizards commonly have non-Arabic names, typically Berber but in some of the more western tales and retellings of the story a similar figure with magian origins and Persian features fills the role of the primary antagonist. Seemingly Zoroastrian versions of these faeries are referred to as al-Majusi.

### GHOLAS: THE GHOULS

The *ghola* is a large female *jinn* that shifts shape to hide its normally grotesque form of a hairy goat-footed ogress similar to the *teryel*. Known as cannibals that attract their prey through softly worded mimicry of voices, these dark Faerie creatures resemble the *ghula* of other lands (see *Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 71).

A more savage creature using the same name is found only in the eastern necropoli of the Siwah Oasis and has more in common with creatures living in Egypt or the Sinai mountains. These hulking *ghuls* possess sorcerous powers and assume the forms of jackals, hyenas, or vultures. Such *ghuls* are demonic *jinn* similar to the Infernal Ghul detailed in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, page 73.

### SHAYATIN: THE DEVILS

*Shayatin* are the wicked invisible spirits that haunt graveyards, ruins, thresholds, and latrines. These creatures tempt and corrupt humans in similar ways to more European demons. Mechanically these creatures are the same as the shaitan of the eastern lands, that is they are corrupt Infernal *jinn* equivalent to the mazzikim, succubi, Evil Spirits, and many other immaterial demons detailed in *Realms of Power: the Infernal*. All shayatin can be affected by Sihr.

### LERIAH: THE JNUN OF THE AIR

The *leriah* are Disease Spirits, a type of demon that can wield its *Diseased Possession* power to inflict magical contagion on its victims. Seven tribes of *leriah* exist, with each claiming a day of the week as their own which they torment their victims on. As they are not true *jinn*, they are not affected by Sihr.

### AFARTA: THE WINGED MESSENGERS AND NOBLES

Related to the *leriah* but in a class of their own are the *afarta* (singular: *afrit*), powerful spirits of the air ranked higher than other *jnoun* that rival the most powerful *marid* of the Mythic Middle East in power. Many lesser *afarta* can take the form of long-haired winged serpents and act as messengers for the sultan of the *jinn*, commanded by their chief, Eblis. Despite this, almost no creatures of this type are *jinn* themselves.

Greater *afarta* are the nobles of the *jnun*, terrifying creatures of great power and monstrous appearance. Some take the form of multi-headed serpents while others assume the form of beast-headed giants. Many *afarta* can possess humans — such an individual is known to the locals as a *majnun*, a madman. Even more than other African *jnun*, the Realm alignment of greater *afarta* varies, but most are aligned to the Magic Realm and resemble Magic variants of the elementally aligned demons known as the Aerial Powers. These greater *afrit* lords can grant resistance to magical summoning and control to their subjects as well, similar to the *Recalcitrance* power of the Aerial Spirits, ensuring their independence from magicians that would seek to control them (See *Realms of Power: the Infernal*, page 42).

Despite the similarity of the name to the Mythic Middle Eastern *jinni* known as an *'afrit* (plural: *'afarit*), lesser *afarta* are considered Infernal dragons and not true *jinn* — they are thus not affected by Sihr and cannot be summoned by sahir. Mechanically speaking, the more powerful entities of this class are also not classified as true *jinn* and are therefore immune to the power of Sihr. The most powerful greater *afarta* are actually Daimons of the Magic Realm, manifesting as Aspects when they are encountered in Africa, and are not

easily controlled by non-theurgical Hermetic magic.

When the Order of Suleiman speak of the untamable *jinn* of the Maghrib and Libya, they are often referring to the lesser and greater *afarta* rather than the *'afarit* of their homelands. Only the fabled Seal of Solomon, a lost non-Hermetic artifact, is believed to be able to easily control these highly independent African spirits.

### BAHARIA: THE JNOUN OF THE SEA

Unique to Africa, and found in particular living in the coastal areas around the Tunisian peninsular, are the *jnoun al-Babar*, the *jnoun* of the sea. Said to inhabit all the oceans, this highly hierarchical tribe of Faerie creatures is ruled by their own sultan, Sidi Moussa, who dwells in a vast Faerie regio off the southern Mediterranean coast named "the seventh depth." Sidi Moussa in turn pays homage only to the *Sultan al-Hut*, the Lord of Fishes, a dark and powerful pre-Islamic Faerie deity that is the apex of a feudal court of marine animals.

*Babaria* resemble mermen or tritons, with human torsos and their lower bodies resembling fish. They are believed to be responsible for storms and tempests, occasionally prompting sacrifices and rituals from superstitious locals despite the teachings of Islam. Details for mermen and tritons are given in *Realms of Power: Faerie*, pages 90–91.

Although Faerie creatures with many similarities to their land-dwelling *jnun* cousins, *baharia* are not considered true *jinn* mechanically and cannot be affected by Sihr. They may share many of the Traditional Wards of *jinn*, including acknowledging the authority of Islam, and can be summoned using other magical powers, but the magic of Solomon's legacy appears to have little effect on them.

### SIADNA: THE MASTERS UNDERGROUND

The Walad al-Ahmar ("sons of the Red") and the Walad al-Akhdar ("sons of the Black") are faerie creatures that live mainly amongst the people, albeit invisible or in the form of animals such as dogs, donkeys, camels, serpents, chickens, fish,

## Toaten (Ant-folk)

**Magic Might:** 5 (Terram)

**Season:** Spring

**Characteristics:** Int +1, Per +2, Pre -2, Com -1, Str +1, Sta +2, Dex 0, Qik +3

**Size:** -2

**Age:** 15 (mature)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magical Human; Improved Characteristics, Warrior; Magical Monster; Anchored to Desert, Weakness (Fresh Fruit or Wine) (Individual toaten might have one more Virtue and Flaw.)

**Magic Qualities and Inferiorities:** Improved Strength, No Fatigue; Great Strength x2, Lesser Power (Delve the Earth); Miniature, Monstrous Appearance; Susceptible to Deprivation

**Personality Traits:** Industrious +3, Toaten +3

**Reputations:** Amazing builders 4 (Local), Strange Creatures 3 (Local)

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +3, Attack —, Defense +5, Damage —

**Fist:** Init +3, Attack +3, Defense +6, Damage +1

**Sling:** Init +0, Attack +6, Defense +0, Damage +5

**Soak:** +2

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 2 (climbing), Bargain 1 (setting prices), Brawl 2 (fist), Living Language: Berber 4 (mining terms), Profession: Miner 3 (tunnels), Thrown Weapon 4 (sling)

**Powers:**

*Delve the Earth*, 0 points, Init 0, Terram: With a touch, the toata creates a tunnel a pace deep into the ground. Generally, the creatures use this power repeatedly to build

their warrens. They often use it to loosen stones near the area of effect, which they then use to build the great mounds often used for burials. [PeTe 10, 3 +1 Touch +1 Part +1 Stone] 2 mastery points spent on Might cost, 1 mastery point spent on initiative.

**Equipment:** Toaten only carry small objects which might have caught their interest. Otherwise, they simply wear a loincloth made of camel hide.

**Vis:** 1 pawn of Terram vis in hands.

**Appearance:** Toaten appear to be a strange cross between an ant and a dwarf, but have a hairless, carapace-like ochre skin and two pairs of arms. Their eyes are large, black, and pupil-less, and their lower jaw has two jutting tusks which they often use to break stones free of the ground. Their four hands end in rough claws, and they're almost always covered in dirt and grime. They wind their slings around their waists or like sashes, always keeping a mundane stone ready.

While not exactly monsters, the toaten (singular toata) are inhabitants of the Otherworld. These ant-dwarfs stand no taller than a young child, possess two sets of arms and an insect-like face. The toaten are willing to help mankind, claiming to be helpful servants of the Dii Mauri. Toaten labor ceaselessly in swarms, rebuilding the mountains which the lowhush constantly erode. Due to an ancient compact, the toaten erect and maintain the sacred tombs of the Berbers. For those willing to barter, and regularly trade in strange goods, the toaten can be persuaded to labor on behalf of man. They especially like fruit and wine, but drunk toaten do not work well at all.

or, particularly, cats. They dwell underground in secret lairs and palaces, corresponding to the common faeries of Europe in terms of roles and forms.

These faeries most closely resemble the *jinn* of the east and are vulnerable to the traditional wards common to other jinn and the binding magics

of sahir. They can be created in more detail using the same rules for Pious jinn presented in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, Chapter Four: the Jinn.

**KEL ASOUF:**

**THE PEOPLE OF THE EMPTY PLACES**

In the deep south of the desert dwell the nomadic Tuareg, thought by their Berber cousins to the north to be part supernatural due to their strange customs. However the Tuareg tell their own stories of invisible spirits that dwell in the empty places and night of the desert — the *Kel Asouf*, the *jinn* of the Great Desert, the lost tribes of the night.

The Kel Asouf are considered true jinn and can be affected by Sihr — their links to eastern sahir are one of the reasons they are feared but respected by the Tuareg tribes, who resort to amulets and charms provided by their tribal settuten as protection.

## Lowhush — A Berber Bestiary

To the Berbers, a wasteland or *amadagh* represents the outskirts of the Otherworld, a Faerie tainted region characterized by reversal — rivers flow uphill, trees have roots that reach into the air, and sheep are black, with black milk. Although part underworld and land of the dead, an *amadagh* is above all a barren land, even if forested and is inhabited by dire threats and bestial dangers by definition. The *amadagh* is therefore where the *lowhush* (Berber: "monsters," singular: *lwasb*) are found, a collective term that encompasses dangerous mundane beasts, Magic spirits and monstrous Faeries.

Supernatural *lowhush* are most similar to the European faeries detailed in *Realms of Power: Faerie*, Chapter 4: Faerie Bestiary, or have similarities to the eastern jinn described in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, Chapter Four: the Jinn. Local differences are described here, but for more details (including game statistics) refer to these two books.



GIANTS

The *teryelen* (singular: *teryel*) are primeval ogresses, the daughters of the *Teryel*, the first woman and the first witch or *settut* of the Berber creation myth. Superficially similar to the *ghul* of Bedouin tales, the *teryel* fulfills many roles and is many times a night terror but sometimes a savior of women suffering violence.

The weaker variant referred to as an *aicha bouteliss* is little more than a brutish female giant of the forest, hard of hearing and short sighted, while the *loundja* is a beautiful creature that lingers near village wells and possesses the powers of a *settut*. Greater examples of *teryelen* wield magic on a scale with the highest Court Faeries of European myth and are African versions of Great Lezis, Faerie landholders of the wasteland, and keepers of great treasures.

Both her husband, the *wagbzen*, and the ogress' son, *sfar labwa* (Berber: "the whistling wind") are more brutish creatures, best represented as Faerie Giants (see *Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 98). A similar but more somber Faerie giant, the *ajdboun alkubur*, haunts cemeteries and ancient tombs and another cyclopean son of the *teryel*, the *moumoub ad-ergbal*, can be found throughout the forested hills of the Tell.

