

Tradetalk

The Chaos Society Magazine

#3

RuneQuest
Glorantha
Chitullu
Elric!
Pendragon
Nephilim
Hawkmoon
Elfquest
Mythos



Back Again

with

Naskorion

The East Wilds

The Stygian Church

Scenario: Growing Pains

The Ralian Myth Cycle

TRADETALK

Tradetalk is an amateur magazine dedicated to the role-playing game *RuneQuest*, the *World of Glorantha* and all related games. All contents of this magazine are made by fans of this game and is not official, unless otherwise stated.

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Contributions by fans of material for *RuneQuest*, *Glorantha*, *Cthulhu*, *Elric!*, *Nephilim*, *Hawkmooon*, *Elfquest*, *Mythos* and especially artwork are all very welcome. Each author or artist who isn't a member of the *RuneQuest-Gesellschaft/Chaos Society* will be rewarded with free copy of this issue. Members will receive the praise and thanks of fans all over the world - may our numbers increase!

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IN OUR

NEXT ISSUE:

KETHAELA

**THE KINGDOM OF NIGHT,
HENDRIKLAND, NOCHET,
THE ISLAND GAZETEER,
ISTAKAX, THE GRAIN GODDESS,
PENDRAGON KNIGHTS**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to Tradetalk #3 - Getting back on track!

Write of Passage

We're eager to hear your opinions on Tradetalk. Comments and letters to the editor can be emailed to me, Ingo Tschinke, at Tradetalk@t-online.de

Send paper mail to:
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Schevemoorer Landstr. 33
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Your feedback will help us improve the magazine. If we get enough letters, we'll add a Letters to the Editor feature in Tradetalk #4.

Enjoy the issue!
Ingo

Hello, and welcome to the East Wilds Special issue of Tradetalk! We hope you'll enjoy this as much or more than the Safelster Special. Interesting and exciting things have happened in roleplaying since #2 was published. High among them (at least for us) were the letters we received from readers of Tradetalk #2.

Most of you had very positive things to say about the "new" Tradetalk; exactly the sort of thing that warms an editor's heart. Nonetheless we also appreciate letters pointing out our flaws and mistakes, perhaps even more than words of praise. That's how we make Tradetalk better, after all.

Speaking of mistakes, there were a few in Tradetalk #2 that we have to note (much as we'd like to forget them). A full chapter of description was left off of the end of the article on Kustria, including the Tower of Xud (see the illustration on the back page of Tradetalk #2) as well as some additional material. Also, it turns out that there's considerably more Malkioni material available than we suggested in the last issue; for one thing, Nick Brooke's web page has a lot of stuff about the Malkioni. Check it out at: http://ourworld.compuserve.com/hompage/Nick_Brooke/malkioni.html. There were other, smaller mistakes in the issue; our sincere apology to authors and readers. We'll try our best to avoid such errors in the future.

And now, some thanks for those who've put in long hours on Tradetalk. Rick Meints deserves high credit for his excellent work on layout and design. Thanks to Peter Maranci for English-language editing, rewriting and proof reading work. Our illustrators Dario Corallo and Simon Bray have earned great thanks for the outstanding art that they've provided. These and all of our editors and contributors have helped make Tradetalk a magazine that we're proud to present.

YOUR FEEDBACK: The Glorantha Digest

In letters and email some readers have noted that some of our articles have been previously published on the Glorantha Digest and/or personal web pages. They're absolutely right: web pages and discussion on the Digest are the greatest sources for new material for Tradetalk, and we'd have a hard time gathering enough material without them. The net in general is a vital resource for Tradetalk; for one thing, our team of editors needs it for communication. Since we're spread over the whole world in Bremen, Boston, London, Rome, Chester, Melbourne, Jacksonville (OR), Kiel etc., email is the only affordable way to co-ordinate the production of Tradetalk. Every article in Tradetalk goes around the world at least three times before it gets printed.

RESOURCES ON-LINE

Here are a few useful resources available on-line for RuneQuest/Glorantha gamers:

The Glorantha Digest; Ongoing, knowledgeable, sometimes hot-and-heavy discussion and information about our favourite world. To join, send email to glorantha-digest-request@chaosium.com with 'help' in the body of the text.

There are more RuneQuest and Glorantha web pages available than we could possibly list (although maybe we'll try to list some in future issues). Two excellent starting points are David Dunham's page (<http://www.pensee.com/dunham/glorantha.html>) and Kim Englund's site (<http://www.datafellows.com/staff/kim/rq/rqpage.html>).

WHY JOIN THE CHAOS SOCIETY?

Readers can subscribe to Tradetalk without belonging to the Chaos Society. Why join, then? Well, as a member you are not only a reader of this magazine; you're also a part of it. Members choose the goals of the Society and help move those goals forward. When you become a member of the Chaos Society you join with fans all over the world who enjoy RQ, Glorantha and related games. We all know that there's strength in numbers; the Chaos Society is a great way for us to give each other the support to continue enjoying our favourite games, no matter how much or little material is commercially available at the moment.

The Chaos Society constantly looks for new ways to encourage and support gamers. For example, the Chaos Society Australia is one of the official supporters of the Gloranthan-Con Down Under II (thanks to Andrew). If you have ideas for other projects, join us and speak your mind! We hope to hear from every reader! At the moment, the Chaos Society has over 175 members worldwide. But we need your help to go further with our support for RuneQuest, Glorantha and related games.

Submit your
free Classified
Ad's for the
next issue !

THE EAST WILDS

BY
**DAG OLAUSSON,
JONAS SCHIÖTT,
STEN ÅHRMAN**

**Hello and welcome
to the Wilds!**

To avoid confusion, it might be wise to say a few introductory words about the different visions of eastern Ralios presented in this issue of Tradetalk. David Dunham and we three have worked on this part of Glorantha from somewhat different starting points, but we've constantly swapped ideas back and forth, accepted some, rejected some and modified others. Unlike David's campaign, ours is set in the standard 'present' of Glorantha (the sixteen-twenties). We haven't fooled around as much with deities, but that's because our games haven't focused as much on those issues. The obviously Celtic bits (*geasa et ceteras*) aren't prominent in our version, though we're sure some clans do it that way. And Korlar's story contains some information that is flat-out wrong (in our humble opinion), but that's probably because he's a confused foreigner.

The short summary: these visions are different, but not very different, and you can mix and match any way you please without fear of contradiction - as long as you remember which version you're following in each particular case.

Oh, and please visit our web site for more material.

Jonas, Sten, and Dag
The Chaos Apes, in various configurations, ran the RQ tournament at GothCon (in Goteborg, Sweden) between 1984 and 1993. At the moment they do not actively game in Glorantha. More information can be found at their website:
<http://idehist.gu.se/~idejs/leastwilds.html>



INTRODUCTION

"East Wilds" is the label applied to varying portions of eastern Ralios, usually by dwellers in the more civilised city-states that surround Lake Felster. On occasion the term is also used by the inhabitants themselves, but they usually see themselves as belonging to a clan first, a tribe second, and possibly a nation as a distant third; defining even larger areas than that is too abstract for them. This campaign centres on the Orlanth-worshipping barbarians of Delela, Saug and Keanos; thus, when the text mentions the Wilds this is a reference to that core area. Some of the surrounding lands are commonly lumped with these countries by outsiders. To the north lie Vustria (a desolate wasteland) and Karia, which is rumoured to be a nest of Chaos. Halikiv, a land ruled by an ancient lineage of trolls, is the neighbour farthest to the east, Coroland being a buffer zone claimed both by Orlanthi and the people

of Darkness. Southward is the Wonderwood, an extremely magical forest that most sane people avoid. Naskorion, finally, lies to the west. While some consider it a part of the Wilds because of Orlanth's religious dominance, its social structure and political activities clearly group Naskorion with Safelster.

Most of this region is wedged in between the Rockwood and Mislari mountain ranges, which are impassable to all except trolls, flying creatures and the occasional Hero. To reach the East Wilds it is therefore necessary to travel by one of five basic routes. The most common approaches are from the west: either by the Doskior River from Naskorion, through Vustria (with the intermittent Issaries caravans from Vesmonstran) or southwest from Maniria via Basim or Helby. A fourth alternative is to join one of the Argan Argar insect caravans between Halikiv and Guhan, the other troll queendom in Ralios. These are said to sometimes pass over (or under?) the mountains to reach Shadows Dance or the Shadow Plateau. The really, really adventurous might opt for joining Lunar traders going through Dorastor, but the dangers involved should be obvious.

THE LAND

Thanks to warm southwesterly winds and the protection of the Rockwoods, the climate of the East Wilds is quite temperate, with mild winters and warm summers. The Orlanth wind seldom exceeds the storm limit.

Much of the terrain is covered by rolling hills and primeval forests, where undergrowth is sparse and deciduous trees predominate (roughly 90%); the exceptions being northern Delela, where there are wide stretches of moorland, and Keanos, where the conifer-covered hills are rockier and more precipitous, leaving most of the rainfall to collect in pockets of swamp. The areas specifically marked as forest on the maps are only those completely untouched by cultivation; one can hardly go anywhere in Delela or Saug without having at least a copse of trees nearby.

The most fertile farmland is found in the river valleys, especially those formed by the Doskior and Allspring rivers. Being very old (they were once much larger, and drained into the sea that is now only Felster Lake), they have dug ravines through parts of the landscape; at some points even actual canyons.

Most of the wildlife is unremarkable in type, apart from the elusive "flying dogs" and occasional strange beings from the Wonderwood. What is noticeable, however, is the high concentration of certain normal species: horses, deer and elk for example. This is the result of the continued hsunchen presence in the region. Grazer stock is kept from getting out of hand by hunting (both Orlanthi and rival hsunchen) and incursions of 'foreign' predators: wolves from Vustria, shadow cats from Keanos.

The People

The storm-worshipping Theyalans are by far the most numerous inhabitants, and constitute the mainstream of society in which most player characters are born, live and adventure. Thus, other cultures, even the large minority of hsunchen, are treated in less detail, and in separate sections. It is assumed throughout that the reader is familiar with the basic facts of Orlanthi culture, as given in the "Genertelan Player's Book" for instance.

Most of the Orlanthi count the Enerali and other, more traditionally hsunchen natives as their ancestors. They have hair in various shades of brown or red, eyes ranging from brown to green, and skin that tans easily. Because there has been some immigration; colonists from Dragon Pass and Dorastor during the Dawn Age and a mixed bunch of refugees during the Age of Empires. The other hues possible in waverans sometimes show up. For some reason, unusual-looking people seem to congregate in the cities.

People in Delela, Saug and Keanos all speak Theyalan dialects, known as Delelan, Saugan and Keano. A speaker of any of these automatically has 2/3 his skill in the other two, 1/3 in the other Theyalan dialects of Ralios (such as Lankan or Naskori), and 1/10 in any Theyalan tongue. There is no real writing in use; a primitive form of Theyalan runes are used to make runestones and could theoretically be used on paper or parchment as well, but there is precious little of these materials in the Wilds. Storytellers sometimes use sticks carved with notches in a system of varying depth and width as a mnemonic aid, but this does not qualify as writing: it's still necessary to memorise the words (through oral instruction) at some point, as the "storysticks" merely provide rhythm, metre and some hints as to the emotional content.

As noted previously, the most fertile farmland lies adjacent to the rivers. Thus the population tends to concentrate there, mainly growing wheat (Ralia's grain). Pigs and poultry are raised on the farms, and higher ground is used as grazing for sheep. Cattle is kept by many clans, though far from all, and there is a certain rivalry between the clans that are predominantly farmers and those that rely heavily on cattle-herding. The second most common beast of burden (after the ox) is the native horse; a small, sturdy and agile breed. Only the brave or foolhardy use horses for riding: if a rider encounters a band of Galanini, they are sure to take exception to this treatment of their brethren. But hitching horses to carts, wagons or chariots presents no problem.

The typical Orlanthi extended family consists of 20-30 people, living in round timber houses (with conical thatched roofs) on a farmstead, and affiliated with a clan. The clan is usually centred on a village, built up of smaller houses (5-10 persons in each), where craftsmen and other specialists reside. This is the norm in Delela. Saugian clans are as a rule smaller, and are often concentrated in a village-like clump of farms. In Keanos, a single stead can be home to

Matters are even more complex in the cities, where there are constant clashes between municipal and tribal authority and "foreign affairs" are more than a question of who to raid this year.

Dogs are used by shepherds for practical reasons, but cats are the preferred pet. Shadow cats are a special case: in Delela and Saug a smaller breed (SIZ 3-4; only kittens are SIZ 1 or 2) is found, and is rare enough to be reserved for the wealthy. Larger cats (adult SIZ 5-6) are common in Keanos, where they are both trained for the hunt and allowed to roam wild.

Politics in the East Wilds are a complicated matter. While there does exist a formal organisation on the tribal level, with various parties manoeuvring for power on the councils, getting clan leaders to pay attention is always a struggle. Real influence is more a matter of personal charisma than of having a place in the hierarchy. A combination of the two is of course a good way to establish a secure position.

an entire clan, since up to 80% of its members can be out hunting or herding at any given time (during the cold seasons, tents are pitched around the house for additional space). Cities are exceptional in having a good deal of rectangular buildings; in Kilwin this is mainly due to foreign influences, and in the other two as a result of refurbishing old ruins.

Most clans are self-sufficient in everything except salt and raw metals, so trade is rather sporadic. The aforementioned Issaries and Argan Argar caravans usually stop at Kilwin and Istakax, while river trade from Safelster also reaches Dorflik. For the past four decades or so, foreign traders have appeared out of Karia once a year, claiming to worship the moon and to have crossed Dorastor and Kartolin Pass. This is an obvious hoax: they're just some northerners who for unfathomable reasons have chosen to travel through Ormsland (and possibly Telmorla as well).

RELIGION

The religious practices of East Wilders follow the general pattern of Orlanthi throughout the barbarian belt. Orlanth and Ernalda are the most important deities, but there are some noticeable local variations. Apart from those noted below, specific tribes can also have peculiar modes of worship.

The Lightbringers are all present, though only the Chalana Arroy cultists play their standard role. Eurmali tricksters are relatively common in Delela and Saug, and their outlaw status is usually only taken seriously if they commit an actual crime. Issaries is mainly the god of heralds and messengers; his trading aspects are only represented in the cities. Sages of Lhankor Mhy are lawspeakers, runecarvers and keepers of the oral tradition; there are no such things as libraries or 'research' in this region.

Many other deities of the Orlanth pantheon are worshipped by their normal adherents: Gustbran (smiths), Mastakos (charioteers), Minlister (brewers) and Odayla (hunters). Humakt was once popular in the Wilds but has been supplanted by Orlanth, and now only has temples in Kilwin and Dorflik. Storm Bull cultists haven't found this area very attractive; there's too little obvious chaos. But there are a good number of hopeful Uroxi in the tribes bordering Karia, from which the occasional monster does appear. And the recent influx of suspicious-looking types in red is encouraging.

There are a number of important local divinities, most obviously Ralia the Wheat Mother. Also in the fertility business is Pastoma, goddess of the Allspring river, and her numerous daughter-naiads (who are spirits of the various tributaries). Doskior, god of the river by the same name, is more inclined towards travel and commerce. Several local Heroes serve to personify aspects of Orlanth: Nikur of Blackburn (Thunderous), Aringor Darstalsson (Lightbringer), Alakoring Dragonbreaker (Rex) and Retter the Stalker (Adventurous).





THE OTTER CLAN

BY
JONAS SCHIÖTT

The Otter clan is a part of the Rolin tribe. It is ruled by chieftain Kvid of the San clan, who resides in the village called One Hundred Ears. The lands of the Rolin tribe are located in the land of Delela, on the south bank of the Dorskior, closer to Istakax than Kilwin. Rolin tribesmen tend to be large, strong and hairy. The Otter clan is composed of more than 400 people (somewhat below average size for a Delelan clan) of which roughly 150 are children (and are therefore not initiated).

Most of the clansmen are farmers, using the pony-like native horses to pull their wooden ploughs. About half also herd sheep, while the rest supplement the yield of their fields with fishing or hunting. Craftsmen in the village include a smith, a carpenter, a leatherworker, two boatbuilders and two herbalists. There is also a part-time merchant. The clan thane keeps five warriors and a lawspeaker at his stead. Both Orlanth and Ernalda have local shrines.

The clan is split into three bloodlines: Aren's, Bulrik's and Joren's. These employ different colours, often in decorations or warpaint, to mark their affiliation. Aren's, the most populous, has almost 200 members; their colour is yellow. Next in size is Bulrik's line, with approximately 120 "red" members. Joren's "blue" blood, finally, has barely 100 members. There is a certain rivalry between these different bloodlines, but no serious conflict. Outwardly, they all stand united.

Neighbours to the south are the hsunchen Otter People, with whom the clan has always had good relations. Less friendly are relations with the Kott clan (also of the Rolin tribe) to the north. There have been many raids and other troubles between the Kott and Otter clans throughout history. Galanini, a horse people, live in the wastelands to the east and west. There is hardly any contact at all between them and the local Orlanthi.

HISTORY

A story known to all the clans:

"Many, many years ago, even before the days of king Retter, the forefathers of the Otter clan lived further north. Then came an evil time with poor harvests and kinstrife among the people. To protect themselves and their families, three brothers left on a quest for a safe place to live. The three brothers were Aren, Bulrik and Joren, sons of Verad. While wandering the land, they came upon a band of trolls that had trapped three otters. The otters promised to help the brothers if they were freed from captivity. Verad's sons agreed to this, and after a hard struggle they defeated the darkness monsters. One of the otters had fur of golden yellow, and Aren took it into his care. The second otter's coat was of shimmering red, and Bulrik bore it from that place. The third otter was blue as the sky, and Joren became its protector. The otters showed the way to Small Fish Stream and with their help the brothers were well received by the Otter People who lived there. From them, the brothers learned the magic which lets us eat the small fish, and we have been friends with the Otter People ever since. Now you understand why Aren's folk have yellow as their colour, Bulrik's red and Joren's blue. And how it comes that we all learn the magic that makes us more powerful than the Kott clan or any other clan. They cannot eat the little fish, and so they must work much harder to feed themselves."

CLAN LANDMARKS

Most clan buildings are of traditional Delelan type: round log houses with room for an extended family in each. The houses have holes in the roof instead of chimneys, and the windows are narrow slits near the ceiling that are covered at night (and at all times during Dark and Storm seasons). A majority of the steads are clustered around the stream, where the soil is at its most fertile; the rest are spread thinly over the clan's territory, seeking level ground suitable for farming. There are a few stretches along the stream that are unsuitable for habitation because of a tendency toward slides.

The Shrine of Ernalda

On the western edge of clan territory lies this shrine, which is unsurprisingly also dedicated to Ralia. The land around it is the best in the region, and belongs to the cult. It is almost exclusively used for the growing of wheat, the exception being a small vegetable garden for the priestess' use.

Loran's Stead

The thane's homestead is the most extensive in the clan, consisting of several houses since his housecarls' families live here as well. Loran's immediate family consists of his mother, grandfather, wife and six children. The hird's families total 40 people.

Senar's Store

The store is generally open every Freezeday and Clayday, except in Mobility week. If a customer needs something desperately and can't wait, Senar might be persuaded to make an exception. Most of the goods in stock are metal tools and other unusual household items. Senar also carries a (very) small amount of cloth and other imported luxuries. The most expensive of these is salt, while the most exotic is snuff from Keanos (mostly for his own use).

The Rock

Towards the north, close to Kott territory, the stream digs deeper into the landscape, creating bluffs of up to 5 metres in height. At one point, a cliff rises a full 15 metres above water level. This place is known as "the Rock".

Fords

The stream is usually easy to ford anywhere, but at the three marked places it is possible to cross almost dryshod; except, of course, during Storm and Sea seasons, when the fords are the only way to cross.

The Moss Woods

A deciduous forest to the east; a portion of which is cut down yearly. This is done partly for the timber, partly to make room for new farmland. Old fields nearby are abandoned, so the forest can reclaim them. Thus, the extent of the woods remains fairly constant.

IMPORTANT CLANSMEN

These persons are well known throughout the clan. Everyone has met them at least once, and they in turn know almost everyone by name.

Halvar Stormeye

Usually called "the priest", but is really only an acolyte. Leads local ceremonies at the Orlanth shrine. Halvar was born and raised in the clan and is now approaching the age of fifty. He is well liked, but not enough of a leader to gain a position of more power. Because of the demand from initiates for skill and spell teaching, he is one of the very few people in the clan that can make a living without farming or fishing. Halvar is known for being able to extend the magic he receives from Orlanth over a week. Also, he controls a mighty Sylph. Halvar is of average build and appearance.

Elen of the Seven Harvests

Elen is a full-fledged priestess of Ernalda who has borne seven healthy children, four girls and three boys. Aided by the acolyte Rita she oversees the religious festivals and ceremonies that are associated with farming; the sowing rite and the harvest rite, for example. With her magic (Regrow Limb, Heal Body) she is also the most powerful healer in the vicinity. Cases of disease, though, are best left to Eglar and Nara, the two old women who possess knowledge of herbal remedies. Elen is the very archetype of an Ernalda priestess: plump, shapely, and attractive, with a calm and even temper.

The Orlanth Shrine
The location chosen for the shrine is on an infertile piece of land, which is also elevated above the immediate surroundings. The sanctified area is marked with 20 wooden staves that form an Air rune. On normal holy days, Halvar presides over the rites here, but on High Holy Day he and the initiates travel to the (major) temple at One Hundred Ears, which takes a full day's walk to reach.

The Barren Hills
Neither the Otter nor the Kott clan lays any claim to this rather bleak region. Occasional shepherds bring their flocks here, but otherwise the only occupants are rodents, robbers and some Galanini.

Loran Longneck

This thane occupies his position both by inheritance and vote. Almost all consider him a good leader: fair, generous and a mighty warrior, he inspires a good deal of respect. His only flaws worth mentioning are a short temper and a certain blindness to human nature—he thinks well of everyone, at least until proven wrong (in which case he becomes an implacable foe). He will always give someone who shows proper regret a second chance. Although Loran's housecarls are all closely related to him, only the few who feel themselves to be more deserving of the position begrudge this nepotism. Loran is a short, broad and powerful man whom few would call handsome. In later years, he has begun to acquire a noticeable girth.

Viran Lawspeaker

Loran always has the last word, but Viran's influence as advisor is considerable. Viran is so old that he served in the same capacity under the former chief, Loran's father Sird. During the long winter nights Viran has many edifying stories to tell, and his store of knowledge about the law and Orlanth is without compare. He is a small man with a limp and a hunched back.

SUGGESTED FAMILIES

These are some examples of family backgrounds that player characters may have. The families listed are ones that have children at an appropriate age for initiation. These have been separated them from the character descriptions, so that one can be used without having to use the other.

