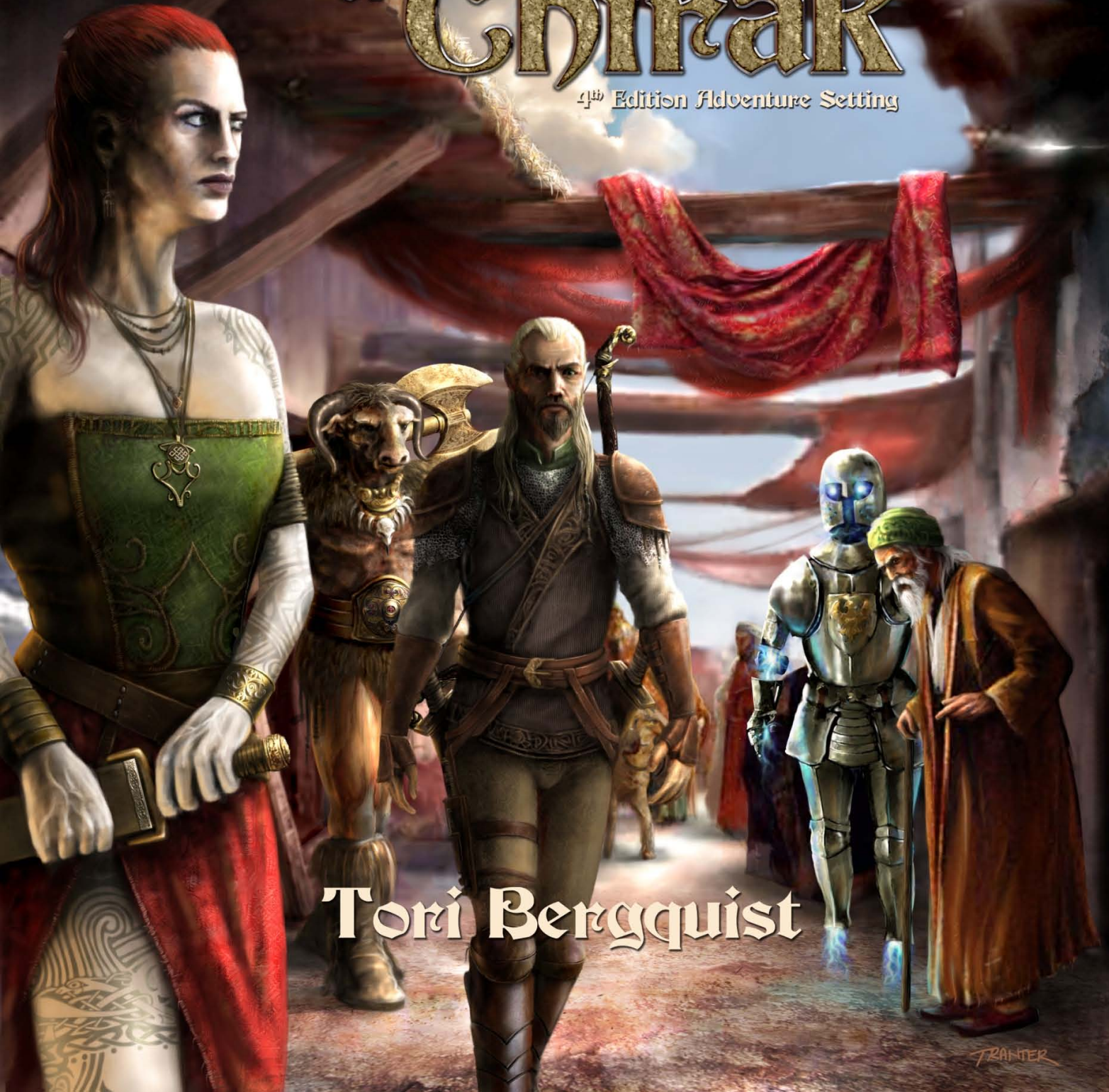


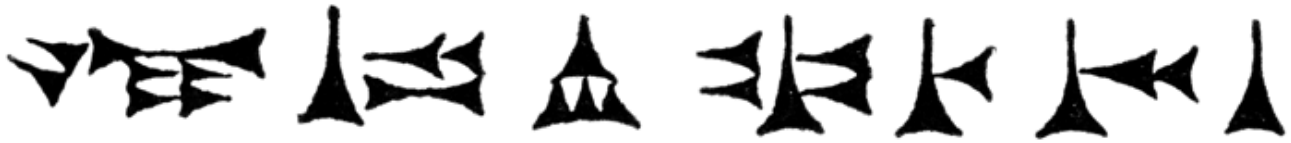
# The Realms of Chirak

4<sup>th</sup> Edition Adventure Setting



Tori Bergquist

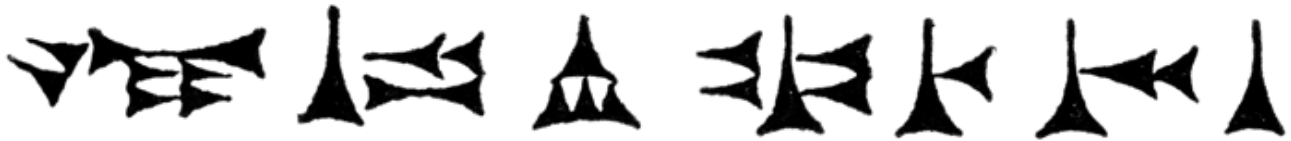
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# The Realms of Chirak

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#### OGL



This OGL book is compatible with the 4<sup>th</sup> edition rules system

**Written by Nicholas Torbin Bergquist**

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**Cover Art and Zodiac Gods Logo** by Simon Tranter. *In the markets of Fartheren, Mardieur Mardieux waits while Nethander approaches Zeriti the Shumariin assassin; to the right Khurzod the Arcanist and Collector 113 look on.*

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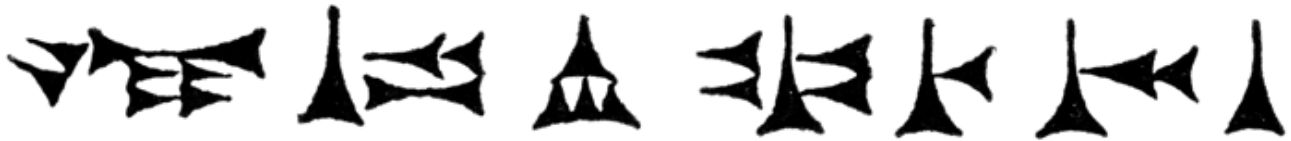
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**Play testers:** David "Mardieux Mardieur" Hollister, Jeffery "Marlonius Kord" Steen, Michael "Kiara Byarne" Anderson, Mark "Nethander" Coleman, Mark "Maretz" Hirshey, Jody "Von Mashira" Wood, John "Gloriend!" Diffley, Keith "Tiny Kargath" Dowell, Aaron "Malys" Boim, Scott "Tia'Fang" Jewell, John List, Jason "Hal" Vye, Marl "Kedrick" Correa. Additional Players: Mary (Amysteri), Kyle (Caratea), Dale "That Crazy Freakin' Druid" Henderson, the many other players in Seattle, my sister Taara for the early years, and many, many more!



## Foreword

Chirak sprang to life in the summer of 1992 when I decided it was time to run *Runequest* again, and I was interested in exploring some story ideas for a fantasy setting that I couldn't easily fit in to my already overflowing home-grown campaign world. After some brain storming, I took a module I had written for a *Gamma World* one-shot I had run a year earlier, and thought it would be interesting if the real twist on an apocalyptic setting was that it was actually a fantasy world, and not our own distant future, in which the adventures took place. This was coupled with the fact that I was deep in to my studies in archaeology at the University of Arizona at the time, and wanted a world with a sense of reality to it, one with cultures and people that felt a bit more *organic*. This can be hard to achieve in a setting designed for adventure fantasy gaming, since essentially the world has to be one in which *strange and dangerous things happen, and often*. Normal people have a hard time staying that way let alone sane when death and devilry knock at every door and lurk around every corner!

Anyway, I took this *Gamma World* module (which, for reference is preserved in the form of Eristantopolis and the White Desert) and used it, along with an outline of a world in which the Apocalypse was caused by the wrath of the gods, leading to a final show down and an Armageddon so vast and grand that it shattered the fabulous, ancient magical civilizations which flourished before this event. Cut to two thousand years later, and civilization is just now beginning to recover, amidst the shattered remains of a mysterious, annihilated past.

My first effective campaign in Chirak used the *Runequest* rules, and afterward it migrated to *AD&D* 2<sup>nd</sup> edition to suit the tastes of the gaming crowd I GMed for. It stayed with *AD&D* right up until the release of *D&D's* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition and the D20 system, at which time I

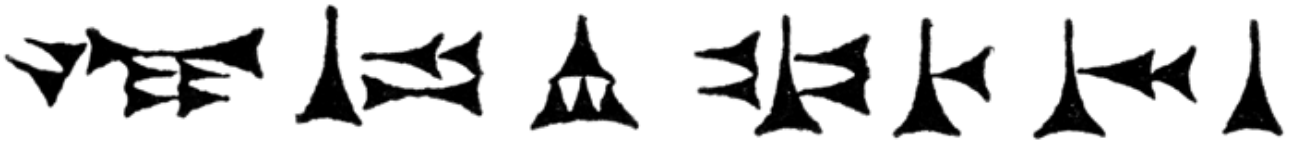
actually found the conversion to be a smooth process, something my other game world (*Keepers of Lingusia*), steeped in old school mechanisms, did not do so well.

Now, with the appearance of 4<sup>th</sup> edition, I have finally taken the time to edit, revise, append, and clean up the campaign setting for use in the newest incarnation of everyone's favorite game. Indeed, you could probably use the bulk of this book with its earlier iterations with minimal conversion, so long as you are savvy to the variations between each version of D&D. I personally happen to be very fond of the newest edition of the game, and think it is especially suited to the style of GMing which I prefer, and returns the rules to a simpler, more manageable focus, as was found in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> edition--except with longer miniatures based combats.

Anyway, I want to take a moment to thank the dozens of gamers who have played at one point or another in Chirak. Many of you will see your characters mentioned within! Special thanks to Dave Hollister, without whom Mardieur Mardieux might just be another dumb minotaur. Thanks also to Jeff "Marlonius Kord" Steen, Michael "Kiara Byarne" Anderson, Mark "Maretz" Hirshey, Jody "Von" Bergquist, Mark "Nethander" Coleman, Ben "Maximus Rheams" Baldwin, and others, including Kyle (Caratea), Mary (Amysteri), Mark from Seattle, the crazy guys from Boeing, the Albuquerque gang, including John List (Kith), Scott Jewel (Tai'Clure), Keith "Kargath" Dowell (who was always willing to try new and crazy rules!), Jason "Hal" Vye, John "Gloriend!" Diffley (RIP Faendry!) and a ton of other people whom I have forgotten to mention, since I am terrible with names. And thanks also to all of you who will game in Chirak in the future; this world has a lot more adventure yet to go!

--Tori Bergquist





# Chapter I - The Realms of Chirak

## *Introduction to the Post-Apocalyptic Fantasy World*

### **The Ancient Past**

Long ago, ancient man dwelt in a dream-like splendor. Several great empires, including the Mythrics, Inadasir, and others forgotten to time ruled the world. Sorcerous palaces of crystal and gold stretched in to the sky, out of sight from the ground beneath. Servants shaped from stone and clay served these empires obediently, and the gods, divine keepers of the twelve sacred astrological points in the sky, dwelt in harmony with one another. The last decades of this impressive era of peace and beauty were two millennia ago.

Something happened then, a time known as the Apocalypse, in which terrible floods swept the known world, and much of the divine civilization of old was annihilated. It was said by some that the gods themselves were seen to be in terrible conflict, riding the crest of the great elemental waves, which carried their wrath across the realms of man. When it was over, and the waters receded, only a handful struggled from the ruins of this great destruction to carry on. Things were different forever more, and the twelve sacred stones of the gods were lost, the sorcery inherent within them gone as well.

The greatest of these ancient civilizations were called the Mythric, Eshadai and Inadasir Empires. The Mythric Empire was submerged in the deluge, in what came to be known as the great Sea of Chirak, after what some say was the final Emperor of that lost realm, and others say was the first survivor. A handful of Mythric Isles with a trace of the ancient ruins still exist in the present.

Beyond the Sea of Chirak, are scattered other great land-locked seas from the deluge, and eventually a great wasteland of jagged, ruptured volcanic mountains that become increasingly impassable and uninhabitable as you work your way closer to the edge of the world. It is said that if you go far enough north, an impenetrable wall of

glacial expanse awaits. To the west, beyond the edge of the known world is an endless, tumultuous sea, and to the east some claim the edge of the world fragments in to an airy void. Southward lies an endless sea of volcanic mountains.

In the days of the Apocalypse, each of the great empires met their elemental fates. The Inadasir Empire was ravaged by war, and a horde of demons fought men and elohim to a standstill, until the sacrifices of the gods ended the conflict with their deaths. In the north, the Eshadai were engulfed in ice, frozen forever beneath great glaciers. The civilization of the south, from whom the people of Pelaeus and Ulos are descended, was obliterated by the endless eruptions of great volcanoes, and in the west, the gods fought their last stand, devastating the epicenter of the ancient world with permanent great scars where their titanic bodies fell to the earth.

Some say that the jealousy of the gods came in to conflict, and through their human puppets, this jealousy turned to rage and conflict. Others say that it was the desire of man to become like the gods, using the power of the zodiac stones to make their possessors demiurges that caused the apocalypse. Still others say that humanity was judged for its sloth and impious behavior, and found wanting. Those who survived are the fortunate few, being pure of heart or intention. Still others say it was the opposite, and that the deluge carried away the worthy to a true heaven, and that the remaining people were found unworthy.

### **The Present**

The old gods have largely passed from the memory of man, and a handful of new demiurges, successors to the old way, have arisen to struggle for ascension to forge a new pantheon. These young new avatars and demiurges include



Kalie'yana of the sea, Kon'Hun, Hidden Lord of the Sands, and Laddaskar, the demiurge of the land and farmers. The Zodiac Stones, containing the essence of divine power of the dead gods, have been scattered and lost. Some have been discovered by souls daring enough to walk the path of the avatar, and a few have even become demiurges.

These are weak demiurges compared to those the old tales refer to. Some tribal groups in the world have forgotten the old ways and gone on to form new shamanic religions and beliefs based on spirits and ancestral blood magic (The Hoagarit and Nubiri, for example) while others have renounced the ways of the old gods and adopted a coldly rational view of the universe (i.e. The Masirians and the Sabraheil). Others have embraced new pantheons of young spirits and demons (i.e. Therias and Xoxtocharit).

Throughout the lands, a scholarly group in the form of the **Preservationists** has arisen, dedicated to the restoration of lost knowledge and the preservation of old writings. This group is held in great esteem by the chieftdom of Eristantopolis, the city of Barcen in Espanea, and the Nithadians.

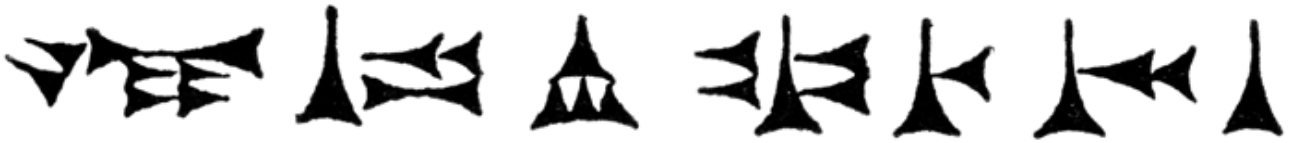
The cults of this world now follow a path seeking salvation in the eyes of the Dead Gods, and the **Cult of the Lost Gods** is a great one within the land. People see themselves as the outcasts of a fantastic salvation during which all of mankind save their selves were sent to the Heavens beyond to dwell in harmony with one another. Only the impure souls remained behind. As a result, the Cult of the Lost Gods sees disharmony in this world as unacceptable, and seeks to reunite the dissident city states and kingdoms of the land, but New God cults, like that of Piscrael or the enigmatic Hun'hunal, are in opposition, postulating that the people of this land are the lucky survivors of an Armageddon that wiped out all of the weak and infirm, among both men and gods.