HATAF LARRAIS

The "bride snatcher," another son of the *teryel*, is similar to the *glanconer* (see *Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 74–75) but preys on young married women, fulfilling a role intermediate between child terror and sexual predator.

TALAFSA

This giant serpent has seven heads, resembling the hydra of Greek legends. A water spirit similar in role to a nereid or water nymph, the *talafsa* typically demands a maiden as annual sacrifice and brings drought to an area unless appeased.



JNUN

The *jnun* are also considered *lowbush*, although their forms and stories owe more to imported Arab and Bedouin concepts than native Berber beliefs.

Murabitin

Murabitin (Arabic, singular *murabit*) or *igurramen* (Tamazight, singular *agurram*) play a unique role within the culture of the Maghreb. They are equal parts scholar, dream interpreter, religious hermit, and crafter of protective amulets. They tend to live in *zawiyas* (houses built near tombs) and act as caretakers for the shrine of the saint buried in a nearby tomb, venerating the saint through their study and prayer. First and foremost, they act as a source of religious authority, discussing interpretations of the Qur'an and law while mediating disputes amongst the Berber community living around them.

Their amulets and tokens serve to protect and aid the people who wear them, warding off evil spirits, providing protection or guidance. *Murabitin* create them for those locals who ask for them using the Craft Amulet Ability (see Abilities). While a *murabit* asks no price for the amulet, he will often comment on how difficult a particular amulet's construction might be, and the person receiving the amulet often gifts

The Divine

Unsurprisingly, varieties of Islam dominate Mythic Africa, and have done ever since the waves of the Prophet's followers rode out of Arabia in the seventh century. Common in the region, *Murabitin* and Sufi mystics provide elements troupes are just as likely to encounter beyond a city's walls as within an oasis' mosque.



the Murabit with something equitable, such as trade goods or livestock. Occasionally, the Murabit may ask for a favor or the completion of a particular task, instead.

Sometimes, a brotherhood, or tariqa ("Path"), will form around a Murabit and his lineage. Its members take the title of "talib," or student. Talibs vow loyal obedience to the lineage and consider the murabitin to be stewards and inheritors of the divine grace of the founding murabit. Through the combined spiritual force of these faithful, some believe murabitin capable of healing illness and granting spiritual salvation to their followers.

A few of the zawiyas stand near pre-Islamic tombs, and many of the murabitin at these places practice dream interpretation as a method of divination or communion with ancestor spirits, accessing the fragmentary memory of the community's past. The skill is not limited to these holy men, though, and murabitin across the Maghreb claim the ability to successfully decipher the secrets held within dreams. The knowledge marks the murabitin as heirs of Berber traditions from antiquity, and contemporary protectors of ancestor shrines.

### Story Seed: Dream a Dream of Days Past

The characters discover the talents of the local murabit and seek him out to learn the location of a specific spirit, lost site, or other fragment of antiquity known to the restless dead ancestors the murabit can call. With knowledge stretching back to the days of the Roman Empire, the dreaming ghosts offer a rare, though occasionally unreliable, source of knowledge based on experiences from their lives. Could the murabit's talent serve as a stepping stone to the Ancient Magic of Canaanite Necromancy (see *Ancient Magic*) or Insight into creating an initiation for the Mystery of Dream Magic (See *The Mysteries Revised Edition*)? How do the characters intend to convince the pious murabit to share his wisdom — can a magus become an adopted son after rescuing the scholar's firstborn boy from a bargain with a sahir and an unsavory fate at the appetites of an insatiable slaver jinn?

### MYSTIC TRADITION: DIVINE MURABITIN

**Favored Abilities\*:** Blessing, Ceremony, Craft Amulet, Dream Interpretation, Understanding.

**Required Virtues and Flaws:** Murabit, Pious, Vow

\* (See *Realms of Power: the Divine Revised Edition* pages 47–54 for details regarding the Powers and Methods of Blessing and Understanding, and page 137 for details regarding Craft Amulet and Dream Interpretation)

Murabitin are often found in a lineage, father to son, and taught as an apprentice. It is not unusual, however, for an appropriate candidate to be "adopted" and brought into the family for education. Some murabitin do not follow this practice, but simply surround themselves with talibs, or devoted students. The Order considers them to be hedge wizards and not truly worthy of membership.

They seem to share a heritage with the Jewish tradition of Ba'al Shem, although neither group would ever admit to such a connection, despite the past existence of a substantial Jewish population amongst the Maghreb Berbers.

### VIRTUES

#### Murabit

*Minor, Social Status*

Your character is a murabit, a scholar of the Divine, a wise man and worker of wonders. He is a member of a Murabit Tradition and treats Blessing, Ceremony, Craft Amulet, Dream Interpretation, and Understanding as favored Abilities, and may take Divine Lore and Theology at character creation.

#### Talib

*Minor, Social Status*

The character is a member of a murabit's brotherhood, considered a student, guardian, and close follower of the murabit. Expected to serve and travel with the murabit, he should consider taking either the Oath of Fealty or Vow Flaw. The character may take either Academic or Martial Abilities at character creation.

#### Craft Amulets

*Minor, Supernatural Ability*

Your character begins with Craft Amulets 1, a Supernatural Ability that represents his ability to make small objects imbued with supernatural effects and harness the power of words and symbols (see Abilities).

#### Dream Interpretation

*Major, Supernatural Ability*

Your character begins with Dream Interpretation 1, a Supernatural Ability that represents his ability to divine the truth behind prophetic dreams. The value of dream interpretation is well understood in Berber society and, given its long tradition within the culture, it is an accepted form of divination.

This Ability may be used in place of Meditation as a Holy Method when activating Holy Powers (see Abilities).

### ABILITIES

These Abilities are often used by murabitin.

#### Craft Amulets

The murabit tradition uses the Craft Amulets Ability in combination with their Holy Methods and Powers to aid and protect individuals and places. All amulets are created with Touch range and the new Worn duration, which is equivalent to Sun. The target may be Individual, Room, Structure, or Boundary. In the case of targets other than Individual, the amulet is considered Worn while it is in contact with or buried beneath the target. The Boundary target would normally imply a ritual, but in the case of amulets this instead adds a further 20 to the effect level. The Worn duration lasts until either the amulet is broken or is removed from the target.

Two types of amulet may be created, Minor and Major.

Minor amulets are designed for a specific Individual target and take (12 – Craft Amulets to a minimum of 1) hours to create. These amulets require the crafter's Craft Amulets Total to be at least double the target level of effect. They usually last a matter of days or weeks, determined by the quality of their construction (Dex+Craft Amulets + simple die roll = number of days amulet lasts).

Major amulets take a season or more to create. Once the level of effect has



been determined, the craftsman must spend consecutive seasons working on the amulet.

For each point by which the Craft Amulets Total exceeds the level of effect the crafter accumulates one point until the target level has been reached. The craftsman can work on only one Major Amulet in a season.

**CRAFT MINOR AMULET TOTAL:**  
Dexterity + Craft Amulets + Shape and Material Bonus + Aura Bonus

**CRAFT MAJOR AMULET TOTAL:**  
Dexterity + Craft Amulets + Holy Method + Holy Power + Shape and Material Bonus + Aura Bonus

If using the rules from *City & Guild*, amulets typically have 1 Damage Level, but non-perishable components may be reused. Amulets have a Penetration of 0 but they can contain Holy or Arcane Connections to a given target, in which case the base multiplier is treated as the base Penetration score, as well as sympathetic connections, which modify the base Penetration as normal. The effects of both Minor and Major Amulets can also have Penetration designed into the effect at a cost of one level for two points of Penetration. This is in addition to Penetration gained through Arcane and sympathetic connections, and is not modified by sympathetic connections.

The Shape & Material bonus cannot exceed the murabit's Craft Amulets score.

**Specialties:** Specific Holy Methods or Powers, particular shapes or materials (Supernatural)

**Dream Interpretation**

Murabiti lore understands dreams to be one of the chief vehicles through which God and the angels bestow visions and prophecies upon humanity. The Dream Interpretation Ability has two uses. The first is a form of Meditation, as per the Holy Method, used in combination with Holy Powers of Blessing and Understanding. In this case the character must engage in ritual prayer for an hour before spending a full night in restful sleep. Upon waking he must spend (6 – Dream Interpretation to a minimum of 1) hours contemplating the imagery revealed to him in his dream. At

## Legacy of the Philosopher Poets

Some characters may seek out the writings or relics of the Sufis, attempting to incorporate their insights into cult initiations, deciphering the Enigma or simply expanding upon their understanding of the Divine. Here are some of the Arabic-language titles they may find:

*Bidayat al Mouridin*  
*Ouns al Wabid*  
*Tahfat al Arib*  
*Diwan* (collection of poems)

Tractatus Theology (Quality 9)  
**Author:** Abu Madyan  
**Availability:** Private libraries in the Maghreb and Al-Andalus. Sometimes found in the Levant.  
**Description:** This is a collection of books regarding Sufi insight and philosophy from Abu Madyan. Each title is a tractatus.  
*Kitab al-i'tibar* (On Reflection)  
*Kitab kbawass al-buruf* (Characteristics of Letters)  
*Tawbid al-muqimin* (The Certain Profession of the Oneness of God)

Tractatus Theology (Quality 10)  
**Author:** Ibn Masarraah  
**Availability:** Private libraries in the Maghreb and Al-Andalus. Rarely found in the Levant.  
**Description:** These are short works providing a better understanding of Ibn Masarraah's thought. However, their concise nature often raises new questions. Several referenced manuscripts remain missing, making it nearly impossible to reconstruct his philosophical system, especially where he discusses the attributes of God. Each

title is a tractatus.  
*Incoherence of the Philosophers*  
*The Deliverer From Error*  
*The Revival of Religious Sciences*  
*The Jerusalem Tract*

*The Revival:* Summa, Theology: Islam (Level 5, Quality 8)  
Others: Tractatus Theology (Quality 8)  
**Author:** al-Ghazali  
**Availability:** Private libraries in the Maghreb and Al-Andalus, and throughout the Eastern Muslim world.  
**Description:** The *Incoherence* is the result of al-Ghazali's brush with skepticism, where he embraced the belief that all causal events and interactions were not matters of chance, but rather the immediate and present will of God. *Deliverer* is his autobiography. *The Revival* is an in depth look at his philosophy of Islam, and *The Jerusalem Tract* is an overview of Islam.

### THE KHIRKA OF ABU MADYAN

Passed from master to student in the study of Sufism as the symbol representing of attainment of master status, this simple cloak radiates a palpable feeling of calm and well-being. A patched, woolen garment of nondescript grey color, the Khirka of Abu Madyan has a Faith Score of 5, giving it 5 Faith Points and a Divine Might of 50. It has the Saint powers of *Celestial Immunity*, *Grant Serenity*, *Resist Temptation*, and *The Incombustible Shroud*. (See *Realms of Power: Divine*, page 88, for descriptions.)

the end of that time, the player rolls for the miraculous effect as normal.