The Laxons

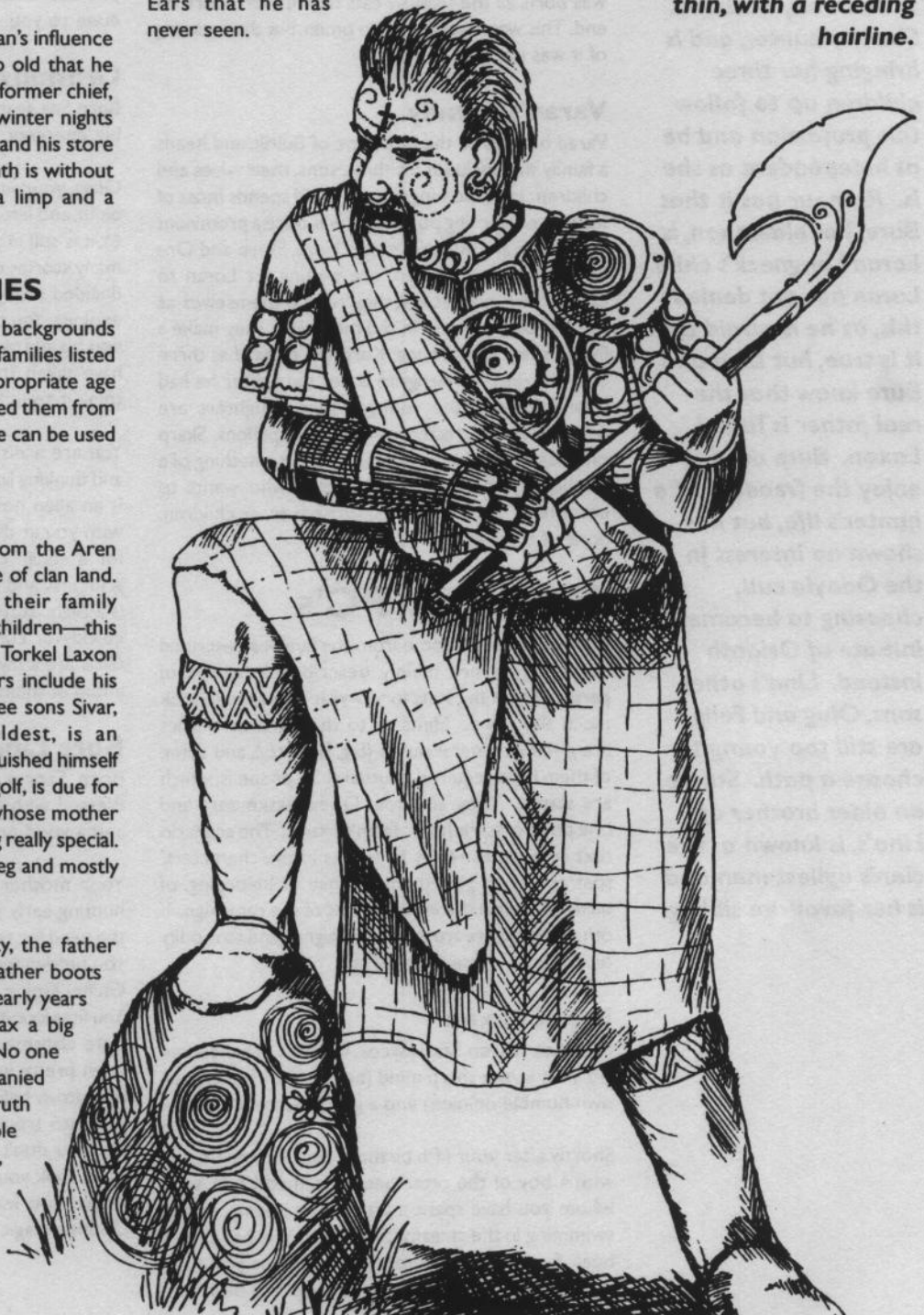
A small and poor family of fishers from the Aren bloodline, living on the southern edge of clan land. Their most distinguishing trait is their family surname, handed down to all male children—this practice is otherwise unknown here. Torkel Laxon is head of the family. Other members include his mother, his wife Ragna, and their three sons Sivar, Ingolf and Tordak. Sivar, the eldest, is an acknowledged warrior who has distinguished himself in two raids. The middle brother, Ingolf, is due for initiation. He is an ambitious youth whose mother has convinced him that he is something really special. Tordak, the youngest, is lame in one leg and mostly keeps to himself.

Despite the family's general poverty, the father seems able to afford a new pair of leather boots each year. Torkel claims that he in his early years did Vanagram Leathersmith of Istakax a big favour, and gets the boots in return. No one from the Otter clan has ever accompanied Torkel on his trips to Istakax. The truth is that he pays with silver that he stole from the grave of Bertana Greenglow, who was an Ernalda priestess in Istakax a hundred years ago. Torkel has a slight phobia regarding graves and burials.

Trygve's Family

This is a very small family, only consisting of Trygve and his four children. They are of the Bulrik bloodline. When still a young warrior, Trygve suffered an almost fatal head injury in a fight with trolls from the Ratsnack clan. A Chalana Arroy initiate named Tonka saved his life, but he still lost his sight in one eye. When Trygve's father died a few years later, leaving him the stead, he travelled to One Hundred Ears and married Tonka. The terms were that she would be his wife until she had borne him a son. Twelve years later, Grimulf was born. Tonka moved back to One Hundred Ears, and now only visits for a week at the end of each Sea season. Grimulf has three older sisters; Narga, Treva and Vorna, all rather mannish and bossy. He also has three younger half-siblings in One Hundred Ears that he has never seen.

Senar the Trader
The moonlighting farmer Senar is the closest thing to a merchant in this clan. He is an initiate of both Dorskior and Ernalda, but not of Orlanth. Senar lives on a stead near the store with his wife and Dirk, his son. He is tall and thin, with a receding hairline.



Lina's Family

Lina comes from a large family in the Joren line. She has seven siblings, all with many children, and their parents are both still alive. Despite (or perhaps because of) this, Lina has chosen to live somewhat apart from her relatives and without any husband. She is a hunter, and is bringing her three children up to follow this profession and be as independent as she is. Rumour has it that Bure, her eldest son, is Loran Longneck's child. Loran has not denied this, as he is afraid that it is true, but Lina and Bure know that the real father is Torkel Laxon. Bure does enjoy the freedom of a hunter's life, but has shown no interest in the Odayla cult, choosing to become an initiate of Orlanth instead. Lina's other sons, Olag and Felig, are still too young to choose a path. Sturve, an older brother of Lina's, is known as the clan's ugliest man and is her favourite sibling.

Kaltar's Family

Kaltar is a shepherd, living with his wife Dolga and his two brothers Tambe and Brokar and their families on one of the Aren line's wealthiest farms. Confusingly enough, Tambe's and Brokar's wives are also named Dolga. Kaltar has three very small children; Tambe had one son who died when a tree fell on him; and Brokar has four children, of which Gastur is the oldest. Gastur's siblings are Starkad, Fredrik and Olfild. Both Kaltar and Brokar have served in the thane's hird, but left after Brokar lost his right foot. They built a stead on the eastern outskirts of clan territory, where Tambe joined them after their parents had died. At that time the oldest brother, Koralt, moved to One Hundred Ears where he married Manga, the niece of Larsake Sparehair, a Storm Voice with a huge family. The night Gastur was born, all the shadow cats howled for hours on end. This was regarded as an omen, but the meaning of it was unclear.

Varad's Family

Varad belongs to the bloodline of Bulrik, and heads a family that includes his three sons, their wives and children. He is no longer young, and spends most of his time composing poetry, but was once a prominent warrior, as are his sons today. Korp, Skarp and Ore (as the sons are named) are waiting for Loran to call for new housecarls; they regard themselves as the obvious choices. In the meantime, they make a living fishing and farming. Korp, the eldest, has three children. His son Arngrim is not the fighter he had hoped for, and the younger twin daughters are definitely not interested in violent occupations. Skarp only has one child: Hilda, regarded as something of a tomboy by the other adolescents, who wants to become an Orlanth initiate. Ore has three children, none of them in their teens yet.

SUGGESTED PC's

These characters come from the families described above. They are mainly described in terms of personality, as the stats for 15-year olds tend to look much the same. Hints as to their characteristics are given in general terms (big, fast etc.), and some of them have acquired unusual skills or spells, which are stated. They all know Digest Taskmoert and one point of spirit magic from Orlanth. The scenario text sometimes refers to events in the characters' past: this is to give them a sense of belonging, of being rooted in the environment of the campaign. If other characters are used, you might need to modify or eliminate these references.

Ingolf Laxon

Born Sea season, Stasis week, Godday. A handsome lad, with a very sharp mind (best in the clan, in your own humble opinion) and a good memory.

Shortly after your fifth birthday you became friends with a boy of the otter people, named Krt'tf, with whom you have spent a lot of time playing, mainly swimming in the stream (Swim +10). He has always been faster in the water than you, but you have privately decided that some day you will best him.

When you had grown enough to help your father with his fishing (Boat +10) he started taking you into the village, where you quickly made new friends. Probably the best of these is Dirk, an older boy who is the trader's son.

Your family, particularly your mother, have high hopes for your future, expecting that some day you will be a great leader of men. These plans are definitely to your own liking, and you do your best to be as true to Orlanth as possible. In your spare time you often daydream about how mighty you are destined to become. You enjoy responsibility and accept any task that is set for you without question. Laws, traditions and authorities should always be obeyed, whether the leader is you or someone else. Although you try to be just and fair, you find it impossible to forget an insult or injury done to you.

Grimulf Axepole

Born Sea season, Death week, Freezeday. You are a big, energetic and extremely strong young man.

Olina, your mother's priestess, was present at your birth, and left a magical healing potion as a gift (Heal 6); it is still in your possession. As a child you heard many stories of adventurers and heroes, and quickly decided that one day the scalds would sing of your exploits. You convinced your father to start teaching you his old skills at an early age (2H Axe +20), and have taken the nickname "Axepole" because you think it sounds tough.

You are a distinctly emotional person, acting first and thinking later, if at all. Weighing the consequences is an alien notion, and your enthusiasm runs away with you at the drop of a helm. You are not noted for a sense of humour, but rather for a certain grimness and taciturnity. The reason for the latter is a slight stutter that appears when you try to talk quickly or communicate several thoughts at once. Girls are a mystery to you; you are actually slightly afraid of them, but would never admit this.

Bure Linason

Born Storm season, Fertility week, Windsday. Blessed with strength, both mundane and magical, and a good portion of luck.

Your mother began teaching you the basics of hunting early on (Track +10, Bow +10), impressing the need for self-reliance on you. In your early teens you befriended a Trickster who calls himself Gniffel Gniffel Goink, but is usually known as just Gniffel. You first found him dangling from a tree, where some irate clansmen had tried to lynch him. They had been pretty inept about it, so you managed to get him down before he suffocated. Gniffel has gotten you into trouble on several occasions since then, but you don't mind. He is fun to be around, and once took you to meet a Galanini shamaness, from whom you learned some useful spells (Speedart, Countermagic 2).

Gniffel's irreverent attitude has rubbed off on you; authority always seems questionable now. And with your self-confidence, you sometimes wonder why people need all these gods? Your main reason for joining Orlanth is to be sociable. You enjoy talking and mingling with people. Even if they wrong you, you find it easy to forgive them. There is nothing that could frighten you, and problems are stimulating, for they challenge you to really stretch your abilities.

Gastur Milkskin

Born Storm season, Illusion week, Fireday. A fast thinker and fast on your feet, as well as having better co-ordination than any of your peers. You also possess excellent night vision (penalties for darkness are negated, except in total darkness).

Because of the inauspicious circumstances of your birth and the exceedingly pale complexion that has given you your second name, people have always treated you with a certain reserve. Other children have been known to throw sheep droppings at you. Because of this antipathy, and because you prefer the night time anyway, your only real friend during childhood has been the Storm Servant's familiar, Orvar the shadow cat. Associating with him on various nocturnal escapades has developed your natural talent for stealth (Hide +20, Sneak +20).

As others treat you, so you treat them: you have little time for other people, regarding them with scorn. Honesty and honour are not inflexible rules, if bending them will benefit you in some way. Work does not engage your enthusiasm; your cleverness is often employed to get out of burdensome chores. If you could find some way of making a living without toil and sweat, it would be most welcome. You are no coward, but feel that personal risk should be avoided if possible.

Hilda (the Harridan)

Born Storm season, Truth week, Waterday. Smarter than average, you also possess both physical and spiritual resilience.

As a child, you befriended the travelling Chalana Arroy priestess, Qlina. She taught you how to recognise some useful herbs (Plant Lore + 10). You once went with her to the Healers' temple at One Hundred Ears, and learned a spell to heal wounds (Heal 2). When your cousin Arngrim started teasing you about girls not making good warriors, you decided to prove him wrong. As a result, you have gotten involved in more than your fair share of childish brawls (Grapple +10). Two years ago, you even started taking snuff, just

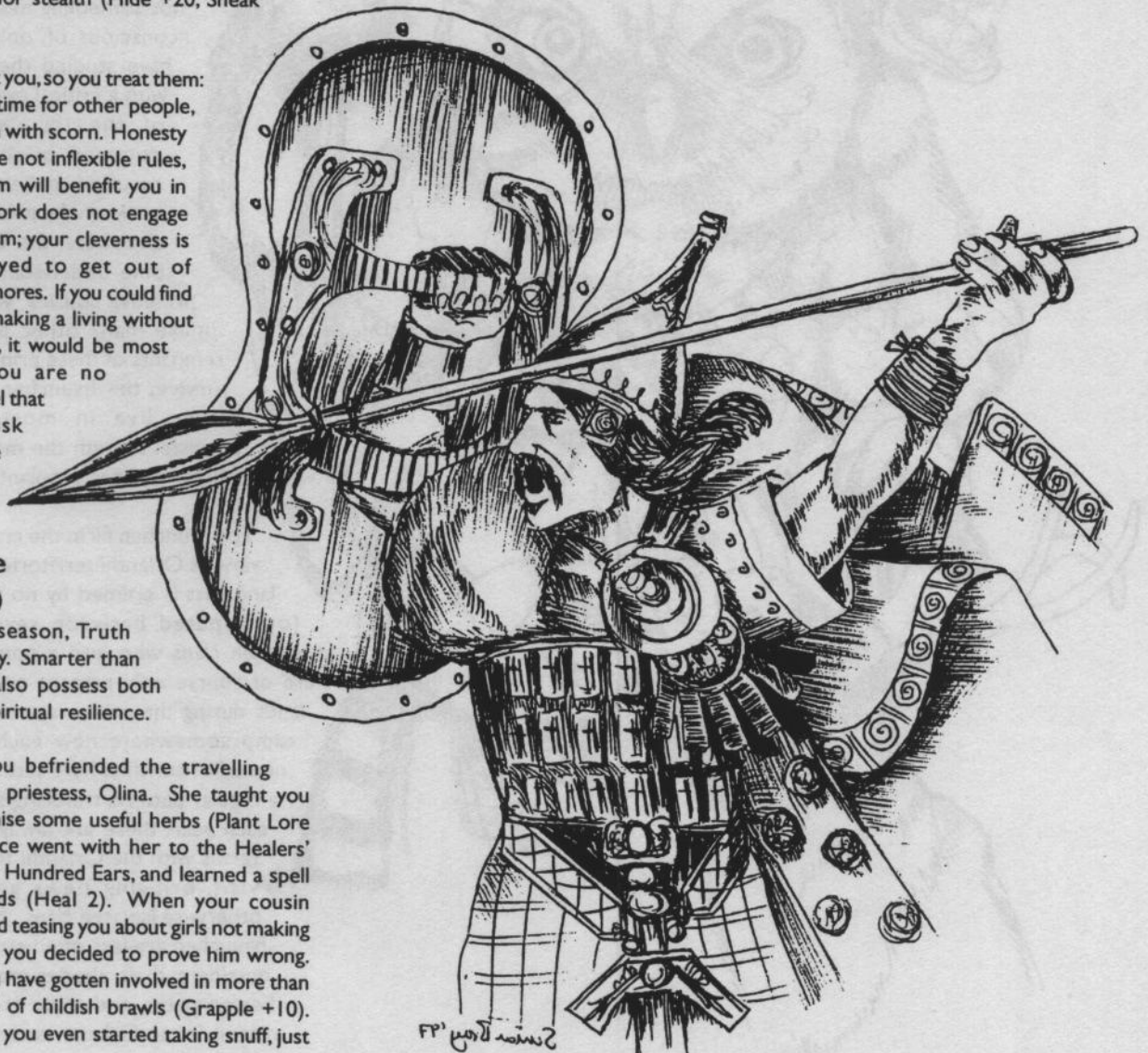
to show how tough girls can be. Arngrim can't stand the stuff, as you constantly remind him. Joining the Orlanth cult is another way to demonstrate the equal aptitude of girls for any activity.

The nickname "Harridan" is only used by others, and is not to your liking—you will take offence at anyone who employs it. As you do not wish to show weakness, you are touchy about any personal remarks and keep most of your feelings to yourself. But you are quick to spot flaws in others and will state your opinions freely. Courage and generosity are some of your good traits. On the other hand, you have not been blessed with much patience.

CHARACTER GENERATION

When rolling up new characters from the Rolin tribe, their stats should be adjusted as follows: +1 STR, +1 SIZ. This is a result of their long forgotten descent from Hsunchen of the Bear tribe. Orlanthi from other parts of the Wilds will have different modifiers.

Digest Taskmoert
1 Point, Touch, Temporal, Passive. This spell allows the recipient to eat and derive nourishment from fish too small and foul-tasting to normally be considered fit for human consumption. The taste will be rather bland, but not offensive in any way. However, the user will suffer from bad breath afterwards, since the fish are eaten whole and raw.



HSUNCHEN

BY JONAS SCHIÖTT



The East Wilds harbour

nearly a dozen different hsunchen peoples. A few of the tribes—such as the Galanini, for example—are large and powerful, but most are quite small, like the Beaver and Otter hsunchen. Before Time the hsunchen dominated all of Ralios, but during the period just before and after the Dawn most of them converted (for various reasons) to a theistic worldview, religion and culture.

There are still some physical differences between Orlanthi from different regions of the Wilds; a result of their descent from hsunchen of different tribes.

But this common background is not something most people are conscious of; only those who have studied the old legends with a critical eye have an idea of the true story. Their common origins have also resulted in better relations between the two cultures than elsewhere; the Orlanthi have some understanding of their primitive cousins' worldview. So, unlike many other places where remnants of these primitive peoples survive, the hsunchen of the East Wilds live in mostly peaceful coexistence with the more advanced culture that has supplanted them.

The hsunchen fill in the cracks between various Orlanthi territories, dwelling on land that is claimed by no Orlanthi clan (or disputed between several). Those hsunchen clans who lead a nomadic lifestyle are of course only present on their 'home' lands during the winter seasons, and a few camp somewhere new each year. Some nomadic hsunchen have settled down into a regular pattern, travelling similar routes each year; these are always on friendly terms with the Orlanthi they habitually visit, bringing news and trade to otherwise isolated clans. Non-nomadic hsunchen are less often encountered by outsiders; their abodes are well off the beaten paths, and there is normally no reason for an Orlanthi to seek them out.

HSUNCHEN

Most hsunchen are seen as curiosities or nuisances by the Orlanthe. The exceptions are Galanini and Telmori, the former because they are still numerous enough to be a potential threat, the later because their aggressiveness makes them an actual threat.

GALANINI

To a scholar interested in exact distinctions the Galanini are no longer true hsunchen, having abandoned their old religion long ago. But to their practically-inclined neighbours this makes no difference; they're still one of the "animal peoples".

The Horse People are a nomadic breed, constantly on the move during the verdant seasons, and only settling down in one place during dark and storm seasons. For most clans, Vustria is used as a base of operations from which they send parties of scouts and hunters all over Ralios. In the rest of the Wilds, some clans can be found travelling in whole herds. Their primary locales in Delela and Saug are Laughing Horse Plain, Thunder Veldt and Goldlook Forest (the latter is where most of them make their winter camp), but it is not at all unusual to find Galanini raiding or trading anywhere in the East Wilds. They usually avoid raiding Orlanthe living near their 'home' areas. Contact with western civilisations, on the other hand, is seldom very cordial.

Galanini culture seems very contradictory to outsiders—they live in a mixture of highly formalised solar hierarchies and primitive hsunchen anarchy. The leader of the tribe is referred to as the Tsar; he and most of the other men worship Ehilm the Sun, while the women mainly revere a horse deity they call Galanin. Outsiders believe Galanin is identical with Hippoi, but whatever the truth of this it seems clear that worship is not conducted according to the shamanistic Hykim/Mikyh pattern.

The Galanini's level of technology is similarly mixed: while they lack most tools and implements, things not needed in their hunting and gathering society, they are probably the finest goldsmiths in all of Glorantha. Their arms,

armour and other items are of the finest quality and artistry (though only available to a select few). They prefer gold over all other metals, and inevitably want to acquire any they come across—by peaceful means if possible. Their primary source of new metal is a few secret and strongly guarded groves deep inside the Goldlook Forest, where trees actually grow leaves of real gold.

Orlanthe lifestyle is in at least one respect heavily influenced by the Galanini: the use of horses. The Galanini still feel a deep kinship with their steeds, and it is clearly stated in their law that only a horse-brother or -sister is capable of sitting on a horse's back without insult to Galanin. The Orlanthe have for many generations considered it prudent not to anger them by riding horses, partly because they are still a military force to be reckoned with, but mostly because of an ingrained respect for these ancient allies. Fortunately, Galanini have adopted enough Solar rigidity to follow the exact letter of the law (without attempting to change it), leaving open the option of hitching horses to ploughs, wagons or chariots. The horses used by Orlanthe are in fact closer to the original Ralios pony—Galanini have over the centuries interbred their stock with horses captured in raids on other nations, resulting in a faster and somewhat larger breed.

TELMORI

The two varieties of Telmori, "pure" and "cursed", both exist in Ralios. In Telmoria, the wolf peoples' ancestral home, the overwhelming majority are Pure Ones, descended from those who refused to obey Nysalor. Unfortunately, Orlanthe in the Wilds get their picture of Telmori from the packs of Cursed Ones that roam Vustria, making forays into Delela as well as Naskorion and Otkorion. This is especially unfortunate for the Pure Ones who, ranging far afield during the summer seasons, are mistaken for their tainted cousins.

To Delelans, Telmori are werewolves, chaotic and evil monsters. People in Saug and Keanos regard them more as legendary beings, the basis of horrifying tales told around the campfire.

OTHERS

The most common hsunchen are the Damali, deer people, who dwell throughout Delela and in northern Saug. The moose tribe (Alec) is found in west Delela, mainly in the area of the Delaman tribe. Udari, otter hsunchen, are rare but can still be found along some tributaries to the Doskior in east Delela.

The Falani (beaver) tribe dwells in the minor rivers of Saug. Raccoon hsunchen (Lotari) are limited to northeastern Saug, but are relatively common there.

On the fringes of the Wilds there are a few other hsunchen types.

In the Mislari mountains and their foothills thrives the mountain goat tribe (Caroni). The red owl people (Flari) are believed by everyone to be extinct, but in fact still lead a precarious life deep in the heart of Corolaland.

A FIRST AGE GALANINI MYTH CYCLE

BY
SHANNON APPEL

In the last decades of the First Age an unprecedented event occurred: the creation of a god. In the end this grand experiment failed, leaving our generation with ashes rather than golden enlightenment. Still, the Second Council has left us with many lasting legacies. One of the greatest is the archives of Elias Terenikson.