Humanoids of all species have recovered from the Apocalypse and flourish once more, settling in carefully guarded cities and townships, to protect themselves from the many threats of the world.



Young warlords arise all the time, and occasionally an unscrupulous arcanist or errant necromancer unlocks ancient secrets, and seeks to conquer some corner of Chirak.

Finally, other marks of the ancient past do well up in the form of the animates, dark regions of territory surrounding strange ruins, such as the ancient astronomical dome south of Eristantopolis, or the vast subterranean ruins of Beltraine. These sites are protected by ancient golems, creatures called Animates by mages to distinguish them from the mindless golems of conventional sorcery. These mechanical monsters seem to follow their own secret agenda, and serve unseen masters who use lost technology to chart the night skies, looking for something to mark their own salvation, or reason for being, but who knows what that may be? Every year, a handful of human-like Animates, sometimes protected by fearsome guardians are sent out in to the world to explore, record events, and learn of local history and language. Once in a while these mechanoid researchers even return to the dome. These animates are usually never seen again, as their goal has been completed and they are (presumably) either retired or given a new task specific to their strange, clockwork home.



*A waterside view of Barcen, Espanea*

## **Overview of The Realms of Chirak**

The region known as the Sea of Chirak is part of a larger world, commonly described by the same name, for no one knows what the world was called by the ancients anymore. Therefore, while the *Realms of Chirak* refer to the world at large, the specific cultural groups around the *Sea of Chirak* are referred to in a specific geographical context.

### **Geography and Physics of Chirak**

The geography of Chirak is simpler than in some other fantasy universes. Chirak is a spherical world, slightly larger in dimension than the real Earth. It

operates on principles of physics that would be comfortably familiar to any student of such in our own reality. Indeed, it is this adherence to the rules of the normal that allows the magic of Chirak to seem so uniquely special. Magic is, in principle, the breaking of these rules, and thus in order for it to work, there must be a coherent underlying structure to reality to be broken.

Chirak's geography and physics notwithstanding, it is an unfortunate fact that the edges of the known world are deadly locations to visit. In the mythology and lore of the Apocalypse it is often stated that the edges of the world were being slowly destroyed by the horrendous destructive



chaos released by the betrayer gods, and that this primal elemental energy can be found if you sail or walk far enough in any direction. If there are other pockets of life and stability beyond these walls of elemental fury, none can say.

### Astronomical Lore of Chirak

The skies of Chirak look much like any other night sky, but there are a few key differences worth noting to those who would pursue a study in astronomy or astrology.

First and most importantly, there are two moons. The larger of the two moons is known by its epochal name of **Luna** and in the mythology of the old pantheon it was said to have been a neutral land upon which the gods held court.

The second moon is called **Minora** and little is known of this orb, save that the records of old suggest that it first appeared in the sky on the eve of the Apocalypse. The exact nature of this moon and what force created it is completely unknown. It has been noted by astrologers that this moon is about half the size of Luna, but slightly closer in its orbit to Chirak. On rare occasion, when Luna, and Minora align and eclipse the sun, it is believed to be a terrible omen.

There are twelve planets recorded in the sky, and each planet is aligned to one of the twelve prominent constellations. As such, this means that Chirak's solar system has thirteen worlds which orbit about the sun, and each orbit coincidentally passes through a visible constellation, which in turn associated with one of the twelve signs of the zodiac. There are also a myriad variety of lesser constellations.

Not much is known about these twelve orbiting bodies beyond their astrological significance. The old stories of the Apocalypse suggest that at least one of these worlds, called Perdition in Espanean and Abyss in the native language of its inhabitants, was a living, inhabited world that was devastated during the Apocalypse. It's descendants tell a tale of treachery and corruption, and suggest that many of the demon races stemmed from this world.

Abyss is the only world of the twelve that can not be viewed without a telescope.

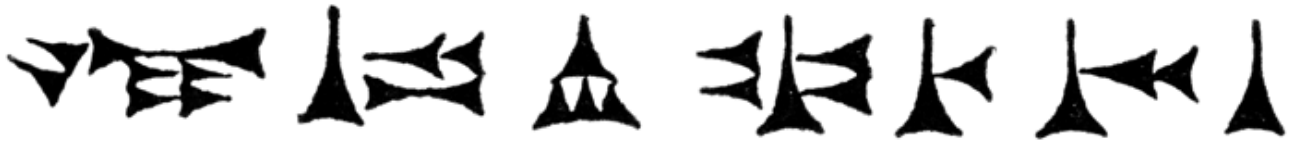
For quick reference, here are the twelve constellations of Chirak and the names of the twelve worlds which pass through them, in order from closest to farthest orbit. The astronomers of Chirak use a surprisingly close measurement system to our own *astronomical unit (AU)* with on 1 AU to be the estimated distance from Chirak to the Sun:

| Constellation | World Name | Est. Distance |
|---------------|------------|---------------|
| Unknown       | Chirak     | 1 AU          |
| Capricorn     | Articus    | 2 AU          |
| Aquarius      | Quarnios   | 3 AU          |
| Pisces        | Iscari     | 4.5 AU        |
| Ares          | Abaddon    | 6 AU          |
| Taurus        | Abyss      | 8 AU          |
| Gemini        | Arborea    | 11 AU         |
| Cancer        | Charybdos  | 14.5 AU       |
| Leo           | Celestia   | 19 AU         |
| Virgo         | Tybor      | 24 AU         |
| Libra         | Inimikus   | 30.5 AU       |
| Scorpio       | Acheron    | 37 AU         |
| Sagittarius   | Irkalla    | 46 AU         |

Although the exact nature of these distances of measurement (by means of parralax and occasionally through gravitic lensing) are up for debate, it is generally agreed upon that the other planets in the solar system are *really far away*. The fact that the ancients are known to have used incredible flying ships to visit these other worlds is simply mind-boggling to the scholars and mages who study astronomy.

At this time, it is believed by most astronomers that the worlds move about on the planes of great crystal spheres; one might imagine a metal ball tossed in to a hollow sphere, as an example. These invisible layered spheres are otherwise etheric, and can not be observed directly. The stars are believed to be on a vast outer sphere, beyond the reach of the farthest world. A few heretical astronomers (arcenists, naturally) contend that there are no crystal spheres at all, and that the stars are actually





distant suns, just like Chirak's own, each one sustaining its own worlds, gods and mortals.

### **The Major Regions of Chirak**

Chirak is divided into six major "known" regions of the world, with the Sea of Chirak region being at the center of the known world as well as the center of the modern renaissance in exploration and advancement. Other regions range from barren and dangerous wastelands (such as in the south) to exotic lands filled with relics and ruins from the lost era (as with the West). These regions include:

#### **The Sea of Chirak**

This region includes the numerous cultures and lands which abridge the vast Sea of Chirak. Here, humanity and its kin have flourished and returned to a state of advancing civilization. The majority of adventures and campaigns in Chirak have been centered in this area, and much about it has been documented and explored. At the heart of the Sea of Chirak rests the fabled Kaldinian cultures, of which the kingdom of Espanea is most prominent, leading a small renaissance in the center of the the known world. On every shore of the landlocked sea can be found a diversity of cultures and kingdoms growing up amidst the ruins of the ancient Mythic and Inadasir empires.

#### **The West**

The legendary West is a fabled region in which it is said the Apocalypse came to a close with the fall of the last gods. This is a strange, demon-haunted land of ancient sorcery, mouldering remnants of the divine and their armies, and hideous entities. The West is a strange and dangerous place to visit, but it also holds vital secrets to the past.

#### **The Frozen North**

North of the Sea of Chirak is a region that grows increasingly cold, where even the summers are barely tolerable, until at last you arrive at the edge of a frozen sea of ice, with the remnants of an ancient continental land called Pale imbedded in

eternal slumber. The people of the north are hardy and rugged lot. The Frozen North extends much farther north across the Glittering Ocean than has ever been explored.

#### **The Everread Desert of the Burning South**

Little remains of the Burning South, save for a vast realm of impenetrable volcanic mountains, vast and unbreachable deserts and terrible heat. The northernmost sections of this realm are barely habitable, and are considered part of the southern expanse of the Sea of Chirak region. Only dragons are known to dwell in this vast wasteland.

#### **The Eastern Realms**

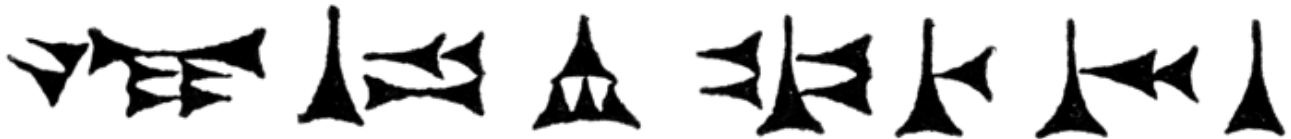
To the east are an ancient land dominated by two major regions, the Sapphiritics in the south and the Yellow Kingdoms of the north. Beyond the easternmost shores of this region stretch a vastness of elemental power, where the sky, land and sea seem to merge in to one haze, and a realm of floating debris in the maelstrom of an airy void can be found. Because of the difficult mountains, deserts and rough terrain between the Sea of Chirak and the east, little trade or exploration has gone on between the two lands.

#### **Far Therias**

Located in the southwestern most corner of the world, abutting against the primordial chaos that eats away at the rest of the planet, Therias is a pocket of civilization nestled in its own domain, far removed from and largely unaware of the Sea of Chirak to the northeast and the West to its north. The Therians are a hearty lot, but they are largely ignorant of the rest of the world, and remain to be discovered by all save the Abraheilites and Helians of the West.

#### **Theliad**

The remote northwestern region of the great continent is dominated by a series of local kingdoms generally described as the Theliadans by those traders and travelers who venture to that region. Theliad is a curiosity to many, and intersects



with the cultural Mecca of Eristantopolis in a strange way. The locals have eschewed the worship of old gods or new avatars in favor of a local phenomenon, in which certain individuals can attain enlightenment and immortality, granting them seemingly godlike status.

### **Overview of the Sea of Chirak**

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The Sea of Chirak is the centerpiece of the world, and the heart of most adventures and tales. Most characters will initially come from this land, and it is here that most new explorers in the world will come from, at least at first. What follows is a short summary of the key kingdoms and cultures which adjoin the Sea of Chirak region. Much more about these lands can be found in the Gazetteer, later on:

### **The Heart of the Sea of Chirak:**

---

#### **The Kaldinian Expanse**

This is the "cultural group" of the island kingdoms. The Kaldinians today are a loose society of freebooters and pirates who dwell on a handful of islands in the Sea of Chirak as well as a few open ports of call. They are the last generation of free men, and it was from the old Kaldinian movement that the larger island kingdoms emerged. The island kingdoms consist of:

#### **Espanea**

The largest island in the heart of the Sea of Chirak, Espanea is home to an age of renaissance with a kingdom and culture reminiscent of Italy and Spain during the 1600's. The Espaneans are curious folk by nature, open to many ideas and concepts, and are famous for their explorers and scholars.

#### **Esterehabau**

A kingdom of elemental sorcerers; loosely reminiscent of Carolignian France, Esterehabau is steeped in old values that they have preserved long past the time in which other Kaldinians left such antique customs behind.

#### **Pardainse**

The dwarves of Pardainse are spread throughout the western Burgeness Isles. Pardainse is a kingdom of dwarves dwelling in a future Italy as it might have been imagined by Leonardo da Vinci. The history of these dwarves is not well known amongst men, and they arrived here early on, quickly achieving a mastery of artificing and aiding in no small measure in the advancement of Espanea in to its enlightened age.

#### **Sontaniardes**

This collection of islands is a loose affiliation of smaller islands east of Espanea, dominated by rogues and privateers. Sontaniardes is different only from the modern Kaldinians in that they hold allegiance to the Sea Kings, piratical overlords who work together to achieve a semblance of peace amongst one another.

### **The North Coast of the Sea of Chirak:**

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#### **Legoran Kingdoms**

A northern land, southernmost of the northlanders, Legoras is a forestland of barbarian jarldoms who war amongst one another and revere old spirits that some say predate the gods themselves. The Legorans are culturally descended from northmen of Syrgia and may have once been migrants from the distant frozen lands of the far north.

Dwelling in the Legoran lands are the Cannesh, which are strange shapeshifters who may once have been human, but who are all now in tune with their nagual, or animal aspect.

#### **Masiria**

A frozen desert in the northwest coastlands, nestled in some of the most ruinous lands of old. The culture is a decadent civilization of old human sorcerers, the elite of whom have extended their lifespans to unnatural lengths. Think Melnibone meets Egypt.



### **Hoagarit**

These Fierce horselords who war with all their neighbors and regularly assemble armies of nomadic soldiers to pillage friend and foe alike. The Hoagarit are reminiscent of the Huns.

### **Maegar**

The Maegar are found north of the Hoagarit and Legoran lands, and are a mixture of Syrgian, Legoran and Hoagarit in terms of racial stock and culture. They are fierce nomads but along the coast of the northern ocean a small cluster of civilized gentry have arisen in the city of Andos. The Maegar prefer to be left alone, but can prove vengeful if provoked.

### **Eristantopolis**

Located on the southern edge of the White Desert beyond the Masirian lands, this is the fabled oldest city in the world. Here the Order of the Preservationists began long ago. Eristantopolis is a fabled city of ancient knowledge and forgotten pre-cataclysmic lore.

### **Xoxtocharit**

Much of the Xoxtocharit lands are in the Frozen North, but some of this kingdom stretches down in the the region of the Sea of Chirak. The Xoxtocharit are a cold, calculating people descended from the ancient migrants of the eastern Occultic people long ago, and so are related as well to the Hoagarit in the south. They are devoted to the 113 Demon Gods, which they revere as the victors in the ancient Apocalypse. The sorcerer kings of the Xoxtocharit are bloody apostates who despise the weaker religions and cultures of Chirak. The people of this land may not individually be evil, but its ruling culture is decidedly inimical to others. Xoxtocharit's culture is reminiscent of Central and South America of the real world.



### **The West of the Sea of Chirak:**

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#### **Grelmaine**

Militant generals and rebellious holy men in civil war dominate Grelmaine. This is a vast land currently erupting with conflict. Loosely based on Russia during the civil wars at the dawn of the twentieth century. The forests of Grelmaine are notoriously haunted and many ancient, powerful evil beings lurk in its wilderness.

#### **Westgate and the Sabiri Lands**

Westgate is the western cityport ruled by Espanea and the gateway to the Fabled West. Sabiri is the vast untamed steppeland between the True West and the region of the Sea of Chirak. The Sabiri people are a mysterious lot, with chalk-white skin, tribal nomadic clans, a hatred of gentry and the civilized men, and an obsession with tattoo magic and their cruel demiurge Kobal. Beyond their lands lies the West proper, with its deadly and ancient mysteries.

#### **The Jagged Coast**

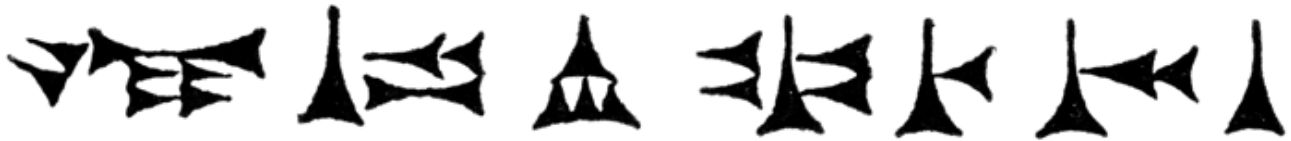
This is a rough and untamed wildland with a few free ports. A hidden city of Tieflings and gnomes called Eredor can be found in this region (the only culture of tieflings in Chirak) and most free minotaurs herald from here. There are many mysterious relics and ruins in this region as well, including the mysterious city of Beltraine, where most of the friendly Animates come from, the sentient golems that are themselves living relics of the lost technology of the ancients.

### **The South Coast of the Sea of Chirak:**

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#### **Shaddizhar**

The southern human kingdoms and tribes of the Shaddizhari stretch along this southern swathe of coastland, stretching to the edge of the Everdread Deserts and the Endless Fire, where the destruction of the world was halted during the Apocalypse. Shaddizhar is a roughly Arabic culture.