**EFFECT TOTAL:**  
simple die + Intelligence + Dream Interpretation + (Blessing or Understanding) + Aura

The second use is a form of direct divination. In this case, the murabit is interpreting his own dreams or the dreams

of others to find answers to posed questions. The dreamer must be prepared, as per the normal use of the Dream Interpretation Ability, and upon waking the murabit spends (6 – Dream Interpretation, to a minimum of 1) hours contemplating the imagery. He may then make an Intelligence + Dream Interpretation roll. Characters with the Premonitions Ability gain a bonus equal to their Premonitions score.

The Ease Factor is the level of the equivalent Momentary non-ritual Intel-

## Fae vs Infernal

As presented, the Punic deities are Infernal, but for storyguides who would prefer a faerie variant, one could view the priests of Carthage as Faerie hedge wizards specializing in Faerie Bargaining (See *Realms of Power: Faerie*, page 131), but unlike the contemporary art, their faerie patrons could ignore the demands of a broken deal.

Carthaginian bargaining always involved sacrifice, providing the fae with Vitality in exchange for favor. The ruling class offered children to their god, as part of their usual worship, and especially if they particularly needed something. They would make a vow which was basically "If X goes well for me, I will sacrifice my youngest child to Ba'al Ammon."

However, in the later years of the city's rule, they would raise slave children as sacrifices, perhaps adopting them, thinking to fool their gods. However, unlike standard Faerie Bargaining, if the Carthaginian faeries ever discovered the ruse, then the fulfillment of the letter of the contract failed, and so the gods could withdraw their protection, benefit, or service.

lego Hermetic spell. Holding an Arcane Connection to a target allows the character to treat the Range as Touch, and the Boundary Target does not require a ritual. The usual rules for Penetration in *ArM5*, page 184 apply to this Ability. Most who possess the Dream Interpretation Ability have specific rituals that they believe help them achieve insight. Some fast before sleeping, some wear ritual clothes while they sleep, while others sleep in graveyards in order to gain the assistance of ghosts.

**Specialties:** Any appropriate Holy Power, own dreams, the dreams of others, dreams had under specific circumstances (Supernatural)

## Sufism and the Maghreb

Sufis believe the Qur'an speaks directly to their hearts as daily life's stories. Their relationship of the Divine is a personal one of all consuming love. Through

## Echoes of the Destroyed

The complete destruction of Carthage meant that little of their culture survived, and only scattered and incomplete accounts remain.

**Bibliotheca Historica, Book III (Latin)**

Summa, Area Lore: Ancient Carthage (Level 2, Quality 5)

**Author:** Diodorus Siculus

**Availability:** Private libraries in the Levant and Egypt. In Constantinople.

Diodorus explains how the Carthaginian nobles thought their loss at the hands of the Romans had resulted from the displeasure of their gods. Even as the legions broke the defenses, nobles sacrificed 300 high-born children in the fires of Tanit and Ba'al Ammon.

**De Superstitiones (Latin)**

Tractatus Area Lore: Ancient Carthage, Quality 5

**Author:** Plutarch

**Availability:** Private libraries, Constantinople.

Plutarch discusses the acts of sacrifice in particular, mentioning how "the whole area before the sacrificial statue was filled with a loud noise of flutes and drums so that the cries of wailing should not reach the ears of the people."

one's outward actions one expresses one's piety. However, there are some who have sought other Islamic paths through asceticism and spiritual quest. These individuals are known as Sufis, primarily due to the fact that they often wear simple garments of wool (Arabic: suf).

As of the 12th and 13th century, some mystical Sufi brotherhood orders began to spread into the region, though truly, they are much more popular in the Levant. Nascent groups have begun to evolve in Marrakech and Fes. These Sufis, though, played an integral role in the cementing the place of Islam amongst the Berber population through the Maghreb. They inspired leaders and spread their philosophy. Although its roots are undoubtedly

earlier, Sufism acknowledges two writers in the early 10th century as the effective founders: Mansur al-Hallaj and Junayd Baghdadi. Later writers worked to formalize the theories of Sufism, including Abu Nasr al-Sarraj and Abu Hamid Muhammad al-Ghazali. Currently, the most active thinker is the mystical poet Ibn-Arabi of Damascus. Sufis believe their philosophy originated from the Qur'an and therefore remains compatible with mainstream Islamic thought, and is in no way contradictory to Islamic Law. They see it as necessary to the complete fulfillment of Islam.

Recently, Sufis have begun to gather in groups known as tariqas, usually based within a convent or the tomb of a saint and led by a senior Sufi, known as a shaykh. Others might consider this a school, with a shaykh or murshid (guide) who acts as a leader or spiritual guide for the organization of muridin (s. murid, "desirous"), but most Sufis see one another as peers, each with his own insights to share. They acknowledge the transmission of knowledge and the recognition of a murid as a new shaykh with the passing of the khirqa. The khirqa is a cloak representing the Sufi chain of spirituality. Receipt of the cloak marks the new shaykh as a part of the silsilah, the chain of shaykhs stretching back to the Prophet Muhammad. Sufis believe this chain serves as the channel through which wisdom flows from the source of spiritual revelation to the being of the shaykh. The ceremony of giving the khirqa occasionally occurs between peers, as one shaykh acknowledges the wisdom of another.

Perceptions of Sufis have begun to shift, and while they are often considered heretical, many view them as paragons of a devout and pious lifestyle. Some authorities encourage Sufi groups through the construction of various buildings for their use, including zawiyas (homes at tombs of saints), khanqahs (convents), and ribats (hospices). These gathering places also allow authorities to maintain more effective monitoring of the tariqas.

Sufis seek a closer union with God, through both personal piety and participation in group rituals. Exactly which group rituals are practiced varies according to each individual tariqa, but through them Sufis attempt to achieve mystical insights into God's nature and the world around them. Many murabitin are Sufis, and the uninformed often conflate the two groups,



## Story Seeds

A lost civilization of demon worshippers could, perhaps, be a good source of stories.

### A LOST KEY

Locals bring the magi a stele covered with both Greek and strange symbols. Called a "cippus," the low pedestal was dedicated to Melkart, patron god of Tyre, as a votive offering. Studying the inscription for a season with a Dead Language: Punic score or a Dead Language: Classic Greek score of 4 or greater allows the researcher to treat the stele as a tractatus.

#### Cippus of Melqart (Classic Greek/Punic)

Tractatus Dead Language: Punic, Quality 5

This provides a key to understanding the Phoenician language, as the inscriptions on the cippus is in both Phoenician and Greek. It also bears the True Name of Melkart, and a native Goetic infernalist wants to claim it for his own. A dangerous game begins as the infernalist hides amongst the visiting peasants, trying to circumvent any precautions the magi may have taken and steal the stone.

### UNDISCOVERED HERITAGE

A magus discovers a cache of ancient Greek manuscripts attributed to the Cabieri, either in the libraries of Constantinople or pulled from ruins somewhere in the Theban Tribunal. The text seems to suggest a connection between the ancient Punic magics of Carthage, and the rites of Thoth-Hermes. It references several secret cultic locations in the mountains west of Carthage. Seekers, following the Thoth-Hermes link and investigating the sites, may find the false faerie Ba'al Ammon lingering or easily called. When the creature appears, it offers the magi the chance to learn ancient magics and risk being unwittingly corrupted.

### HEALTH AND LONG LIFE

Received as a gift, discovered in ruins, or acquired from someone in the bazaars of the Tell, the magi acquire one of the Punic priesthood's life-extending amulets, providing a bonus to the bearer's Aging Rolls. Is it an Arcane Connection to Ba'al Ammon, a relic of ancient Carthage, or a trap cleverly laid by Gifted sahir of the Caliphate? Is the risk of wearing a potential trap worth the Aging benefits? Or is disassembling the amulet for Insight worth a chance to discover a minor Breakthrough connected to longevity?

### WAGES OF CARTHAGE

A Gifted sahir opposes the magi, and seems to possess a nearly unlimited supply of Vim vis. His servants, however, seem to shift over time. While initially Faerie jinn, later foes are Infernal jinn, and then full demons. The sahir has located Ba'al Ammon's cache of vis infesta outside of Tunis and now uses it to send a constant stream of supernatural assassins to harry the magi when they depart the covenant. Once he is defeated, will his trove of tainted vis be recovered by the magi, and if so, what will they do with it? How can they prevent another sahir from doing the same thing?

### TO RESURRECT THE BRAZEN TOPHET

While searching through the ruins of ancient Carthage, a magus discovers an enormous lump of melted bronze which seems to contain several pawns of vis. If excavated and reformed, it would function as it did previously, providing the magi with a Tophet of Sacrifice, capable of turning offerings into Vim vis. Such a prize might drive greedy magi into more and more depraved acts for the easily generated vis, or, if word of the tophet gets back to vis-poor tribunals or amoral, vis-hungry magi, the owners might find themselves challenged on many fronts by challengers seeking the tophet for themselves.

but they are distinct traditions. Particular pious Sufis, known as zahids, are also said to be able to work miracles, known as karamas, which enable them to fly, heal with a touch, and conjure food and clothing with a simple prayer. (See *Realms of Power: Divine*, page 116)

Other Sufis have found that through this process of philosophical introspection and ascetic lifestyle, they begin to not only alter their own personal reality, but the most erudite amongst them seem capable of altering the reality of the world around them in small ways. They "find" the resources they need, or events seem to occur in their favor, such that some might call them blessed. Sufis say they simply follow the will of God.

Some of the more renowned Sufis of

the Maghreb include:

- Abu Madyan was a very popular Sufi mystic from Iberia who traveled and studied throughout the Maghreb. Many Almohads feared he might challenge their authority. He died in 1198, answering a summons to the court of the Caliph in Marrakesh. He was buried in Tlemcen, and is considered something like the city's patron saint.
- Ali Hirzihim was often considered by Abu Madyan as his spiritual leader. He fervently distributed of the works of al-Ghazali in the region and taught at the Qarawiyyin University in Fes. He was taught by his uncle, who, in turn, was taught by al-Ghazali. He received his khirka from Ibn al-Arabi
- Al-Dakkak was from Sijilmasa and was a prominent Sufi in al-Andalus and the Maghreb in the late 12th century. He studied alongside Abu Madyan in Fes for some time, finally gifting Madyan with the khirka of a Sufi master. He is buried outside of Bab al-Gisa in Fes.
- Al-Ghazali is considered one of the most influential Muslim philosophers. He was a Persian Sufi and wrote extensively, helping establish the systematic view of Sufism and its integration into mainstream Islam. Some believe him to be the single most important Muslim after Mohammed. He died in 1111 in Tus.
- Ibn al-Arabi was from Seville, in Iberia, and considered a great judge of Islamic law. He traveled throughout

the east before returning to Seville and later moving to live out his days in Fes. He was very concerned with the nature of the soul and the theory of knowledge. Ibn al-Arabi carefully examined the Sufi belief which stated knowledge can only be achieved through purification of the soul combined with chaste living and the elimination of material desires. He died in Fes in 1143.