Terenikson was the greatest historian of the Council, and in all likelihood of the entire world as well. He lived during the height of the Council's prosperity, and used its influence to gather together mythic cycles from all over the world. He was one of the first to draw the connection between the Plentonium tales of the rebel and the Heortling tales of the emperor. His codification of parallel sociomythic patterns was hundreds of years ahead of its time. Only recently have we been able to appreciate the full measure of his genius with the recovery of his archives, miraculously untouched since the destruction of Dorastor a millennium ago.

This paper is based upon some of the first age Ralian myths from the Terenikson archives. It is published under grant #4A732-8-1621 from the Temple of Irrippi Ontor adjunct at Fort Wrath.

All Hail the Illuminated Moon!

Karasin Butthead, Historian of Dorastor

THE MYTHS OF THE GALANINI

Modern Ralios is a remarkably varied society, a nexus point at which the cultures of the Hsunchen, the neo-Brithini, the Orlanthi, and the Galanini have met. There are also remaining traces of post-Nysalorian and Uz influences. In the late First Age, these societies had not yet blended to their current level, giving scholars a unique opportunity to study them in their more pure forms.

The earliest human culture of Ralios is believed to be Galanini. It seems to have followed the standard hearth-mother pattern of society until late in the Darkness. At that time, a religious community known as the Dangan Confederacy formed in the area surrounding Lake Nalar (now Lake Felster). It united the isolate tribes, and formed the first cohesive Ralios mythic structure. The two Dari Alliances of the First Age served to make this structure permanent, although there was some Orlanthi influence in the later years. These influences are readily apparent in many of the myths that Terenikson collected.

Galanini myths centre around a people created by the horse-god Galanin. They are alternatively named the Galanini, in honour of the god, or the Enerali, in honour of Galanin's human son, who sired the founders of the four major Ralios tribes. Traditional enemies of the Galanini include the Triolini of Lake Nalar, the Hsunchen of the East Wilds, and the neoBrithini of the West. Today, the horse-riding culture of the Galanini has been nearly extinguished, and the Hsunchen and neo Brithini now rule most of Ralios.

Still, the myths of the Galanini live on; the purest among the modern tribe which names itself the Galanini. The myths are also remarkably similar to those of the Hsunchen Orlanthi tribes of East Ralios, hinting at a common cultural origin. The Hsunchen interweave Galanini and Orlanthi myth patterns more extensively than their First Age predecessors. In the neoBrithini states around Lake Felster, the myths of the Galanini have been relegated to peasants' folklore in the face of the teachings of the Invisible God, but still persist. Throughout Ralios the Galanini are sometimes felt. Even during Sacred Time they can still take on a reality of their own.

What follows is a myth cycle surrounding the death of the founder-god, Galanin. It marks the end of the Galanini Golden Age, and the beginning of their Storm Age. I have appended my own notes to each tale, to explain some archaic First Age usage. —KB

THE LAST STORY OF GALANIN

A War Age Myth of the Galanini

The year once more ebbs. As the last fires slowly burn out, darkness again seeks to overwhelm the world. Sacred Time has once more come upon us. It is the time when the fate of our world will be decided again. It is the time when we may be called upon to make sacrifices to win the eternal battle, and so I will remind you of the tale of the first sacrifice. Today, as we look into the maw of darkness which seeks to once more devour the world, I will tell Galanin's last tale: how he gave his life to the beast-god Basmola.

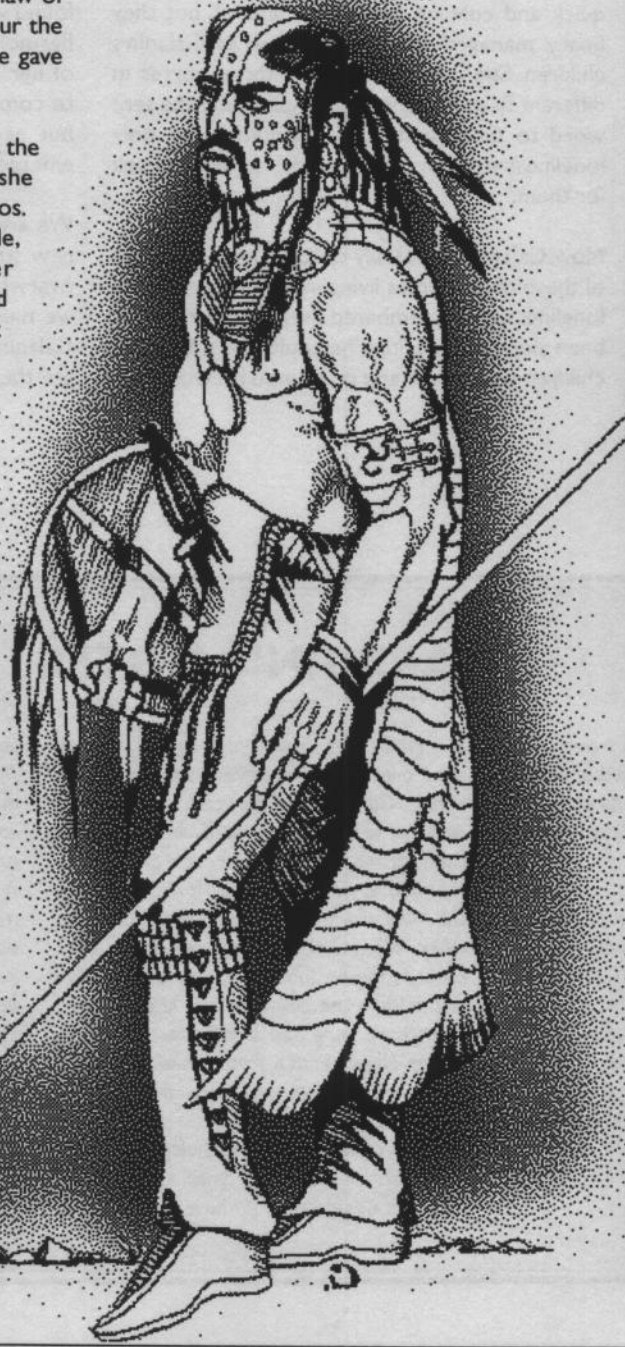
Basmola was an arrogant goddess. She was the queen of the Basmoli lion-people, and she hated all the other peoples who lived in Ralios. She disliked the primitive Hsunchen people, because they reminded her that her followers were primitives too. She detested the Enerali, because they were the best tool-makers in Ralios, and her people could never hope to be so clever. But above all, she hated Galanin and his horses, because they were joyous and carefree, and they made Basmola feel the emptiness of her own soul.

There came a day when Basmola's hatred turned to thoughts of murder. Basmola decided that she would kill Galanin so that she would never again have to see him so happy and full of life. Such thoughts had never before occurred in the world, and if not for Basmola, they might have never occurred, ever. But Galanin was very intelligent, cunning, fast, and alert, so Basmola had not set herself an easy task - as she soon found out.

At first Basmola tried to leap upon Galanin and rend him; but she failed because Galanin was very fast, and simply trotted quickly along until Basmola was left gasping and panting behind him. Today, we still remember

the value of speed when we train our horses to race, and learn to drive our chariots.

Another time Basmola tried to lie in ambush for Galanin, so she could catch him unaware. But Galanin saw



DEATH AND WAR

her and simply choose another path. Basmola waited for days, until she was too hungry and thirsty to wait any more. Today, we still trust our horse's senses, because they are often better than our own.

Yet another time, Basmola tried to sneak up on Galanin when he was asleep. Enerali had been stationed as guards, though, and they saw Basmola and chased her away. It was a long time before she stopped running, and she was very bumped and bruised from running into things in the night. Today, we still remember the pact, and guard Galanin's children when they can not guard themselves.

Finally, though, Basmola crafted a plan to use Galanin's compassion and honour as weapons against him, and this was his downfall. She sent out many of her Basmoli warriors to hunt horses. It took them many years, for horses are nearly as quick and cunning as Galanin himself, but they finally managed to capture three of Galanin's children. She imprisoned these three horses in different Basmoli dens across Ralios, and she sent word to Galanin that they would know only loneliness forever if he did not sacrifice himself for them.

Now, Galanin was deeply touched by the thought of these three horses living in darkness, suffering loneliness. He remembered the days when he had been alone, and decided he could not subject his children to this fate, and so he gave his word that

he would sacrifice himself for them. He made the Basmoli free the horses first, and they did, for they knew Galanin's word was an honourable one. At Galanin's urging, the three horses fled.

That was how Basmola was able to kill Galanin.

After Basmola slew Galanin, she scattered his bones across all of Ralios so that we could never do the proper rituals over them. When the rituals of rebirth were done over Galanin's grave, he stayed dead. Later, when more horses died, the rituals didn't work for them either. It was the end of our world.

We must remember that there is always hope. No matter how deep the night, there will always be a dawn. After Galanin died, the Basmoli brought war against our people. It was the beginning of the War Age. Many of our people died, but we maintained hope, as Galanin had taught us. We found weapons, and we eventually fought off the Basmoli, slew Basmola, and forced the remnants of her people to flee. Greater darknesses were to come, such as when the sun was snuffed out, but each time we fought back, and we have emerged stronger for it.

We are the Galanini. Our enemies only give us new strength. Darkness seeks to once more to overwhelm the world, but we will fight it back. If we must, we shall make the noble sacrifice, like Galanin, but in the end we will be victorious. We are the Galanini! We are the strong!

In those days there was a god named Humath. He was the spirit of the cold, sharp wind that blows down from the North, and cuts through you like an iron knife, the wind that blows down trees, and tears down hearths, and destroys everything so it can be made anew again. He was a minor spirit then, just one of the Many, for that was before we recognised him as one of the twin storms.

KARASIN'S NOTES

Terenikson's copy of the previous tale exists only in the form given above, told at Sacred Time. It has been preserved in its entirety. A number of facts from early Ralios myth help to clarify this tale.

At one time "the pact" is spoken of. This was an agreement between Galanin's two children: the horses and the humans (Enerali). The horses were first-born, but unable to defend themselves. Thus, the second-born Enerali swore to defend their horse brothers against danger. This pact was one of the most central tenants of the horse-based Galanini culture that prospered in the First Age.

At a later point, rituals are discussed as being done over Galanin's grave. According to the earliest Galanini myths, when a horse or man died due to misfortune, words were said over their grave, and they were remarkably returned to life the next day. It was only after Galanin's death that these rituals failed to work. Nonetheless, Ralians continue to practice these rituals to the present day. The last myth in this collection is a late First Age myth describing the significance of these rituals. Unfortunately in the Third Age, these rituals are no longer well understood.

Students of comparative mythology will notice a number of familiar themes in this story. Galanin's death seems to have the strongest

correspondences to the death of Grandfather Mortal, since he was the ancestor whose murder brought mortality to his people, but correlations to the Yelm-Orlanth cycle also exist, with Basmola playing the role of rebellious Orlanth. Many will be quick to realise that this story leads into a cycle of Basmoli Galanini myths where the Basmol(a) god is inevitably slain. They are not reproduced here.

The three horses who Galanin sacrificed himself do turn up in later Galanini mythology. They are most important in the stories of the Zebra Tribe.

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THE TIME OF MANY WEAPONS

A War Age Myth of the Galanini

In the Age of War, things were very bad for the Galanini. They weren't as bad as they would be during the Age of Darkness, but the Galanini didn't know that yet, and things were definitely worse than they ever were before. Every night, a new horse would be gone, and everyone would know that a Basmoli had dragged it away during the night. Some nights, an awful screaming would be heard, and everyone knew that a Basmoli was playing with a horse that night before killing it.

The Enerali tried to uphold the pact and protect the horses, but this was before the time of weapons, and often there were Enerali gone in the morning too, and the people knew that more brave men had died. Sometimes, the people would find the bones days later and try and do the ancient rituals, but they never worked any more.

Humath saw how miserable the people were and he thought he knew what had to be done. So, he came down from the North to help. He saw the horses first, and he realised that they were even more helpless than Galanin's second children, and he decided to offer aid to them. Humath offered the horses the secret of weapons, and promised that they could use them to kill the Basmoli, and that none of the secret rituals would allow them to come back.

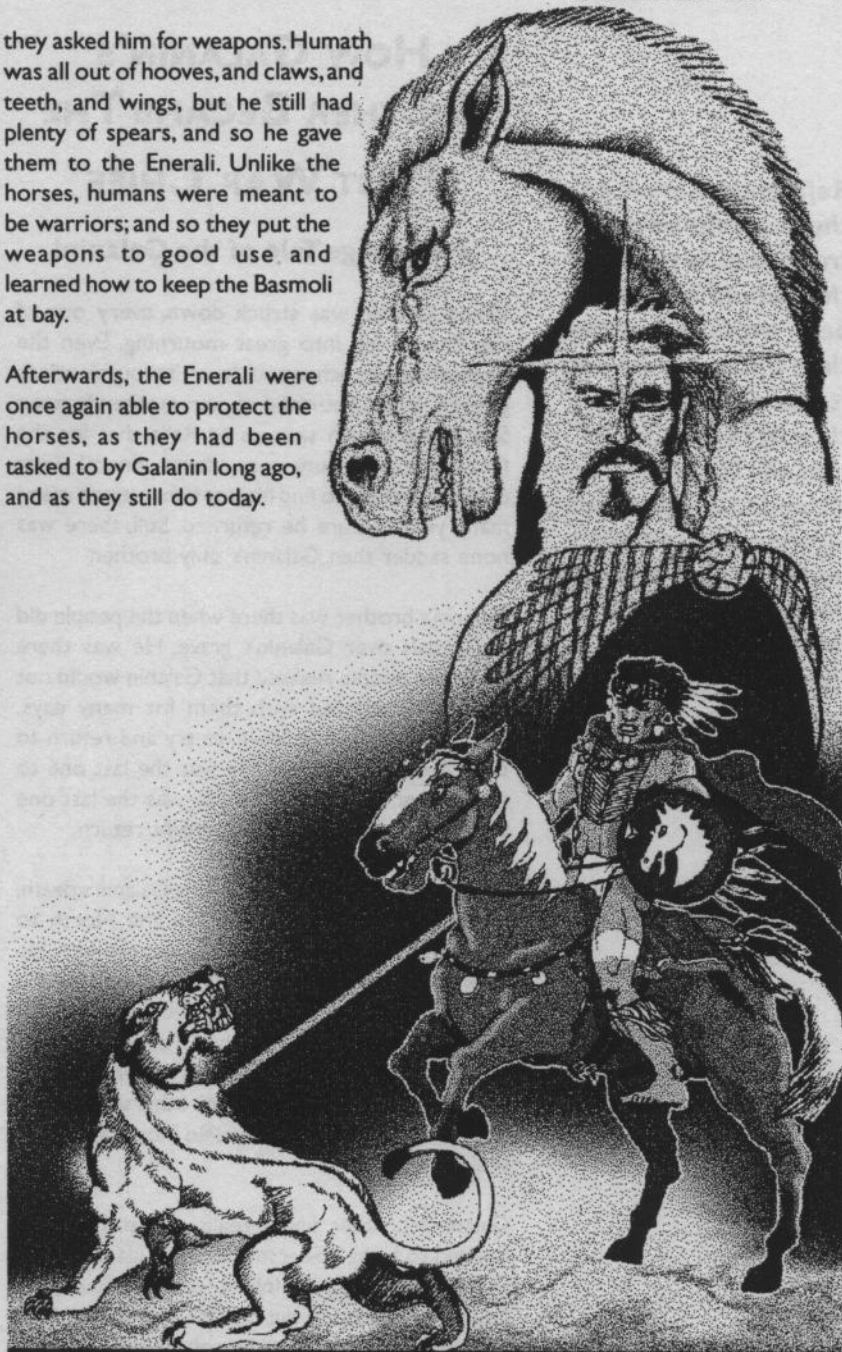
Most of the horses refused, for they are a peaceful people, but some believed that the only alternative was death, and so they accepted Humath's offer. Humath handed out all of his weapons to the horses, and some were given sharp hooves, and others wicked claws, and others pointed teeth, and others strong wings.

Many Basmoli died after that, and the people weren't totally helpless any more. However, horses were not meant to be warriors, and so they continued to fall, maybe even faster than they had before. Deadly Basmoli could kill before teeth could find purchase. Dextrous Basmoli ran quickly, and those horses with hooves and claws could no longer run as fast as they could before. Stealthy Basmoli could sneak up on the flying horses who sometimes had to rest. Almost all of the horses with weapons were killed.

Finally, one wise horse came to the humans and told them of the gifts that the cold wind spirit was giving away. The humans were very happy, because they had thought they had failed in their pact to protect the horses; but here was a new chance. Many of them went to find Humath, and

they asked him for weapons. Humath was all out of hooves, and claws, and teeth, and wings, but he still had plenty of spears, and so he gave them to the Enerali. Unlike the horses, humans were meant to be warriors; and so they put the weapons to good use and learned how to keep the Basmoli at bay.

Afterwards, the Enerali were once again able to protect the horses, as they had been tasked to by Galanin long ago, and as they still do today.



KARASIN'S NOTES

This myth seems to have two main points: it gives an explanation for the mythic horses of the world, and also explains how the Enerali managed to fight the Basmoli.

Students of comparative mythology would do well to examine the pegasus and hippogriff tales found elsewhere in Genertela. The Dara Happan story is a particularly enlightening example, for it offers a contrary explanation of winged horses. Where the Galanini pegasus is a horse gifted wings and so made different, the Dara Happan horse is a pegasus deprived of its wings and made humble. This does much to illustrate the goals and aspirations of the different cultures.

A few notes should be made regarding the god Humath. He is a strong cognate of Humakt. Some modern mythologists believe Ralios might even have been the origin place of the war god. Unfortunately, Terenikson's archives are from too late a time to say for certain, as they were collected after the Orlanthe culture came to Ralios. Prior to the coming of the Orlanthe, the Ralians worshipped the Many, an immense group of nature spirits. Humath appears to have been one of these. In the late First Age, the Ralians began to worship the Twin Storms, Humath and Orlanthe.

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HOW GALANIN'S BROTHER BECAME THE FIRST WAR CHIEF

A War Age Tale of the Galanini

Reference is made to the Vustrians being traitorous. In truth, they would not have been traitorous at the time this myth was set. It was not until the time of the Darkness that the Vustrians earned this reputation by abandoning their horses. However, by the First Age, when this myth was collected, there was much rivalry between the Vustrian highlanders and their lowland brethren.

When Galanin was struck down, every one of the Enerali fell into great mourning. Even the degenerate Hsunchen and the traitorous Vustrians grieved. InUlei returned to her mother forever. She brought such sadness to Ralia that for the first time ever game was scarce. Eneral went questing, vowing to find his lost father. It was many, many years before he returned. Still, there was none sadder than Galanin's only brother.

Galanin's brother was there when the people did the rituals over Galanin's grave. He was there when the people realised that Galanin would not return. He grieved with them for many days. When they began to leave, to try and return to their lives, he remained. He was the last one to watch over Galanin's grave. He was the last one who still hoped that Galanin might return.

As you know, in the time following Galanin's death, a mischievous spirit came from the North to distribute weapons among Galanin's children. He gave them first to the horses, and this was a disaster. The horses got sharp teeth, and clawed hooves, and wicked beaks, but these were poor weapons. The horses thought they were good, because they had never had any others. But, when they tried to use them, they died more often than their enemies.

Galanin's brother finally realised that someone needed to bring leadership to the Galanini. Since Galanin was dead, and InUlei was withdrawn, and Eneral was questing, the task fell to him. He went and told Eneral's four children about the weapons, and then brought them to the mischievous spirit.

The spirit offered the sons many different weapons. Korion almost accepted a strong iron sword, but Galanin's brother pointed out that metal was scarce, and they would never be able to make more. Vustr almost accepted a curved dagger, but Galanin's brother pointed out that it was too short to use in real combat, only fit for striking from behind. Uton almost accepted a three-pronged trident, but Galanin's brother didn't like the look of that weapon at all, and told him so. Fornao almost accepted a fine quiver of arrows, but Galanin's brother pointed out that he had nothing to throw them with.

Galanin's brother saw that the weapon spirit was trying to hide a collection of fine spears. He pointed to them, and suggested that Eneral's sons examine them. They found them to be light, sturdy,

and excellent for striking at foes from a distance. Each proclaimed that he had found his weapon, and was ready to go to war.

Despite this success, Galanin's brother was a little worried. He knew that Eneral's sons would one day be the best warriors in all the world, but he saw that they needed guidance. So, he cast aside his grieving and mourning, and told the weapon spirit that he would have a weapon as well.

The weapon spirit looked at Galanin's brother carefully. He remembered the silly hooves, teeth, and beaks that he had given the other horses. He thought for a minute to give such to Galanin's brother as well. But then, he saw that warning gleam in the eyes of Galanin's brother. He knew that he had been found out. Thus, he didn't try and trick Galanin's brother, but offered him a spear as well.

Of course, Galanin's brother had hooves, not hands, so he couldn't hold a spear. So, the weapon spirit whittled down a spear to just a sharp point, and affixed it right in the middle of Galanin's brother's head. Galanin's brother waved his horn about proudly, and it was clear that of all the weapons given to horses, this was one to be reckoned with. Thereafter, Galanin's brother was known as the Father of Unicorns. This is the name we know him by today.

In later days, the Father of Unicorns trained all of Eneral's children in the use of weapons. For a time, he was the greatest war chief of all of Ralios, and he led great armies against the Basmoli, the Hsunchen, and the Triolini, until such time that his students surpassed him in arms.

KARASIN'S NOTES

InUlei, who appears in this myth, was Galanin's wife and the mother of Eneral. Her mother was the land-goddess Ralia. Eneral's children are also introduced here: Korion, Vustr, Uton, and Fornao. We can still see their names emblazoned upon the lands of Ralios. Their myths remain strong, and many Ralian tribes trace their ancestry to these four brothers.

One of the most telling facts of this story is the way the character of the weapon-bringer has changed. In "The Time of Many Weapons", he was clearly described as Humath, but here he is simply a mischievous spirit. It is hard to say whether this was a real change or simply a differentiation in story-telling techniques. My own belief is that this present story actually has a later origin than the "The Time of Man Weapons", and thus reflects the story becoming more Orlanathi. Rather than Humakt himself giving out weapons, it is the Trickster who brings Death to the plains of Ralios.

-KB

Eneral's fifth child, Yelorna, is not mentioned here. She only appears sporadically in Terenikson's archives, usually in the myths of her tribe of Yelornans. The Unicorn Father is an important figure in Yelorna's mythology.



WHY WE DO THE RITUALS FOR THE DEAD

A First Age Myth of the Galanini

Whenever one of our people dies, either human or horse, we conduct the rituals for the dead. When the twin storm's cold winds blow down from the North, then we bury the bones of the deceased in Ralia's earth, and we light the sacred fire above them. Finally, we say the sacred words, and make our prayers to all the Many gods, and when the rituals are done we leave.

Now, some youngsters don't understand why we do these rituals; so I will explain. The rituals for the dead have very ancient origins, going all the way back to the time of the Eternal Plains when Galanin roamed freely. In those days, when someone died our people would do the rituals (just as we do now), and the next day the dead person would rise again.

But then the evil goddess Basmola killed Galanin, and after that the rituals didn't work. People would die, and our people would do the rituals, but the dead would stay dead.

Our people had faith in the gods though, and so they continued to do the rituals, just as Galanin had taught them to do. And, one day they worked again! It was just after the Dawn, when King Dan, our greatest hero had died. We did the rituals for the dead, just like we always had, and he rose again.