### **Nithiad**

A peninsular region of enlightened humans and halflings who enslave minotaurs and engage in a rule of law similar to the old Roman Republic. Nithiad is an atheistic land, which does not acknowledge the young demiurges and avatars that are arising in the world, seeing instead the post-apocalyptic era as a new age for man. Nithiad is the strongest nation militarily along the Sea of Chirak next to Grelmaine and Espanea.

### **Adenach**

This is a dry, blasted land with a sparse culture of barbarians who abstain from the use of all technology and most magic, eschewing such in favor of raw wits and simple living. The people of Adenach are reminiscent of an Aboriginal culture than knows what the rest of the world is like and rejects it all.

### **Hashykarystir**

The kingdom of the lizardfolk, who war amongst one another and feud with the Mercurians to the east. The lizardfolk are in their own sort of era of expansion and enlightenment as they have evolved to understand cooperation and complex government, but their dedication to the demiurge Kon'Hun (whom they believe to be a lizard man as well) has led to religious strife and a holy conflict against the Mercurians to the east.

### **The East Coast of the Sea of Chirak:**

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#### **The Pellucid Kingdoms**

The Pellucid Kingdoms are usually named as Correnstal, Mercurios and Dragos, although Kasdalan in the deep south is sometimes also considered part of the group. The Pellucid Empire was a great realm in its time, but fell centuries ago due to warfare and strife. The following nations all share similar cultural qualities, much as the Kaldinians of the island kingdoms do, that link them together:

### **Mercurios**

The coastal kingdom of Mercurios is one of several kingdoms that owe their heritage to the now collapsed old empire of Pellucid. This is a strong feudal land, much like England during the 12th century. Mercurios has been ruled by the line of king Iron Dukas for centuries now, though it is said its royal line labors under an endless curse.

### **Correnstal**

This was the first great province of the old Pellucid Empire to achieve its own freedom. Correnstal was founded by a great first king who achieved a status as myth and legend. Correnstal has always been a place where life was hard, as resources are scarce, and it has warred regularly with the goblins of the Kyurtain Mountains and the necromancers of Dragos in the south.

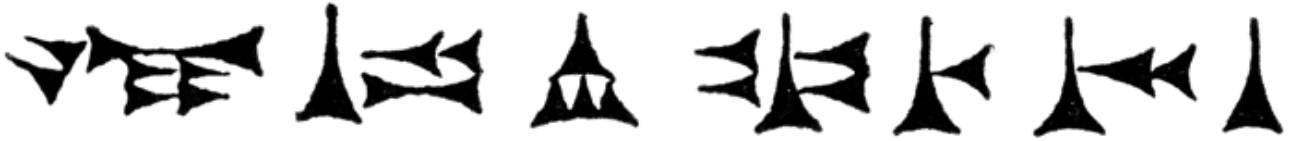
### **Dragos**

This small but powerful kingdom was founded by descendants of the era when Kasdalan conquered the Pellucids. The Dragosian elite practices necromancy, and over time the culture of the realm grew up around the acceptance of the dead as a resource. Because it is nestled in a region that is poor for farming, it often finds itself in conflict with its neighbors to secure food and resources.

**Kasdalan** The deep south holds this dangerous and ancient relic kingdom, once the heart of a vast empire founded by two immortals, Lady Poe and her former husband Zam Redar. Together these two, one an immortal sorceress and the other a thousandspawn of great power managed to conquer the Pellucid Empire and beyond. Today, Kasdalan is a decadent empire of old magic and necromancy in which men are forbidden from the dark arts and the witches of Lady Poe rule supreme.

### **Pelaeus**

Beyond Kasdalan is this sea kingdom which plies its trade on the Pelaeen Gulf, trading with



kingdoms to the east in the Sapphiritic Empire and beyond. The Pelaeans are a hardy folk who are used to conflict with Kasdalan and other threatening neighbors, and are reminiscent of the ancient Greeks of around 1200 BC.

**Nubirion**

This vast wilderness is an impenetrable jungle north of Mercurios. Nubirion is ruled by a number of fractious kingdoms and several cultures descended from the same migratory group as the Hoagarit and Xoxtocharit kingdoms to the north.

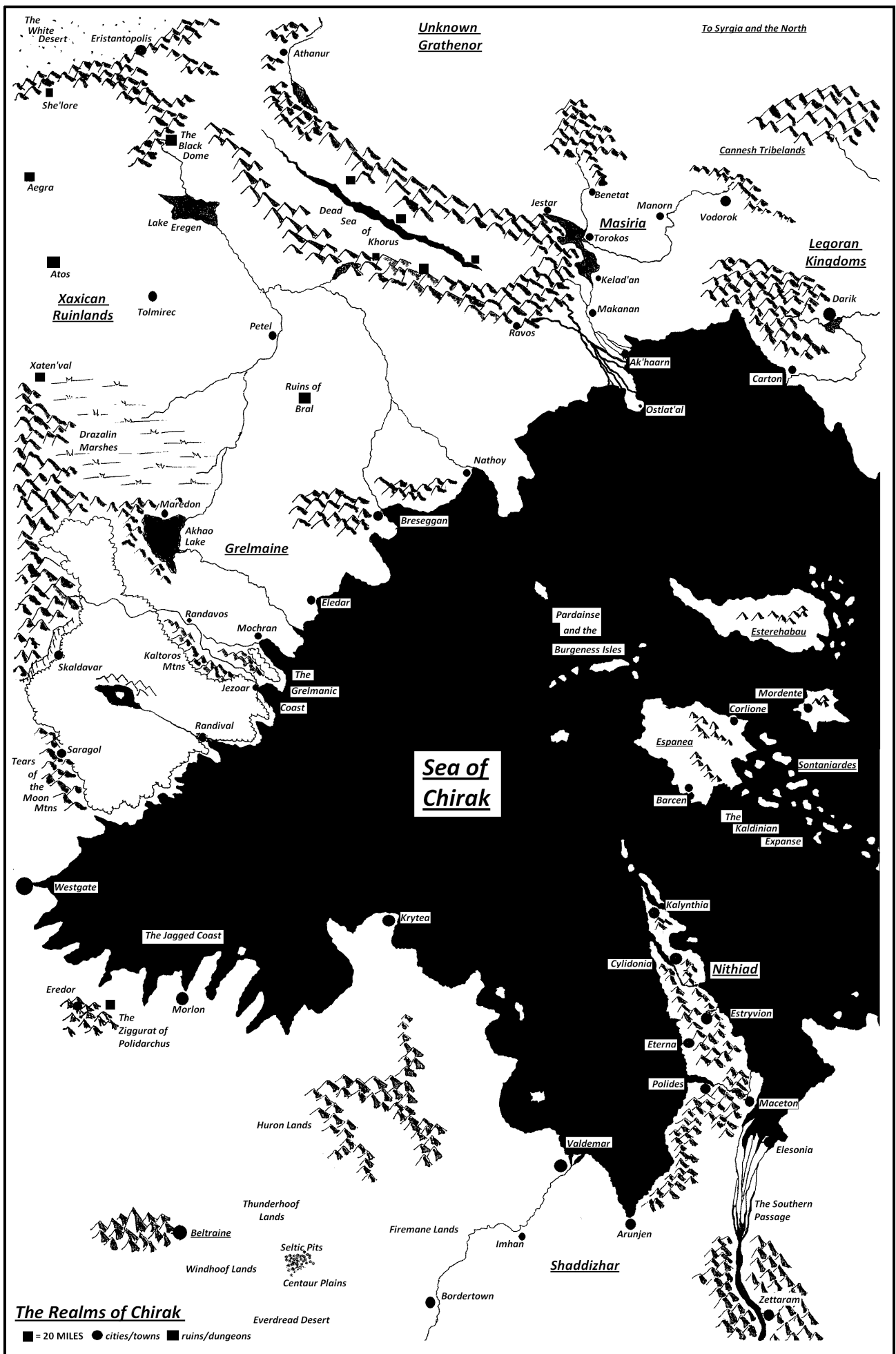
The Nubiri people are a diverse lot, mostly of dark skin, and devoted to ancestral magic and worship. Thematically Nubirion is roughly similar to a mixture of Post-Columbian South America and old world Phoenician-inhabited North Africa.

**Shokoztoni**

This region is a mysterious subculture of Nubirion, little explored and very hostile. Natives from this land are dangerous and barbaric. You have been warned.



*Ruins of the Mythric Isles*



To Southern Syrgia

to the Glittering Ocean  
Andos

Maegar Tribelands

Western Xoxtocharit

Astrual

Talael

Hoagarit

Nubirion

Correnstal

To the Kaldinian Expanses and Espanea

Eastern Sea of Chirak

Eastern Isles of Kaldinia

Dagragor  
The Starry Gulf

The Pellucid Kingdoms

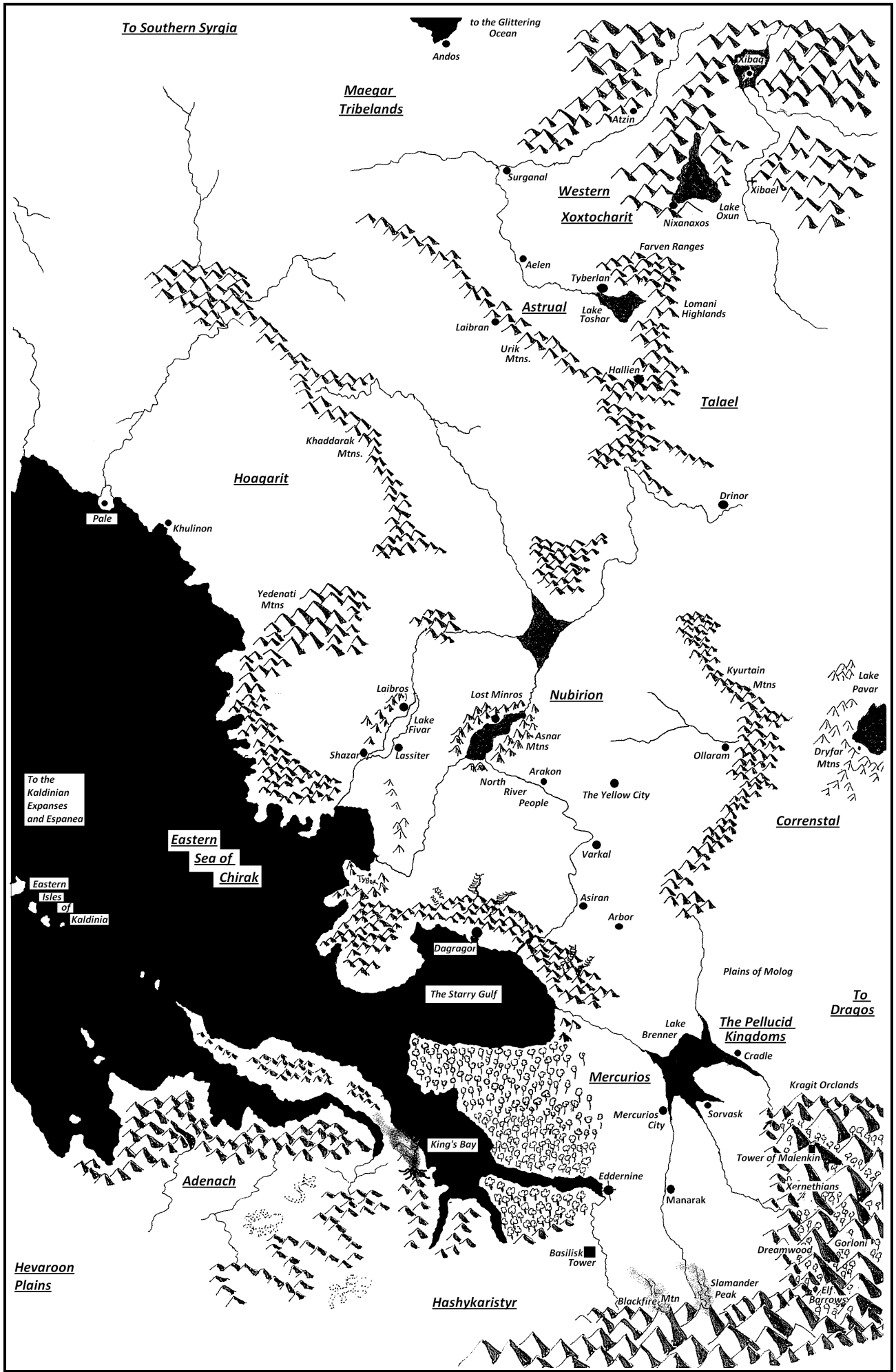
To Dragos

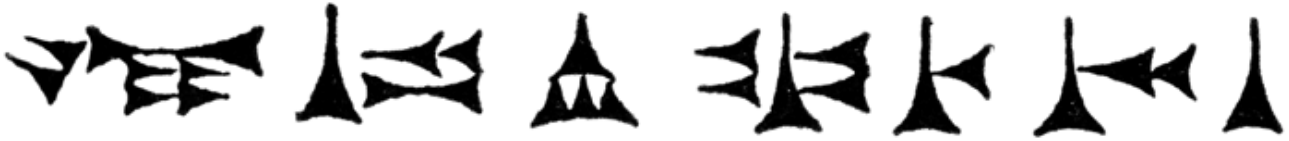
Mercurios

Adenach

Hevaroon Plains

Hashykaristyr





# An Historical Record of The Realms of Chirak

## A Note About Recording the Past:

The only commonly accepted method for recording time is carried out by the Preservationists, who record time from the final day of the Apocalypse. According to their records, it is now 2,448 years since the fall of the gods and the end of the ancient empires. Most references to time among more conventional records refer to things in terms of "years ago." Such as, "three hundred and twenty years ago, Lord Kelvar ruled Espanea." Outside of the efforts of the Preservationists, little effort has been made to keep a diligent record of the years.

The Preservationists use a method of dating based on the lunar cycle, derived from an ancient Mythic and Inadasir dating convention. The Mythic/Inadasir calendar seems to have started with the creation of the world, according to surviving ancient texts, and with the creation of time itself. The most serious scholars of the Preservationists feel that the dating method actually began with the foundation of the proto-empire of the Mythic people, sometimes called the Heminat, in the oldest surviving records. It is further believed that the Inadasir, a later empire and contemporary of the ancient Mythics, adapted this system and replaced a somewhat more awkward solar calendar.

In the present, it is believed by the Preservationists that the lunar calendar is preferred, for the sun is believed to be diminishing, as its solar energies dwindle with time due to the death of the sun god, Pallath. Certain reputed scholars have noted that the annual temperature of the seasons diminishes very slightly year by year, and that the world will eventually be plunged in to an icy darkness, though this may not happen for several thousand years more. There are other scholars who have recently noticed a slight reversal of this trend, and the new Summer of 11,000 OC set a record upswing in temperatures. The exact

cause of this reversal is not known, nor is it known if this is an aberrant flux, but certain scholars "in the know" claim that a follower of Pallath named Marez actually found a shard of the Pallath Stone and then traveled to the dead god's City of the Sun, where he aided in disrupting a lingering energy of Chaos that was sapping the fusion fires of the great orb.

A short summary of interesting events can be found in the following chronology of Chirak. The parenthetical notation is the event as dated according to the old Mythic Calendrical system (omc), a dating method used by the Preservationists and most scholars. For practical purposes, the many and varied calendrical systems which are commonly used, including the Pellucid Lunar Calendar and the Nithadian calendrical system are omitted, for the sake of simplicity.