## The Gods of Carthage

While demons still exist in all those places you might expect to find them in Mythic Europe, and in such places as those described in the Great Desert, there are other Infernal legacies to be found in North Africa. Many of the more sinister *jnun* such as the lesser *'af-arta*, *ghul* and *shayatin* are aligned to the Infernal Realm and European traders bring with them their own demons. However, one almost forgotten Infernal power lost to the rest of Mythic Europe hides to the south beyond the Mediterranean, the supposedly defeated gods of the Carthaginians.

## Punic Worship

Records of the worship and theology of the Carthaginians comes from those outside sources that documented aspects of the Punic culture before its utter destruction in 164 BC. In fact, all surviving material on Carthage and its traditions was written by its enemies. The rest of the Mediterranean reviled the empire's tradition of sacrificing the "first fruits" to their gods in exchange for favor and assistance, which included burning the firstborn children of prominent citizens in enormous bronze altars. Several peace treaties demanded that the Carthaginians cease the practice, but they did not. Born out of the city of Tyre and ancient before the Romans were a tribe on the Tiber, Punic worship claims a wide and surprising heritage.

## PRIESTHOOD

The priests of Carthage drew their tradition from the Cabieri, a circle of ancient mystics and smiths, who kept a sanctuary on the island of Samothrace in the Aegean Sea. They ranked second only to the kings and queens, and acted as the direct intermediaries with the Punic gods. For a fee, they negotiated petitions with the deities, related demands back to the people, and ensured petitioners met their obligations. Extremely active in the education of the populace, they indoctrinated new generations at an early age with the tenets of their belief system. To be a priest in Carthage was to be at the very core of Punic life.

## ORIGINS

The authority on Punic worship is Sanchuniathon, an author of great antiquity, whom Plutarch assesses as truthful and accurate in documenting history. Philo of Byblos translated Sanchuniathon's whole work from the Phoenician language into Attic Greek, and published it. No known copies of Sanchuniathon's text survive, but according to Philo, Sanchuniathon sought out the writings of a man known as Taautus, a member of the Cabieri, "whom the Egyptians called Thoyth, and the Alexandrians Thoth, translated by the Greeks into Hermes."

After mastering Taautus' mysteries, he studied the secret writings of Punic priests in the Levant and merged the two into the core of the Carthaginian priesthood's rites. In the following centuries, later priests shrouded his discoveries in myth and allegory, so that rival cultures like the Greeks or Romans would not steal Sanchuniathon's inventions.

## DOGMA

Punic worship had three primary tenets: celebration, sacrifice, and serpent worship. To honor and glorify their gods, they erected standing stones, or stelae (singular: stele), engraved with the symbols for their gods. Raising a stele dedicated to a particular god was one method for gaining the god's favor, or to show gratitude for assistance provided by the god. Most stelae discov-

## The Right of the Victors

One of the last remaining texts on the religion and mythology of the people of Carthage comes from Eusebius's *Praeparatio Evangelica*, which tells of the works of Sanchuniathon, priest of Ba'al Ammon and sorcerer of Berytus. He tells how he deciphered the Levantine writings, deciphered mystic inscriptions in the Punic temples, learned the truth regarding the apotheosis of Punic gods — a truth their own priesthood later concealed with allegories and myths. Eusebius' intended to discredit pagan religion through the example of Sanchuniathon. He succeeded in creating the last literary map to the magic of the Punic, albeit it one clouded by the distance of time and the secondhand translation of his source, Phyllos of Byblos.

### *Praeparatio Evangelica* (Latin)

Summa, Area Lore: Ancient Carthage (Level 2, Quality 5), Theology (Level 3, Quality 5)

**Author:** Eusebius

**Availability:** Private libraries in the Levant and Egypt. In Constantinople.

One copy is kept as a collection of papyrus scrolls on iron rods in a dark cedar box with brass fittings. The rods are capped with brass bull's heads. Written in a fine, narrow hand in a Roman dialect of Latin.

ered at ancient Carthaginian sites bear the mark of Tanit, and she is the most invoked of the Punic gods, even thought to influence Ba'al Ammon. They also constructed pillars inscribed with Punic myths and stories, and remnants of such pillars might provide insight to Seekers attempting to recover lost magics. Some may even have incorporated the True Names of worshipped beings.

Sacrifice in Carthage involved burning the votive object in a great bronze statue of either Ba'al Ammon or Tanit. In doing so, the Carthaginian priests employed a now-lost method of Profane Sacrifice. A synthesis of the Infernalist methods of Sacrifice and Profaning the Holy (see *Realms of Power: Infernal*, pages 95, 96), this allowed the sacrificial burn-



## Ba'al Ammon, Lord of Carthage

**Order:** Prince of False Gods

**Infernal Might:** 50 (Vi)

**Characteristics:** Int +2, Per +2, Pre +1, Com +2, Str +4, Sta +5, Dex +5, Qik +4

**Size:** +0

**Confidence:** 1 (3 points)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Greater Immunity to Flame and Heat; Improved Characteristics; Overconfident

**Infernal Qualities:** Vis Mastery (as the Magical Quality)

**Personality Traits:** Greedy +6, Proud +6, Ruthless Ambition +6, Subtle +5, Cunning +4, Deceptive +4, False God Demon +3

**Reputation:** Demon of Carthage 9, Ba'al Saturn 4, Baalzebub 3

**Hierarchy:** 9

**Combat:**

*Fist:* Init +4, Attack +9, Defense +8, Damage +4

*Great Sword:* Init +6, Attack +21, Defense +17, Damage +13

**Soak:** +4

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-5), -3 (6-10), -5 (11-15), Incapacitated (16-20), Dead (21+)

**Abilities:** Bargain 10 (setting rates for assistance), Brawl 4 (dodge), Charm 9 (first encounters), Dead Language: Punic 5 (giving orders), Folk Ken 9 (humans), Guile 10 (priests), Great Weapon 10 (great sword), Infernal Lore 8 (individual demons), Intrigue 9 (subtly spreading doctrine), Leadership 15 (humans), Philosophiae 8 (metaphysics), Teaching 9 (Infernal Lore)

**Powers:**

*Form of Fancy*, 0 point, Init 0, Corpus or Animal: After taking physical form, the demon can shapeshift into any human form, even ones with animal aspects such as curling ram horns, which it may dissolve at will. This is a natural manipulation of the physical form, and thus physical attacks are not stopped by Magic Resistance.

*Know the Places of Men*, up to 10 points, Init 0, Intellego: Ba'al Ammon may create Intellego Corpus or Imagi-

nem effects up to 10th magnitude at a cost of 1 point per magnitude.

*Master of Flame*, up to 10 points, Init 0, Ignem: Ba'al Ammon may create Ignem effects up to 10th magnitude at a cost of 1 point per magnitude.

*Summon the Herd of Destruction*, 12 points, Init -19, Mentem, Ritual: Summon a company of 10 ghostly war elephants (see later) that follow Ba'al Ammon's commands for Moon Duration. He may delegate this command to another individual, but the elephants understand only Punic. This is a ritual power. (ReMe 15, +4 Arc, +3 Moon, +2 Group)

*Coagulation*, 5 point, Init -1, Corpus: The demon can obtain a material form, which it may dissolve at will.

*Envisioning*, 1 or 5 points, Init 0, Mentem: The demon can appear in the dreams of a sleeping target (1 point) or make a target experience a waking dream (5 points). This was how Ba'al Ammon often communicated with worshippers.

*His Master's Voice*, variable points, Init +1, Vim: The demon can summon other demons or corrupt beasts to its current location. This costs 1 Might Point for every point of Infernal Might of the being summoned, so is used sparingly. The demon has no control over the demon he has summoned.

*Obsession*, 1-3 points, Init -5, Vim: the demon can impose the Obsession Traits of Greed, Merciless Ambition, and Pride. (*Realms of Power: The Infernal*, pages 31-32)

*Possession*, variable, Init +2, Mentem: To possess a human, the demon may expend any number of points from its Might Pool to create a Possession Might Pool. These points actually enter the possessed creature and are not regenerated by the demon until the Possession ends. The more Might invested in this power, the more the demon can do with its host, but the weaker the Penetration. If it uses all of its Might, the demon gives up a physical form and resides within the victim. Separate portions may only communicate informa-

tion learned since the division when within sight of each other, otherwise they are independent copies of the demon's mind. These copies may use any of its Powers for which it has sufficient Might points in its Possession Might Pool, but the points do not regenerate until the possession ends. The demon may grant its host Magic Resistance equal to the Possession Might; if it does so, then the host is excluded from wards against supernatural beings just as if it were the demon itself. In all other situations, the demon can "hide" within the host, and walk through such wards with impunity. If a demon attempts to force the victim to act contrary to his nature, or use any of the victim's own supernatural powers, the demon must spend points from its Possession Might Pool. A Supernatural Power requires 1 point per magnitude, 1 Might Point per point of a Supernatural Ability, or Might Points equal to the Might Points expended by the victim. A questionable action requires the demon to exceed the victim's Personality Trait on a stress die + Might Points spent. The storyguide may give a modifier to the Personality Trait roll based on the nature of the command. Once the Possession Might Pool placed into a victim reaches 0, the possession ends. Note that a being can be possessed with as little as 1 Might Point. A demon can possess multiple victims simultaneously, and can direct each independently. Vim spells may be used on the victim to target this fraction of the demon, and must Penetrate the base demon's Infernal Might normally, but drain the Possession Might Pool, not the Infernal Might of the demon.

*Shroud the Stench of the Pit*, variable points, Init +3, Vim: Ba'al Ammon can conceal the Infernal nature of any other supernatural power or aura, making it appear to be Magical or Faerie instead. It may also be used to remove all stench of the supernatural, making things appear wholly mundane. This power can shield a creature or

## Ba'al Ammon, Lord of Carthage (Cont'd)

effect from the Sense Holiness/Unholiness ability. This Power costs Might Points equal to the original cost of the Power being concealed, or Might Points equal to the magnitude of the Infernal effect if it does not cost Might Points. This power lasts for as long as the Power it is masking.

*Wealth of Nations*, 3 points, Init 0, Teram: The demon can summon riches. Each use of this Power can create wealth equivalent to up to 50 pounds of gold. This wealth can be of any form—gold, gems, rich tapestries, ivory, etc—but it always has intrinsic value, rather than being valuable because of its utility (a roomful of grain, for example). This wealth is not created, it is instead

summoned from somewhere else, chosen by the demon usually for the greatest corrupting effect. This might be a royal treasury on the other side of Europe or the purse of the man standing nearby.

**Weakness:** Protected Group (People who have sacrificed to the Punic Gods that day)

**Vis:** There are ten pawns of Vim vis in the demon's curling horns. Ba'al Ammon carries 20 pawns of vis Infesta when spending extended time abroad.