In the days of the Eternal Plains, people would rise the next day, but days were a lot longer then. It took many years before Dan came back, but he did. He called himself Dari, and he made an even better Dangan Confederacy, and called it the Dari Alliance.

When Dari died, we said the rituals over his grave again, and now we know he will be back. He has been gone many years, so we are sure his return will be soon. If King Dan could be reborn by the old rituals, others can be too. That is why we always do the rituals for the dead, for all the humans and all the horses.

Karasin's Notes

References to Dan and Dari clearly place this myth much later than the other three I have collected here. It is included because it provides an interesting capstone to the cycle concerning the death of Galanin. It is instructive to look at the four myths as a whole.

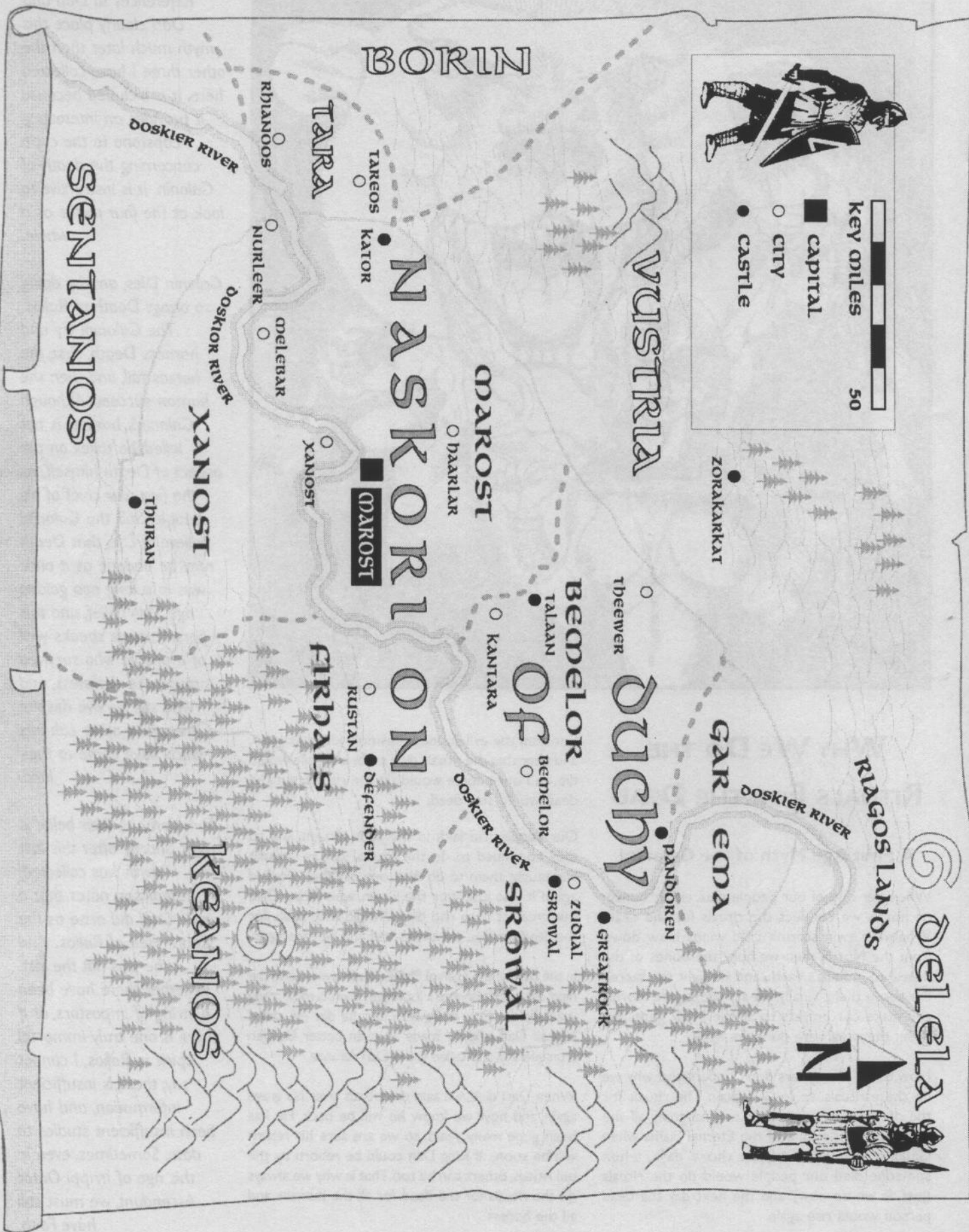
Galanin Dies, and by doing so brings Death to Ralios.

The Galanini try and harness Death. First, the horses fail, and then the human succeed. Although Galanin's brother is not killed, he takes on the aspect of Death himself, as the first war chief of his people. Still, the Galanini believe in Life, that Death may be undone as it once was in a long ago golden age. This belief, and this perseverance speaks well of a people who survived through the darkness, and who still survive despite the many other cultures which have come to their land.

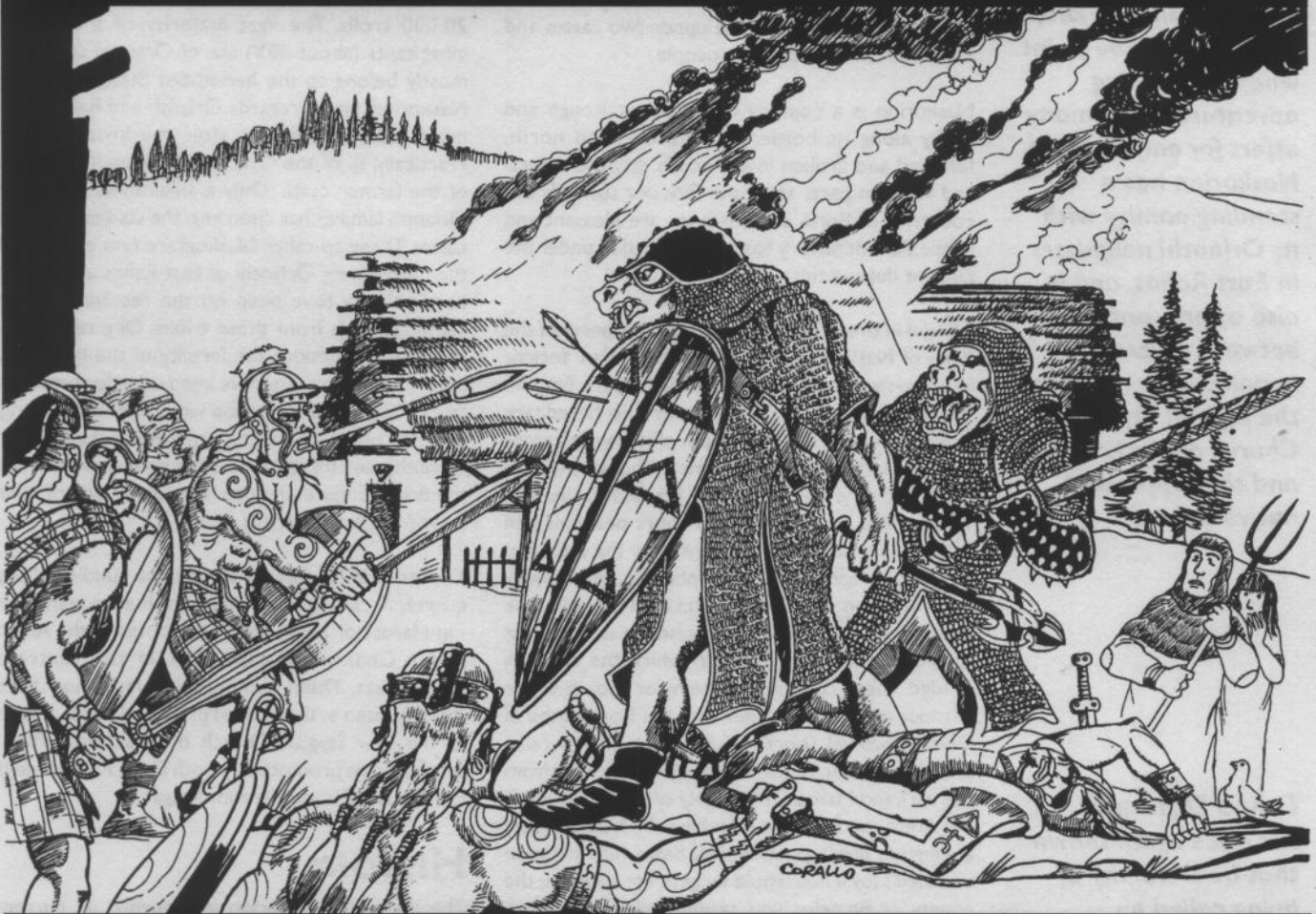
And, perhaps their belief is right. Shortly after this last myth was collected,

Terenikson notes that a new Dari did arise as the Zebra Heir of Ralios. And he was not the last.

Whether there have been a string of impostors, or if there is one truly immortal spirit in Ralios, I cannot say; there is insufficient information, and have been insufficient studies to date. Sometimes, even in this age of Irrippi Ontor Ascendant, we must still have Faith.



NASKORION



**BY INGO TSCHINKE &
JÖRG BAUMGARTNER**

Edited by David Dunham

Introduction
Of the various kingdoms and duchies in Ralios, Naskorion is one which offers good opportunities for adventuring. The native population of Naskorion is quite diverse, the duchy has numerous enemies, and internal conflicts keep escalating to the point where wandering adventurers find many offers for employment. Naskorion has a standing enmity with its Orlanthi neighbors in East Ralios, and it also offers conflicts between several variants of Arkat sects, the official Stygian Church of Naskorion, and the suppressed native Orlanthi.

David Dunham
has once again shown that he is worthy of being called an innovator for Glorantha. His updated Pendragon Pass rules in Enclosure have given us another option for Roleplaying in Glorantha.

DESCRIPTION

The ancient duchy of Naskorion stretches along the Doskior River. Much of the duchy's rim consists of forested rolling hills. The most fertile area can be found in the Doskior Valley, especially around Marost, the capital city. The river guarantees and determines life in Naskorion. It feeds the population, waters the fields and is the single most important trade route between Safelster and East Ralios.

The majority of the population lives north of the Doskior. This area is considerably more fertile than the broken and rough forested hills in the southern part of the duchy. The farmers grow various grains and roots and raise cattle and breed pigs. Fishing the Doskior, quite wide in its course through Naskorion, supplements the diet of the population. Hunting is a privilege of the upper two castes and plays no role in feeding the people.

Naskorion is a country of opposites. Rough and rocky along its borders to the east and north, forested and broken in the south, still the central and western parts along the Doskior towards the countries of Borin and Sentanos are pleasant and fertile. Recent history has seen expansion under the current duke in this direction.

All land in the duchy is the personal property of the duke of Naskorion. The nobility obeys an ancient feudal system stemming from Arkat's Dark Empire. According to this system there are no hereditary fiefs. The nobility is formed from offices which grant their holders a constant income. Although they are not hereditary, they are usually granted to the heir. These offices are divided into court positions and lords. Court positions are granted by the duke and include the chancellor, the chamberlain, the steward, the Champion of Naskorion and the Marshal of the Naskori army. The lords administrate and protect four of the five counties into which the duchy is divided. These counties are Bemelor (north of the Doskior and on the border with the Riagos tribe of Delela), Srowal (north of Keanos), Firhals (also bordering Keanos), Xanost (south of the river from Marost), and Marost. The county of Marost is under the direct control of the duke himself. These counties are further divided into knightly fiefs, which are given to a lord's loyal household knights. For example the county of Bemelor was traditionally divided into Enelor, Theewer, Dasegkor, and Hrolan. Naskorion has recently expanded into the Riagos tribal lands, and the duke created a new county of Garema to reward his supporters (and raise his revenues). Although Garema is smaller than the other counties, the duke expects the same tribute, in part to encourage further expansion.

Holders of court offices are often totally dependent on the pleasure of the current duke, which has led several noble houses into poverty during the last centuries. The lords of the provinces are somewhat more secure as the dukes of Naskorion have only rarely been able to replace a lord with his entire retinue without risking attacks from enemies of Naskorion in the neighboring countries.

There are four cities besides the capital city of Marost, of small to medium size. These cities - among these Kantara and Theewer in Bemelor - are fortified by earthen ramparts. Only Marost sports a city wall which could withstand a siege, though it's overshadowed by the mighty ducal castle. There are a total of eleven castles in the duchy, of which the ducal castle at Marost, Greatrock in Srowal in the east and Zorakarkat in the north are the most impressive. Atypically for Ralios, many of these fortresses lack a town right below their walls, due to the fact that dukes could (and did) forbid settlement there. Instead, they are usually supported by scantily defended towns within a short riding distance, which can be protected by sallies from the fortress.

Naskorion is home to about 400,000 humans and 20,000 trolls. The vast majority of the human inhabitants (about 80%) are of Orlanthi stock and mostly belong to the henotheist State Church of Naskorion, which regards Orlanth and Ralia as the most important deities after the Invisible God. Practically all of the Orlanthi-stock population are of the farmer caste. Only a small minority of the Orlanthi families has risen into the soldier or priest castes. These so-called Naskori are firm enemies of the neighboring Orlanthi of East Ralios and Vustria because they have been on the receiving end of ceaseless raids from those tribes. One reason for these raids - besides the fertility of the land - has been the fact that they have been ruled for centuries by Malkioni feudal lords who worship Arkat and pray for the return of his Stygian Empire. (East Ralian Orlanthi remember Arkat as the invader who ended the Bright Empire, and use his name as one of their strongest swear-words.)

The trolls in Naskorion sometimes huddle in "city quarters" of their own - slums by human standards - in Marost or along the trade routes of the Argan Argar Chain, and especially in the fortress Zorakarkat. Their numbers in Naskorion have recently risen as they gained privileged status, thanks to the new Stygian Church of Naskorion. These privileges are promoted by both Duke Rainard de la Faucille and Bishop Kurzum Aragat.

HISTORY

The duchy of Naskorion in (roughly) its current borders was formed in the Second Age when the Return to Rightness Crusaders conquered Ralios and destroyed the Stygian Empire. Paslac, the last Stygian Emperor of Ralios, had been forced to retreat further east in Ralios, and had subdued the Naskori Orlanthi as serfs. From his power base in Naskorion Paslac attempted to hold back the crusaders, but in a desperate last campaign his forces were crushed in Safelster near the city of Syran.

The victorious crusaders divided the remains of Paslac's empire among themselves. One of them, the Lord de la Faucille, became the Duke of Naskorion, and married a daughter of Paslac to solidify his claim on the land. Through this marriage he learned of the Stygian property laws which allowed only

descendents of the Emperor to hold land. In a shrewd maneuver, he renounced all the conquerors claims to the land to his children, the only descendents from Paslac likely to make a claim for the land, and avoided thereby yielding any of the land to his subordinates. He recompensed them with lucrative offices, though.

When the Empire of the God Learners was drowned by the Tanier River in 1049, the duke of Naskorion declared himself the heir to Arkat's Stygian Empire, and kept his duchy for his family - barely, and only with the help of the Naskori who bore a grudge against the eastern tribes and chose to support the duke. They were rewarded with acceptance into the nobility of Naskorion, and they greatly influenced the state religion to incorporate more Orlanthe features.

However, Naskori acceptance of the Malkioni religion, and especially of Arkat, made them the target for contempt and enmity from their Delelan neighbors. The Naskori became more and more dependent on the protection of their Safelstran lords. They gradually lost their freedom and became serfs of the nobility, bound to the land. Nowadays the house of Ontor the Hammer, lord of Firhals, is the only remaining Orlanthe noble family.

The hatred between Naskorion and the barbarian tribes to the east was only heightened by the "betrayal" of the Naskori Orlanthe people, and the dukes had to put great effort into the defense of

their duchy. The eastern frontier was heavily fortified, and the fortress Greatrock, seat of the Lord of Srowal, has the greatest contingent of troops anywhere in the duchy.

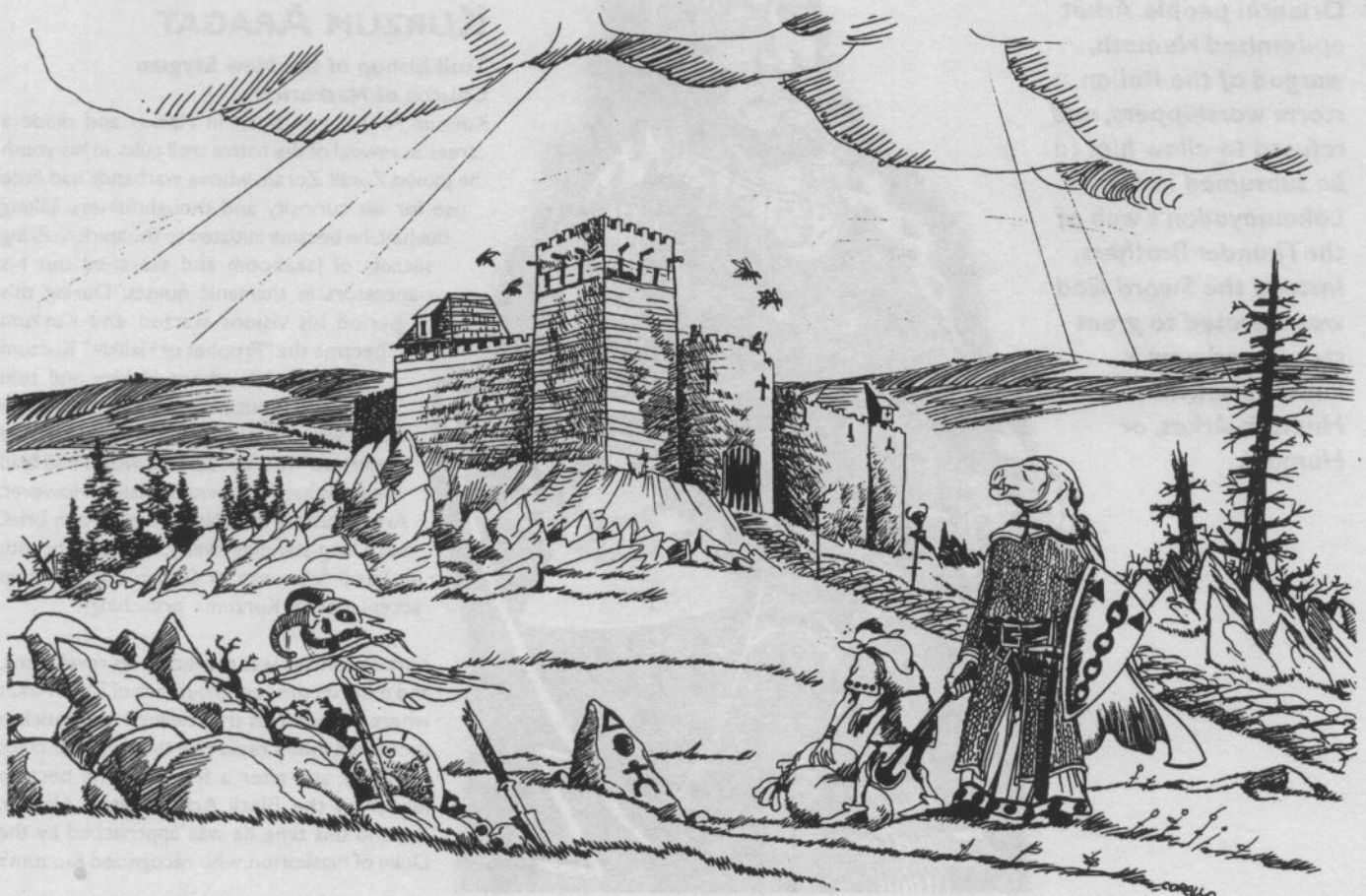
The current duke, Rainard de la Faucille, has led his duchy on an expansionist course for fifteen years. In 1608 his troops invaded Borin and captured part of that county's holdings. The Count and Countess of Borin died during this conflict. Rainard then cleansed his nobility of bothersome opposition. In 1616 he announced himself to be an agent of the Argan Argar Chain, and granted this troll cult considerable privileges. Three major caravanserais were erected during this period, attracting troll settlers. In 1617 the duke expanded again, annexing southern Delela and eastern holdings of Sentanos. From 1618 to 1620 he expanded the old shrine to Zorakarkat into a major fortress of Naskorion.

As head of the state religion, Rainard promoted Arkat the Troll aspect of the Stygian Church of Naskorion, relegating the henotheist church to a secondary role. He installed his troll protégé Kurzum Aragat as the archbishop of the Stygian Church. Generally he preferred trolls to members of the henotheist creed. Since Ingvor the Liberator's revolts of 1622 his bodyguard has consisted only of trolls of St. Zorak Zoran, who had overthrown the rebellion with extreme brutality.

GROUDIAT

Groudiat is a noble-born Arkati who lost his court office of warleader at Duke Rainard coronation. Ever since he has waged a futile war against Rainard's reign. He has become the leader of a band of outlaws who have specialised on raiding caravans traveling between Safelster and Naskorion.

Groudiat has a reputation as a vengeful loser, and the majority of the nobility despise him. Groudiat has often stated a claim to the throne of Naskorion through a tenuous bloodline back to Paslac the Emperor.



PERSONALITIES OF NASKORION

Rainard de la Faucille

Duke of Naskorion

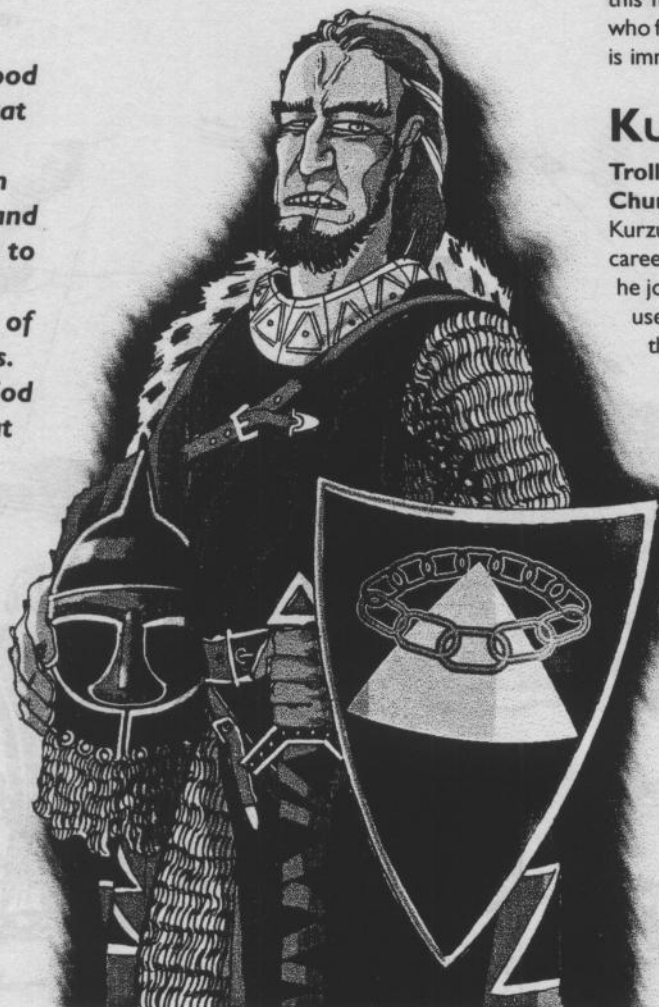
Rainard is a vainglorious and powerhungry fanatic plotting to revive the ancient Stygian Empire. This is sort of a family tradition of the de la Faucilles, but Rainard has been the first to found a new aspect of the Stygian church to regain Ralios in Arkat's name. He inherited his duchy fifteen years ago and has added considerable territory through conquest.