## Summary of Dating Methods

### Preservationists Calendrical System:

Records date from time of the Apocalypse (defined by records at Eristantopolis)

### Mythic Calendar (omc)

All dates are appended with the "Old Mythic Calendar" date, which dates back to the ancient Heminat

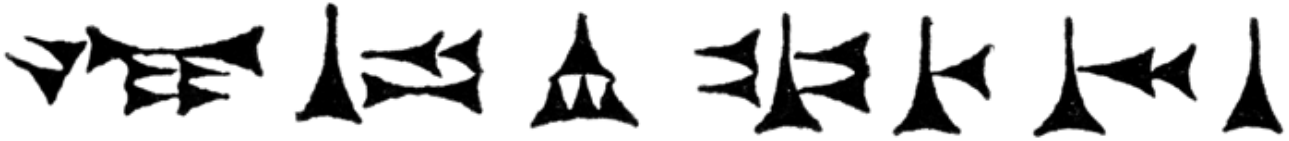
### Inadasir Calendar:

Inadasir calendar is a solar calendar, not normally used

## Chronology of the Realms of Chirak:

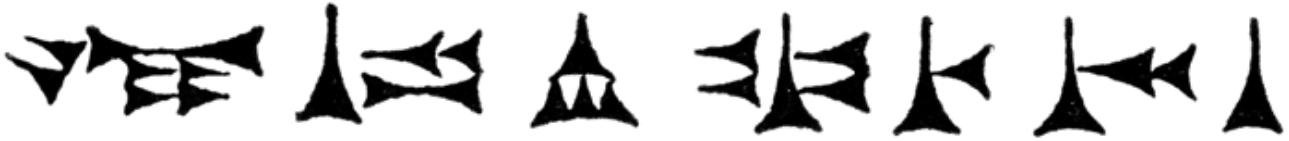
- **Before 2448 years ago:** A great, eons-old techno-magical civilization living in world unity is devoted to the twelve sacred zodiac stones, each kept by a powerful and ancient god. Betrayal erupts, and the gods are plunged in to a nightmare of destruction that sparks the apocalypse.
- **(8854 omc) 2448 years ago:** The Apocalypse ended. The old pantheon of the gods was no more. The world had been reshaped by the terrible celestial conflict. Such civilizations as the Mythic Empire and Beltraine are shattered



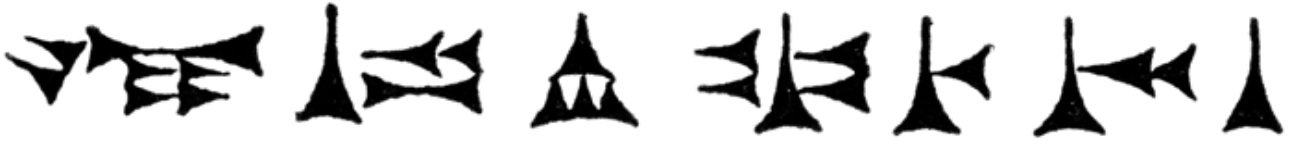


ruins from which a handful of surviving men struggle to survive. Technology is blasted back to the stone age.

- **(8900 omc) 2400 years ago:** the mysterious man known as Chirak brings word of hope to this dark age of man. His message of hope and his efforts to restore man to civilization put many back on the path to recovery. In ages to come, Chirak would be used to name the great sea and the realms in his honor.
- **(9200 omc) 2100 years ago:** The venerable cultures of the Nubiri and Shokoztoni lands are first to recover, already being of stone-age development, and thrive in their region. Cultural edicts in the wake of the apocalypse forbid the use of old technology or magic.
- **(9300 omc) 2000 years ago:** The descendants of the old mages gather and form a new society in Masiria and the White Desert. Their cultures and philosophy reflect different interests in the wake of the chaos they have survived.
- **(9400 omc) 1900 years ago:** Kalie'yana appears as a demiurge and begins healing the abyssal rifts of the Seas of Chirak.
- **(9600 omc) 1700 years ago:** The first early kingdoms of man begin to rise from the ashes of the old, as the societies that would become Abraheil in the west, Espanea, the island kingdoms, and Old Pellucid in the Seas of Chirak, and the Yellow Kingdoms in the east show their early roots.
- **(9700 omc) 1300 years ago:** The Xoxtacharit lands are settled by the forebears of the black sorcerers.
- **(9800 omc) 1200 Years ago:** The Nithiadian republics are settled by nomadic clans.
- **(10,000 omc) 1000 years ago:** The first four avatars of Pornyphiros in Abraheil are created. The northern empire of Agathor rises under the immortal Agathon. He unites the ancestors of the Xoxtocharit, Zappun, Kaz'Dul, Maegar, Legoran and Syrgian people under his banner.
- **(10,100 omc) 900 years ago:** The Pellucid Empire is founded by the first of the great warlords of the time, Altonirios. Emperor Agathon is assassinated and his sons inherit the twelve provinces of the vast empire.
- **(10,150 omc) 850 years ago:** Agathor falls at last as the last son dies. Within a decade the empire is nothing more than a memory.
- **(10,185 omc) 815 years ago:** Minhauros' daughter Milina is born of Minhauros' possession of his avatar and relation with an unknown woman.
- **(10,220 omc) 780 years ago:** The Hoagarit hordes invade Xoxtacharit.
- **(10,276 omc) 724 years ago:** The Hoagarit migrate to the coast to sack and destroy Old Castonia.
- **(10,300 omc) 700 years ago:** The last great elvish empire in the Kyurtrain Mountains defeats the goblin empire and then migrates east. Elves captured as prisoners of the goblins are the beginning of the Red Elves, the Eredariin. During this time the great sorcerer Zam Redar rises to power.
- **(10,350 omc) 650 years ago:** Espanea is formally founded as a nation, and a charter of trade and information is written to dictate the nation's purpose.
- **(10,380 omc) 620 years ago:** The Masirians try to colonize the Sabiri lands.
- **(10,500 omc) 500 years ago:** Correnstal is founded. Zam Redar comes in to power in Kasdalan and begins a reign of conquest. He conquers the cities of the Dreaming Plains (Ulos among them) then uses his scepter of Dragon Kind to destroy the old dragon kingdom of the Kulaidor Mountains and enslave the surviving dragons. His armies decimate the Pellucid Empire.
- **(10,510 omc) 490 years ago:** The last known avatar of Akquinarios, a xernethian elf named Queylinzar Itharian dies after aiding in the defeat of Zam Redar's attempt to conquer the lands of Chirak. The Kasdalanian invasion is stopped by the first Kaldinian alliance (Espanea, Sontaniardes, Esterehabau). In the process, the dragon hordes are decimated and the survivors scatter across Chirak. Lady Poe and her allies unseat Zam Redar from his throne of power. Zam Redar is deposed and entombed in the gullet of a great worm. The Daman Kingdom of the south is formed out of dissident generals who remain loyal to Zam Redar. The Great Empire falls.. Other surviving soldiers and mages of his army settle in the region that becomes Dragos.



- **(10,550 omc) 450 years ago:** The first Order of the Preservationists is founded in the City of the White Desert. The Eredariin rise up against their goblin masters and gain control of the underworld kingdoms of the goblinoids.
- **(10,600 omc) 400 years ago:** The Pardainse dwarves settle on their island and begin building their utopia.
- **(10,622 omc) 378 years ago:** The Masirians withdraw from Sabiri, leaving their cities empty. This is considered a draw, after a century of perpetual warfare with the local nomads.
- **(10,675 omc) 325 years ago:** The Animates of Beltraine suddenly awake and begin exploring their new world while rebuilding their ruined infrastructure.
- **(10,690 omc) 310 years ago:** The Sorcerer Hazalak dies and is reborn a true lich. He founds the Edicts of Death upon which the Dragosian society is founded. His son, Mekudar, becomes the first king of Dragos.
- **(10,700 omc) 300 years ago:** Old Pellucid at last falls to internal conflict and warfare. Over the coming years it forms in to several kingdoms that rise and fall.
- **(10,740 omc) 260 years ago:** The province of Mercurios rises in Old Pellucid and begins to grow in to a real kingdom. Syrgia in the north has its first great victory against ancient Xoxtocharit.
- **(10,780 omc) 220 years ago:** The Preservationists come to Espanea.
- **(10,795 omc) 235 years ago:** The Espaneans try to colonize the Sabiri lands.
- **(10,810 omc) 250 years ago:** The Dukas clan of Mercurios becomes the reigning kings.
- **(10,781 omc) 219 years ago:** Port Graven and other island colonies of Espanea erupt in civil war and ceded from the greater nation, forming the Sontaniardes Alliance.
- **(10,811 omc) 189 years ago:** Then king Incurros of Espanea attempts to bring the Sontaniardes colonies back under control in the War of Islands. It last thirty years and eventually the effort is given up. Only Mordente remains in Espanean control.
- **(10,899 omc) 101 years ago:** Zvakattas drives the Espaneans back in Sabiri, but is defeated at Fartheren.
- **(10,922 omc) 78 years ago:** The last great war between Nithiad and Espanea.
- **(10,944 omc) 56 years ago:** The famous War of Trade erupts when Espanea tries to control the passage of ships in its region through Sontaniardes and Esterehabau. For about ten years, deadly sea conflict is constant among privateers and naval ships, before then king Julius Darego ceased hostilities and allows the free trade of Espanea's sister nations to continue.
- **(10,979 omc) 21 years ago:** The Sabradan Empire tries to invade Pelegar (again).
- **(10,992 omc) 8 years ago:** The Arcanists led by Santana try to gain control of the Abyssal portals with the Book of the Planes.
- **(10,994 omc) 6 years ago:** Minhauros returns to life in Mardieur Mardieux's body. He seizes control of Espanea first, and then bully's Nithiad in to siding with him. He begins hostilities against Legoras.
- **(10,995 omc) 5 years ago:** Mardieur Mardieux returns in a clone body and escapes the arcanist lich Malenkin. He finds the Akquinaris stone and joins the Tower of Kaledan.
- **(10,996 omc) 4 years ago:** The Nithiadian-Mercurios naval war is briefly engaged.
- **(10,997 omc) 3 years ago:** Minhauros is destroyed by Mardieur. Marcus Darego is returned to the throne. Mardieur sails to the west.
- **(10,998 omc) 2 years ago:** The Demon-God Boolion attempts to escape in to the mortal plane, but is thwarted twice.
- **(10,999 omc) 2 years ago:** The Elves of Cylea are saved from extermination by the company of Marlonius Kord, Kiara Byarne, and Thorphin the dwarven hero.
- **(11,000 omc) 1 year ago:** The cult of the dragon gods awakens their progenitors, the creation/destruction forces of Tiamat and Bahamut. A new avatar of Pallath named Maretz arises and discovers the City of the Sun, where the consuming Chaos is thwarted, with the aid of his allies Nethander, Lady Von, Rovas, Maximus, and Sedara. The Order of the Obsidian Skull suffers a great internal civil war when it is disrupted by the efforts of the warrior Maximus Reams. Maretz and his crew



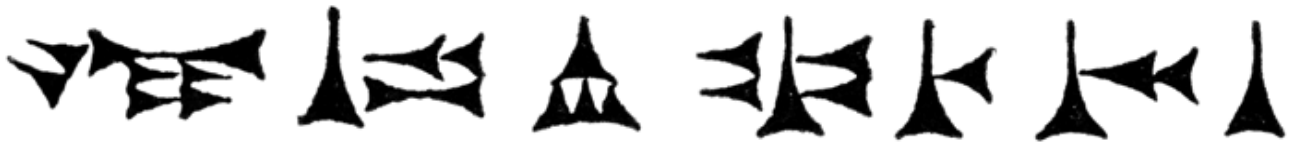
also stop the resurrection of the Thousandspawn named Kostchie the Damned, as well as thwarting the plans of the thousandspawn Zam Redar, who is awakened from his eternal prison.

- **The Present:** The Realms of Chirak are poised on the brink of a new century by the Old Mythric Calendar. Rumors of war in the North,

of a great city in the ice, ruled by a sorcerer who claims to be an immortal survivor of the apocalypse. In the south, the lands of Kasdalan are riddled with strife and civil war, and in the Xotcharit and Maegar lands, a new cult to some entity called Hun'hanal rises, a being claiming to have achieved divinity without one of the sacred Zodiac Stones. Zam Redar takes up residence in the city of Andos in Maegar.



*The arboreal woods of Legoras*



## Chapter II - Races of Chirak

Chirak is a vast realm, and there are many races available for prospective heroes and adventurers. What follows is an overview of the many and varied races available for play, along with their unique traits, feats and other peculiarities. Additionally, conventional races are provided background data to assist you in establishing their particular character and flavor in the Realms of Chirak.

Major humanoid communities in the realms include the cannesh shape shifters of the Legoran lands, dwarves, ogres and giants of the north, the minotaurs of the Huron Mountains, the lizard men of Hashikarystyr, Masirians of the north, the animates of Beltraine and the Great Dome, and the cylovites of the Blasted Lands. Each community of humanoids has something to contribute the lands about them, and with the exception of the Animates and Masirians, are rarely seen beyond their native realms. To decide if you want to play one of these races or something more conventional, read on.

### Humanity

Humans are everywhere. They were the most numerous of the races before the Apocalypse, and they remain so afterward. Perhaps this is because they are ambitious and prolific, but humankind thrives.

Among men, there are numerous special cultural details and variations to consider. Some cultures of man are still trapped, either by necessity or design, in barbarism, while others have recaptured some of the lost glory of the ancient Mythic and Inadasir empires and are entering a new, modern renaissance. You should consult the specific gazetteer entries for each region to provide more detail on specific character traits. Some, such as the Adenites, have unique racial modifiers that set them apart from other men. Likewise, some humans have transcended their mortality and are treated as separate races, such as the Masirians.

Unless the text of a specific gazetteer entry states otherwise, all human characters are built as described in the core rules.

### Human Background Packages

You can choose from several racial groups throughout Chirak. Pick one of these to add some flavor and possible skill bonuses to your character. The following racial packages are representative of several of the most common human cultural groups to be found in the Sea of Chirak region.

#### Kaldinian Ancestry

You hail from the Sea of Chirak and the island cluster at its heart. In appearance you tend towards a dark and swarthy look, with sun burned skin and a predilection for dark, long hair and Mediterranean features. If you are male, you tend to favor the groomed mustache and beard, and if you are a woman you prize your long dark tresses. If you hail from Esterehabau, you are somewhat lighter of skin, as your people are intermixed with northern blood.

Perhaps you are a seafarer for Espanea or a freebooter out of Kaldinia. You could be a prospector, searching for gold on the lush islands, or maybe even a Lessi native, one of the indigenous people who are directly descended from the ancient Mythic Empire.

*Espanean Associated Skills:* acrobatics, perception

*Sontaniardes Associated Skills:* intimidate, acrobatics

*Esterehabau Associated Skills:* insight, diplomacy

*Kaldinian Associated Skills:* thievery, acrobatics

#### Northern Eshadai Ancestry

You are fair of skin and burn easily in the southern sun. Blonde and red hair is much more common amongst your kin than dark, and beards aren't just a fashion statement, they are a way of saving your face from frostbite.

The people of the north are varied, but all have a strong tendency toward rugged, hardy lifestyles and a sense of pragmatism unseen in other lands where resources and warmth are more common!

*Syrgian Associated Skills:* endurance, perception

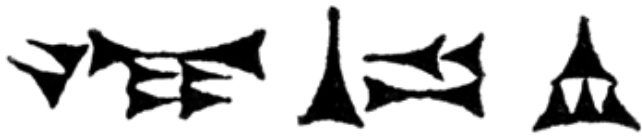
*Legoran Associated Skills:* athletics, perception

*Palaeic Associated Skills:* diplomacy, intimidate

*Maegar Associated Skills:* nature, endurance

#### Occultic Ancestry

You are dark of skin and have shorter features, appearing quite distinct from the other racial groups of the Sea of Chirak region. You tend to have more



prominent epicanthic folds around your eyes, and if you hail from Nubirion you can have almost coal-dark skin.

If you hail from Xoxtocharit then you might well be a soldier or priest in the service of (or disillusioned by) the demon gods. If you are from Nubirion, then you may well be a tribesman, a shaman or a wandering hunter or mystic, and might owe allegiance only to your tribe or remote city. If you are Hoagarit, then your best friend is your horse, and you eagerly wait for the day when you prove yourself strong enough to unite the tribes of the Horse Lord under your banner, to at last conquer the infidels of the Sea of Chirak.

*Xoxtocharit Associated Skills:* intimidation, religion

*Hoagarit Associated Skills:* Nature, Perception

*Nubirion Associated Skills:* Nature, Endurance

### **Pellucid Ancestry**

You hail from the eastern kingdoms of the Sea of Chirak. You have lean, muscular features and tend toward light skin with blonde and sandy red hair on average, although those of Pellucid descent can look very different in appearance, although being tall is the most common trait.