**Appearance:** Ba'al Ammon manifests as a handsome and well, but appropriately, dressed man or woman with curling ram's horns on the side of his head and eyes like cinders. He always has a large, vicious sword

adorning his outfit. He shifts his form to the visage and gender the individual summoning him would find most appropriate.

Ba'al Ammon delights in corrupting men, creating death and destruction, and driving societies into decline. His Vis Mastery quality means he can use vis in place of Might points, and he carries several rooks of vis with him when spending extended time manifested. The animal which manifests with him is always a snake; sometimes a small garter or viper, other times a larger one of indistinct variety.

ing of objects to effectively generate Vim vis infesta (See *Realms of Power: the Infernal*, page 18), which created a pawn of vis per +2 granted by the sacrificed object. For instance, an innocent human would generate 5 pawns of vis. This allowed the priests and their demon god to then enact potent rituals and effects.

Finally, the Carthaginians venerated serpents as symbols of rejuvenation and immortality. Drawn from the mysteries of Taautus, they saw dragons and snakes as divine, able to shed their old skin and be reborn in a larger, more powerful form. Festivals, sexual rites, and sacrifices honored serpents as servants of the gods, symbols of fertility, and the embodiment of the rulers of the universe. Priests incorporated the snake into shrine symbolism and into mystic rites, bearing the shed skins of snakes in amulets which granted long life. Such an amulet discovered now might provide a +3 bonus to aging rolls, but grants the wearer the Tainted with Evil flaw for as long as it is worn.

Believers felt they could expect interventions on their behalf, the support and favor of their gods — a bargain the demons honored just enough to encourage greater and greater sins and bloodshed. Often, the acts demons performed were ones they might have done willingly, but they demanded a price from worshippers because they

could. While some Punic texts suggested ascension or apotheosis was possible for the greatest of priests and kings, no details regarding such a transformation have been discovered.

### SACRED PLACES

Punic culture demanded that each new colony build a temple dedicated to Tanit and Ba'al Ammon so their gods could be petitioned. Temples contained shrines and included a nearby tophet. A great bronze representation of Ba'al Ammon or Tanit with up stretched arms, the tophet would be filled with a great fire. Petitioners placed bound sacrifices on the sloped hands, allowing them to fall into the statue's mouth, where they would burn. Priests collected the vis-rich ashes and buried them nearby in urns dedicated to Tanit. The demon then used these pits as vast sources of vis to aid in its tasks. Evidence of such a tophet lies buried in the ruins outside Tunis, a great mass of melted bronze destroyed in the razing of Carthage.

### CARTHAGE IN 1220

Now known as Tunis, Carthage is a shadow of its former glory, but still one of

the grandest and richest cities in North Africa. The Punic and Roman sites have been abandoned and looted for cut stone, and little recognizable remains. Nearly 100,000 people live in sprawling, nearby Tunis, the provincial capital of the region for the Al-mohad Caliph, and its great harbor does brisk trade. Merchants from across the Mediterranean come to exchange goods for the gold and slaves brought out of the desert. In sagas which follow history, the governor of Tunisia seizes control of the city in 1228, declaring himself Emir and establishing the Hafsid dynasty. It is described further in Chapter 2: Coasts.

## Punic Deities

The gods of Carthage came with the Phoenicians from the Levant out of deep antiquity. A collection of beings with Semitic origins and African influences, they ruled over Punic culture for a thousand years and then simply took up the Roman masks the legionnaires brought with the rule of Republic and Empire. While their conquerors forbid their more abhorrent practices, and killed or enslaved much of the populace, the Punic gods Tanit and Ba'al Ammon and their coterie did not disappear, they simply gained different servants.



According to what texts survived the destruction of Carthage, the Punic believed that their gods originally existed as men, kings who ascended to godhood through ancestor worship. Through this apotheosis, their rulers became the embodiment of cosmic elements, joined in a transformative union with the forces of nature and the sun, moon, and stars. They then attended to the petitions of their people, negotiating through the priesthood.

Unfortunately, it was a lie.

Whatever the gods of Carthage may have began as, the being worshipped by their society was, in fact, a single demon of Hell impersonating the deities of the Punic. The arrangement perfectly suited the capricious nature of demons. The ever-renewed and often selfish goals of the Carthaginian citizens meant the demon always had something sinful to occupy it, and the regular sacrifices meant quite a bit of collected power. Through sheer, depraved glee, it managed the corruption of Carthage quite well, preying upon the people's desperate hope for good fortune.

Carthaginians believed they possessed many gods, similar in some ways to the Hellenistic or Roman pantheon. Their foci ranged from Carthage itself to fertility to healing or justice or war. They included Ba'al Ammon, Tanit, Eshmun, Dagon, Sydyk, and Melkart. These may have begun as demons masquerading as gods, perhaps even faeries who played the role of gods, but in the end, as Carthage burned, its pantheon was completely composed by a lone servant of Hell.

The lord of the Punic pantheon was Ba'al Ammon, and his symbol was the spiraling horns of the ram. Nominally considered the god of the moon, he was the patron god of Carthage. The Egyptians linked him to Amun, the transcendental god of the essential and hidden. The Greeks claimed he was Kronos, who fathered the Younger Titans which so intrigued the founder Tytulus, consumed the first Olympians, and sacrificed his son, Iarbus, to secure victory in war.

A potent necromancer and master of flame, Ba'al Ammon survived the ages as the Roman god Ba'al Saturn, and eventually revealed himself as the demon Baalzebub to the Goetics in search of his ruthless power. As a Pu-

nic god, he often answered prayers of the nobility to aid the Carthaginian armies in battle, summoning up ghostly elephants and soldiers to fight while causing the fiery artillery of the living to burn with the pernicious hunger of the Infernal.

The Queen of Blood and Fire, Tanit held many roles, and in some ways, she was more popular than Ba'al Ammon. Her shrines were more numerous, and many worshippers appealed to her roles as a consort and confidant of Ba'al Ammon, petitioned her for aid a goddess of war, or sought her blessing as a virginal mother goddess, nurse, and symbol of fertility. Occasionally represented with a lion's head, her symbol was a circle atop a triangle with a straight line crossing the point, not unlike an ankh. In fact, the Egyptians associated her with Nit, the goddess of war and hunting. The Greeks saw her as Juno Caelestis, the African Juno.

Dagon ruled over farming and fishing, a god dedicated to the bounty of the land. The Greeks called him Zeus Arotrios. He also guarded the underwater prison of seven titans cast into the sea as punishment.

Carthage considered Eshmun a god of healing, and associated him with the Greek god Asclepius. The eighth son of Sydyk, he always carried both the staff of his office and a snake coiled around his other arm. His brothers were the secretive Cabieri of Samothrace.

Sydyk discovered the uses of salt and sat as the judge of the gods, interpreting when Ba'al Ammon was absent. He was notably harsh and unforgiving, preferring righteousness to mercy, and his punishments were always severe. Sanchuniathon records Sydyk's father as Magos, a follower of Zoroaster who ascended as a foreign god.

The Punic god Melkart was sometimes called the Tyrian Heracles, and considered the patron god of both Tyre and Leptis Magna. The emperor Septimius Severus even constructed a temple to Melkart in Rome. A legacy of Carthage's origin as a colony of Tyre, Melkart remained as a god of death and rebirth, protector of places dedicated to him and guardian of his most devout worshippers. The general Hannibal was a noted follower of Melkart. His cult was also widespread in the Punic colonies of Iberia.

## Chapter Five

# Appendix: Mundane Bestiary

The mundane animals of Mythic Africa are distinct from those of Mythic Europe. This appendix provides information and game statistics for them.

## Camel (Jamal)

Camels are well adapted to arid environments. They can find water by smell: open water sources have the same distinct smell as the air after rain. Camels can survive without water for extended periods, and are able to travel in mild sandstorms without harm. Their hooves have a unique design that splays when they travel on loose-packed surfaces, like sand, so that they do not sink into it as deeply as a human or hooved animal does. This allows them to travel more swiftly on sand than horses, and to be less fatigued by running on sand than other animals are.

Dromedary camels were first presented in the description of Alexander of Jerbiton in *Magi of Hermes*, pages 10–11. The following statistics represent a common riding dromedary.

## Camel, Dromedary (Camelus)

**Characteristics:** Cun -2, Per 0, Pre -4, Com -5, Str +1, Sta +3, Dex 0, Qik -2

**Size:** +2

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Smell Water (see Powers, below), Survive Without Water (see Powers, below).

**Qualities:** Herd Animal

**Reputations:** Cranky +1 (much of Africa)

**Combat:**

**Kick:** Init 0, Attack +4, Defense +2, Damage +2

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1, (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21) Incapacitated (22+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 4 (running), Awareness 3 (predators), Brawl 2 (dodging), Survival 3 (home terrain)

**Powers:**

**Smell Water,** 0 Points, Init 0: The camel can smell drinkable water for a distance of up to two miles.

**Survive Without Water,** 0 points, Init 0: The camel can survive without water for up to two weeks.

**Appearance:** A single-humped Arabian camel.

**Riding camel:** Camel races are a popular pastime amongst the lower classes – dromedary camels, or *mebari*, bred for racing differ slightly from the base creature. Add Fast Runner (+3 to all rolls involving running) and Improved Characteristics to increase Quickness to +0.

**War camel:** Add the Aggressive and Pack Animal Qualities and the Ferocity (when ridden in battle) Virtue. Increase Brawl (hooves) to 5. A war camel's kick has the following basic combat statistics: Init +0 Attack +8 Defense +5 Damage +2. It can be trained to attack as part of a Trained Group with its rider.

**Bactrian camel:** These two-humped eastern camels gain the Hardy Quality and the Long-Winded Virtue but also possess the Feral Scent Flaw. Bactrian Camels are fully detailed in the "Ship of the Desert" insert in *The Cradle and the Crescent*, page 170,

together with several additional variants bred for particular roles.

The rare white Camels of Virtue are considered masters of the sands and wander from desert to desert leading tribes of wild camels using their ability to access a great Desert Regio Network that bridges the desolate dry landscapes they call home.

## CAMEL OF VIRTUE

**Magic Might:** 7 (Animal)

**Characteristics:** Cun -2, Per 0, Pre -4, Com -5, Str +3, Sta +3, Dex +2, Qik -1

**Size:** +3

**Season:** Summer

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Magical Animal, Magical Champion, Desert Regio Network, Homing Instinct, Hardy, Improved Abilities, Unaffected by the Gift, Voice of the Land, Bound to Magic, Magical Monster, Offensive to Animals

**Magic Qualities and Inferiorities\*:** Greater Power, Major Virtue: Ways of the Desert; Improved Fatigue, Improved Powers, Lesser Power, Personal Power.

\* Unlike most Beasts of Virtue, a Camel of Virtue lacks the Susceptible to Deprivation Minor Inferiority and is immune to thirst, starvation or fatigue like most other creatures with Magic Might.