Researching the past glory of his family and the Stygian Empire, Rainard came across old documents detailing the relation between the ancient Stygian Church and the trolls. Seeking out the surviving fragments of the Stygian sects, he began to rebuild his own view of a new Stygian Church fit to regain Ralios. He established himself as an agent of the Argan Argan Chain, and used this connection to make further contacts with the trolls. He entered communication with a troll sorcerer of Black Arkat who was enthusiastic about the potential the Stygian Church offered. This sorcerer is Kurzum Arगत, who claims to have had many visions of Arkat's return. Together they decided to lead the Stygian Church back to its former power and glory.

ARKAT - SECTS

Arkat Humathson

This sect is the most (some say only) popular form of Arkat worship among the Naskori, though still a minority religion. Its adherents remember Arkat's instrumental role as adversary of Lokamayadon, the Orlanthi priest who had sold his religion to his ambitions in the God Project and the Bright Empire, the priest who sent the sun worshippers of the north to rule over good Orlanthi people. Arkat epitomized Humath, wargod of the Ralian storm worshippers, and refused to allow him to be subsumed in Lokamayadon's web of the Thunder Brothers. Instead the Sword God was elevated to great status, and now is known elsewhere as Humath-Arkat, or Humakt.



Inspired by one of Kurzum Arगत's vision, Rainard had the fortress Zorakarkat erected in northern Naskorion, the castle of Arkat the Troll. This fortress fulfills two purposes - it serves as the castle of Arkat Reborn, and it is a major caravanserai for the Argan Argan insect caravans crawling through Naskorion between Guhan and Halikiv. The work was completed in only two years, demanding the full resources of the duchy, and even before it was finished it had become a symbol of the New Stygian Church of Naskorion. Rainard made his Stygian Church the new official and privileged state religion, and given the composition of the Naskorion nobility it soon found wide acceptance at court. Kurzum preached his prophecies and visions of Arkat's imminent return to lead his Stygian Empire to power and glory again, raising Naskorion to the leading power in Ralios. Trolls have benefitted from many privileges and are highly regarded as traders and warriors. Most are regarded as knight caste members, with their priests in the wizard or even lord caste, and trollkin receiving peasant status.

In the years after the foundation of Zorakarkat was laid, Naskorion attracted many trolls who profess adherence to the New Stygian Church. A sizeable troll quarter has risen below the city walls of Marost. There is a growing unrest among the farmers of Naskorion who remember their Orlanthi myths and are increasingly opposed to this troll-Arkat worship. There have been several uprisings which Rainard's troll guard has pacified in bloody massacres. Even this massive unrest has failed to impress Rainard, who firmly believes that the return of Arkat Kingtroll is imminent.

KURZUM ARAGAT

Troll bishop of the New Stygian Church of Naskorion

Kurzum Arगत was born in Halikiv and made a career in several of the native troll cults. In his youth he joined Zorak Zoran, whose warbands had little use for his curiosity and thoughtfulness. Taking the hint, he became initiated to the spirit-walking secrets of Jakaboom and searched out his ancestors in shamanic quests. During this period his visions started, and Kurzum became the "Prophet of Halikiv." Kurzum wandered throughout Halikiv and told the trolls about his visions, and that the time was nigh that Arkat Kingtroll would return to walk the surface world and lead the trolls back to power in Ralios. However, Arkat's history in Halikiv had been only brief, and a long-standing rivalry, even enmity, with his troll followers in Guhan did not help acceptance of Kurzum's preachings.

Kurzum himself was moved by his revelations, and entered the sorcerous cult of Black Arkat where he found his true calling. His fanaticism drove him into a rapid rise through that cult's hierarchy, and after a few years he became leader of the Black Arkat cult in Halikiv. Around this time he was approached by the Duke of Naskorion, who recognized Kurzum's

visions as the answer to his spiritual and political needs. Duke Rainard asked Kurzum to come to his capital in Marost and help him reform the Stygian Church of Naskorion as bishop and prophet of that church.

Accompanied by other followers of Black Arkat, adventurous trolls, and Argan Argar traders under their high priest Groushbad, plus a sizable horde of trollkin slaves, Kurzum relocated to Naskorion. On his march Kurzum was gripped by a vision of a troll castle unlike any before upon a hill before him. The hill turned out to be a deserted shrine to Zorak Zoran, and Rainard de la Faucille set about to build the castle of Zorakarkat, dedicated to Arkat the Troll.

While work on the castle proceeded, and a new cathedral was begun in Marost, Kurzum Aragat and Duke Rainard worked to convert the nobles of Naskorion to their reformed creed. However, his activities to resettle trolls from Halikiv angered the troll queens of Halikiv. They condemned Kurzum's neglect of the traditional troll matriarchy and the categorization of the Naskorion trolls into castes. Relations between Kurzum and Halikiv have cooled down since...

Nor did the trolls of Guhan applaud this development. Molshobrok, High Priest of Black Arkat in Guhan, declared Kurzum's church a human perversion. Kurzum has been forbidden to enter Guhan or Halikiv, on pain of death. His faith in his visions is unbroken, though, and he keeps preaching the advent of Arkat and his coming campaign to encompass all of Ralios.

Orktbrak

Troll Champion of Naskorion

Orktbrak is the captain of the ducal bodyguard, and among the best warriors in the duchy. He is a Death Lord of Zorak Zoran and a follower of the Stygian Church of Naskorion. Orktbrak was born in Guhan, but had to leave after running afoul of Gudebash, another influential Death Lord. Given his cult Orktbrak is astonishingly civilized and loyal to the duke. He is feared for his unrestrained violence in suppressing peasant uprisings, which regularly become gruesome bloodfeasts. To most Naskori he presents the darkest, even hellish aspects of the Stygian Church of Naskorion. Ever since an "incident" between the bodyguard and the local garrison which caused the untimely demise of thirteen ducal soldiers, Orktbrak and most of his company are stationed in Greatrock Castle, in the east. Now Orktbrak spends his time hunting down Orlanthi raiders, thereby protecting the native Naskori villages. There have been astonishingly few quarrels between the ducal bodyguard and the garrison of Greatrock, even though Saroult, Lord of Srowal, is known for his hatred of trolls.

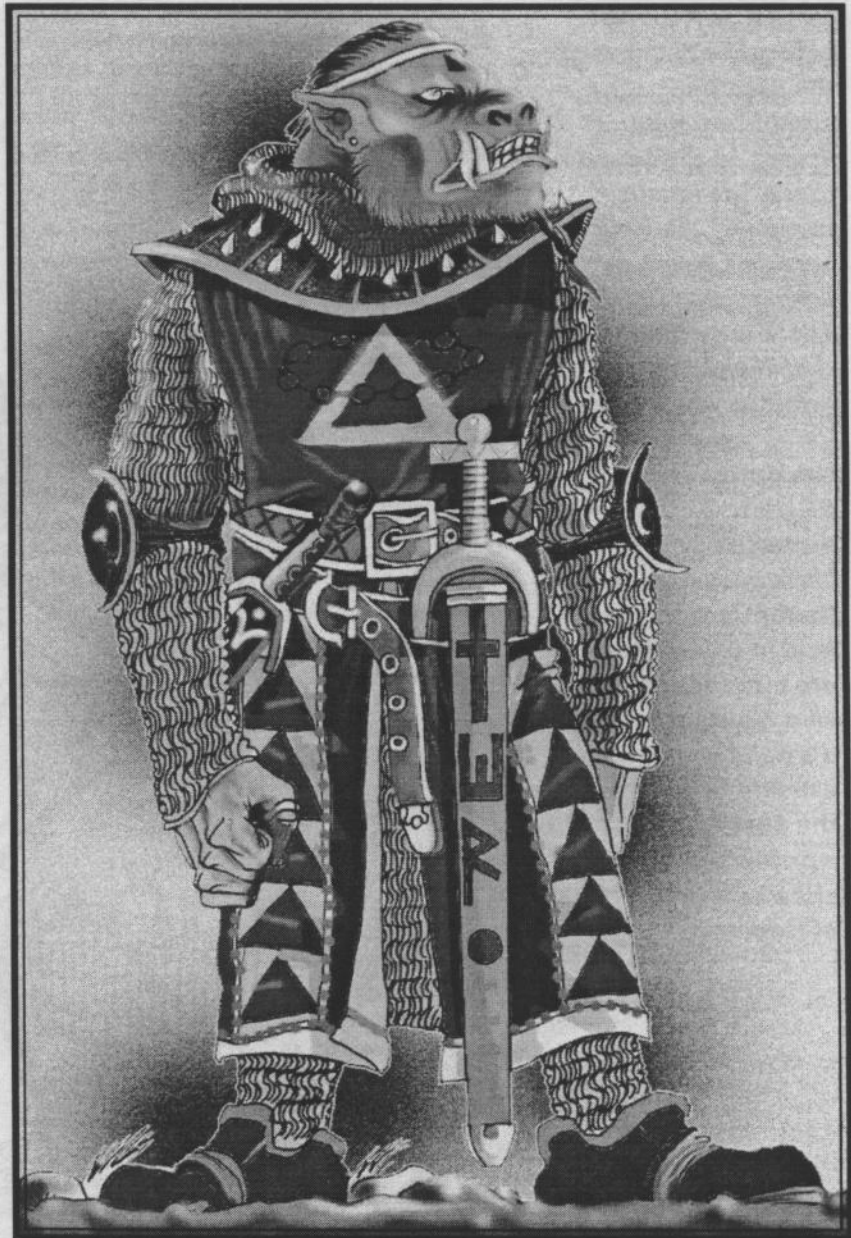
Saroult

Lord of Srowal

Saroult is one of the most powerful men in Naskorion, ranking right after the duke. He and his house have held the lordship for the county of Srowal for fifteen generations. Like the rest of his family, he belongs to one of the most obscure Arkati sects in all of Ralios. This sect is subject to much speculation, and rumour has it that Saroult is a devotee of Arkat the Deceiver.

Saroult opposed the Duke's efforts for a united Stygian Church of Naskorion from the outset, as he regards the link between Arkat worship and the trolls as nonsense, and an insult to the human Arkat sects. He is one of the few nobles in Naskorion who dares (and can afford) to gainsay Rainard in public. Like the Duke, Saroult knows that he is so firmly entrenched in his office as Lord of Srowal that Rainard cannot replace him.

The Boristi
There are still Boristi in Naskorion despite the attempt to destroy them as soon as they show up. The Boristi had many worshipers in the last few centuries, because their faith promises much more safety to the peasants than the Aeolian church can. No wonder that in the rural countryside of Naskorion the Boristi still dwell. (For more on of the secret of the Boristi see Tradetalk 2).



The Religions of Naskorion
Officially there is only one religion in Naskorion - the Stygian Church - which is a ducal state religion. This church has had many changes over the years of its existence. In the following text you will find the 'old' version as it existed before the changes of the duke and archbishop Kurzum Aragat. In the boxed text is the idealized version of the New Stygian Church as promoted by the duke. There are other churches, sects and religions which have found worshipers in Naskorion. These religions are mostly suppressed by the Naskorion officials and therefore worship is held in secret. There are also some Orlanthi who have gone back to a traditional Orlanthi worship as practiced in the East Wilds, but this worship is described elsewhere in this issue of Tradetalk.

Saroult has grown old, and less irascible, avoiding open confrontations with the duke, but he still has a firm rein on his obligations as Guardian. He hates the Orlanthi barbarians and is known to rule the Naskori farmers in his province with a hard hand. He ruthlessly stamps out any pagan worship of Orlanth he encounters in his province, and keeps an eye on the Aeolian rites of his farmers. He has never failed to protect or at least avenge them against barbarian raiders, though.

Recently he has used the ducal troll bodyguard under Orktrak stationed at his castle to stamp out secessionist tendencies among the Naskori and confuse the enemy in the east through raids. While he despises the duke's troll pets, he doesn't hesitate to use them as a weapon against the foes of Naskorion.

Ontor the Hammer Lord of Firhals

Ontor is the only noble of Naskorion of pure Naskori blood. He worships St. Orlanth, and is the only candidate to legitimately worship the Orlanth Rex aspect. His household includes the only thanes of Orlanth anywhere in Naskorion. He manages his house exactly by to the laws of Orlanth, leading it almost like a clan chieftain.

Ontor's ward consists of the eastern region south of the Doskior Valley, right to the border of the Keanos barbarian kingdom. The terrain is riddled by steep canyons and covered by dark primeval forest. There are few fertile places suitable for agriculture.

Ontor's nephew Frusbur is the bishop of St. Orlanth in the Church of Naskorion, currently quite out of favour in the duchy, and has spent the last few years at Ontor's court.

The Lord of Firhals is as hard as the country he rules. He is known as a stout conservative all over Naskorion. Although he has always distanced himself from the rebels led by Ingvor the Liberator, many rival nobles suspect him to sympathize with the rebellion, and even to work towards an alliance with Delela. There are even rumours about secret meetings between Ontor and Aruzban Ironarm.

Over the last few years, Duke Rainard repeatedly invoked Ontor's oath of fealty and demanded that he root out the rebels havens and deliver the guilty to Marost. So far the punitive raids have failed to produce the rebel leaders.

Frusbur Bishop of St. Orlanth in the Church of Naskorion

Frusbur is quite young for his position as head of St. Orlanth's sect in the Church of Naskorion. He achieved this exalted position mainly due to Ontor's intercession. Frusbur entered his office with much enthusiasm, but the change of the Stygian belief by the duke forced him to take a position of resistance towards Duke Rainard. The duke retracted all support of Frusbur's creed and actively campaigns to displace it with his new Stygian Church. Frusbur didn't give up in this frustrating situation. He soon realised that open resistance would have no chance to rescue the church from trollish influence.

Therefore Frusbur left Marost and now stays at the court of his uncle Ontor. It is said that he plans a campaign to destroy the new Stygian Church. He is rumoured to support the Naskori rebels, just like his uncle.



Ingvor the Liberator

Leader of the Orlanthi rebels

Ingvor was a thane of Ontor's household before he decided to oppose the suppression of Orlanth's creed in Naskorion. He violated his vassal's oath to Ontor when he openly called for rebellion against the duke.

Hardened by bloodshed, Ingvor has become a pure follower of Orlanth, without any regard to Malkioni creed. He incited many Naskori to follow his example and join the rebellion by reminding them of their Lightbringer roots and their true heritage, which had been destroyed by the Arkati of Naskorion. His followers are spread all over Naskorion and whisper hot rebellion. In a few places the rebels have struck, but retaliation has been bloody and excessive. Rainard de la Faucille and his bodyguard of trolls have leveled over a dozen villages, killing every inhabitant, even the livestock.

So far Ingvor has remained ahead of his pursuers. Despite a huge bounty on his head he has escaped the duke's minions again and again, and is now rumoured to hide out in the southern part of Naskorion, along with a considerable number of followers. Ontor, the guardian of that region, has repeatedly searched the terrain for traces of the rebels, but hasn't produced anything yet. Some accuse Ontor of secretly supporting the rebels.

THE STYGIAN CHURCH OF NASKORION

The Stygian Church of Naskorion was rebuilt from the remains of the old Stygian Church of Arkat's Dark Empire. The dukes of Naskorion treat the worship of St. Paslac as a kind of ancestor worship. At the time of Paslac, the last emperor, the Stygian Church was a monolithic religion in which each deity of the Lightbringer and troll pantheons had its own place.

After the destruction of the Stygian Empire by the God Learner crusade, the Stygian Church was shattered, and officially replaced by the unified Malkioni Church of the Invisible God propagated by the God Learners. Effectively, the peasants of Ralios clung to their old, semi-pagan ways, and their religion became in Naskorion more or less an Aeolian church, i.e. a Malkioni religion with Lightbringer and Orlanthi pantheon "saint" deities. The noble houses - many of which claimed descent from Paslac - maintained some forms of ancestor worship.

This peoples' church lost the trollish aspects, and the Arkat aspect was suppressed by the ever-scheming Jrusteli monks. When the God Learners of lower Ralios were drowned by the Tanier in 1049, the nobility of Naskorion (crusader-descended, but intermarried with native noble houses) "remembered" the Arkat aspects of the church to demonstrate that they were not God Learners. Some of them took part in the raiding of Seshnela after the fall of the God Learner empire.

Still the Stygian Church was mostly Aeolian, especially for the peasant caste of the Naskori. The nobility used the church as political opportunity to give the suppressed Naskori a refuge in the worship of a kind of castrated version of Orlanthi belief. The main aspect in this Church was Orlanth Thunderous and Barntar (Orlanth the peasant) as well as Ralia. Neither are warrior cults which could be a danger for the leading nobility.

The nobility focussed on ancestor worship of Paslac and Arkat (only a few worship Orlanth Rex). Normally each aspect had its own bishop. There was a Bishop of St. Orlanth - the position held now by Frusbur - with his priests and bishops of St. Arkat and St. Paslac. Furthermore there was also a position of a bishop for the darkness and troll aspects of the Stygian Church, which had been vacant for the last centuries. All these bishops are led by the head of the Stygian Church - the duke of Naskorion. In the last few years the church was heavily reformed by duke Rainard de la Faucille and the new bishop Kurzum Aragat (see boxed text).

ADVENTURE IDEAS FOR NASKORION:

Death to the Trolls

Frusbur is starting a campaign against the trolls of Naskorion. Therefore he uses the idea of Retter the Stalker and he is hiring people to try to get the trollkins under his control. He promises them equal rights and freedom. The goal of the adventurers should be to get as many trollkin under control as possible.

Freedom for Naskorion

Ingvor the Liberator is trying to hire Orlanthi warriors from Delela, Keanos and Saug. Therefore he sends some of his men to the clans in the East Wilds to convince them to fight for the freedom of the Orlanthi in Naskorion. This is a very dangerous task, because the clans hate the Naskori so much.

Ontor the traitor

Duke Rainard commands some of his men to bring him proof that Ontor the Hammer is a traitor. His men should try to capture Ingvor and bring proof that Ingvor is supported by Ontor. If they should learn that Ontor isn't a traitor they should made up the proof of his guilt - Rainard wants to get rid of Ontor.

The Trollparty

Kurzum Aragat promises the peasants of Naskorion that they will be reborn through the Arkat ceremony of rebirth. Therefore he sends some of his subjects to the rural lands to find peasants who want to become a troll (as did Arkat). After their rebirth, they will change their caste and become warriors in the name of Arkat. In the ceremony the peasant will get eaten by the trolls to achieve rebirth through St. Kyger Litor. In fact Kurzum is not able to give rebirth, he wants to throw a splendid party for his troll companions with real good food.

ARKAT - SECTS

Besides the state church, some of the noble houses follow different sects of Arkat. After the destruction of the God Learners in Ralios, the Naskorion nobility tried to distance themselves as much as possible from the God Learners and gave support to various sects of Arkat. Over the last centuries this support bound these sects more or less together with the supporting noble house.

Arkat the Teacher

This urban sect remembers Arkat as the patron of crafts and arts, and claims that he brought many crafts from his lands in the west. Various guilds include shrines to this aspect in their chapterhouses, and in some guilds the sect's wizards teach the basic magics for the guild secrets.

THE NEW STYGIAN CHURCH OF NASKORION

History

Arkat was the greatest hero ever. His life's goal was the destruction of the devil, who he called Gbaji. The Stygian Church was founded by Arkat after he destroyed Gbaji in Dorastor.

During his career Arkat had to collect a lot of knowledge and experience to achieve his inhuman goal. He went through many personal transformations. He was born on Brithos, where he was brought up by elves. He fought as a soldier for the Brithini. For his success against the vampire king of Tanisor he got a lot of fame, but he also realized how godless the Brithini were. He changed sides to Gerlant Flamesword and underwent his first transformation: he became a Hrestoli knight. He rose rapidly through all the castes, and became the general of the Seshnegi Crusade against Chaos. But the Hrestoli were blind towards the other powerful gods of Glorantha. Arkat revealed himself to the enemy of his life for the first time - Gbaji the Deceiver. He heroquested and was trapped in hell by demons. There he was saved by Harmast Barefoot on his Lightbringers Quest. For this reason he became a hero of Orlanth, called Arkat Humathson from then on. For a long time he fought side by side with the warriors of Orlanth and Humath against his enemy, Gbaji the devil. But this transformation was not the last on his path to destroy Gbaji. He was not complete.

Therefore he took the step towards the power of Darkness. Kyger Litor, the mother of all trolls, absorbed him, and gave birth to Arkat the Troll. Now he was complete. With the help of Zorak Zoran the avenger he was totally complete. He now had the elves' feeling for nature, the discipline of the Brithini, the knowledge of the churches of the West, an understanding of the individualism and community of the Orlanth culture, and the power of the trolls. Now he was able to face the devil and destroy him. He went to Dorastor with his friends and in an inhuman fight of power he destroyed the devil Gbaji. Then he returned to Ralios to found his Dark Empire and the Stygian Church. Finally he became a god through his apotheosis.

His empire was a realm for all races of Ralios. There was peace between humans and trolls. Together they are strong. But the demonic God Learners destroyed this peaceful empire. They also destroyed the friendship of the races. Only the last emperor, Paslac the Holy, resisted these infamous demons. He made his last stand in Naskorion. There he was slain on banks of the Daskior River. But his descendants survived in this country. They held the knowledge of Arkat's Stygian Church in their hearts. They knew the prophecy that in time HE will be reborn and HE will rising up as the emperor of Ralios again. Then the only TRUE STYGIAN Church will reveal itself.

This vision came to Duke Rainard de Faucille of Naskorion, the only true descendent of Arkat's empire, and to the troll priest of Black Arkat, Kurzum Aragat of Halikiv, through the sendings of Argan Argar. Together they erected the fortress of Zorakarkat, the fortress of friends.

Theology

The Stygian Church believes that there is only one Great God, the Invisible God - the creator of the world. But at his side are other Gods who deserve faith and worship for their support and help. The Stygian Church follows the laws of Malkion the Prophet. Therefore the sorcerous spell of Tapping is forbidden.

The church believes in four castes into which both humans and trolls are born. The four castes are those of peasants (trollkin), warriors, priests and lords. Everybody who proves himself worthy through his abilities and honourable behaviour can migrate from his caste in the 'true church' of Arkat. The growing class of burghers in the city demands some of the rights of the knight caste for themselves (like merchants bearing arms) but are counted as peasant caste. The Stygian Church views men and women as equal in all aspects.

The enemy of the invisible god and Arkat is Gbaji, the devil and deceiver. Gbaji leads an army of demons and Chaos gods. In the church doctrine Chaos is the worst enemy which always seeks to destroy the true faith.

Hierarchy

The leader of the new Stygian Church is the duke of Naskorion, Rainard de la Faucille, aided by the bishops of St. Arkat and St. Paslac, the bishop of Arkat the Troll and the bishop of St. Orlanth. At the moment Kurzum Aragat holds the positions of St. Arkat and St. Arkat the Troll - he is the holy prophet of this church. The position of St. Orlanth is held by Frusbur. Major church matters can only be decided by all three in concert.