You might be a soldier or knight in the service of Iron Dukas out of Mercurios, or a dedicated servant in Correnstal, seeking to aid your preferred contender to the throne. You could also hail from Dragos, where necromancy is a necessary way of life. You might also hail from as far south as Kasdalan or Pelaeus, where you learned to watch your back in one, or you made a living as a sea trader in the other.

*Mercurios Associated Skills:* athletics, endurance

*Correnstal Associated Skills:* endurance, nature

*Dragos Associated Skills:* endurance, arcane

*Kasdalan Associated Skills:* intimidate, perception

*Pelaeus Associated Skills:* acrobatics, perception

### **Sabiri Inadasir Ancestry**

Your heritage is distinct, for you have a dusky gray to chalk white skin that is almost unearthly in appearance to the men of the east around the Sea of Chirak. You sometimes take advantage of this, as some men in the east don't even think you are human like they are!

Sabiri are nomadic horse warriors, but enjoy a convoluted society of secret cults and guilds of warriors and assassins. Others of Inadasir ancestry include the Eredites, slave-kin of the city of Eredor where labor and servitude has been your life's duties, and deeper in to Pelegar beyond the Kossarit Mountains you are used to the hard life of survival in a land over-run with demons.

*Pelegar Associated Skills:* Intimidate, Stealth

*Sabiri Associated Skills:* Nature, Athletics

*Eredite Associated Skills:* Endurance, Nature



*Trector Cyberius, warlord of Nithiad*

### **Southern Ancestry**

You are dark of skin and are well adjusted to the burning desert heat which is most common to you. You and your kin are well adjusted to the southern climes, and find the discomfort of northerners amusing.

You may be from Nithiad, where you are accustomed to beautiful low hills and farmland full of olives and grapes. You might be from the harsher deserts of Shaddizhar, where you are used to bartering for your wares, or you may come from the desolate Neolithic lands of Adenach.

*Adenach Associated Skills:* endurance, perception

*Shaddizhar Associated Skills:* bluff, insight

*Nithiad Associated Skills:* diplomacy, nature



## Animates



Animates are the magically animated forms of golems brought to life through an imbue ment with elemental energies. With very few exceptions, most animates are relics from the pre-apocalyptic age or derived from the remains of such, and it is believed that they were used as servants by the Old Mythricks, Inadasir, and other lost cultures both during peace and war.

Animates most people hear tell of in legends are the great monstrosities that guard the Black Dome of the north near the White Desert, killing and smashing all that approaches. The lesser known forms are sometimes referred to simply as collectors, humanoid entities of clay, metal and other odd patchwork parts sent out into the world to gather knowledge. They are sometimes self described as researchers and scholars, while at other times they seek out specific objects or items, and will often trade and barter for such items if they are held in high regard. Doppelgangers who have been utterly refused have been known to leave, only to come back later with deadly reinforcements.

Animates are unusually difficult characters to play, but can be an interesting challenge for someone who would like to try out a living construct. Animates usually serve some unusual ultimate purpose, which could be a long term campaign goal. On occasion animates achieve a sense of independence, perhaps having been inactivated due to damage, or on rare occasion shutting down due

to some inhibition of their elemental power source. These animates may have a sense of free will and curiosity on their own, and an urge to explore.

### Playing an Animate Character

Animates build their humanoid collector models to emulate living creatures, and so the nature of the magical artificing imbues them with life-like qualities, although they are clearly made of artificial materials. An animate collector appears to look like a human or elf made of stylized and decorative pieces of metal, ceramics, cloth and a strange fiber.

**Average Height:** Variable, usually in precise measurements of 5, 6, or 7 feet in height

**Average Weight:** 300-500 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Int, +2 Con

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** Normal, but an animate may choose better vision (see below)

**Languages:** Old Mythic, Espanean (or one other) and Tradespeak

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Endurance, +2 Perception

**Living Construct:** (see MM)

**Choose two of the following options:** Night Vision, Fire Spray, Change Self, Hardened Skin, or Machine Logic.

#### Night Vision (Animate racial power)

*You can see at night as if it were daylight, although sudden bright lights can blind you.*

This effect requires a minor action to activate, but remains on until deactivated. If the animate is surprised by sudden bright light equivalent to sunlight in his square he grants combat advantage until the end of his next turn. Otherwise, even in total darkness he can see as if it were daylight.

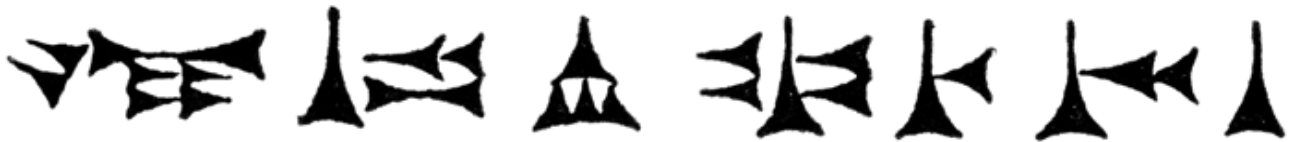
#### Change Self (Animate racial power)

*With a thought, your exterior appearance changes like plastic to emulate another humanoid form.*

##### Daily Utility

##### Standard Action – Self Only

**Effect:** This ability emulates the Wizard Level 6 Utility Spell of the same name.



### Fire Spray (Animate racial power)

*Small holes in the ends of your fingers release a stream of burning liquid at your enemies.*

**Encounter – Martial, Fire**

**Standard Action – Close Blast 3**

**Targets:** All creatures in area

**Attack:** Dex+2 vs. Reflex

**Hit:** 1D8+Con modifier fire damage to all targets in blast.

*11<sup>th</sup> level:* 2D8+Con modifier fire damage.

*21<sup>st</sup> level:* 3D8+Con modifier fire damage.

### Hardened Skin (Animate racial power)

*You tense up, as armored plates lock together in to a solid, impenetrable mass of hardened ceramic, metal and wood.*

**Encounter - Utility**

**Minor Action – Self Only**

**Effect:** You gain ½ level+Con Modifier in temporary hit points.

### Machine Logic (Animate racial power)

*You are particularly mechanical in your way of thinking, and perceive reality through calculated, analytical eyes.*

**Daily - Utility**

**Instant Reaction – Self Only**

**Trigger:** You are struck by an attack with the psychic property

**Effect:** Gain a +2 defenses bonus against the psychic attack and a +2 save bonus against any ongoing psychic damage until the end of your next turn.

### Animate Racial Feats:

The following feats are unique to animates, who hone their precise abilities to recall and duplicate humanoid behavior.

#### Advanced Fire Spray

**Prerequisite:** Animate, Fire Spray power

**Benefit:** You spray a lingering, burning fluid from your fingertips instead of normal fire. The animate may add ongoing 5 Fire damage (save ends) to his power's effect.

### Mimicry

**Prerequisites:** Photographic Recall feat, Charisma 14+

**Benefit:** Animates are able to study and precisely imitate the motions and voice of those they encounter. Some perfect it to an art.

The animate can study one target for a period of time and attempt to mimic that target with a Charisma check. The base DC for this task is 20. Modifiers include: +2 if the target is studied for at least one minute, an additional +2 if studied for 10 minutes or more. Penalties include: -2 per day since observing the subject, an additional -4 if the subject is being mimicked through second-hand (but accurate) information.

The animate will either precisely imitate the mannerisms or the voice of a target (or both, with two separate checks). The mimicry will be so precise that the animate could be instantly assumed to be its mimicked target. The animate that does this is actually doing a form of pantomime, and is not creating movements that are able to duplicate combat or skill-based actions of the target. Nonetheless, the result is uncanny compared to conventional thespians, a mechanically precise duplication of life.

### Photographic Recall

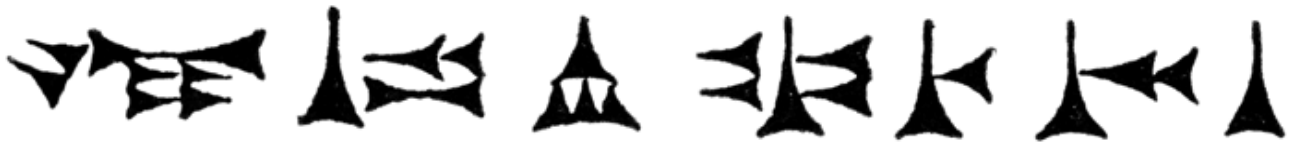
**Prerequisites:** Animate, Perception as a trained skill

**Benefit:** Animates can be constructed and magically programmed to record what they see and hear with stunning precision. As time goes by, this ability is nurtured and becomes truly vivid.

An animate may make a Perception check to recall any information previously experienced with startling precision. The length of time which can be applied to the recall is based on the following chart:

| Perception Check | Length of Time |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1-10             | 1 week         |
| 11-15            | 1 month        |
| 16-20            | 1 year         |
| 21-25            | 10 years       |
| 26-30            | 100 years      |
| 31-35            | 1,000 years    |
| 36-40            | 2,000 years    |
| +5               | +1,000 years   |

The animate may photographically reconstruct an image recalled in a physical media (such as potter or painter). It will be almost lifelike, depending on the



quality of painting materials. An animate with the Mimicry feat may precisely duplicate voices from any period of time (like a recording, but not as voice mimicry). Minutiae down to the signature on a clay pot or the runes on a banded ring may be recalled with this ability.

## Cannesh



The cannesh tribes are shape shifting fey folk of the northernmost Legoran forest lands, not far from the Northern Wastes. They are mysterious, but very down to earth folk, and are not often found as adventurers outside of the Legoran lands. Their nature as blessed beings of the spirits makes the Legoran people reverent and fearful of the Cannesh tribes.

The cannesh are a remnant of the ancient past, descended at one time from Legoran stock. The Cannesh are the descendants of Legoran men and women who intermarried at one time with a now legendary fey folk of the north, a mysterious society of animist spirit folk who are described in the ancient myths as a race of spirits, freed from the crags of the earth at the time of the apocalypse to, "dance upon the edge of the world in a swirling pattern of light and dark." No mortal being who interacted with these fantastical spirits could resist them, and it is said that the most ancient and favored Legoran people were nurtured and cared for by these beings through a time of great darkness before being

released back in to the world, forever changed and unique.

Preservationists claim these ancient Fey Spirits were among the many spirit servants of the gods cast down from the heavens in the apocalypse, but the legorans claim that they were ancient forest spirits who always existed apart from the realms of men and gods, and that they appeared then to help the legorans survive through the harsh centuries after the destruction of the world. Because of this, the legorans treat the touched descendants of these people, the cannesh, with a mixture of fear and respect.

The cannesh themselves claim to still know of the existence of the fey spirits, but are not fearful or curious of the mysterious northern beings which spawned their kind. Instead, they love to recount tales of their first legendary clansman, Yagirin Hedor, who led the young race southward to seek out the heart of the world. It is said that this migration was because of an exile, that Yagirin and his peers sought to capture the essence of the heart of the forest, and that in doing so, it forever altered them. Others claim that this was a gift freely given, and when it was accepted, the cannesh were considered ready to return to the mortal realms.

Cannesh are humanoid in appearance, although the nature of the possessing beast within each cannesh's heart has an overall affect that shows in his humanoid side. A bear folk cannesh in human form looks large and burly, while a Vollfluen wolf folk will have sharpened canines and a healthy body of hair. Hidihirin and rastakats are short, and mistaken as Halflings, although the sharp, pointed and bird-like features of the rastakats shows through, just as the lean and athletic features of the hidihirin give them away for their rabbit nature.

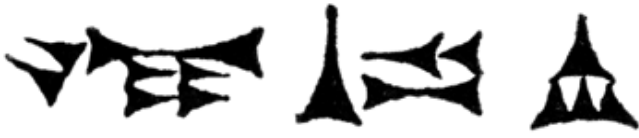
Cannesh, as shape shifters, can transform in to their spiritual animal form, and may do so at will. Their animal form will have all of the characteristics of the animal in question, but the hit points, skills, and level-based modifiers of their humanoid form.

Each Cannesh belongs to one of the following tribes:

- **Bacgruit (the Bear folk)**
- **Hidihirin (the Rabbit folk)**
- **Vollfluen (the Wolf folk)**
- **Rastakats (the Raven folk)**

There are several other lesser tribes (badger folk, skunk folk, serpent folk, fish folk, etc.) In addition, rare cannesh are born as the feyweres (Cannesh Lords), who can shape shift in to any animal form they wish.





## Cannesh Characters

Cannesh characters must choose from one of the aforementioned tribes. Cannesh in humanoid form have all of the outward physical characteristics of humans or halflings, but with the following racial characteristics that are dependent on their native tribe:

### Traits Common to all Cannesh:

**Language of Animals:** Cannesh can speak with animals of their own kind using their racial tongue, as well as speak to others of their species.

**Tribe:** Choose from one of the following tribes of cannesh. Each type gains a shape shifting form, and the abilities of that form can only be access when shape-shifted. All at-will and encounter abilities granted by the shape shifted form may automatically be utilized when in that form. The tribe of choice also grants a language specific to the animal type they can shape change in to. This language allows for communication between cannesh of the same tribe, as well as animals of the same type.

**Uncivilized:** Cannesh do not understand or embrace civilization. No cannesh may be trained in Streetwise at first level (if this skill is required, substitute Nature or Perception in its place). Moreover, a cannesh who spends too much time in civilization and away from the wilderness will gain a -2 penalty to all charisma and charisma based skill checks as a result of his increasing sickness at being away from the wilderness. When in civilized lands (a city, for example) the cannesh gains the charisma penalty. He will lose this penalty when he leaves the city and returns to nature.

Conversely, cannesh are more cunning in the wilderness, and gain a +2 initiative bonus when in the wilds. This bonus does not apply in civilized regions, such as towns and cities.

### Cannesh Tribal Packages:

*A note about shape shifting:* When shape shifted, cannesh lose the benefit of any armor worn in humanoid form. Equipment remains at the location they change shape, although cannesh often wear harness-like clothing that will remain worn when they shape shift. Such garb costs the same as normal clothing, but must be crafted by cannesh tailors.

## Bacgruit (the Bear folk)

**Average Height:** 6'2"-7'

**Average Weight:** 225-400 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** Low Light

**Languages:** Bear-Tongue, Tradespeak, and one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Endurance, +2 Nature

### Cave Bear Form

### Cannesh Racial Utility

*You transform in to the shape of a great bear.*

### Encounter – Primal, Polymorph

### Minor Action – Personal

### Sustain Free

**Effect:** You change in to the form of a large black or brown cave bear. While in this form you cannot access equipment, but gain a basic claw attack and cave bear frenzy. You gain the following traits while in this form:

**Speed:** 6; +4 squares if charging or running

### Basic Claw Attack

### Cannesh Racial Attack

*Your bear form has large, dangerous claws.*

### At-Will – Martial

### Standard Action – 1 target

**Attack:** Str+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1D8+Str claw damage.

**Special:** the claw attack counts as a melee weapon for purposes of exploits.

### Cave Bear Frenzy

### Cannesh Racial Attack

*You burst in to furious rage against your foes.*

### Encounter – Melee Attack

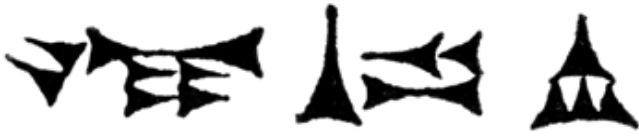
### Standard Action – Close Burst 1

**Attack:** Str+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 2D8+Str claw damage done to all adjacent enemies so hit.