**Reputations:** Noble +3 (the Desert), Cranky +1 (Africa)

**Personality Traits:** Camel +3\*

**Combat:**

**Kick:** Init -1, Attack +8, Defense +3, Damage +5

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-



3, -5, Unconscious  
**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-8), -3 (9-16),  
 -5 (17-24), Incapacitated (25-32),  
 Dead (33+)

**Abilities:** Area Lore: Great Desert 6 (re-  
 giones), Athletics 4 (running), Ani-  
 mal Handling 4 (camels), Awareness  
 3 (predators), Brawl 2 (dodging),  
 Survival 5 (home terrain)

**Powers:**

*Perfect Form of the Desert Ship*, Init -3, 0  
 Might points, MuAn 15: Trans-  
 forms the beast into dromedary or  
 Bactrian form and back, modifying  
 characteristics and non-magical  
 Qualities accordingly. (Base 5, +2  
 Sun): Personal Power (12 mastery  
 points to reduce Might cost)

*Keep the Simoon at Bay*, Init -3, 1 Might  
 point, ReAu35: This power pro-  
 tects the camel and its herd from  
 the malevolent *simoon*, a scorching  
 wind and sandstorm of the deep  
 desert. This power also protects  
 any riders mounted on the camels.  
 (Base 10, +2 Voice, +1 Sun, +2  
 Group): Greater Power (3 mastery  
 points to reduce Might)

*Scent the Distant Waters of the Oasis*, Init  
 -3, 1 Might point, InAq20: This  
 power allows the camel to find  
 any natural body of water upon  
 the path or track it is traveling.  
 Following the scent eventually  
 leads to the water but the animal  
 must make simple Perception rolls  
 against an Ease Factor of 6 to fol-  
 low the scent accurately (roll once  
 per day for long journeys). If the  
 water is more than half a day's  
 travel away, the beast must invoke  
 the power again. (Base 2, +2 Road  
 (as Voice), +2 Smell (as Group),  
 +2 Sun; based on Call of the Rush-  
 ing Waters with non-standard pa-  
 rameters): Lesser Power (4 mastery  
 points to reduce Might cost).

*Subtle Taste of Poison and Purity*, Init -2, 0  
 Might points, InAq5: As the spell  
 of the same name (see *ArM5*, page  
 122). As the Camel of Virtue is a  
 Magical Animal, it is not affected  
 by poison and can taste poison-  
 ous or fouled water without harm.  
 (Base 4, +1 Concentration): Per-  
 sonal Power (1 mastery point to  
 reduce Might cost)

**Appearance:** A huge white dromedary  
 or Bactrian camel of noble bearing.



## Dog, Painted (Kalb)

Much more social than the smaller  
 jackal of the northern desert, this wild  
 canine often hunts in packs of simi-  
 lar gender of up to 30 animals. Often  
 found near the desert strongholds of  
 the Tuareg, preying on the pastoral-  
 ists' herds of goats, sheep or camels,  
 a pack is capable of pursuing and kill-  
 ing gazelles and other antelopes on  
 the open plains. For its size it has one  
 of the most powerful bites of any dog,  
 reflected by increased damage from  
 the Crushing Jaws Quality. Its habit  
 of disemboweling prey lends it a nega-  
 tive reputation as a bloodthirsty killer.

## Dog, Painted (Lycaon)

**Characteristics:** Cun +0, Per 0, Pre  
 -2, Com -4, Str --, Sta +2, Dex  
 +3, Qik +2

**Size:** -1

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Charac-

teristics (x2), Puissant Brawl, Sharp  
 Ears, Infamous, Pack Mentality

**Qualities:** Crushing Jaws, Fast Runner,  
 Pack Animal/Pack Leader, Pursuit  
 Predator, Sharp Ears, Tireless

**Personality Traits:** Brave +3, Social +3

**Reputations:** Bloodthirsty (local) 4

**Combat:**

*Dodge:* Init +2, Attack n/a, Defense +7,  
 Damage n/a

*Bite:* Init +2, Attack +12, Defense +9,  
 Damage +1\*

\* Includes a bonus of +3 from the  
 Crushing Jaws Quality.

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-  
 3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8),  
 -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16),  
 Dead (17+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 5 (distance run-  
 ning), Awareness 3 (smell), Brawl  
 3+2 (teeth), Hunt 4 (pursuit), Sur-  
 vival 3 (desert)

**Natural Weapons:** Teeth: Init 0, Atk  
 +3, Def +1, Dam +1.

**Appearance:** A large lean canine with  
 long legs and distinctive oversized

round ears that stand erect like a wolf's. Its mottled pattern short fur of red, black, brown, white and yellow gives it the appearance of being "painted." Its cry is unusual, sounding more like the cry or chirp of a bird rather than a dog barking.

All painted dogs are fast runners and gain +3 on all rolls involving running, being able to pursue prey for long periods over considerable distances if necessary.

A Bjornaer magus with a Painted Dog Heartbeast would have a choleric humor with a melancholic aspect.

## Fox (Tha'lab)

The fox is a symbol of guile and cunning in both Mythic Europe and Mythic Africa, featuring prominently in folklore. The tales of Reynard the Fox fooling the kingly lion, the foolish sheep or the greedy wolf are particularly common in France but local variations are heard particularly throughout Christian lands. In Arabic speaking lands the fox presented in stories similar to those of Reynard the fox is referred to as either Abu Hassan or Abu Suleiman. The African fox is smaller than its European cousins, but no less sly.

## Fox

**Characteristics:** Cun +1, Per 0, Pre -2, Com -5, Str -6, Sta -1, Dex +2, Qik +6

**Size:** -4

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Perfect Balance; Nocturnal

**Qualities:** Ambush Predator, Crafty, Good Jumper, Hardy, Sharp Ears

**Personality Traits:** Sly +3

**Reputations:** Wily (local) 3

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +6, Attack na, Defense +8, Damage na

**Bite:** Init +6, Attack +9, Defense +10, Damage -5

**Soak:** -1

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 4 (running), Awareness 3 (food), Brawl 3 (bite), Hunt 4 (prey), Stealth 4 (stalking prey), Survival 4 (desert)

**Natural Weapons:** *Teeth:* Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1.

**Appearance:** Much smaller than a wolf, the sand fox is slighter with an elongated body, narrow head and short limbs. Its fur is sandy in colour, and it has very large ears..

The tiny (Size -5) creature weighing about 3 pounds known to the Bedouin as a fanak (Fennec) is found throughout Mythic Africa and the Mythic Middle East. Larger Arabian variants (Size -3) of the sand fox with more reddish coloration can be found only in 'Uman in southern Arabia - their Wound Penalties are adjusted accordingly but their combat statistics are otherwise identical.

More cunning mundane versions of foxes exist: add Crafty x2 (increase to Cun +3) and add Guile 3 (animals). Magic aligned versions such as Vafer the Magical Fox and Felix the Lucky Fox were first presented in *Tales of Mythic Europe*, page 14 and *Magi of Hermes*, page 123 respectively. A Fox of Virtue is also presented in *Realms of Power: Magic*, page 67. Faerie and Infernal foxes have also been encountered by Hermetic magi and sahir.

All foxes are excellent jumpers and get a +3 to all rolls involving jumping.

Bjornaer magi with fox Heartbeasts are considered to have a choleric humor with a sanguine aspect.

## Goat (Maa'ez)

Goats are common in Mythic Europe and beyond - they are used for their meat, their milk and in some places their hairy hides. Transhumance, the movement of pastoralists and their herds from the coastal plains to the mountain pastures over the course of the year, is particularly common in Provence and the Maghreb.

Many Christian tales of the Devil depict Satan as a black goat or humanoid he-goat presiding over a coven of witches, and folklore is full of tales of local hedge magicians assuming the form of goats. Popular moralising associates the goat with lechery due to their extreme activity when in rut.

## Goat (Capra)

**Characteristics:** Cun -1, Per +1, Pre -4, Com -5, Str 0, Sta +1, Dex +2, Qik +1

**Size:** -1

**Virtues and Flaws:** Long-Winded, Perfect Balance; Lecherous (Minor).

**Qualities:** Aggressive, Extra Natural Weapons (horns), Hardy, Herd Animal, Keen Vision, Skilled Climber.

**Personality Traits:** Lustful +1

**Reputations:** Lecherous (local) 2

**Combat:**

**Horns:** Init +2, Attack +11, Defense +6, Damage +2

**Hooves:** Init +3, Attack +9, Defense +8, Damage +1

**Soak:** +1

**Fatigue Levels:**

OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16), Dead (17+)

**Abilities:** 4 (running), Awareness 3 (predators), Brawl 5 (horns), Survival 5 (hills)

**Natural Weapons:** Horns: Init +1, Atk +3, Def -1, Dam +2; Hooves: Init +2, Atk +2, Def +2, Dam +1.

**Appearance:** The statistics above reflect a small wild she-goat (Arabic: 'anaza) such as an Arabian *tabr*. Both male and female goats have short knobbly horns, although males of many breeds possess larger natural weapons

Male goats (hircus) are similar to the basic she-goat above but some may be larger (Size 0, increasing Strength to +2 and dropping Quickness to 0), have a stronger Personality Trait of Lustful +3 and have the Ferocity (romantic rival) Virtue.

Larger breeds of goats, goat-antelopes and sheep (up to Size +1) such as the Mouflon, and breeds with larger horns such as the Ibex of the Levant or the Barbary Sheep of Morocco exist throughout Mythic Europe and Mythic Africa - these creatures may have increased strength due to their larger size or have their combat statistics altered using the template for Large horns: Init +2, Atk +3, Def +2, Dam +3.

*Sheep:* These statistics can also be used for wild ewes (ovis). Change Per-



sonality Traits to Peaceful +3 and Obedient +3, drop the Aggressive and Extra Natural Weapons Qualities, decrease Cunning by 1, and change Abilities to Brawl (dodge) 2. Not all wild ewes have horns and most are smaller than goats (Size -2): subtract 2 from Strength and increase Quickness to +2. Wild rams (aries) resemble male goats but have the following different Personality Traits: Virile +3, Violent +2.

Domesticated goats and sheep lack a Survival score but have slightly higher Communication scores of -4.

All goats and sheep are good climbers and gain a +3 bonus to all rolls involving climbing.

Bjornaer magi with wild goat Heartbeasts have a melancholic humor whereas those with wild sheep Heartbeasts are melancholic with a choleric aspect.

## Hyena (Dhubba)

In the thirteenth century hyenas, or *dhubba*, are found throughout the Levant, North Africa, Iraq, Persia, and lands beyond. These striped hyenas can be trained and tamed like dogs, even to the extent of becoming part of a dog pack if raised with hounds. Although not sacred to the ancient Egyptians, hyenas were used in hunting desert game. Some greater African specimens (Size +1) may be significantly larger than the standard sized versions detailed here and their Middle Eastern cousins (also Size -1). These fell beasts are often ridden by *jinn* or witches. The hyena is also a common animal form for *ghul* to assume.