Important Gods and Demigods

Followers of the Stygian Church believe in Malkion and Hrestol as prophets of the Invisible god. The most important saint is St. Arkat - the hero of humans and trolls. He is the original founder of the Stygian Church. The most important martyr is St. Paslac - the last emperor of the Dark Empire. He was the perfect regent, and all the dukes of Naskorion are his descendants.

Besides these western saints the Stygian Church also reveres the troll gods Zorak Zoran, the destroyer of Chaos; Kyger Litor, Mother of Arkat the troll; and Argan Argar, god of friendship between humans and trolls. The lesser gods are Orlanth, father of all clans; Ralia, Mother of the land; Humath, warrior of honour; and the Lightbringers.



GROWING PAINS



The three scenarios of this mini-campaign provide a framework for adventures stretching over several years. The first scenario is included in this issue of Tradetalk; the remaining two will follow next issue. These adventures are intended to introduce the East Wilds as a campaign setting. For this reason we strongly suggest that player characters be local-born. We have included a description of the Otter clan as a home locale for new PCs. If foreign adventurers or more experienced Orlanthi are preferred, some changes in the background and/or plot are necessary. Some suggestions for possible changes are included in the introduction to each scenario.

The basic structure of the plot follows classic lines: PCs are tricked into doing something which initially seems beneficial, but in the long run turns out to have disastrous effects, and can only be rectified through heroic efforts on their part. The purpose of the exercise is to teach the characters (and their players) something about Orlanthi virtues, in particular about taking responsibility for their own actions.

The first scenario begins with the player characters about to undergo the final stage in their initiation into the cult of Orlanth: a journey to the Other Side, the local mythical terrain. Normally, this is just a quick visit, the main purpose of which is to impress young Orlanthi with the reality of the magical and religious side of existence. On this journey, however, things do not go as expected. Instead of the guide they expected to meet (a sylph, flint slinger or other wind being), the PCs are met by a strange red-headed woman who is not

very helpful, even though she claims to be. She informs the PCs that their mission is to find a poem. Four entities or groups each hold one fragment of this poem. Once assembled, the poem provides a clue to the second scenario. In fact, the poetry hunt has nothing to do with Orlanthi initiation. It is part of a scheme devised by a being who calls himself the Wise One: a Riddler, a servant of Osentalka, who wants the PCs to find and use the wheat hidden in the temple. To this end he has enlisted the aid of the red-headed woman (who is really a spirit of Disorder), planted the fragments of the poem, and intruded into the ritual that brought the PCs to the Other Side. Now only he can return them home, and he will do so only when they have pieced together the poem.

The Wise One is a kind of ghost. Once a brilliant agricultural researcher by the name of Alchangir, with plant improvement as his particular field of expertise, he can find no rest as long as his last invention remains untried. His motives are basically altruistic; he is firmly convinced that "transwheat", as he has called it, is a great boon to mankind, and has never considered the possibility that it might be less than perfect.

After the first scenario is concluded, time passes until the GM feels the party is ready for the next stage. This period of time is very flexible, and the PCs can have numerous adventures, becoming experienced enough to deal with the challenges to come. Use this opportunity wisely, as the timeline between scenarios 2 and 3 is fixed and unrelenting...

Alternative Introductions

This scenario is very hard to run with non-Orlanthi characters. Outlanders who have been adopted into the clan and wish to convert, becoming initiates of Orlanth, are possible PCs. For those experienced adventurers who already are worshippers of the Orlanth pantheon, this adventure could be run as a more general magical journey, not having anything to do with initiation. The motivation for such a quest will be based on the party's composition and goals.

The midst of Storm season comes around, bringing torrential rainstorms with it. One night, the PCs are troubled by dreams featuring the poem that they found in the first scenario. The following morning, the local landmark known as the Rock has partially crumbled, revealing part of an ancient building: the ruins of a temple to Osentalka. The second scenario focuses on the exploration of those parts of the temple complex that have not yet caved in. There the PCs find a number of mysterious objects, some of which are dangerous, but first and foremost they discover barrels of transwheat. This is the treasure alluded to in the poem.

When the new grain is tried (on a small scale at first), it is found to yield much larger crops than normal wheat. Soon the entire clan is planting transwheat and enjoying great prosperity. However, there is a cloud to this silver lining. This strain of wheat has gained its increased size and fertility through an infusion of Chaos. Alchangir was convinced that chaotic energies could be harnessed for the good of mankind, and after many failed attempts came up with an apparent success. But Chaos is essentially unpredictable; after the transwheat has been in use for a while the taint, which at first is so small as to be undetectable, gives rise to a new mutation: a hitherto unknown disease. Before long people start falling ill, hallucinating wildly and teetering on the brink of insanity. Attempts to return to the old ways fail since Ralia is displeased; it becomes impossible to grow any kind of wheat at all on the clan's lands. The PCs are, somewhat unfairly, be blamed for this catastrophe and forced to flee their home in some haste.

In the third scenario the PCs attempt to repair the damage they have inadvertently done. Seeking expert advice on how to avert divine wrath, they go to the obvious place: the nearest 'big city', Istakax. There they learn that the only cure is to go on a Sacred Quest that will convince Ralia to restore the fertility of their lands. They have several options as to which quest to go on; depending on their attitudes, each offers different obstacles. If the PCs succeed (though probably not without a good deal of hardship), they return home, hailed as saviours.

THE INITIATION

Those who would become adults this year are, after a week of instruction and testing, about to undergo the final and most secret part of their initiation. Halvar Stormeye leads them to an old altar in a valley among the Barren Hills. It is Windsday, on Death week of Sea season. A gentle rain falls through the mild breeze. The sky is covered with clouds; the snow melted just a few days ago. Far off, a shadow cat yowls. The young Orlanthi nervously finger the weapons and leather armour loaned them by their families. The paint on their faces and arms (in the appropriate colours) is still sharp and clear despite the rain. Halvar turns towards them and raises his voice...

HALVAR SPEAKS

"We are the Otter clan. We came here a long time ago, when there was famine throughout Delela, and here we met the three otters who taught us how to survive even when Ernalda is ill. But though the fish is an important part of our daily lives we must not forget that Orlanth and Ernalda are the most important; we must not become so impudent that we turn our backs on sheep and wheat.

We are not as many as the Kott clan, but we are braver, wiser and above all more honourable than them. This makes us a greater and stronger people. But we must not become hardened by our superiority: Orlanth's virtues of generosity and justice apply equally toward the Kott clan. Even if they are devious and shift.

As this will be your most important test, I cannot tell you what to expect. But I can repeat what is expected of you. An Orlanthi must always take action, even if it is not always the right one. Seeing to it that something happens is the main thing; mistakes are made to be corrected, and also to learn from. You will probably make many mistakes, but this is no cause for concern as long as you maintain the virtues of Orlanth and set things right in the end. Orlanth himself grew through acknowledging his errors and correcting them."

Halvar raises his arms into the air and calls upon Orlanth to guide his worshippers on the right path. As they have been instructed, the PCs repeat this prayer. A powerful whirlwind rises around them, blurring their vision: Halvar, the altar, even the hills fade from sight. They can feel themselves being lifted from the ground and carried up and away at great speed...

At this point in the ritual the point of POW required of all initiates is expended.

ON THE OTHER SIDE

When the PCs come to their senses again, they find themselves standing in another valley in a mountainous landscape. On a nearby mountaintop, a woman can be seen, beckoning to them. As they climb towards her, they realise that the surroundings are very much like their home, but the stream is a rapidly running river, the woods are much greener and the hills are mountains.

This is the magical reflection of the Otter clan's territory. Everything encountered is clearer, more beautiful, more dangerous and in general more extreme than on the material plane. Instead of their own clan the PCs will meet wind children who live on platforms in the trees and keep sheep with blue wool; instead of the Kott clan there is a group of clever and conniving shadow cats; instead of the Otter people there are huge (SIZ 8-18) otters; and so forth.

It is important to realise that the Other World is very subjective. The attitudes of its inhabitants and the nature of events largely depend on the purpose of the visit. Thus, since the PCs expect to be tested, and the ritual invoked was also aimed towards that purpose, the encounters they have will mainly be in the nature of tests. The PCs' preconceptions about the world also play a part. For instance, members of the Kott clan going through a similar rite would probably *not* see the reflections of their own people as devious and sneaky, but clever and funny instead. They would also meet really stuck-up and boring wind children.

Another thing to remember is that there is no time in the realms of myth. The PCs will arrange their experiences in a temporal sequence anyway, but it seems to them that the passage of time is very dependant on attention. Boring tasks like walking from place to place (or climbing a mountain) take barely any time at all, while a conversation can drag on for as long as it is interesting (even in the midst of some other activity, like combat).

OLIVIA

The woman is dressed in white, bearing no arms or armour. She has bright red hair (not the reddish brown shade common among East Wilders), skin as pale as Gastur's, and is quite alluring. She greets the PCs with a little speech.

"My name is Olivia, and I am here to help you. But there are certain laws I must follow, and certain things I do not know, so I will not be able to help you always. Your task is to find a poem that was lost a long time ago. Different fragments of the poem are known to different groups, but you are needed to forge the fragments into a whole once more. When you have accomplished this, you must bring it to the Wise One. I believe one fragment is known by those who live down there." She points towards the area corresponding to the PCs' home.

As explained in the synopsis, Olivia does *not* have anything to do with Orlanth or the initiation; she is an agent of the Riddler. To complicate matters further, the Riddler's own naiveté has blinded him to the possibility that Olivia might have a private agenda to follow. She is forced by the terms of her binding to help the PCs acquire the poem, but will otherwise try to sow dissension within the group. To disrupt their unity she will play the characters off against each other in various ways; a favourite ploy is to use her sexuality against men, creating jealousy, while evoking sisterhood with women, turning them against the men. She will try to inflate the pride of those who succeed at various tasks, implying that they are better than their comrades. Her stratagems will work best if she seems genuinely helpful at first, escalating tensions within the group as the scenario progresses. It also helps to keep the players confused if her helpfulness against external threats is emphasised; if the PCs are losing a fight, she will step in at the last moment and turn the tables with spells.

THE HIPPOGRIFFS

While travelling towards the lowlands, the party passed under a cleft in the mountainside. As they do, a number (equal to the number of PCs) of gold-shimmering hippogriffs fly out, circle down and land next to the humans. These creatures have the heads, bodies and hind legs of horses, but the wings and forelegs of eagles. The PCs have no idea what these beings are; hippogriffs have been extinct since before Time began, and now only exist in the timeless world of myths.

The hippogriffs state that they are seeking "the light which time has hid" and ask if the PCs have any knowledge about it. This is actually a line of the poem, but the players must figure this out for themselves. Even if they do, and say so out loud, the hippogriffs do not find such information very helpful and issue a challenge instead. Their contention is that Yelm is superior to Orlanth, and that this can be shown through a series of contests between them and the PCs. For each contest, one hippogriff and one human are paired off. If the PC wins, he receives a golden egg (the size of a normal hen's egg, worth 100 pennies) as a prize; if he loses he must forfeit some of his magical force (3 magic points). Olivia is appointed judge.

The first contest is of dancing.

The hippogriff rears up on his hooves and performs a stately formal dance (with 90% skill).

The second contest is of music.

A harp materialises out of thin air, and a hippogriff plucks an elegant ballad with his claws (91%). The hippogriffs can provide instruments for the PCs, but only harps or lyres. Under the terms of this sky-air contest, an Orlanthi who focuses his mind properly (an INTx3 roll) can materialise a drum or bagpipes.

The third contest is of magic.

A hippogriff summons a Sunspears that blasts a small boulder to pieces. If the PC contestant can come up with a proper prayer to Orlanth (a Ceremony skill roll and a POWx5 roll) a mighty Thunderbolt strikes the mountainside, precipitating a small avalanche (nobody is injured). If only one of the rolls is successful, a puny thunderbolt appears and the hippogriffs win.

The final contest is of weapons.

Clumsily gripping his bow (he only has 67%), the hippogriff contestant shoots at a tree some distance off (but within effective range). If the PCs have lost all previous contests (quite likely), Olivia decides some cheating is in order. She uses a Sureshot, Bladesharp 14 or something of that sort, but do so with such subtlety that only the beneficiary has a chance to notice it. He may choose to finish this contest in a peaceful manner (i.e. chopping down a tree with his Bladesharp sword) or a violent one (killing a hippogriff). The winner is praised by Olivia as the saviour of the party's honour and the stuff of which heroes are made.

PLEASE NOTE:

The rules for encumbrance and fatigue are not used in this scenario or those parts of the third scenario that take place on the God Plane.

Adapting To Party Strengths
The combat encounters given (trolls and broos) are intended to challenge an inexperienced party. If older and tougher PCs are used, increase the number of opponents to give the party a challenge. It may also be necessary to improve the shadow cats' skill levels if the PCs are good at non-combat skills. If, on the other hand, the party is having trouble with the bare minimum of enemies, Olivia is there to lend a hand.

THE WIND CHILDREN

Continuing on their journey, the party comes down from the mountains and heads, per Olivia's directions, towards the river. As they reach the fringe of wind child territory, they spot two of these beings sitting in a windblown pine tree, having a heated argument. They are both very handsome, with magnificent silvery wings. The quarrel concerns a bag of sand, which they both claim to have found first. One says that he saw it first, the other that he grabbed it first.

"If I hadn't spotted it, you never would have found it!"

"I would too! It's your own fault for shouting and pointing at it."

"That was just to tell you it's mine!"

"Doesn't matter, I'd have seen it anyway and gotten to it faster than you!"

Et cetera. Olivia asks the PCs to judge the dispute. If they suggest splitting the sand, the wind children condescendingly explain that the sand isn't magical, the bag is. While the argument is going on, lightning unexpectedly

strikes a nearby tree, splitting it down the middle. Burnt into the inside of the trunk are runes for the words "to yield it now is bid". Olivia and the wind children can read. Various endings to this encounter are possible.

The PCs might ignore the whole situation, now that they have the line from the poem. In this case, the wind children kill each other and the bag disappears. It later shows up in the trickster's possession—he eats it before anyone can react.

The group might grab the bag for themselves; if they do, they must fight the wind children. The bag's use is incomprehensible, and it disappears when the PCs return to their own world.

If they judge in one of the wind children's favour, or Solomonicly decree that they take turns using the bag, this is grudgingly accepted.

The most Orlanthi conclusion is that the wind child thane should decide. Sarax Threevoice lives in a cluster of huge trees, his housecarls are six muscular wind children armed with long, slender swords. He greets the PCs as cousins, offering them water and

mutton. Regarding the bag, he rules that it belongs to the entire clan (i. e. he keeps it and lends it to anyone who needs it). Sarax also congratulates the PCs for their wisdom in bringing this matter to his attention.

THE TRICKSTER

Olivia suggests that another part of the poem might be found with the clan of cats. On the way there, the party finds a tall oak. It is in the same place as the tree where Bure saved Gniffel. A strange creature is hanging upside-down, by its knees, from one of the lower branches. It has a hedgehog's head and body, the arms and legs of a monkey, and a large red behind.

"Well met, warriors. For you I have some gifts," he says and gestures, apparently picking an object out of thin air. He then opens his hand to show a hazelnut. "If you eat this you will always be the very picture of health." (+2 CON, never tires, never falls ill) "But if you plant it, a hazel shrub will grow, whose nuts each equal a whole meal."

Olivia's counsel is that the bravest PC should be given this nut. She points at the oak and suggests that whoever can climb the highest will have proven his superior courage. If the players fall for this, Climb rolls are in order. The first two are made with no penalty, after which there is a cumulative -10% for each roll. A missed roll means the climber is stuck and will have to try a different way up, three consecutive failures mean that no further upward progress is possible. A fumbled roll results in a fall, with 1d4 of damage for each previously successful roll. Whatever the outcome, the trickster speaks again.

"I also have a Cloudstone here for you. If you sharpen a weapon with this, it will cut through your foes like grass." This causes double damage dice for the duration of this and the next scenario; the stone is only good for one use. "If, on the other hand, you crumble it and spread it to the winds, your home will be safe from hailstorms for many years." (10 years, to be precise)

Olivia thinks that the best fighter has the most use for this item. A duel between the aspirants, fought until all but one have yielded, would decide the matter.

"If you as a group have more than (a number higher than the actual one) brothers and sisters, I will grant you a third gift. In this box is something that will make your fields give better crops." While the PCs confer about this, he chats with Olivia in a strange language.



If the PCs lie, claiming that they have that many siblings, the trickster says "Well, if you have such large families you need a lot of food. Here you go." In the box is some ordinary sheep manure. Laughing like crazy, the strange being climbs up into the tree and disappears among the leaves. If they tell the truth, he will say goodbye and wish them many happy returns, whatever it is they are up to. Should they ask about poems, he only knows one:

**Bolibompa
Bolibombompa
Bolibompa
Bolibombompa
Will you look at That
What a lot of Fat
The Shadow Cats**

Proceeding into what they feel to be Kott country, the PCs encounter three shadow cats. These seem friendly enough, inviting the party to their home for a little midnight competition. The hospitable cats live in a gigantic heap of sticks, which no PC is small enough to crawl into. Next to the heap is a hen-house, also built of sticks.

Their thane's name is Fremurr. He is big as a lynx and has thick grey fur with black spots. Fremurr is in the habit of speaking in rhyme, and also of rhyming with whatever is said to him. After treating his guests to water and roast chicken, he declares the start of the competition. "For a prize we set the possession we value most, against the one you value best. This silver torque is the favourite of your host, what is your wager on this test?" Best out of seven events wins. Olivia is appointed arbiter; she is partial to the PCs.

1. Be first to the top of the heap.

Three Climb rolls. The competing cat Simirir has 70%.

2. Rip a broadcloth to shreds.

Each cloth can take 20 hits, and an attack roll is needed to inflict any effective damage on it. The cat Geraur gets 3 Rip attacks/MR at 65%, doing 1d3 with each. Daggers and shortwords get 2 attacks/MR, other swords just 1.

3. Argue for/against wearing boots.

The player gets to think up arguments for his character; the GM takes the role of Urar the Wise, who thinks that boots make prowling impossible, make your feet stink etc.

4. Walk past the hen-house without waking the hens.

Two Sneak rolls, Hmanar has 55%.

5. Spot an egg in the grass. First successful Scan roll wins. Since it is night, all humans have a -30% penalty except Gastur, who gets his normal chance. Arga the cat can use her full 40% without any problems.

6. Heal the wounded hen fastest.

It has taken 4 hit points of damage. Sim the cat healer has a 35% First Aid skill.

7. Guess at riddles.

Each contestant speaks one riddle, the one who needs the fewest guesses wins (not getting it at all counts as five guesses). Fremurr's riddle is "When does death save your life?" The answer is "When you parry with a sword."

If the PCs win, Olivia once again has ideas about what to do with the prize: the most agile and courageous Orlanthi should have it. Beyond the heap of sticks is the start of a crevice that gets wider and wider further away. The one who can jump over at the widest place gets the trophy. Looking down the crevice, there is no bottom to be seen. The torque is only silver-plated tin, by the way (1 ENC, worth about 20 pennies).

The cats, being Orlanthi, naturally know a lot of poems, but not the one the party is after. "A 'lost' poem? Better check with the otters, then. They've really lost it." If the PCs wonder why Olivia led them here, she points out that she never claimed to be omniscient.

THE OTTERS

When the adventurers travel into Otter People territory, they hear a cry for help. On investigation, a band of dark trolls (equal in numbers to the PCs) is found. The men of darkness have captured three otters, one each with yellow, blue and red fur. If the otters are freed, they take the PCs to a cliff wall, where something is carved. Olivia or the otters can read what it says: "gifts the earth will bear".

If asked about other parts of the poem, the otters suggest talking to various groups the PCs have already met. The only new clue they have is that the Earth Woman, who lives where the Ernalda shrine is located in the material world, is very knowledgeable.

THE EARTH WOMAN

A robust but still beautiful middle-aged woman with blonde hair in a long braid, she is dressed entirely in green. She greets the party at the entrance to her underground abode, and then explains that she would be grateful for their help with a little problem that she has. Her assistant, a little brownie, has disappeared and she has reason to believe

he has been kidnapped. When she sought to divine his whereabouts, the message "it awaits in Asrelia's care" resulted. She knows that a witch lives in a nearby cave with some subordinates.

If the PCs want to help, the cave is easy enough to find. Inside, it is pitch dark. In the entrance cavern, no light can exist. Horrible bear-like roars and heavy sighs float through the dark. As soon as all the PCs are inside, a net is thrown over them, leaving them hopelessly entangled. Someone or something gathers up the net and its contents; the party is carried away and dumped in another room. The sound of a heavy door slamming shut is heard. Before too long, a torch is lit and the PCs can see that they are not the only prisoners. There is a large black man, a normal-sized blue man, a small yellow man, an ugly little red humanoid (a red elf) and a brownie. All except the brownie are armed, the blue and yellow men are also wearing armour.

"Damn it," says the black one, who is holding the torch. "A lot of light wasted on a bunch of stupid pale folk."

"They smell bad, too," squeaks the red elf.

"Oh well, maybe now the witch will eat them first," suggests the blue person.

"Hmm, fried white meat in sweet-and-sour sauce. It's worth a try, I'm really hungry," says the yellow one.

"Who-who-who are you?" stammers the brownie.

All except the brownie continue bickering and squabbling until the PCs can convince them otherwise. The thing to realise here is that they are all caught in the same trap and should co-operate in order to get out of it. If everyone helps push at the door (which is huge), it will budge enough for the bolt to be seen. It is so high up that a human pyramid must be built to reach it, with a base of three, then two, and finally one at the top. Once the door is open, escape is easy. Noises can be heard from the inner caverns, sneaking in the opposite direction will get the group outside.

Well away from the cave, the strange people go their separate ways, but the brownie stays with the PCs. The Earth Woman thanks them for their assistance and offers them food, healing and rest. This is the only place in this scenario where the party can regain magic points. Olivia now reveals that the Wise One sits on top of the mountain by the river.

DARKNESS

AGAINST CHAOS

Before the party reaches the mountain, they come across a battle being fought between 4 trolls and (3 + number of PCs) broos. If they decide to help the trolls, it will be a tough fight. If asked what they should do, Olivia just shrugs and looks bored. The trolls are very grateful if their side triumphs, praising the PCs' courage. They give the Orlanthi a magical stone, which when thrown to the ground produces a field of protective darkness (10 metre radius, 5 minute duration, one use).

MEETING

THE WISE ONE

The mountain's position is equivalent to that of the Rock in the normal world, but here it is a full 200 metres tall. On the top stands a short, fat and bald man dressed in a grey robe. When the PCs come up to him, the air around them is becalmed and a hush falls on the surroundings.



He looks them over carefully and then speaks:

*"It awaits in Asrelia's care
the light which time has hid
gifts the earth will bear
to yield it now is bid"*

He will answer any questions with questions of his own, for example:

*"Who are you?" "Who are you?"
"What is the meaning of the poem?"
"What is the meaning of life?"*

He will then ask them a riddle: "What grows better than wheat?" The answer is: "Better wheat!" This is an Illumination riddle for the skill of Plant Lore (see Dorastor for a description of Illumination). The riddle will be asked of each PC in turn, and for each wrong answer the Riddler will grow to twice his previous height. When everyone has failed or if someone gets it right, whichever comes first, a whirlwind appears and takes the PCs home. They find themselves precariously perched on top of the Rock.