11<sup>th</sup> Level: Becomes 3D8+Str claw damage

21<sup>st</sup> Level: 4D8+Str claw damage



### Hidihirin (the Rabbit folk)

**Average Height:** 4' to 4'10"

**Average Weight:** 65-150 lbs..

**Ability Scores:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Charisma

**Size:** Small

**Speed:** 7 squares

**Vision:** Low Light

**Languages:** Rabbit-Tongue, Tradespeak, and one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Insight, +2 Stealth

#### Rabbit Form Cannesh Racial Attack

*You transform in to the shape of a large winter hare.*

**Encounter Utility - Primal, Polymorph**

**Minor Action – Personal**

**Sustain Free**

**Effect:** You change in to the form of a large winter hare. While in this form you cannot access equipment, but gain a basic kick attack. You gain the following traits while in this form:

**Speed:** 8

**Size:** small

**Quick and Nimble:** In rabbit form the cannesh gains +2 Stealth and +2 Reflexes.

#### Basic Kick Attack Cannesh Racial Attack

*Your hind legs as a large hare are enormously strong.*

**At-Will – Martial**

**Standard Action – 1 target**

**Attack:** Dex+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1D6+Dex damage.

**Special:** the kick attack counts as a melee weapon for purposes of exploits.

### Rastakats (the Raven folk)

**Average Height:** 3'2" to 4'6"

**Average Weight:** 50-125 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Intelligence, +2 Dexterity

**Size:** Small

**Speed:** 5 squares on foot, 8 squares flying

**Vision:** Low Light

**Languages:** Raven-Tongue, Tradespeak, and one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Insight, +2 Perception

#### Giant Raven Form Cannesh Racial Power

*You transform in to the shape of a giant raven with a six foot wing-span.*

**Encounter Utility - Primal, Polymorph**

**Minor Action - Personal**

**Effect:** You change in to the form of a giant raven. While in this form you cannot access equipment, but may use your claw attack for any melee abilities. You gain the following traits while in this form:

**Speed:** 8 flying, 4 on ground

**Size:** small

#### Swooping Dive Attack Cannesh Racial Attack

*You dive-bomb a target and attempt to gouge its eyes out!*

**At-Will – Martial**

**Standard Action – One Target**

**Must be in raven form**

**Attack:** Dex+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1D6+Dex damage and target is blinded until the end of your next turn.



### Vollfluen (the Wolf folk)

**Average Height:** 5'3" to 6'4"

**Average Weight:** 125-300 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Constitution, +2 Dexterity

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** Low Light

**Languages:** Wolf-Tongue, Tradespeak, and one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Nature, +2 Stealth

### Wolf Form

### Cannesh Racial Power

*You transform in to the shape of a large wolf.*

### Encounter Utility - Primal, Polymorph

#### Minor Action - Personal

**Effect:** You change in to the form of a wolf. While in this form you cannot access equipment, but may gain a bite attack. You gain the following traits while in this form:

**Speed:** 6

### Basic Bite Attack

### Cannesh Racial Attack

*In wolf form you have a vicious bite.*

#### At-Will – Martial

#### Standard Action – 1 target

**Attack:** Str+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1D8+Str damage.

**Special:** the bite attack counts as a melee weapon for purposes of exploits.

**Special:** If the cannesh has combat advantage against a target, that target is also knocked prone if hit.

### Cannesh Racial Feats:

#### Feywere - Cannesh Lord

**Prerequisites:** Race-Cannesh, any 2 attributes 16+, level 11+

**Effect:** The cannesh discovers his heritage as a true shape shifter. He loses his Tribe trait but gains the ability to transform in to any listed cannesh animal form (bear, rabbit, wolf, raven, and others at the DM's discretion). Use the Animal Form abilities as listed for each tribe; the feywere gains all of them, though he may only use one form per encounter.

#### Quickened Shape shifting

**Prerequisites:** Race-Cannesh, Dex 14+

**Effect:** The Cannesh has become so efficient and precise in his ability to shape shift that he is now able to change

form as a free action instead of a standard action, although he may only shift form once per round.

#### Fey Intuition

**Prerequisites:** Race-Cannesh, Arcana, Wisdom 13+

**Effect:** A Cannesh with especially keen intuition gains an enhanced ability to divine the magical nature of things around him. He can "see" fey forms and spirits, circles of power and ley lines. He can extend this to conventional magic. The cannesh gains a permanent +2 bonus to his Arcana skill, and can identify any fey creature or spirit correctly by making an arcana check, against a DC equal to the 10+the level of the target inspected.





## Changelings

Changelings are one of many potential half-breeds that can be found in Chirak. Among the denizens of Chirak, doppelgangers are a reclusive species, but they have almost no culture of their own, having merged with humankind as a predatory chameleon species eons ago, and as a side effect of this cohabitation doppelgangers occasionally produce offspring with humans or elves. Though rare, this has happened often enough that the offspring, changelings, are a not-uncommon phenomenon in large cities.

Without much of a culture to claim as their own, changelings often learn something of the secretive doppelganger culture they are related to, as well as the seedier side of their human or elvish heritage. Changelings often are rather worldly, for their ability to mimic any person they meet gives them a unique opportunity to invade elements of society unseen by other half-breeds, and as a result many changelings learn to adore and covet the experience of being truly human, to the point where they turn their back on their doppelganger heritage, preferring to pretend to humanity.

Player character changelings are certainly likely, and often distinguished by their fondness for good living and the niceties of life, and it is quite possible for an adventuring group to go for some time with a changeling in their midst without realizing it!

Changelings are most likely to come from large metropolises, such as Eddernine, Barcen, and Eristantpolis. They are certainly likely to be rogues and bards, but a surprising number display sorcerous talent.

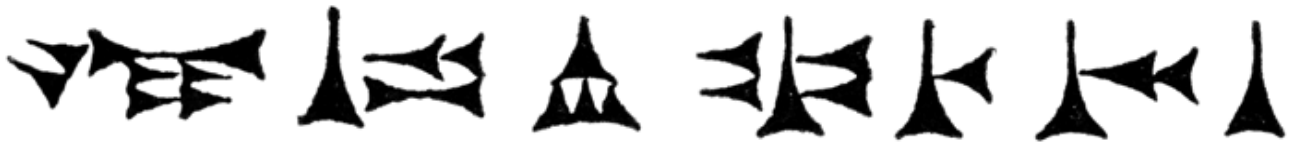


## Cylovites



Cylovites come from the Blasted Lands to the west, where rumors abound of an “ancient empire immersed within the mountainous, craggy expanses ruled by these strange crystalline beings, where humans are, the lowest sort of slave fodder imaginable.” On very rare occasions, a cylovites has been encountered outside of these lands, but are immediately destroyed by any and all who encounter it. The myths of the apocalypse tell of the cylovites having a definite relationship to the end of the world, being harbingers who arrived just weeks before the great cataclysm.

Humans and demihumans who dwell in the regions of the Cylovite-controlled blasted lands may be chosen as player characters. Specific details can be found in the entry on the Crystite Kingdom, but these player characters will also be very rare, and a bit of a challenge to play. Cylovite Thralls are permanently altered by parasitic attachments that make them innately



subordinate to the Cylovite Overlords, and as such, player characters of this species must get very far away from the telepathic control of their masters to function normally. It is said that a special concoction created from the mandragora root, when applied to the parasitic attachment, will subdue the entity sufficiently that the host thrall can move freely and think on his own without interference for a time, usually a few hours. It is suspected that some rare escaped thralls have used this method to gain freedom, fleeing to the farthest corners of the world to escape their oppressive masters.



A Cylovite Hybrid is any biological living being implanted with a Parasitic Crystal. The crystal covers the subject over a week long period like a crystalline suit of armor or a mesh of crystal muscles and skin, and bonds with the subject's nervous system. A prospective host must make three saves (one per hour after initial infection) to survive the process and reject the bonding crystal parasite. If the host fails three saves before making three successes, then he or she has become a hybrid.

All other mental elements of the host remain the same, but the hybrid's original personality will change by one factor toward the implanting overlord's own disposition (i.e. pacifistic servant of Laddaskar with an overlord master who is a violent and evil being will now either lose his pacifism or become a simpering coward as well.) As such, the base alignment of the hybrid usually shifts "down" one level (lawful good becomes good, good becomes unaligned, unaligned becomes evil, and evil becomes chaotic evil) as most overlords are evil or chaotic evil.

Willing hybrids are often the source of soldiers and enforcers in the Crystite Kingdom. Unwilling hybrids become fodder, cheap labor, or are (if especially resistant) thrown in to the gladiatorial pits.

The overlord who made the hybrid acts as if it has a permanent charm effect on the hybrid. The Hybrid who seeks to rebel against the overlord must make a Wisdom check to overcome the effects of the spell against a DC of 25 or the Will of the overlord, whichever is better. Any other overlord can attempt to dominate a hybrid they did not make, but the Hybrid gets a +2 modifier against these foreign dominations (see the monstrous appendix for more on Cylovite overlords). The hybrid can make these resistance checks once per day, and if broken, the Overlord must cast the spell to gain control once again as if using the power normally. If it takes again, then the effects will once more be permanent until broken. If it ever fails three times in a row, then the Hybrid loses his charm compulsion permanently, and can never be dominated mentally by his creator overlord again.

Escaped cylovite thralls are usually humans or other humanoids. This racial entry serves as a template; apply it to another race of your choice (usually human, halfling, elf, dwarf or tiefling, although shapeshifters and constructs are excluded) to create your escaped thrall.

### Cylovite Thrall Template

**Average Height, Weight, Ability Scores, Size and Speed:** as base species

**Vision:** low light

**Languages:** as per the base species, plus Cylovite

**Skill Bonuses:** Replace with +2 Arcana, +2 Endurance

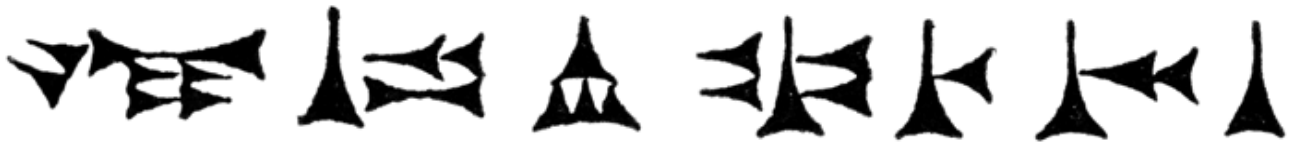
**Crystal Skin:** Hybrids are now partially crystalline, but are also still living beings, albeit with a controlling cylovite parasitic mind. As such, they gain a natural AC bonus of +2.

**Resistant:** This armor also resists damage from: fire 5, cold 5, and electricity 5.

**Weakness:** Anyone choosing to target the crystalline nodes along the head, neck and back of a hybrid may attempt to do so; it is a -5 penalty to the chance to hit, but success causes 10 additional damage.

**Telepathy:** Hybrids are telepathic, and can communicate with other beings mentally within 1 mile, and up to a distance of 10 miles with a Cylovite overlord. This ability is two way with the Hybrid only, and is a free action that targets one person.

**Mental Resistance:** Escaped Hybrids develop a resistance to mental effects, and gain a +2 bonus to their Will defense.



## Devas



Only slightly less common than tieflings, devas are an unusual race of plane-touched in Chirak, and most of their kind are usually visitors from other planes of experience, who come to Chirak to study its mysteries and ponder the nature of good and evil in a land that was devastated by the conflict between such long ago. It is believed that the very first devas to visit Chirak did so many eons ago as curious visitors, but that the majority of native devas came to Chirak as soldiers during the Apocalypse, and that their immortal souls have been tied to this existence ever since. Indeed, a deva who dies and reincarnates while visiting Chirak loses his outsider trait and is considered a native member of this world.

Most folk think of devas as above, visitors from the planes, but they are really much more. Devas appear to be spirits made flesh, a process in which the phantasmal entities of the spirit plane somehow learn the ritual necessary to transcend their ethereal realm and bond themselves to true flesh. The ritual grants them a body and a physical existence, though they age not at all, and can reincarnate easily. Over time, those spirits which pursue dark paths and find that evil is to their content will eventually shift, and one day reincarnate in to the form of a diabolic being, usually a rakshasa or devil of some sort. Those devas who pursue the path of spiritual goodness instead become more profound figures, and over time become progressively more powerful beings. It is believed by a handful of scholars that good devas eventually transform in to Elohim, but there is no substantiation to this speculation.

Devas in Chirak are designed as per the normal rules, although evil devas may respawn in to a wide range of vile beings with each reincarnation. The exact requirement for either good or evil to induce some transformation is unknown.

## Dragonborn

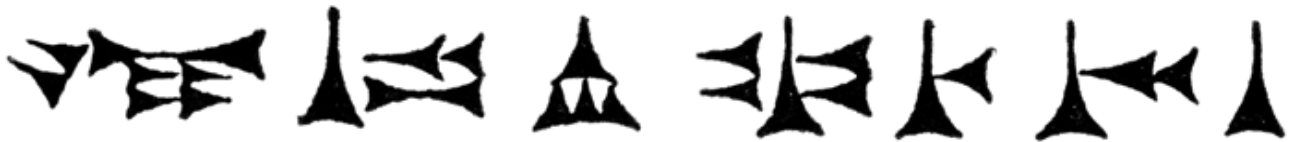
The dragonborn are a rare race in the world of Chirak, for the vast majority of the draconian humanoids were slain in the Apocalypse, as they joined the dragon hordes to serve one side or the other. It was during this ancient period that the ancient and majestic draconian empire was sundered, and the conflict between dragons rent the unity of their people to shreds.

Most dragonborn are descended from humans who venerated the dragons, and eventually interbred with the pan-dimensional species, becoming draconic themselves. The dragonborn have a curious reverence for dragonkind, who are not considered native to Chirak. It is said to be the nature of dragons to wander the stars in search of their creator gods, the ancient Tiamat and her consorts, who are known to include the elder red wyrm Rovas and the white wyrm Kaos. In their time of wandering, they came to Chirak, where they found Tiamat had been reincarnated and was seduced in to assisting the dark gods behind the Apocalypse to help unmake the world. The dragons were stricken over their desire to both aid and hinder these chaos gods who had lured Tiamat in to their plans, and it was this fragmentation that led to their fall.

The dragonborn were used by the dragons as shock troops and foot soldiers in the old wars, and so a great many died. Even today, with low birth rates, there are probably fewer than ten thousand left in the world, scattered across the land. Dragonborn seek out remote regions of the world to care for one another in isolated communities. They are more common in the North and the Yellow Kingdoms than anywhere else.

### The Dragonborn Cults

Kobolds are a strange lot, and often develop sophisticated belief systems around dragons and even dragonborn. All kobolds believe that they must achieve a certain measure of karma, and if they do so they will reincarnate as dragonborn and eventually dragons. Dragonborn find this annoying, if only because they also tend to believe that a virtuous dragonborn will one day reincarnate as a dragon...



## Dwarves



Dwarves, along with goblins, ogres, giants, cannesh, elves, and other fey kin are all said to have been elemental spirits of the land who were cast down in the wake of the apocalypse, and given mortal form. It is true, according to the Preservationists, that none of these beings dwelt in the land prior to the end of the old world, and that when in Inadasir culture was strong, men alone ruled the world, and only a handful of other beings, such as the animates, minotaurs and lizard men, were man's contemporaries.

Dwarves of the land are known to come from two places. In the utter north are the old kingdoms of the dwarves who sprang from the mountains after the rupturing of the land in the apocalypse, and in the center of the Sea of Chirak is the Island kingdom of Pardainse, where the artificer culture of the seafaring dwarves have created a unique steam age kingdom in the heart of the world. The seafaring culture of Pardainse is steeped in arcane magic, but they are friendly traders, and formidable allies of Espanea.

The dwarves of the utter north are at eternal odds with the ogres and giants of the land, vying for sacred control of their mountainous domains. Dragons, too, are involved in this eternal struggle. The dwarves are most

numerous of the mountain folk, and most stubborn. Some dwarven communities make contact with man and engage in trade and commerce, but most don't. Dwarves are surly, squat humanoids, with archetypal foul tempers. Unlike some fantastic realms, however, the dwarves of Chirak are magical, and practice potent earth magic and artificing. The dwarves are renowned for this esoteric sorcery, which only they have mastered.

### Mountain Dwarves as Characters

Mountain Dwarves work off of the same racial stats and abilities as described in the PHB.

The Mountain Dwarves are a barbarian culture, and favor martial classes such as barbarian, fighter, ranger, warlord, and other more violent professions. Some dwarves may be wizards, however, and are usually venerated for their magical achievement. Warlocks in dwarven society are an anathema, and reviled among the mountain dwarves.