## Hyena (Yena)

**Characteristics:** Cun +1, Per +2, Pre -4, Com -1, Str -1, Sta +2, Dex +1, Qik +2

**Size:** -1

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Characteristics, Keen Vision, Puissant Guile; Social Handicap (unpleasant odor), Nocturnal

**Qualities:** Crafty, Crushing Jaws, Keen Eyesight, Large Teeth, Mimicry, Pursuit Predator, Thick Fur.

**Personality Traits:** Cowardly +3, Sly +2

**Reputations:** Treacherous 2

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init +2, Attack +9, Defense +7, Damage +5\*

**Dodge:** Init +2, Attack na, Defense +5, Damage na

\* Includes a +3 bonus from Crushing Jaws

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-4), -3 (5-8), -5 (9-12), Incapacitated (13-16), Dead (17+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (food), Brawl 3 (bite), Guile 1+2 (feign dead), Hunt 4 (tracking), Survival 3 (desert).

**Natural Weapons:** The weapon statistics for a hyena's bite are Init 0, Atk +4, Def +1, Dam +3. The damage bonus is increased to +6 as noted due to the Crushing Jaws Quality (see later).

**Appearance:** The more common striped hyena has a comparatively massive torso with shortened hind legs, causing its back to slope down. Their short muzzles are borne by a large head and long thick immobile neck.

### NEW QUALITY

**Crushing Jaws:** This quality reflects the fact that although the animal is not particularly strong compared to humans, the muscles with which it bites down are tremendously powerful. The muscles that open its mouth are comparatively weak. A human may hold closed the animal's jaws with a successful Grapple. This Quality adds +3 Damage to any bite attack.

### HYENA OF VIRTUE (CROCOTTA)

The Hyena of Virtue, known as the *crocotta* or *kynolykos* (Greek: "dog-wolf"), hails from Ethiopia and is believed to be the product of a hyena and a lion. These spotted hyenas are larger (at least Size +1), appear to shift genders readily (as per the Gender Shift Virtue), and are comparatively much stronger and faster (Strength +4, Quickness +3, and Tough Hide Quality) than their mun-

dane cousins. Add the Improved Characteristics Virtue, the Tough Virtue and the Tainted by Evil Flaw. They are also both more violent (add the Aggressive Quality and increase their Brawl score to 5) and less cowardly (replace Cowardly with a Fierce +3 Personality Trait). Unlike their lesser cousins, the *crocotta* has real Intelligence (Int +2) and a laughing human-like cackle with improved powers of mimicry (equivalent to speaking Arabic 3) that they use to trick human prey. All *crocotta* possess the Greater Immunity: Steel Virtue and many have the ability to enthrall their victims as per the Entrancement Ability. Some *crocotta* can strike dogs dumb if their shadow falls across them and can paralyze any creature they look at thrice.

A stone found in the body of a Hyena of Virtue can serve as a charm of protection for whoever wears it on his upper arm (Ward Against Faeries of the Desert) or alternatively grant the ability to see the future (Premonitions or Visions). In some cultures it is the eyes of the *crocotta* that grant similar powers. A charm made from the genitalia and anus grants the Venus's Blessing Virtue to the wearer according to Persian sources.

## Jackal (Wawi)

Unlike the wolf, the jackal, or *ibn 'awa* (*wawi*), is not a pack animal and usually hunts alone or in mated pairs, or scavenges near the edges of human settlements. It is more friendly to man than its cousin the wolf and can be domesticated and even trained to act as a guardian, but not for hunting.

Black jackals are also considered symbols of Anubis, the ancient pagan Egyptian god of embalming and the dead. The black jackal is also a common shape assumed by both Faerie and Infernal *jinn*, particularly by *ghul* or members of the Ghul tribe, probably due the animal's scavenging tendencies and habit of lurking near cemeteries.

## Jackal (Thos)

**Characteristics:** Cun +0, Per 0, Pre -2, Com -4, Str -3, Sta +2, Dex +3, Qik +3

**Size:** -2

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Characteristics (x2), Long-Winded, Sharp Ears

**Qualities:** Fast Runner, Keen Sense of Smell, Pursuit Predator, Sharp Ears, Tireless

**Personality Traits:** Friendly +3

**Reputations:** Scavenger (local) 4

**Combat:**

**Dodge:** Init +3, Attack na, Defense +6, Damage na

**Bite:** Init +3, Attack +10, Defense +8, Damage -2

**Soak:** +2

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3/-3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-3), -3 (4-6), -5 (7-9), Incapacitated (10-12), Dead (13+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 5 (distance running), Awareness 3 (smell), Brawl 3 (teeth), Hunt 4 (track by smell), Survival 3 (desert)

**Natural Weapons:** Teeth: Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1.

**Appearance:** Smaller than a wolf with shorter legs, the jackal is slighter in build with a longer body and a shorter tail. Predominantly reddish-yellow in color, some individuals have black highlights or even grey fur.

All jackals are fast runners and gain +3 on all rolls involving running, able to pursue prey for long periods over considerable distances if necessary.

## A TYPHONIC BEAST

Found in the easternmost deserts and Egypt is the jackal-like creature known as the Set Animal, *sha* or *sal'awa*. Sporting the body of a jackal, the ears of a donkey, a long curved snout and an upright forked tail, it has a distinctive appearance. It is associated with the dark Egyptian god Set, equated with the Greek monster Typhon, and is said to be a harbinger of misfortune.

Such an unusual animal is almost certainly magical and may make a unique familiar if a magus can locate and be-

friend such an elusive creature, although its allegiance to an elder being aligned with destruction may give fainthearted magi pause. Alternatively, the *sha* may be dark Faerie hounds, the monstrous form of a shapeshifting hedge magician, or even an Infernal beast that seeks to trap an unwary magus into serving its long forgotten dark master.

## Lizard (Waral)

Tuareg myths consider these desert lizards to be ancestors of the current tribes and harming, killing, or eating a *waral* or *waran* is considered taboo. Found throughout the desert sheltering in the rock clefts or basking in the sun on flat stone outcrops, these reptiles have a sinister reputation among the other desert peoples.

## Lizard, Waral (Varanus)

**Characteristics:** Cun +2, Per 0, Pre -6 (+3), Com -2, Str +5, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik -1

**Size:** +2

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)\*

\* due to Ferocity Virtue, when defending food or a fresh kill

**Virtues and Flaws:** Ferocity (defending food), Greater Immunity: Poison, Tough, Depressed, Poor Eyesight

**Qualities:** Aggressive, Crafty, Grapple, Hardy, Loathsome Appearance, Keen Sense of Smell, Thick Scales, Tough Hide, Venomous

**Personality Traits:** Languid +2

**Reputations:** Dangerous (local) 2

**Combat:**

**Bite:** Init -1, Attack +11, Defense +6, Damage +9\*\* and poison (see below)

**Grapple:** Init -1, Attack +7, Defense +4, Damage special (see ArM5, page 174)

\*\* Includes a +3 bonus from Crushing Jaws

**Soak:** +5

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-7), -3 (8-14), -5 (15-21), Incapacitated (22-28), Dead (29+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (food), Brawl 5 (bite), Survival 3 (desert).

**Powers:**

**Venomous Bite,** 0 points, Init 0: When a *waral* attacks, compare its Attack Advantage to the victim's armor Protection (not his Soak). If the *waral's* advantage is higher, the victim suffers effects equivalent to an exceptionally debilitating poison (Stamina roll against Ease Factor 12, Incapacitating), regardless of whether the bite inflicts an actual wound. Unlike smaller venomous creatures such as the adder, a *waral's* special attack is not hindered by high leather boots or other simple measures and it can use the venom to great effect on a victim it has already grappled with its locking bite.

**Appearance:** These large grey lizards can become aggressive when provoked, lashing their tails when aroused. Their size and color varies depending on their habitat, with some specimens growing over 8 feet long, like the one detailed here. Although slow in gait, the creature's powerful jaws can snap closed quickly to lock around its prey and prevent escape.

## Ostrich (Na'aam)

Scattered throughout northern Africa but more commonly found in Egypt, a slightly smaller version of this flightless bird ranges throughout northern Arabia and the Levant. Valued for their feathers, leather, and less so for their meat, they roam the semi-arid plains in great flocks but avoid the deep desert. Ostrich hunting remains a favorite pastime of nobles and rich sahir.

## Ostrich (Struthio)

**Characteristics:** Cun -2, Per +2, Pre -1, Com -2, Str +2, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +3

**Size:** +1

**Confidence Score:** 0 (0)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Improved Characteristics, Keen Vision, Perfect Bal-



ance, Sharp Ears; Fragile Constitution  
**Qualities:** Camouflage, Defensive Fighter, Fast Runner, Hardy, Herd Animal, Keen Eyesight, Thick Feathers

**Reputations:** None

**Combat:**

*Dodge:* Init +3, Attack na, Defense +8, Damage na

*Kick (as hoof):* Init +5, Attack +8, Defense +7, Damage +3

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-6), -3 (7-12), -5 (13-18), Incapacitated (19-24), Dead (25+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 4 (predators), Brawl 4 (dodging), Survival 5 (home terrain).

**Natural Weapons:** The weapon statistics for an ostrich's kick are Init +2, Atk +2, Def +2, Dam +1.

**Appearance:** This large bird has a long neck and legs, and huge eyes. Males are typically black with white tail plumage, whereas females are a more discreet grey color.

Larger versions of these birds are kept by some evil *jinn* to use instead of horses or to trade with nobles and sahir who favor a more exotic mount to impress the common folk. Such specimens are typically Size +2 or larger and may have additional Virtues such as Great (or Mythic) Quickness, Perfect Balance and Unaffected by the Gift.

Some *jinn* tribes have bred their Faerie flocks to have magical powers dealing with travel and distance.

Unlike other birds, an ostrich cannot fly or even glide but can run as fast as a gazelle if needed. Similar to horses, an ostrich gets a +3 to all rolls involving running.

## Scorpion, Monstrous (al 'Aqrab)

Known as al 'Aqrab in Arabic speaking lands, the scorpion is a common shape assumed by evil *jinn*. The creature presented below represents a type of "giant" black scorpion about the size

of a small rabbit found in the Arabian deserts. The majority of scorpions encountered are Size -8 or smaller, but swarms of hundreds or thousands are treated as a single much larger creature (see later).

## Scorpion, Monstrous (Scorpio)

**Characteristics:** Cun -2, Per -2, Pre -5, Com -6, Str -10, Sta +2, Dex +2, Qik +6

**Size:** -5

**Confidence Score:** 0

**Virtues and Flaws:** Lightning Reflexes; Infamous

**Qualities:** Aggressive, Ambush Predator, Extra Natural Weapons, Grapple, Tough Hide, Venomous

**Personality Traits:** Fierce +3

**Reputations:** Deadly (local) 5

**Combat:**

*Pincers:* Init +6, Attack +10, Defense +14, Damage -6

*Grapple:* Init +6, Attack +7, Defense +11, Damage n/a

*Sting:* Init +10, Attack +10, Defense +6, Damage -9\*

**Soak:** +4

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1), -3 (2), -5 (3), Incapacitated (4), Dead (5+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (food), Brawl 5 (sting), Hunt 4 (rodents), Stealth 4 (ambush), Survival 3 (desert).