EPILOGUE

When the PCs recount their adventures to Halvar, he will be perplexed. Never before in the history of the clan has there been such an extensive and difficult initiatory quest. Normally, a much more helpful guide will steer the initiates through a relatively simple task. If the PCs discuss this with other Orlanthi initiates, they hear stories like the following:

Nagir Slouchear "...it was her, the earth woman standing alone without her digging stick and I offered to get it back. Me and Lardur tracked down the two trollkin, taking it from them was easy. She thanked us and we came back to the barren hills right away. In..."

Harsan Longlegs "...and my two friends, Jorm and Gard met a sylph who called himself Bluestorm, he showed us around where the wind children lived and then took us to a mountain where some horse-things lived. We riddled for a while, and we got three right but they only got two, so we..."

If they collect enough stories, they hear about nearly every being that they encountered. The exceptions are that nobody has ever met a red-headed woman or a wise bald man.

Halvar proclaims the party full-fledged initiates, and as part of their education goes over the different encounters with them, explaining the proper Orlanthi behaviour in each case. Most of his points are obvious, but the following clarifications might be useful:

Refusing to accept a prize won from the hippogriffs through cheating is very honourable, just and generous. Killing a hippogriff as part of the contest is nominally Orlanthi, but in a very rash and immature manner. Attacking on sight or refusing the contest is not correct behaviour.

Saving the trickster's gifts for the whole clan's benefit is both generous and wise (it also results in other benefits, see below).

Refusing the shadow cats' invitation or contest shows lack of piety and courage, respectively.

Helping the trolls against the broos is extremely courageous. Avoiding the fight carries no stigma, the PCs are not expected to be foolhardy.

When Loran learns that this initiation was unusually strenuous, he feels sorry for the PCs and grants them 100 hours of free training. For each of the trickster's gifts they bring back, they get another 100 hours. A gold egg will also buy 100 hours' training. Skills for which teachers are available include: Climb, Dodge, Jump, Speak Delelan, Speak Stormspeech, Orate, Animal Lore, Plant Lore,

Mineral Lore, Scan, Hide, Sneak, Ceremony, Enchant, Summon, Battleaxe Attack/Parry, Broadsword Attack/Parry, Dagger Attack/Parry and Self Bow Attack.

If they give the clan both the nut and the cloudstone, they also get one spirit spell each, up to 4 points in strength, from either Orlanth or Ernalda. If they only deliver one of the items, they get a 1 point spell each. The PCs' families will let them keep the equipment they were loaned for the initiation.

STATS

Hippogriffs

Leader

STR 31 CON 16 SIZ 26 INT 15
POW 20 DEX 19 APP 18
Move: 6/12 Fatigue: 47 Hit Points: 21
Magic Points: 20 DEX SR: 2

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Bite	5	63	1d10
Left Claw	5	47	1d6+3d6
Right Claw	5	41	1d6+3d6

Spirit Magic: (120%): Detect Gold, Heal 6, Light.

Divine Magic: Sunspear.

Skills: Ceremony 87, Dance 61, Fly 93, Orate 74, Poetry 41, Play Harp 56, Scan 74, Sing 71.

Notes: Attacks with bite and both claws in each round.

HIT POINT LOCATIONS

Head	AP 3	HP 7
L Front Leg	AP 3	HP 6
R Front Leg	AP 3	HP 6
Left Wing	AP 3	HP 6
Right Wing	AP 3	HP 6
Fore Quarters	AP 3	HP 9
Hind Quarters	AP 3	HP 9
Left Hind Leg	AP 3	HP 6
Right Hind Leg	AP 3	HP 6

Others

STR 28 CON 13 SIZ 22 INT 13
POW 13 DEX 16 APP (16)
Move: 6/12 Fatigue: 41 Hit Points: 18
Magic Points: 13 DEX SR: 2

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Bite	5	40	1d10
Left Claw	5	35	1d6+2d6
Right Claw	5	35	1d6+2d6

Spirit Magic: (74%): Heal 3, Light.

Skills: Fly 72, others as stated in the scenario.

Notes: Attacks with bite and both claws in each round.

HIT POINT LOCATIONS

Head	AP 3	HP 6
Left Front Leg	AP 3	HP 5
Right Front Leg	AP 3	HP 5
Left Wing	AP 3	HP 5
Right Wing	AP 3	HP 5
Fore Quarters	AP 3	HP 8
Hind Quarters	AP 3	HP 8
Left Hind Leg	AP 3	HP 5
Right Hind Leg	AP 3	HP 5

Wind Children

Number 1

STR 7 CON 12 SIZ 7 INT 14
POW 18 DEX 19 APP 15
Move: 3/10 Fatigue: 19 Hit Points: 10
Magic Points: 18 DEX SR: 2

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	AP
Rapier	7	41/44	1d6+1	8
Sling	2	37/-	1d8	

Spirit Magic: (107%): Disruption, Farsee 1, Heal 2, Shimmer 3.

Skills: Dodge 40, Fly 95, Hide 37, Orate 19, Scan 41.

HIT POINT LOCATIONS

Head	AP 0	HP 4
Left Arm	AP 0	HP 3
Right Arm	AP 0	HP 3
Left Wing	AP 0	HP 3
Right Wing	AP 0	HP 3
Chest	AP 0	HP 5
Abdomen	AP 0	HP 4
Left Leg	AP 0	HP 4
Right Leg	AP 0	HP 4

Number 2

STR 8 CON 13 SIZ 7 INT 12
POW 17 DEX 18 APP 17
Move: 3/10 Fatigue: 21 Hit Points: 10
Magic Points: 17 DEX SR: 2

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage	AP
Rapier	7	40/47	1d6+1	8
Sling	2	41/-	1d8	

Spirit Magic: (98%): Bladesharp 1, Heal 2, Speedart.

Skills: Dodge 39, Fly 97, Hide 36, Orate 19, Scan 47.

Shadow Cats

Fremurr

STR 12 CON 16 SIZ 6 INT 17
POW 27 DEX 28 APP (13)
Move: 8 Fatigue: 28 Hit Points: 11
Magic Points: 27 DEX SR: 1

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Claw	7	93	1d6
Bite	10	99	1d10
Rip	7	89	2d6

Spirit Magic: (166%): Disruption, Heal 2, Ironhand 4, Mobility 4, Shimmer 6.

Divine Magic: Identify Scent x 4, Wind Words.

Skills: Climb 124, Dodge 130, Hide 100, Jump 172, Listen 121, Orate 101, Scan 141, Search 115, Sneak 102.

Notes: First strikes with both claws simultaneously, following up with a bite 3 SR later. If both claws hit, the cat hangs on and rips instead in the next round, while continuing to bite.

HIT POINT LOCATIONS

Head	AP 0	HP 4
Left Front Leg	AP 0	HP 3
Right Front Leg	AP 0	HP 3
Fore Quarters	AP 0	HP 5
Hind Quarters	AP 0	HP 5
Left Hind Leg	AP 0	HP 3
Right Hind Leg	AP 0	HP 3

Clan Cats

STR 8 CON 14 SIZ 3 INT 10
POW 21 DEX 24 APP (10)
Move: 8 Fatigue: 22 Hit Points: 9
Magic Points: 21 DEX SR: 1

Weapon	SR	Attk%	Damage
Claw	7	56	1d6-1d4
Bite	10	41	1d10-1d4
Rip	7	65	2d6-1d4

Spirit Magic: (123%): Mobility 2, Shimmer 3.

Skills: Dodge 70, others as stated in the scenario.

HIT POINT LOCATIONS

Head	AP 0	HP 3
Left Front Leg	AP 0	HP 2
Right Front Leg	AP 0	HP 2
Fore Quarters	AP 0	HP 4
Hind Quarters	AP 0	HP 4
Left Hind Leg	AP 0	HP 2
Right Hind Leg	AP 0	HP 2

Dark Trolls

STR 16 CON 10 SIZ 18 INT 13
POW 10 DEX 10 APP 10
Move: 3 Fatigue: 26 Hit Points: 14
Magic Points: 10 DEX SR: 3

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage
AP			
Mace	6	35/25	1d10+1d4
10			
Sling	3	35/-	1d8

Spirit Magic: (53%): Bludgeon 1, Darkwall, Heal 1, Protection 1.

Skills: Darksense/Scan 35, Darksense/Search 35, Listen 40.

HIT POINT LOCATIONS

Head	AP 1	HP 5
Left Arm	AP 1	HP 4
Chest	AP 1	HP 6
Right Arm	AP 1	HP 4
Left Leg	AP 2	HP 5
Abdomen	AP 2	HP 5
Right Leg	AP 2	HP 5

Broos

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 16 INT 13
POW 10 DEX 10 APP 4
Move: 4 Fatigue: 29 Hit Points: 16
Magic Points: 10 DEX SR: 3

Weapon	SR	Attk/Par%	Damage
AP			
Head Butt	9	50/-	1d6+1d4
1H Spear	6	35/25	1d8+1+1d4
10			

Spirit Magic: (53%): Disruption.

Skills: Dodge 10.

Notes: May use its head butt 3 SR after any other attack, as well as parry or dodge.

HIT POINT LOCATIONS

Head	AP 3	HP 6
Left Arm	AP 2	HP 5
Chest	AP 2	HP 8
Right Arm	AP 2	HP 5
Left Leg	AP 2	HP 6
Abdomen	AP 2	HP 6
Right Leg	AP 2	HP 6

THE MONEY CHASE

BY JUSSI HYVÖNEN

Saving your campaign from economic corruption is easier than you think.

“I don’t need my customers getting lynched by some mob that figures that anyone who wears Lunar stuff is a collaborator. In fact, I don’t want anybody to even see that stuff in my shop. Could you cover it up, please?”

When a group of adventurers is struck by the psychological disease that has haunted mankind since dawn of time; greed. Any role-playing campaign can degenerate into a ruthless money hunt. To prevent this Hydra-like monster from corrupting my campaign, I had to change the fundamental monetary principles I had previously followed. At first, players were allowed to cash in captured armour and weapons for half of their list price, as long as they were using the money to buy necessities. In time the group realised that if they slew enough enemies they could actually make more income as used-armour dealers than by going on arduous expeditions. The result was disastrous for the campaign.

Something had to be done, so I decided to adopt a more restrictive approach to trade with armour and weapons. It was only necessary to demonstrate the new economic reality a few times before the group got (and reluctantly accepted) the idea.

Picture this: the player characters of your group decide to go on a small trip to straighten out their poor financial situation. In their first encounter they run into a group of Yelmalio worshippers, who they slaughter with comparative ease. After stripping the corpses the party meets a couple of Lunar soldiers, who also meet a quick and bloody end at the hands of the PCs. The adventurers then stumble upon a dark troll and thirty trollkin. One fast and bloody battle later finds the PCs already figuring out how they’re going to spend their well-earned money.

Continuing their voyage of discovery the party meets and greets an elf and later a dwarf - permanently. With their bloodlust now at a fever pitch, they’re actually *pleased* when they’re ambushed by a Chaos gang a little later. Nothing stopped them before, so why not loot these bodies, too?

Leaving the slaughtered and stripped bodies of their former rivals behind them, the party wearily wends its way to Gringles’ Pawnshop, where they plan to cash in the empties for useful stuff. They’ve really made it big. Or so they think...



YELMALIO

Group: Hey, we've got some Yelmalio stuff to sell.

Gringle (after a long, measured pause while he looks the group over): Oh yeah? Where'd you get it? Wait, I know—you found it under a bush. Or your sainted aunt gave it to you when she retired from active patrol duty. Look, who else but a Yelmalian would buy that kind of stuff? Look at that design! Anybody with half a brain can tell it's Sun-worshipper gear. If I sell that, sooner or later some guys with spears are going to come around asking questions about it. So what am I going to tell them? Look, this stuff is just too hot for me. Besides, Yelmalians already get all the armour and weapons they need from their temples, so who could I sell it to? Sorry, no deal. You got anything else?

LUNAR

Group: What about this Lunar armour then?

Gringle: What are you, nuts?! My blind grandmother could recognise Lunar-designed armour and weapons! I'd be hanged for unauthorised dealing in Imperial property so fast my head would spin—right off of my shoulders. I mean, it's good smith-work, yeah—but who but a Lunar would wear it? I've got enough troubles, I don't need my customers getting lynched by some mob that figures that anyone who wears Lunar stuff is a collaborator. In fact, I don't want anybody to even see that stuff in my shop. Could you cover it up, please?

TROLL

Group: What about this then—lots of troll state-of-the-art armour?

Gringle: Hmm. Just out of curiosity, do you have any friends who could actually fit into this armour? Human friends, with human money? Because I'm really getting tired of the swarms of troll customers coming in all the time. They're probably coming to visit the Mistress Race Troll I keep in the back room to eat my garbage.

Listen, seriously, no offence. I'm impressed that you offed some trolls—more power to you. But it wouldn't be worth it to me to keep that stuff in my shop. If you want to pay me a few coins, I'll have somebody haul it away for you. Or maybe you could sell it to a smith for scrap metal? He might give you a couple of clacks.

To tell you the truth, even if I *did* have trolls come in, I probably couldn't sell this to them. For all I know, this could come from one of their leaders—and it's just not worth it to me to risk some crazy Troll-feud. Tell them that I *bought* it? I don't think so. No troll would sell it to a human in the first place, and I can tell you that the Uz are no dummies—they can figure out the obvious, just like you and me. A wrong answer would earn me a troll maul in the head instead of cash in my pocket, and that's a deal that stinks. Sorry, no dice. Good luck getting rid of it, though.

ELF

Group: This elf stuff then?

Gringle: Are you kidding? What kind of flit would use that? Believe me, if there's one thing I don't see around here, it's elves.

DWARF

Group: Dwarf stuff?

Gringle: Guys, if you were undertakers no one would die. Hmm, that strange mechanical object looks kind of interesting. How much? Okay, I'll give you half that. Deal.

CHAOS

Group: Guess you're not interested in this Chaos stuff?

Gringle: **AAIIIIIIII!** Don't come near me with that! Has it been disinfected? By a real Healer, I mean? Get it out, get it out, **GET IT OUT!! NOW!!!** Whew. Don't you guys have anything *normal* to sell? Something I can make a nice profit on?

ORLANTHI

Group: This then? It's ordinary armour and everybody's used to the weapons.

Gringle: Hey, is that a blood stain? Where'd you get this? Armour and weapons don't grow on trees, and I don't want be accused of dealing in stolen goods—I got enough troubles. Besides, that stuff doesn't sell any too good. Most guys who need war gear get it from their tribes. And if a guy wants to buy armour and weapons he goes straight to the smiths who make 'em.. Oh yeah, before you ask: no, I don't want to buy that stuff for stock either. It takes a lot of space to store combat gear, and this isn't a big store. I have to keep my stock moving, you know? Listen, I'm looking for single items with some kind of uniqueness to them—nothing too dangerous, and nothing that's going to get me in trouble. If you've got something like that, great—we can do some business. Believe me, I'd like nothing better...business has been lousy lately. You got anything like that? No? Well, thanks for giving me a try. If you find anything interesting that won't get me killed or in jail, come on back. I'll give you a good deal. But I've got to cover my...uh, *end*. And so should you. Don't bring me any more Chaos stuff, and if anybody asks, you were never here. Okay?

The above is the basic attitude of a fence to used armour and weapons. Soon after this approach was adopted the campaign metamorphosed from a saga of low-life economic depression and dry-gulching into a game in which other, higher values were valued more than money. Needless to say, exceptions can always be made to this approach at the GM's discretion. The important thing is to not let the players take advantage of insufficient pre-planning. Firm but subtle adjustments of matters being corrupted by player pragmatism is vital to ensure the integrity and life-span of your campaign.

"I'm really getting tired of the swarms of troll customers coming in all the time. They're probably coming to visit the Mistress Race Troll I keep in the back room to eat my garbage."

As they travel home, staggering under the weight of enough armour and weapons for a regiment, the PCs run into their counterparts from the neighbouring village. It's supposed to be a "friendly" rivalry, but the truth is that those guys have always been a pain in the butt. But for once the party is happy to see their rivals. It's time to finally settle the score...and say! Those guys have a wagon with them!

Translated by David Dunham

This document was written by Korlar Long-Stride, and apparently presented to Terasarin, sixth Prince of Sartar. Unfortunately, only a fragment has survived. Archaeological evidence has been able to corroborate parts of his narrative.

...the lake is said to get its name from when Arkat's lieutenant Hiskax was struck by a thunderbolt summoned by Konorl Nine-bones, and driven all the way to the underworld. This also explains the lack of fish in the lake.

We gladly left the sorcerers of Drom and headed towards the hills to find the "barbarians". To our great pleasure (and relief), they did indeed answer the Greeting, though it took Ashart and myself several days to understand more than a few words in their tongue. These people called themselves the Chilaning, and survived by hunting and by raiding the people of Drom. Their leader, Eudall Antler-Breaker, modestly went by the title of thane. He was immensely proud of his pack of deerhounds. These tall, lean dogs had short, grey fur, and could outrun and bring down a stag. The Chilaning warriors were all armed with axes and throwing hatchets, and carried hide shields shaped like Arachne Solara's double-circle rune. They wore great kilts of a speckled weave. Most of them shaved their chins, leaving long moustaches. The women wore their hair to their shoulders, and never braided it, instead tying it back with a strip of coloured cloth. They wore short dresses, which reached barely below their knees, and elaborate belts from which they often hung useful household items like knives or scissors.

Several warriors agreed to guide us to the great temple at Kilwyn. Our trip was subject to many detours for no apparent reason. Ashart said that they were compelled to take such a roundabout route because of geasa like those our Humakti follow, but these warriors worshipped only Orlanth and Odayla.

We were given gracious hospitality by many of the farmers along the way. They live in small steads, usually atop a low mound, and surrounded by earthworks. Their houses are round, with long poles forming a conical roof which they cover with thatch or turf. They cut no hole for smoke to escape, but it makes its way through the thatch. The richer farmers build similar barns for their animals. They keep extensive herds of sturdy, shaggy reddish-brown cattle, which they graze on the hills above their steads. Their cream is so luscious, or rather so strong, that some of my men sickened upon drinking it. The farmers are exceedingly proud of their cattle, and can recite the names and lineages of any of them. Some of them also raise horses, which are of a diminutive size but extremely strong, full of fire, and very hardy and sure-footed.

Each of them also has a client-farmer, who sows wheat or raises sheep. They are required to come to the aid of their patron, and to vote on his behalf at any moot. This contract lasts for seven years. Every one of their sheep has two horns, and many of them four. The mutton had an unusual taste, though agreeable enough.

One of our visits was notable. We were guested by Bromur of the Nethori. When he heard that you had sent us, he had a servant fetch a severed head as a gift for you. Darnmet leaped up bellowing about head hunters, and would have attacked our host if Kentrik hadn't quick-wittedly cast a confusion spell on him. We managed to get Darnmet calmed down, and he examined the head dubiously until he had satisfied himself that it wasn't chaotic. Bromur explained that he had taken the head of his family's enemy as a trophy, and that it was the only thing he owned which was a suitable gift for a king. I told him with regret that it probably wouldn't survive the sea voyage home, and gave him a finger-ring on your behalf.

At another stead, our host took out a set of pipes made from the bladder and bones of a boar. He played a lively tune, at which both men and women commenced a remarkably vigorous dance involving much kicking and leaping about. After several minutes Kentrik joined in, which was met with approval.

The city of Kilwyn lies at the joining of two mighty rivers: the Doskior, which flows on towards the west, and the Allspring, which ends here but starts in the Wonderwood of which so many stories have been told. The bridge over the Allspring rests atop large rafts which are tethered to the banks. It is said to be owned by the city's colony of newtlings. Once each year it is towed upstream for their rituals, and then returned. These newtlings skilfully pole their long reed canoes along the length of both rivers, and are very good fishermen. They have good relations with the King of Ralios. They are said to have a large, green temple precisely at the spot where the two rivers join, but the water level was too high for us to see it.

Kilwyn is the capital of Ralios, or Delela as they call it. It has neither the cosy lanes and alleys of Boldhome nor the confusing order of Drom's identical rows of streets. Each house is built where its owner chooses, and there are only paths between them. These houses are round with conical thatched roofs, and the doorways face the closest river. Many are surrounded by small gardens or corrals, or have

adjoining barns. Often they are joined by walls into small compounds, though there is no wall around the city. Most houses have bull skulls at the doorway, which protect against evil spirits.

The king lives in Sweetweed Castle, built of a water weed which only grew before the Dawn. The walls appear to be very sturdy and quite ancient, and are darkish blue with black specks. The king is named Korbron, son of Arukel the Proud, who was king before him. He is also king of his tribe, the Nardaini, and leader of the Voshfrei clan. The king's warriors all wore their hair in spikes so they looked as if they were running into the teeth of a gale. They were well armoured in ringmail, and carried the same odd-shaped hide shields as the Chilaning.

The temple of Orlanth is on a short hill overlooking the city. It consists of a large number of buildings, one for each shrine or subcult, and one for each of their priests. Some of these are very old, including a small stone building resembling a bee-hive, built by Rastarn Orlanthsson. Most are of wood, but there was a conical leather tent which I was told was used by a Breath Shaman. The most unusual is the main temple, which is built of countless thin planks arranged in an upright fashion. Above this is a steep roof made of wooden shingles, and atop the roof is another somewhat smaller building of the same construction, another atop that, and finally a fourth at the very top. The uppermost structure houses an enchanted cup of bronze, which sounds a clear tone when struck.

I shall now describe the worship of the Delelans. Their worship of Orlanth is much the same as ours, though most of the subcults are different. They have our Four Weapons subcults, and Alakoring's cult is the same. Rastarn Orlanthsson first brought news of the successful Lightbringers' Quest to Ralios, and he is still worshipped. Retter the Stalker is a popular hero, and the ancestor of the king. He is known for his hatred of trolls. Indrall Adventurous is another warrior subcult. When I heard that the king's tribe was the Nardaini, I had hoped to find some members of the Nardain Society, known to us from the Second Age, but nobody had heard of it. The subcult of Kork Rider-of-Winds seemed to have similar magic, but would let no Nardaini join. I was surprised that the king would suffer such a shrine in his land, but I was assured that Kilwyn was open to all the clans of Ralios, save those which are friendly to trolls.

Ashart's god is known as Lankoring, and is held to be god of seers as well as lawspeaker. Ashart was greatly disappointed to learn that they refuse to write on parchment or vellum, although their Knowledge Lodge did have wands with carved notches recording all their sagas, and drawings of all the rune-stones in the land. Their sages also use the whole skins of bulls to paint the stories of famous battles and sagas. They are also very learned about the movements of the stars, from which they can predict a baby's future when it is born. Ashart was shocked that women initiates do not wear beards, and refused to deal with them.



Ernalda is known only as the mother of Vinga, who they do not portray with red hair. Ernalda had no shrine, even in Vinga's temple.

Chalana Arroy is worshipped as Chalana, and it is said that having sex with a Healer brings good luck. Kentrik of course had to try this, and there was much laughter among the men about his bad luck when he was turned down.

They know of Eormal, and in fact he has his own temple in Kilwyn, where performers re-enact popular comical tales. The Ralians greatly enjoy these, though neither Ashart nor I could understand a single word, even though we had gained fluency in the Ralian dialect.