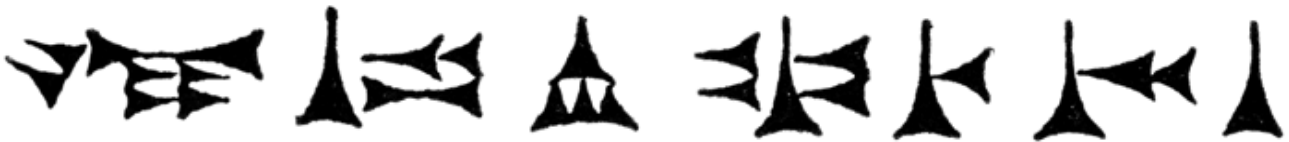
### Pardainse Dwarves as Characters

The dwarves of Pardainse are a more civilized breed of dwarf, and are frequently found in spell casting roles. Their society is based entirely on the surface world, and on an island, no less. Many of the dwarves of Pardainse become proficient mariners, as well as artificers and pistolers.

Pardainse Dwarves receive the same package of benefits as regular dwarves in the core rules, with the following substitutions:

**Skill Bonuses:** Pardainse dwarves may substitute the normal skill bonuses with +2 Arcana and +2 Streetwise.

**Dwarven Weapon Proficiency:** Pardainse dwarves are proficient in pistols and muskets as well as the warhammer and throwing hammer.



## Eladrin and Umbraiin



There may once have been eladrin in Chirak, but the destruction of the fey realm (see more about this in the entry on elves, below) devastated the fey kin and all but annihilated their kind. Some eladrin from the ancient times of destruction did escape in to other dimensional realms through planar gates and portals. These eladrin exist in other planes, and on very, very rare occasion one may decide to return to Chirak.

Reasons an eladrin may venture forth in to Chirak are varied, but some examples include:

- Investigating lost ruins in search of an ancient eladrin relic left over from before the apocalypse
- Seeking out distant elvish relatives who have since descended in to barbarism
- Questing to see if any evidence the fey realm of Chirak is healing, or returning
- A pilgrimage to a sacred site, to honor those lost in the ancient apocalypse
- A scholar, seeking knowledge of what transpired so long ago
- A daredevil or dilettante looking for adventure in a very dangerous land to the fey

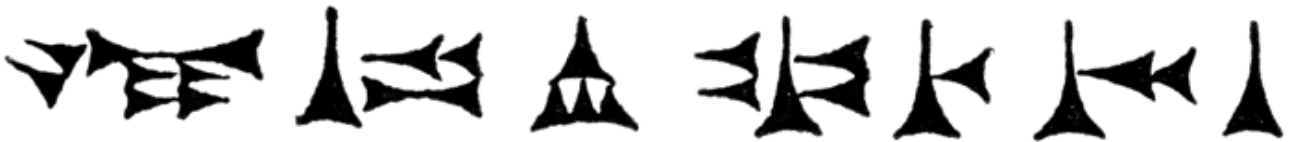
Eladrin who journey in Chirak suffer the same problems as normal elves. Without the fey realm connected to Chirak, and the native planar regions destroyed, there is no place for an eladrin spirit to travel to in the afterlife, and so the dead eladrin, who is suffused with ancient fey energy, will quickly return as an undying (see the monstrous appendix).

Likewise, eladrin in Chirak will notice, over time, that the fey realm is distinctly absent. This is an unnerving experience, made worse when they fey step, as the region they pass through when teleporting is a nether realm not unlike limbo, devoid of life and filled with haunted spirits and bleak energies. Some eladrin grow quite unnerved at all this, and seek solace by quickly returning to the planar realms with which they are more comfortable.

There are a handful of eladrin who were once native to Chirak, and who escaped destruction (if not madness) by seeking refuge in the plane of shadow. These eladrin, sometimes called shadow elves or **Umbraiin**, learned to fey step through the shadow realms, and developed sophisticated fey pacts as warlocks. They are found more frequently than other extra planar eladrin in Chirak, as their minds, having adjusted to the mysteries of the plane of shadow, are more accustomed to dealing with the bleak feelings all fey experience in Chirak. Few Umbraiin are of pleasant disposition, however, and most are unaligned in alignment, for they find such notions as good and evil too capricious and confining for their errant natures.

There are also rumors of a distant sect of eladrin who dwell in the far west, in a hot, southern island realm called Therias. Little more than rumor and myth is known of this region.





## Elves



Elves are a rarely seen race in the Realms of Chirak. The tales of old say that the vast majority of elves died in the great apocalypse, and that somewhere in the distant west, a great expanse of frozen rock called the Weeping Wall contain the petrified remains of the entire Realm of the Fey. Scholars of planar lore attest to the fact that the fey beings in the world today all once claimed a tie or origin in the Fey Realm, and that when the gods fought their terrible, final war, this land demiplane was annihilated, and swept with cataclysmic force in to the mortal realm, where the very life essence of the eldritch fey spirit gods were consumed by Shaligon, Minhauros, and Ga'Thon in a terrible blood orgy.

The survivors were shattered, some fey beings held fast and continued their lives as if nothing had happened, refusing to believe their demiplane was gone. The more civilized beings such as the elves, nymphs, and dryads knew what had happened, and for them, it was knowledge that the heavens they aspired to return to in life or death were obliterated.

For centuries after Armageddon, the elves struggled to maintain their crumbling empires in the mortal realm, but the knowledge of their loss was a rotting cancer in the society of elves. Unable to cope, the sundry kingdoms of the elves began to crumble and wither, and the people broke in to different factions, some seeking a quest to restore their lost glory, and others who accepted the new way, and sought to learn of the world by embracing nature. In this first camp, the elves chose to migrate, usually in some direction taking them far away from the region of the Sea of Chirak, at the bottom of which was said to have been the greatest

elvish empire once known. In the second camp, a handful of elves chose to stay and work to rebuild their lost glory through a new attunement to the land and the strange new spirits which walked in the corporeal realms in the wake of the apocalypse. These elves eventually lost their ancestral memories of old, and became barbaric tribesmen. Such tribes are the elves known by explorers of the world in the modern era, and are known to be the Zamedians in the west, the Xernethians in the east, and the Tuadathen in the north and central regions.

Elves are built on the standard template of the PHB elf, with variants described below. All elves of Chirak learn the Tradespeak language as well as their normal choices, but elvish as a language has fractured in to several dialects, and elves of two different cultures will only partially be able to understand one another.

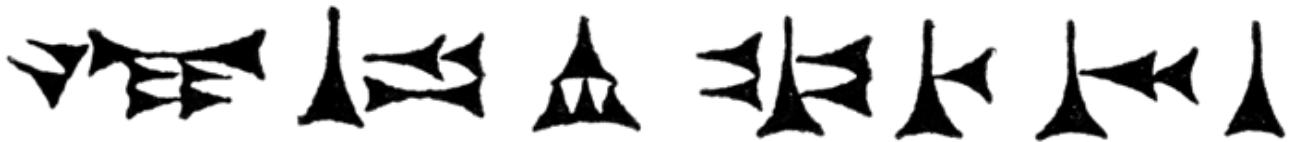
Most elves may choose to make more primitive weapons their racial choices, such as the spear or axe, instead of long sword or bow. While there are no special modifiers, most elves in this time are likely to be fighters, rangers, or warlocks, although a handful of paladins and rogues are known to roam the land, but this can vary from one culture to the next.

**Literacy and Barbarian Elves:** Although elves remember their ancient language and the elvish runes, those who embrace the way of battle are often illiterate. If a player chooses to make his elvish character illiterate, he may choose an additional spoken language to compensate, but must gain the linguist feat and expend one of the new languages it teaches to remove his illiteracy in the future.

**Fey Curse of the Undying:** Elves of Chirak suffer from a curse at death. As their spiritual heaven of the fey realms was destroyed, their souls have no heaven to return to. These spirits wander the ethereal plane in a sort of perpetual purgatory. Some, those which are restless, return from the dead as Undying, a unique sort of elvish undead. See the Monstrous Appendix for more on the Undying.

**Elvish Naming Conventions:** Elves still use the old elvish language to name great works, people and things of note. The elves of Chirak who have moved farthest from their heritage have lost much of this, and adapted newer naming techniques, according to their own elvish dialects (such as the tuadathen and xernethians). The Kulaidoriin, Eradariin, and Umbraiiin (see the Eladrin entry) are still very much in tune with their old language and some old ways.

In names, -iin is a plural suffix used to refer to the people as a whole. When referring to a single individual,



it is left off. Thus, “Zyvathri is an eradar,” versus “Zyvathri’s people are the eradariin.”

To capture the flavor of Chirak elvish names, it is suggested that you use a lot of Xy’s, Ze’s, Thy’s, and other unusual combinations, often with three or more syllables. X’s are usually pronounced like Z’s or Sh’s. Some examples:

**Sample Female Names:** Zyvathri, Elosythe, Nivrathir, Mylenethis, Xykari, Tinemeth, Eretrias, Thaetra, Yvarin, Kaliethe

**Sample Male Names:** Kygrathun, Xylamanthir, Thaervysk, Traenath, Aldrythar, Xyltevan, Kryvarisk, Thelmadaun, Reondyr, Kitharten.

There are many interesting elvish cultural groups, organized in to distinct tribes throughout Chirak. Some of the more well-known tribal groups include:



### Xernethian Elves

Xernethian Elves are simple wild elves who dwell in a nomadic culture. Xernethian elves are true barbarians, dwelling in small tribes off of the land, roving as nomads through their mountainous woodland homes. Xernethians are most often found as fighters, rangers, warlocks, or druids, and rarely do other starting classes show up amongst them. Xernethians do trade with the kingdoms to the east of their mountains on occasion, and with Mercurios to the west, and so are familiar with other cultures. It is rare for Xernethians to want to venture out of their mountains, however.

**Standard Elvish Attributes:** All Xernethians have the elvish profile as per the rulebook for stat bonuses and special abilities.

**Enemy of Orcs and Goblins:** Xernethian elves have an option of taking a Racial Enemy: *orcs and goblinoids*, due to their constant warfare with those species. If they take this, then they get a permanent +1 bonus to attack rolls against those foes.

**Languages:** Xernethians start with Xernethian Elvish as their native language, and either Tradespeak, Kasdalanian, Mercurian, or Dragosian as their second language. They may choose from the core elf languages or these for any additional languages.

### Zamedian Elves

Zamedian elves are native to the Crystite Kingdoms and Madalios region in the Sabiri lands. In between these two human realms the reclusive Zamedian elves of the Draken Mountains, wild elves that have fought the destructive nature of the Crystites for two thousand years some say, ever since the first incursion destroyed their ancient kingdom to the north.

Zamedians are dark haired, tall, and very strong-headed. They are also a remarkably silent lot, and not at all very friendly to unproven outsiders. They number fighters, rogues, rangers and wizards among their lot, with some warlocks and clerics as well.

Zamedians are perhaps no more than two or three hundred in number, but they are intimately familiar with their native lands and mountains. Zamedians have a couple unusual features unique to their breed of elf, as well:

**Strong Will:** Zamedians have learned to resist the mind controlling effects of the cylovite overlords. This has resulted in their gaining a permanent +1 Will bonus. In addition, they gain a +5 save bonus when fighting the effects of a cylovite parasite implant (see the Cylovite entry for more) should they ever be stuck in that position. Zamedians are so resistant to cylovite control mechanisms that they are often just killed when captured rather than waste any effort turning them.

### Tuadathen Elves

Tuadathen elves are found mostly in the mountains of Espanea, Sea of Chirak, Legora, and the utter north. The tuadathens are in some ways the luckiest of elven kind, for they dwell in one of the safe regions of the world, the heartland of Espanea, and are considered magical, almost reverentially so by the Espaneans. It is considered good luck for a tuadathen to come down from the



mountains and grace an inn or town with his or her presence. This respect for the tuadathens sometimes keeps them sheltered from the greater world, unfortunately, and when the occasional young one decides to set out on adventure, he or she is often surprised at what a harsh world awaits them off of Espanea.

Tuadathens are the classic elves, and have no particularly unique traits or gimmicks beyond the fact that they are so highly regarded among Espaneans and the other Kaldinian cultures of the Sea of Chirak, although that is often enough to take them quite far in some social circles!

### Eradariin, the Red Elves

The Red Elves, called Eredariin in the old elvish tongue, are elves who were enslaved in the Goblin Wars and later freed themselves, adopting the worship of Shaligon as they did, and assuming the mantle of control over the goblins. They are normal elves, but ritually scarred and tattooed in honor of Shaligon, and they revel in the vile ways of goblinoid culture.

Although the eradariin are not all evil, it is difficult to be good in a society which is dominated by the worship of Shaligon and the veneration of chaos. As such, red elves born of good alignment are usually found out and killed, or escape to the surface world to find freedom.

Luckily, the depravities of the red elves on the surface world are largely an unknown, except for regions such as Correnstal where they are manifesting as a dangerous military presence.

**Languages:** Red elves begin play knowing both elvish and goblin as languages, although they do not start knowing Tradespeak, but instead know Lower Common, the trade language of the Lower Dark.

**Marks of Shaligon:** The red elves brand themselves with ritual scars and tattoos in veneration of Shaligon. These tattoos serve a second purpose: the red elves can gain additional power from these marks.

Red elves may brand their body with a ritual spell power once at 1<sup>st</sup> level, then again at 6<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup> level. The level of the spell does not matter. Effectively, they use their own body as a ritual spell book. This means that a 1<sup>st</sup> level red elf may start play with one ritual already learned. However, he must acquire the Ritual Magic feat to use the ritual spell. A red elf need not use up a "tattoo slot" when it becomes available; he can hold it until later, when he finds a ritual worthy of branding himself with.

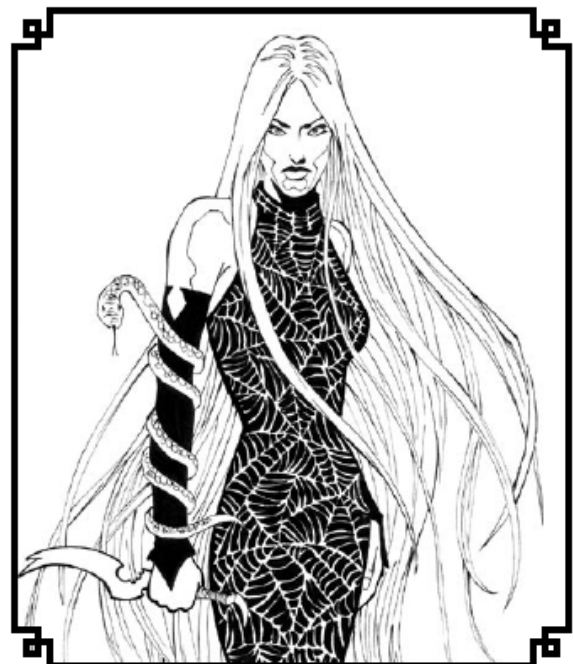
To brand his skin with a ritual spell, the red elf must spend the usual requirements to learn the ritual, and 4D6 additional hours transforming the power of the ritual in to a single, comprehensible glyphic tattoo that is then etched upon his skin. Once done, the ritual is permanently understandable by the red elf, and he does not need to keep it in a ritual book.

### Special Feat: Mark of Shaligon

**Prerequisite:** Worshipper of Shaligon

**Benefit:** The character of any race gains the effects of the Eradariin Marks of Shaligon racial trait, and may brand ritual spells upon his or her body in lieu of a spell book. The bearer of this feat gains 1 new ritual spell when the feat is acquired, and may choose to brand him with new ritual spells as tattoos instead of scribing them into a spell book in the future.

To brand his skin with a ritual spell, the worshiper must spend the usual requirements to learn the ritual, and 4D6 additional hours transforming the power of the ritual in to a single, comprehensible glyphic tattoo that is then etched upon his skin. Once done, the ritual is permanently understandable by the bearer, and he does not need to keep it in a ritual book.





### Kulaidoriin Elves

Kulaidoriin elves are ebon-skinned elves in the southern expanses of Pelaeus and the Kulaidor Mountains. The Kulaidoriin are nomadic, gypsy-like folk who eschewed their old cities long ago, abandoning them for simpler lifestyles as bards, druids and wizards who seek to explore, entertain, and recapture the memory of their lost fey connection to nature. They are peaceful folk.

Kulaidoriin are among the few elves to display more profound recollection of their history, and keep a rich oral tradition about the old ways of their people. Despite their shunning the civilized life, Kulaidoriin actually love visiting human cities in their wandering caravans, bringing merriment to the masses. The arrival of a Kulaidor caravan is always accompanied to music, dancing, celebration and festivities.