**Natural Weapons:** The weapon statistics for a scorpion's pincers are Init +0, Atk +3, Def +3, Dam +4 and for its tail sting Init +4, Atk +2, Def -6, Dam +1.

**Powers:**

*Venomous Sting*, 0 points, Init 0: When a scorpion attacks, compare its Attack Advantage to the victim's armor Protection (not his Soak). If the scorpion's advantage is higher, the victim suffers the effects of an exceptionally debilitating poison (Stamina roll against Ease Factor 6, Incapacitating), regardless of whether the sting inflicts an actual wound. A normal scorpion's special attack is hindered by high leather boots or other simple measures just

like the bite of an adder or asp.

**Appearance:** A black creature with over-sized pincers and an arched barbed tail.

These statistics represent over-sized versions of the common scorpion - most scorpions are Size -8 or smaller.

Although black scorpions appear more menacing and aggressive to the unwary, in general the lighter colored scorpions are more dangerous as they possess more potent venom (at least Ease Factor 12, Fatal) and can blend into the desert sands (add the Camouflage Quality, drop the Aggressive Quality, and decrease to Brawl 3 with resultant change in combat statistics).

The potency of scorpion venom varies according to the exact creature. Different poisons can range from inflicting a Medium wound to being Fatal and even the venom of smaller specimens can have much higher Ease Factors (up to 15).

Even larger scorpions can be found deep in the deserts - comparatively gigantic specimens (Size +3 or greater) are rumored to lair in the Egyptian deserts guarding old tombs and sand-choked ruins. Stories tell of Mesopotamian scorpion-men with wings or hybrid scorpion-human centaur-like creatures that guard the temples of old gods and of winged scorpions in Egypt and far India.

## OPTIONAL RULES: SWARMS

Rules for swarms of small creatures such as black beetles (Size -15) or normal sized scorpions (Size -9 or -10) were first presented in *Legends of Hermes*, page 44 and may be particularly useful for wizards or *jinn* capable of controlling large numbers of tiny creatures through the use of the *Command Animals* or *Summon Animals* Virtues, an innate Magical power, or equivalent Hermetic magic. An evil *jinni* that takes the form of a swarm of smaller creatures such as beetles, scorpions or rats would be thematically appropriate.

The venom of normal-sized scorpions is painful, but individual stings are rarely fatal for healthy people. In Africa, where scorpions are common, the allergy that causes their sting to be fatal may be taken as a Minor Flaw. An attacking swarm of scorpions does +10

damage automatically each round, but this can be Soaked normally.

## Unicorn, Eastern (Karkadann)

...it has the build of a buffalo...a black, scaly skin, a dewlap hanging down under the chin. It has three yellow hooves on each foot... The tail is not long. The eyes lie low, farther down the cheek than is the case with all other animals. On the top of the nose there is a single horn which is bent upwards...

- al-Biruni (11th century polymath) describing a unicorn

Compared to the romantic image of its western counterpart in Mythic Europe, the *karkadann* or "Lord of the Desert" is a large and overtly aggressive beast. Found in the Persian deserts or the plains of North Africa, the *monoceros* is famed for attacking elephants by charging at their bellies and is often depicted skewering them on a long horn that arises from its forehead. It can be soothed by the ministrations of a virgin, but its horn is not an antidote against poisons like the *alicorn* of its western cousin.

## Unicorn, Eastern (Monoceros)

**Characteristics:** Cun -1, Per 0, Pre -4, Com -5, Str +8, Sta +1, Dex 0, Qik -1

**Size:** +4

**Confidence Score:** 1 (3)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Ferocity (defending territory), Improved Characteristics, Puissant Brawl, Tough, Oversensitive (threats), Weakness (maidens),

**Qualities:** Aggressive, Defensive Fighter, Extra Natural Weapons, Hardy, Imposing Appearance x3, Large Horn, Shell, Thick Skin, Tough Hide.

**Personality Traits:** Belligerent +2, Intolerant +3

**Combat:**

**Horn:** Init +1, Attack +11, Defense +9, Damage +11

**Trample:** Init +1, Attack +9, Defense +8, Damage +9

**Soak:** +11

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0/0, -1/-1, -3, -5, Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-9), -3 (10-18), -5 (19-26), Incapacitated (27-34), Dead (35+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 3 (running), Awareness 3 (opponents), Brawl 5+2 (horn), Survival 5 (plains)

**Natural Powers:**

**Charge of the Karkadann,** 0 points, Init 0.

The *karkadann* can expend a Fatigue level and charge into combat over flat terrain using its horn, adding its Combat Ability to its Attack roll. Any creature of smaller size successfully stuck is knocked down prone as per the Optional Combat rules for Charging on Foot detailed in *Lords of Men*, page 123.

**Natural Weapons:** A *karkadann's* Large Horn has the following combat statistics: Init +2, Atk +3, Def +2, Dam +3. Its trample is Init +2, Atk +2, Def +2, Dam +1.

**Appearance:** A large grey beast with thick armored hide and a body like a bull. A large conical horn projects from its nose and curves backwards above a finger shaped lip.

Although the *karkadann* is protected by its thick skin as if it had a shell, it is otherwise slower than an average animal of its size and suffers a -3 penalty to all rolls involving fast or nimble movement, including attacking opponents in melee but not including charging into battle.

Larger specimens (Size +5) and Faerie versions are found in the southern plains and foothills at the edges of the desert. Similar creatures are rumored to roam the plains of Ethiopia, where the fabled Eastern Unicorn of Virtue is said to dwell. Monstrous *jinn* with the head of a *karkadann* are mentioned in folklore as guardians of entrances to Jinnistan or as shock troops in the *jinni* armies that served Suleiman and Balquis, the Queen of Sheba.

The *karkadann* is too large to be taken as a Heartbeast for a Bjornaer unless the magus has the Giant Blood Virtue and the Troupe decides on a suitable background to explain their unusual ancestry.





## Vulture (Nasr)

The Egyptian Vulture commonly found throughout the Levant, the Mythic Middle East and North Africa is sometimes referred to as "the Pharaoh's Chicken" due to its frequent depiction in Egyptian royal carvings. In ancient times the vulture was associated with the goddesses Isis, Mut, and Nekhbet, and was considered the symbol of the Kingdom of Upper Egypt with her wings spreading out to protect the pharaoh.

## Vulture, Egyptian (Vultor)

**Characteristics:** Cun 0, Per +4, Pre -6 or +3\*, Com -2, Str -4, Sta +3, Dex +1, Qik +4

\* due to the vulture's Loathsome Appearance Quality

**Size:** -4

**Confidence Score:** 0 (0)

**Virtues and Flaws:** Lesser Immunity: Rotten Meat, Long-Winded; Feral Scent, Infamous

**Qualities:** Accomplished Flyer, Extra Natural Weapons (claws), Keen Sense of Smell, Loathsome Appearance

**Personality Traits:** Morbid +2, Patient +1

**Reputations:** Omen of impending death 2 (local)

**Combat:**

**Talons:** Init +3, Attack +6, Defense +10, Damage -4

**Beak:** Init +4, Attack +6, Defense +7, Damage -3

**Stone (dropped)\*\*:** Init +4, Attack -1, Defense n/a, Range 10, Special\*\*\*

**Stone (bludgeon)\*\*:** Init +4, Attack 0, Defense +6, Damage -2

\*\* A vulture has the equivalent of the No Hands Flaw, so attacks using stones are at a -5 penalty.

\*\*\* A stone half the size of a man's fist inflicts +3 base damage plus an additional +1 for every two feet in height from which it is dropped (see the Impact Table on page 181 of *ArM5*).

**Soak:** +3

**Fatigue Levels:** OK, 0, -1, -3, -5,

Unconscious

**Wound Penalties:** -1 (1-2), -3 (3-4), -5 (5-6), Incapacitated (7-8), Dead (9+)

**Abilities:** Athletics 5 (swift flight), Awareness 4 (spotting corpses), Brawl 2 (talons), Survival 3 (deserts or mountains), Thrown Weapon 2 (rock).

**Natural Weapons:** The weapon statistics for a vulture's talons are Init -1, Atk +2, Def +3, Dam +2. The statistics for its beak are Init 0, Atk +3, Def +1, Dam +1 and for a dropped stone Init 0, Atk +1, Def 0, Dam Special.

**Appearance:** A large ugly raptor with a bright orange face and white plumage with black tipped wings, often soiled with blood and carrion. Its head is bald, preventing its features from being stained when eating.

Larger vultures, up to Size -1, are found across Mythic Africa. Although slower, these raptors are much more aggressive (add the Aggressive Quality — add 1 to Cunning and increase Brawl (talons) to 5) and have been known to attack flamingoes and other smaller creatures instead of just scavenging.

Vultures are highly intelligent and the more capable ones have been known to use rocks as tools to break open eggs in nests. They can also drop stones on their prey — Greek mythology claims that the poet Aeschylus was killed when a stone was dropped on him by a bird mistaking his bald head for a tortoise.

Vultures that dwell in remote mountain crags often nest within Magic auras and become Warped from repeated exposure to magical energies. These creatures are readily distinguished by their brilliant and varied colored plumages. Some of these magical vultures are capable of limited divination with a particular emphasis on death. These avian seers have the equivalent of the Premonitions Minor Supernatural Virtue or the Visions Minor Supernatural Flaw. More accomplished and older female vultures can possess the Divination Major Supernatural Virtue (see *The Mysteries: Revised Edition*, pages 58-62) and have a relevant Ability score of Divination 4 (death). They receive a bonus to Ceremonial Augury of +3 for misfortune and a bonus of +5 for augury questions involving death. These birds are a common form for shapeshifted *ghul* or Infer-

nal hedge wizards.

Bjornaer with a vulture Heartbeast have a sanguine temperament with a choleric aspect. They are almost always female.

According to Pliny, vultures have a keen sense of smell, able to detect carrion from across the sea and add +3 to rolls involving smell and a +2 to all Hunt rolls.

## VULTURE OF VIRTUE

These giant black creatures dwell in the highest mountains. Vultures of Virtue personify intimidation, patience and prudence. All examples identified by hermetic magi to date have been female, and most are believed to live for a hundred years. Many classical authorities deny the existence of male vultures, claiming that vulture females reproduce by parthogenesis, giving birth to a daughter identical to their mother, an allegory the Church uses to prove that Virgin birth is a naturally occurring phenomenon. The skin of their bald heads contains Corpus rather than Animal vis.

At least one elder Bjornaer maga with a vulture Heartbeast has passed into Final Twilight in recent memory, transforming into a Vulture of Virtue. It is unknown what would happen if a male Bjornaer with a vulture Heartbeast passed into Final Twilight.



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