The Storm Bull is called Bemurok, and he is said to have battled the Devil at Hrelar Amali, after he rotted the Guardian Forest which had been planted by the Aldryami to protect it. Farmers pray to him to bless their cattle with many calves. Darnmet told of how the Storm Bull battled the Devil where the Spike now stands, but they seemed not to believe this; at any rate a fist-fight broke out before Onelisin calmed them down.

They worship Issaries only as the Talking God. Instead, Dorskior is the god of the market, and also the god of the river. All their boats are carved with his watchful eyes. We saw many canoes made of ox-hide, carrying cargo to and from Kilwyn.

Ralia is Orlanth's wife, and worshipped by all the women. She is the cow mother as well as the grain goddess. It is in her honour that the Ralians bury their dead rather than burning them. The dead are wrapped in swaddling clothes like a baby, for it is said that they are returning to their mother. They are also given tools and charms for the afterlife, and their friends and kin include tokens and messages they wish the dead to deliver to Ralia. Ralia's grain is wheat and it is their favourite crop because it is used to brew beer. Some of their better brewers can transform it into a beverage nearly as fine as a good barley beer.

Humakt is called Humath, and is said to be Orlanth's brother and vassal. His bird is the raven, and his priests dress in blue. People try not to let their children be seen by them. One old man cursed us when Darnmet pronounced his name in our fashion, saying that was how Arkat perverted their god. For I have never seen a people who so hate Arkat, whom they call Deceiver and Father of Sorcerers.

Mastakos is very popular, for the Ralian's horses are too small to ride, and they harness them to chariots. All the nobles have young men of good breeding as their chariot drivers. They are required to practice daily until they can drive a chariot up a steep hill and jump ditches as wide as they are tall. The warriors use sword blades mounted on long poles. They will jump out of the car and run along the yoke in order to be closer to their enemies. This is held among them as a sign of great valour.

Odayla is also popular, though they call him Odall. All of the men fancy themselves hunters even if they haven't pledged themselves to Odayla. Odayla is good friends with Yinkin, and uses alynxes to flush out game.

Everywhere we travelled, the clans worshipped the spirits of their tulas, usually honouring a different spirit each season. They also honour the clan founder, and perform his rituals at the end of every year.

Now it is my duty to report on our mission. King Korbron received us with the utmost respect, and held a bull-fight in our honour. His castle has a courtyard, which is strewn with sweet-smelling herbs. Then two bulls are brought in, and, goaded by their owners, charge each other at great speed, seeming to shake the whole building with their ferocity. Eventually one bull flees from the courtyard, or is too badly wounded to continue. More bulls then enter, and the fight proceeds until one bull is declared the champion, at which point the king gives both the bull and its owner a gold ring. The fight I witnessed was won by an immense black bull named Surefoot Erkok, evidently a favourite of the crowd, for they threw flowers at him and cheered.

After this, the king ...

THE STRANGER'S TALE

by Jim Chapin

The stranger emerged suddenly from the Storm outside. Tattered he was, and he cursed the Storm as he appeared. His garments, such as they remained, seemed red under the encompassing grey of the dust. Joseph would have killed him, but I told him to stay his hand. Hungry as we were, I did not want to have the blood of an old man, crazy by the look of him, on our conscience.

It turned out that he actually had some food with him, of a sort I have never seen before or since.

After our meager meal, he began to talk. Clipped to his belt was an instrument of some kind, one that I had never seen before. He raised it and said, it is the emblem of my lost profession: I was a scribe. We gasped at the name. Yes, he grimaced, once I could write, when men still knew that forgotten art.

I can tell you why it was forgotten, and then he told his tale, of how the Gods of Storm were responsible for the evils of our world, talking of things that some of us had heard of but many had not. . .

"Once the world was a place of plenty and beauty. But the first Storm God, Umath, ripped Earth and Sky apart to make a place for himself. Turbulent as he was, his brood was worse. Creatures of destruction, all of them. One of them it was, Humakt, who brought Death into the world. And yet he was not the worst. Another it was, Ragnagar, who brought Chaos into the world, and fathered Wakboth the Devil. And yet he was not the worst. The worst was Orlanth, the youngest, who brought the Great Dark into the world, when he slew Yelm, the God of the Sun.

Orlanth and Wakboth claimed to be enemies, and many men are fooled by this claim. But the perceptive must note that not only are these two close relations, but they have a common goal, the goal of destruction. They will permit us to live, but only to live miserably, so that we cannot challenge their power.

Their relation is strange, but capable of explanation. Whenever man makes a place for himself in this world, these two powers emerge to destroy what we have built. Orlanth is jealous that we can live without his turbulence, so whenever he sees us prosper, he claims the prosperity is the doing of Wakboth. He sets his foolish followers on a path of destruction, and when that destruction, as all such destruction does, brings evil in its wake, Wakboth appears, drawn to the evil. The two relatives "fight." And you may have heard the old expression, "when dinosaurs fight, whomever wins, the grass is trampled." We are the grass.

Thrice this has happened since Time began. First, when bright Nysalor was created by the intelligent races. Orlanth and the other Gods raised up a Crusade against him. In the end, Orlanth and Wakboth combined to destroy the best land in the world, that of Dorastor. Again, when the EWF used the secrets of dragonkind and the Jrusteli proved that man could dominate even the Gods. The old Gods sank the isles of the Jrusteli and joined with the dragons to kill all the humans in Dragon Pass. And now it has happened again, as the Red Goddess, and her Red Moon, created by Man, were brought down by Argrath and his Orlanthi, once again with the help of dragons. So it is that our once beautiful land has been crushed between ice and sea, with dust in between.

We must remember that our two greatest foes may claim to be enemies, but they are relatives who collaborate on a common project, that of ruining all that we do.

It is not enough for them to destroy what man has built; they must also destroy our knowledge. We no longer know what it was that Nysalor brought in his wake. We do not know the God Learners' secret. We do not know the secrets of dragonkind that the EWF taught. Now we do not remember even how to write, and this is the greatest loss of all.

At the end of each age, we have been diminished, and have forgotten much that we knew. But we survive."

By now, our band was murmuring against his wild and blasphemous words.

But he persisted. He screamed out: "Don't you see? Each time they have done this, they have convinced the survivors that it was the fault of the destroyed humans that the Gods did this evil. So that all one had to say was

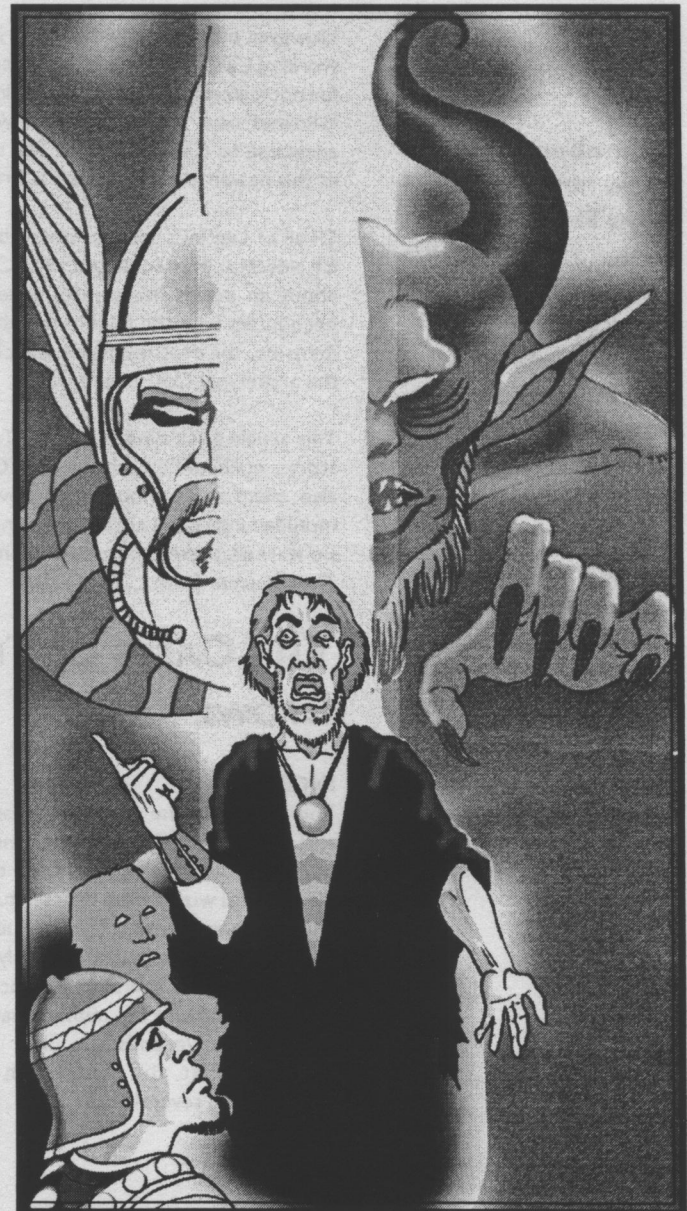
"Nysalor" and our people would forget the generations of peace and civilization he brought, and lay to his account the ruins that Black Arkat made of Dorastor. Or say "EWF" and all that would be remembered was the Dragonkill. Or say "Jrusteli" and all that one would hear was that the Godlearners brought the wrath of the Gods down, not remembering that it was the Gods and not those who learned about them that brought destruction. The same is true of Argrath's destruction of Peloria. Generations of achievement are buried under snow and sea, but we are supposed to lay this evil to the Red Goddess, and not those who destroyed her.

We are now more degraded than ever. That is their goal. It may seem that we must accept that they are mightier than us, that all our achievements can be destroyed at the whim of the Gods, as so often before.

And yet, and yet, as we look at this shadow of a world that is left to us, and we starving remnants that cling to life, we know that there must be a chance to escape our slavery, for else why would Orlanth and Wakboth have to work so hard to keep us down. Here is what we must do . . ."

He never finished his tale, of course, for despite his years and his madness, the blasphemies he spoke had enraged too many of our band. Since he had shared food with us, we felt that we could not kill him, so we threw him back into the Storm he so detested.

Still, I must confess that his words stay in my mind. Crazy and blasphemous they were, however, so I will say no more of them.



THE CURIOS CASES OF TITUS CROW

SCENARIO IDEAS FOR CALL OF CTHULHU!

BY SHANNON APPEL

While it was Lovecraft who crafted the Mythos of Cthulhu and the Great Old Ones, his world is somewhat different from the world of the Call of Cthulhu game. The world of H.P. Lovecraft, full of death, suicide, and attempts to escape the horrors of the mythos, can't be fully mapped into a Call of Cthulhu campaign, and thus the game is somewhat different from the original sources.

However, others have written stories closer to the world of Call of Cthulhu. Although some revile them for not following Lovecraft's vision, in truth they have followed new visions, many of which are easily adaptable to Call of Cthulhu. The most prominent of this newer wave of writers is Brian Lumley.

Of all of Lumley's stories, those about Titus Crow fall closest to the world of Call of Cthulhu. They are about an occult investigator, able to survive his encounters with the Mythos and then to return, to delve into the deep mysteries again. He seems nearly the archetypal CoC investigator.

This article gives synopses of the Titus Crow short stories collected together as *The Complete Crow*. It also offers some thoughts on how they might be moulded into good adventures for Call of Cthulhu. Be warned: these synopses do contain spoilers for *The Complete Crow*.

THE CASES OF TITUS CROW:

INCEPTION:

This story tells the tale of an unfortunate pursued to England by a Priest of the Undying Dead. The pursuit is the result of the theft of an Elixir from black Sanusi wizards, the exact nature of which is an enigma, never revealed. The only hint which is given about the Elixir is that it may only be used by the "utterly pure and completely innocent". In the end, after the thief and the mummy have both gone to their respective ends, the Elixir is mixed into a baptismal font, the font which Titus Crow is christened in several hours later.

The immediate applications of this story to CoC seem obvious. A quest to discover the Elixir would make for a good CoC adventure and the "corpse-laden catacombs under the desert" where the Elixir is hidden seem an ideal setting. However, a lot of peripheral ideas could also be drawn from this story. What precisely is the Cult of the Undying Dead and what are its goals? What are the true powers of the Elixir and why does the Priest of the Undying Dead guard it? One final question is this: do any of the investigators have some event in their past which irrevocably tied them to the world of the Mythos? Is it an event that they know of, or some deep secret? How could this event of the past rise to haunt them again in the modern day?

LORD OF THE WORMS:

Like "Inception", this story also tells of a very long-lived villain. In it, Julian Carstairs employs Crow to catalogue his occult library. However, the job is a ruse. Carstairs has examined Crow's numbers (his birthday, the letters of his name, etc.), and determined that he is the appropriate victim for a certain ritual. On Candelmas Eve (Feb. 1), Julian Carstairs, a worm-wizard, plans to take over the body of Titus Crow, replacing Crow's mind and will with his own. The maggots that invest Carstairs's body are to enter Crow's in a ritual that has been repeated many times in the last centuries.

A worm-wizard would seem to be a great villain for Call of Cthulhu. A man whose body is filled with maggots is quite horrifying. What will the investigators think when a grave-worm is occasionally found in the fellow's wake? Carstairs himself exhibited a powerful hypnosis. A worm-wizard in CoC might have this power or many others. And then, there is the question of the power behind the worms themselves. Were the maggots sentient, or empowered by the dark magics, or was Carstairs the avatar of some previously unknown Great Old One? By reading DeVermeis Mysteriis, an investigator might learn the mysteries of the worm, and accidentally become embroiled in them. The most appealing story idea for "Lord of the Worms" would involve an old associate of the players (perhaps a patron, an old friend, or a former investigator) being taken over by a worm-wizard. What will happen as the investigators slowly realise that their colleague is not as he once was?

A number of Titus Crow novels also exist: *The Burrowers Beneath, The Transition of Titus Crow, The Clock of Dreams, Spawn of the Winds, and In the Moons of Borea and Elysia*. Although they're good fun on their own, they tend to replace the Call of Cthulhu investigations of the short stories with more splashy pulp adventures. For good Call of Cthulhu stories, stick with *The Complete Crow*.

THE CALLER OF THE BLACK:

One of the Crow short stories most tightly connected to the Mythos, this tells of Gedney, a master of the occult who has learned the secret of calling the Black, the horrific blood of Yibb-Tstll. He uses it to murder several who threaten to reveal his occult secrets before he finally falls victim to it himself.

Victims dying of suffocation upon dry land, victims of the Black, could prove a useful enigma to start off an adventure, ultimately leading to an encounter with a sorcerer who controls the blood of Yibb-Tstll. Also, there is the suggestion of a story where the victims of some supernatural force are cultists themselves. How would the investigators react to the task of saving evil occultists from the occult?

THE VIKING'S STONE:

In brief, this story tells of Benjamin Sorlson, an archaeologist who plunders the tomb of Ragnor Gory-Axe, an ancient Viking warrior. The ghost of Ragnor is still aboard his ancient Viking dragonship. It slays Sorlson, and returns its lost treasures to his tomb.

This story is briefly described because it seems less applicable than many others to the Cthulhu Mythos. Well Lovecraft does tell stories of the dead returning to regain their stolen treasures (notably "The Hound"), these are usually corporeal revenants, not spectral shades. The item which best suggests a CoC adventure in "The Viking's Stone" is the tomb itself. The tomb lies near Scarborough in Allerston Forest. It is marked by a menhir (a several ton stone upon which the spirit of the deceased was thought to perch). Nearby is a cleft which contains the actual tomb, housing the bones, armour, and weapons of Ragnor. Perhaps the tomb is a place of power, the meeting place of some modern cult. Another idea could involve the recovering of some ancient item from Ragnor's Tomb. What might the item be, and why must it be recovered? Who or what could try to prevent the recovery of the item? What will the consequences of stealing the item from the tomb of Ragnor Gory-Axe be?

THE MIRROR OF NITOCRIS:

This story of Titus Crow's apprentice, Henri-Laurent de Marigny, tells of an auction of items of the occult, and the mirror that de Marigny buys there. Nitocris' Mirror, artefact of an ancient Egyptian queen, is said to provide glimpses of realms where Shoggoths and other aberrant creatures lived. Shortly after de Marigny buys the mirror he destroys it, when a creature tries to crawl from its depths to drag him inside.

One of the most appealing CoC ideas from this story concerns the possibility of an auction of the Occult. Not only is it an excellent place to introduce new plot threads, as strange items fall into the hands of the investigators, it also a good locale for introducing NPCs. These might be patrons, famous occultists, cultists, or even authorities looking into certain suspicious persons (perhaps the investigators). Stories of intrigue, involving the theft or recovery of occult objects, and deceit, involving the sale of fraudulent items, might both originate at

such an auction. These plots might have nothing to do with the Cthulhu Mythos, and could thus provide a good change of place. The Mirror of Nitocris, described in this story, could also be the source of a CoC adventure if the investigators or some associate came into possession of the item. Alternatively, cultists might gain the item, and learn to focus its scrying powers.

AN ITEM OF SUPPORTING EVIDENCE:

One of Lumley's shortest stories, this tale tells of Yegg-ha, a ten-foot featureless winged monstrosity which killed scores of Roman soldiers centuries ago. When Titus Crow writes a fictional story about this beast, one detractor considers it badly out of date and unrealistic. Only when Crow shows him the skull of the ancient creature does the detractor change his mind.

The Old Ones have dwelled upon the Earth for millennia, since before the first man walked upon the Earth. This short story leads one to wonder, what effect might the Old Ones, and other Lovecraftian horrors, have had upon human history? A fun CoC run might involve the investigators uncovering some ancient conspiracy. Learning how deeply alien monstrosities have manipulated humanity could be a very satisfying conclusion to a story.

BILLY'S OAK:

This is a ghost story which tells of a man hung from a tree long ago, and how that tree can still be heard to creak, as if a body hung from it. The tree was cut down years before, but still the creaking can be heard.

Like "The Viking's Stone", a standard ghost story is a bit far from most Mythos adventures. However, an investigator learning ancient secrets about his dwelling might be a fun run.

DARGHUD'S DOLL:

This story deals with an African witch-doctor using a voodoo doll to enchant a missionary. The doll is regained by the victim, but when his wife tries to preserve it by encasing it in resin, he dies of suffocation.

The secrets of darkest Africa could be used as the centre of any number of Call of Cthulhu adventures. Who knows what unnameable Gods might be worshipped there. "Darghud's Doll" is also intriguing due to the magic this is used in it. It follows both the Law of Sympathy and the Law of Contagion. The victim is affected due to the likeness of the doll, and due to the bit of hair attached to it, that came from the victim. Using this type of realistic magic in Call of Cthulhu can add a lot to the game.

DE MARIGNY'S CLOCK:

This story focuses on the odd coffin-shaped clock which was first described by H. P. Lovecraft in "Through the Gates of the Silver Key". It has come into the possession of Henri-Laurent de Marigny, Crow's apprentice, by the time of this story. The story itself is very reminiscent of "The Terrible Old Man". Two robbers invade Crow's house looking for something to steal. When they open de Marigny's Clock they are sucked inside.

**SUMMON THE BLACK,
a new spell**

Costs 1 POW and requires a Luck Roll. Caster must have previously Contacted Yibb-Tstll at least once. Calls forth the blood of Yibb-Tstll to suffocate a target. This target must be within the range of the caster's voice, and must have already been given an arcane mark of Yibb-Tstll. The target will immediately start drowning, as per Call of Cthulhu pg. 32, and will eventually expire unless he is submerged in water.

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De Marigny's Clock is an element in Lumley stories that I'd just as well ignore. An enigmatic time machine, it drags the stories too far into the realm of science fiction. An invasion of an investigator's home might be a pleasant diversion, especially if the investigator sees conspiracies in everything.

NAME AND NUMBER:

Perhaps the best Titus Crow story, this involves the coming of Anti-Christ. I won't get into the delightful specifics. Suffice to say, Crow eventually puts the Anti-Christ down, by revealing his name and his number.

This story suggests what a great source "Revelations" could be for a Cthulhu campaign. Given that the Old Ones and other Lovecraftian horrors exist, what might Revelations really be about? Is Revelations truly prophetic or does it speak of some time long gone? Does it tell of the time when the Stars are Right?

THE BLACK RECALLED:

The last of the Titus Crow short stories is set in the very recent past. It concerns the meeting of two masters of the arcane, once apprentices of James Gedney, from "The Caller of the Black" They each wish to steal the secrets of the other. Geoffrey Arnold tries to kill his foe, Ben Gifford, by calling the black. Gifford, however, reveals that he has

become the very avatar of Yibb-Tstll. His body is black as ebony, the colour of Yibb-Tstll's blood. Pointing a finger, Gifford causes the Black to erupt from his body and slay his foe. But, the story does not end there, for the meeting between the two masters of arcana had occurred in the ruins of Blowne House, the once residence of Titus Crow. Although Crow is gone, and the mansion lies in ruins, there is still magic there. Mists fall upon Gifford, and then there is silence.

This story suggests several good ideas. First, there is the avatar of Yibb-Tstll. Although Gifford is killed, surely a new avatar will eventually rise. Like Gifford, this new avatar will probably be the head of some cult, the heart of some mystery that the investigators face. Then, there are the ruins of Blowne House. Still covered by mystical protections in the Cthulhu Now era, it is an eerie, mysterious place. What secrets might lie within the ruins?

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TROLLS AND TUSK RIDERS

by Jonas Schiött

Halikiv is one of Genertela's oldest and firmest troll strongholds, ruled by an ancient lineage of Mistress Race trolls. The troll influence extends beyond the borders of Halikiv; most of Corolaland is under their control and all along the route to Guhan, stretching right across Ralios, their presence can be felt.

Three places in the human-occupied East Wilds have a permanent troll population: Istakax, Lickstone (near Ironfort) and Dark Kilwin. The meetings between men and darkness men vary from border skirmishes in Saug and Corolaland to friendly trading in Istakax.

Contact with the half-trolls, or tusk riders, is (unfortunately) much more frequent than with real trolls. Since the war with Naskorion, a half-dozen clans (robber bands) range through Delela and Saug, and have gradually come to use Corolaland as a base. There are also many smaller gangs that sell their services to unscrupulous humans.

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Tradetalk has an aggressive publishing schedule. We need your help in getting quality information out on a timely basis.

ISSARIES INC. NEWS

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Issaries, Inc. is a new company, which returns Greg Stafford to his original project: writing and publishing about Glorantha. Issaries Inc. and Chaosium Inc. are two separate corporate entities. However, relationships are still intimate, with Issaries supplying materials for publication, and Chaosium preparing them, and putting them into the stores. Hence the joint corporate logos.

Why separate? Simple: to concentrate the communication between members of the Gloranthan Tribe, and to provide a clearly defined vehicle to help publish material on our favorite fantasy world: Glorantha. By making it a separate entity, Issaries Inc. has been isolated to assure Issaries stock holders that their funds will be spent only on Gloranthan projects.

Chaosium Inc. continues in business as publisher of *Call of Cthulhu*, *Pendragon*, *Elic!*, and *Nephilim* games and books. Greg Stafford continues to work as Publisher for Chaosium, which he founded in 1974 with the publication of *White Bear & Red Moon*, a Gloranthan board game. Chaosium Inc. also published *RuneQuest*, and its many widely renowned supplements. For various reasons Gloranthan publications ceased and *Call of Cthulhu* came to the fore of the company's interest.

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