The Kulaidor tradition does include a fair amount of witchcraft, and warlocks are not uncommon amongst the people, albeit somewhat less reserved or vile than in other cultures. A Kulaidor warlock is usually seen as a potent fortune teller and seeker of dark mysteries, a sort of devilish anti-hero among his people.

Although the Kulaidor region is not an official kingdom, and is indeed not even a claimed territory, it is nonetheless patrolled by a handful of rangers, paladins and warlords who are kulaidoriin dedicated to protecting the ways of their people and stopping any wanton enemies or foreign incursions that would potentially upset the delicate and free way of life for their people. This order has no official name, although the Kulaidoriin themselves call these defenders the **Crows' Watch**.

**Friendly:** Kulaidoriin receive an extra skill bonus of +2 to Bluff or Diplomacy. Whether it is a formal event or a grifter's shell game, any given Kulaidor is unusually good as such social games and cannot help but take advantage of such situations!

### Other Elves

There are many more tribes of elves yet to be properly discovered or explored, such as the blue-skinned, white haired **Masethetiri** of the Northlands around Syrgia and the **Tynzanati** of Nubirion, with their predilection for blood sacrifice and ancestor worship. Several elvish tribes not mentioned here can be found in the gazetteer of Chirak. Feel free to add or invent new lost tribes of elves as needed!



### Giants and Fir Bolg



Giants are a rare in Chirak, although they were once common before the Apocalypse. It is believed that a great many perished as soldiers in the final wars of that era. While some giants seek peace, dwelling in remote corners of the world, other giants are engaged in an eternal war with their dwarven kin in the Kossarit Mountains and other regions where the ancient enmity between dwarves and giants run strong. Curiously, the dwarves are only mildly bothered about giant incursions, while giants display an almost insane hatred for dwarves.

Some giants have traveled to extremely hot or cold lands to establish their own kingdoms and dominate remote mountains. The Northern Wastes hold the great Throne of the Gods Mountains, said to have once been where the gods sat and observed man before judgment was cast upon them. There the Frost Giant King Epithermys dwells, and in the Southwestern Mountain range of Goliath in the Everdread Deserts, the Fire Giant Queen Pyratikis dwells. Meanwhile the Stone Giant king Geotichros fights the good fight against the dwarves in the Legoran and Hoagarit lands.

Over the millennia giants have slowly diminished in number and sometimes even size. Some believe ogres are a small species of giants, for example.

### Fir Bolg

Hidden in regions such as the Hoagarit territories and Legoras are a species of diminutive giants called fir bolg. These lesser giants are rare and reclusive, preferring to settle in communities far removed from man and dwarf, but on occasion one does venture forth. Fir bolg appear as very large, but otherwise normal looking, human-like giants.



The fir bolg described here are lesser kin to their larger mountain cousins that sometimes harry adventurers. Although lesser fir bolg often trade with their larger kin, they also keep a respectful distance.

### Goliaths in Chirak

The stony goliaths are the smallest of the giant-kin, and they are found spread throughout Chirak, a diaspora of sorts, for the remnants of their ancient empire were long ago wiped off the face of the earth. The Goliaths speak of how their kin came from an ancient empire in the south, one which is now engulfed by the volcanic mountains that smolder beyond the realm of the Everdread Desert.

### Fir Bolg as Characters

**Average Height:** 9' to 12' tall

**Average Weight:** 800-1,200 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +4 Str, +2 Con

**Size:** Large

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** Normal

**Languages:** Giantish, Tradespeak

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Endurance, +2 Nature

**Mighty Fists:** Fir bolg are big, and very strong. Their unarmed attack does 1D8+Str damage and counts as a melee weapon for purposes of exploits. They gain a +2 proficiency bonus with this attack.

**Rock Thrower:** Fir bolg gain rock throwing (below.)

**Large Weapons:** Fir bolg can wield normal two-handed weapons as single-handed weapons. Two-handed versions of the same may be wielded by the fir bolg. Weapons made by fir bolg are one size larger; refer to the rules on scaling weapons to determine how much damage a weapon of one size larger will do (PHB page 220). Such weapons also cost and weigh twice as much as normal.

#### Basic Attack: Rock Throw Fir Bolg Racial Attack

*You can hurl large rocks with ease.*

**At-Will – Martial, Ranged**

**Standard Action – 1 target – Range 20**

**Attack:** Str vs. AC; **Hit:** 1D10+Str damage.

**Special:** On a critical hit your target is also knocked prone.

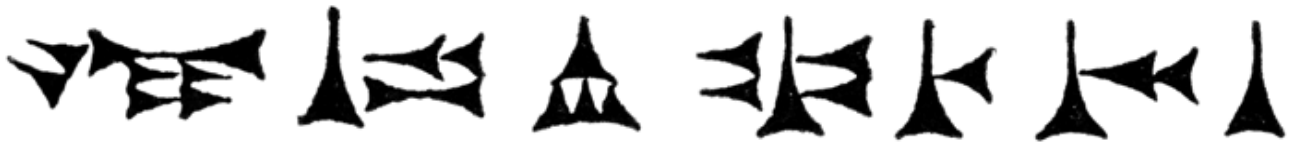
## Gnomes and Goblins



The gnomes and goblins of Chirak are curiously interlinked, and so can best be discussed together, for you see, gnomes and goblins *are the same species!*

The exact nature of the link between the two appears to be something of a mystery, perhaps even to the gnomes and goblins themselves. Likewise, the truth of their relationship is a clever and well-kept secret, such that few non-gnomes and non-goblins are privy to it. Indeed, some societies of either folk have strict and usually deadly penalties for the revelation of this secret, and among the less scrupulous societies they may not allow an outsider to escape with such knowledge.

Essentially, gnomes and goblins are born of two parents of their own kind, or a mixture of the two. About ninety-nine percent of the time the child is the same race as its parents. On rare occasion a birth will reveal a child of the other race, thus two goblins could find themselves faced with a gnome child, or vice versa. When a gnome and a goblin pair up to give birth to a child, the chance of it being one or the other is fifty percent. When a family finds themselves faced with a child of the opposite race, they leave it at the doorstep of a random house in the nearest village of its racial nature.



It gets stranger. Every goblin, sometime in life, may spontaneously change in to a gnome. Likewise, every gnome may spontaneously change in to a goblin. These are not voluntary events. They happen (seemingly) randomly and usually later in the creature's life. Few goblins or gnomes need to worry about a change before the age of forty, although given that both races can live to the age of 200 or later, this means that the chances of it happening are surprisingly good over the lifetime of the creature.

To cope with this, gnomes and goblins usually live in paired societies. Although it is rarely noticed, an observant scholar might notice that wherever you find a community of gnomes, there is also a town of goblins somewhere not far away, usually living in the Lower Dark. The gnomes and goblins always give the outward appearance of being completely unrelated to one another, but an astute observer will notice that the two groups rarely seem to have any disagreements, and often seem to trade goods, though no one ever catches them at it. The fact that both gnomes and goblins are proficient artificers and maintain a fascination for both magic and technology is simply one more curious element of the puzzle.

When a gnome or goblin shifts to the other side, he is exiled from his people and must dwell with the other community. Usually, once this has happened it is permanent. The event takes a matter of weeks, during which the gnome becomes uglier and uglier, or the goblin becomes more and more normal looking. Either way, when it is over, they must say their goodbyes and move on to their new people.

Many gnomes and goblins obsess with finding a permanent cure for this affliction. Gnomes look for a way to stop it, of course, and goblins are divided, with some wanting to spitefully turn all gnomes in to goblins, and others wanting to become gnomes forever. Indeed, some goblins obsess with hastening the process!

In game terms, anyone who chooses to play a gnome or goblin character (who both work as defined in the core rules) has a percentage chance at each level of advancement equal to one half of their level of spontaneously shifting in to the other form. This can lead to some awkward questions for the player character as his compatriots come to term with his new racial identity!

Note that shifting takes approximately 2D6 weeks to complete, and when done the character loses all old racial traits and gains all new racial traits. The shifting normally only ever happens once, and the character is at no risk of the change until after he hits age 40, so

younger goblins and gnomes are safe. Finally, evil gnomes and good goblins are twice as likely to change form (double the percentile chance each check).

#### The Goblins of the Kyrtain Mountains

There is at least one known exception to the above rule: in the western lands of the kingdom of Correnal, the caverns beneath the Kyrtain Mountains are rife with goblinoids of any kinds. These goblins are dominated by the Eradariin elves (see the section on elves for more) and hold close to the worship of the dark goddess Shaligon's spirit. Curiously, these goblins do not suffer from the change, and there are almost no gnomes known to dwell in the region. It is believed by some that these goblins have been cured of their transformative affliction by virtue of this worship to Shaligon. They are a much crueller and more malevolent form of goblin, both larger and more cunning than their more common kin in other regions. Other gnomish and goblin scholars believe that these goblins are not pure of blood, and may have interbred with orcs, a heritage which may explain why they do not transform.





## Halflings



The Halflings of Chirak are few in number, but always have a way of seeming more numerous (or perhaps just bothersome). Most Halflings are good natured seafaring folk, dwelling amongst the human communities of the greater Kaldinian expanses, including Espanea, Mordent, the dwarven kingdom of Pardainse and so forth. There are known to be Halfling settlements deep in Nubiria, and some Halflings come from the north, around Syrgia and Dimedar.

As a people, Halflings are a boisterous, good-natured lot who enjoy having fun and the basic pleasure of life, much as Halflings do throughout the planar realms. Some who suspected that the Halflings were fey beings realize that this cannot be, for the diminutive folk are neither affected by nor cursed with the same troubles as the elves and other fey kin of Chirak. Indeed, Halflings may be more closely related to humans than any other species!

Despite their incredibly good nature, some Halflings are more famously known for their predilection towards thievery and assassination. Some known thieves' guilds favor Halfling hit men over any other race in Barcen, the capitol of Espanea!

Halflings are a naturally curious race, and are prone to getting into plenty of trouble. Most young Halflings go through a "Wanderin' Period" during which a strange wanderlust overcomes their common senses and they troop off to see adventure. Such Halflings are excellent

candidates for adventures, though if they wander too far they tend never to be seen again. Some scholars have suggested this wanderlust accounts for why Halflings can be found far abroad, yet have no kingdom or land of their own.

## Half-Ogres



One of the great mysteries of Chirak is just how, exactly, the large and surly ogres of the wilderness gain the affection of other humanoid. Whether it is a wily dryad or winsome nymph falling in love with a hulking yet philosophical ogre sprouting poetry, or a rough orcish warlord enraptured by a half ogress's knotted tresses, this phenomenon seems to happen far more often than statistics would suggest.

Half Ogres may be played as characters, and are somewhat toned down versions of their larger brethren. Even more outcast, half-ogres are almost never allowed to inter-marry with other ogres, and are required to leave the community if too many of his or her kin object to the half-breed's presence when he reaches maturity (about 12 years old for ogres).

Players interested in a half-ogre character should decide what his or her parentage is. Also, while it is certainly possible that the half-child was an unwanted creature, it is in fact surprising just how many such young half-ogres were willfully brought in to the world. In any case, you'd be surprised what an ogre will lay with!



## Half-Ogres as Characters

**Average Height:** 7' to 8' tall

**Average Weight:** 250 to 450 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Strength, +2 Wisdom

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** normal

**Languages:** The common tongue of the parent who raised him, plus Tradespeak and one other

**Skill Bonuses:** Endurance +2, Insight +2

**Tough Hide:** Half ogres get a bit of the tough hide of true ogres. They have +2 to their AC for natural armor.

**Big Grip:** Half ogres, although still medium in size, can wield weapons one size category larger than normal with ease. A weapon properly scaled to a half ogre will therefore do damage of one size larger than normal. Such weapons also cost twice as much to manufacture.

**Mixed Blood:** Half ogres get one additional power depending upon who their non-ogre parent was. The half-ogre receives a single special ability from the non-ogre parent race. For example, a half-ogre with an orcish parent could get Warrior's Surge, while one with a human parent could get an extra feat or an extra power (not both), or perhaps even the human defense bonus. Only one such power from the non-ogre parent race is inherited.

**Primitive and Brutish:** Due to their reputation as bastard half-breeds, half ogres get little respect in human communities. Also, due to their large size they receive a -5 penalty to any attempts at disguise due to their ungainly size (unless trying to disguise themselves as something equally bulky and large).

**Big Fists:** Ogres have larger fists as natural attacks:

### Big Fists Half-Ogre Racial Basic Attack

*You smash stuff good. Real good.*

**At-Will – Martial**

**Standard Action – Melee**

**Attack:** Str+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1D6+Str damage.

**Special:** On a critical hit your target is also knocked prone.

## Lizard Men



Dwelling in the ruins of a once proud and ancient empire, the descendants of this forgotten realm are now reduced to bickering, warring tribes with immense strength in the **Hashikarystyr** deserts. They don't travel too often and are suspicious of most foreigners, but some tribes do interact with Adenach, Shaddizhar, and people on the Plains of Molog.

Some lizard men can also be found in primitive tribes in the region of Nubiria. These lizard men are called **Mehaka** in the local tongues, and are primitive, stone-age practitioners of blood magic, much like the Shokoztioni tribes of men.

Hashikarystyr are slim, lithe beings, standing between five and six feet in height (females being shorter) and are covered in intricate but protective scales for protection. They often have colorations and patterns that reflect their desert environment and grant them camouflage benefits. Mehaka are prone to coloring of greens and dark colors, to blend in to their jungle homes.

Most Hashikarystyr are stoic, quiet beings that are meticulous about their daily business and protective of their kin. They are not prone to evil ways, though there is a strong tendency among their kind to pursue the edicts of the god Kon'hun, hidden demiurge of the





sands, who is said to have released seventy great spirits of guidance, most prominent of which is **Vennylos**, Spirit of War.

The Mehaka are unfamiliar with these spirits, but instead worship their ancestors through blood magic, and revere their greatest warriors and priests like gods.

Hashikarystyr tribes do not like to interact much with civilized folk, but subterranean variants of the Hashikarystyr tend to be more social and politically active in the Underworld communities. To the Mercurians, Hashikarystyr are a threat, but some nomadic tribes trade with the Adenites in the east in peace. Likewise, the Mehaka are considered a threat to man, and are very isolationist.

Hashikarystyr and Mehaka are both isolationist and xenophobic, but some of their kind see and understand the need to pay close attention to their more numerous humanoid neighbors, even if they like to remain anonymous or invisible to prying eyes. As such, these enlightened lizard men specialize in trade, commerce, diplomacy, and other skills to interact with the greater community on discreet terms. Such kin are likeliest to become adventurers who also seek to benefit their people.

Lizard men traveling in human lands are usually loners or exiles, and may have a long term goal of seeking a way to return to their native lands and regain acceptance.

#### Hashikarystyr Lizard Men Characters

**Average Height:** 5'6" to 6'4"

**Average Weight:** 130-225 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution

**Size:** medium

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** normal

**Languages:** Hashiki (native) plus one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Nature, +2 Stealth

**Basic Attack:** Claws (see entry below).

**Racial Weapon Proficiency:** Scimitar and Crossbow

**Favored Environment:** Choose one: the desert, forestland, or mountains; +2 bonus to Nature when in that environment .

**Camouflage Scales:** +2 bonus to Stealth in the favored environment.

#### Mehaka Lizard Men Characters

**Average Height:** 4'8" to 5'10"

**Average Weight:** 110-220 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Strength, +2 Constitution

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** normal

**Languages:** Mehakan (native) plus one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Nature, +2 Endurance

**Basic Attack:** Claws (see entry below).

**Racial Weapon Proficiency:** All spears and javelins

**Favored Environment:** Choose one: the jungle, grasslands, or mountains; +2 bonus to Nature when in that environment .

**Camouflage Scales:** +2 bonus to Stealth in the favored environment.

#### Basic Claw Attack      Lizard Man Racial Attack

*Your reptilian claws are deadly.*

**At-Will – Martial**

**Standard Action – 1 target**

**Attack:** Str+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1D8+Str damage.

**Special:** Your claws are melee weapons for purposes of any exploits, and may be used two-weapon style (two claws) for exploits such as Twin Strike.

#### Lizard Man Racial Feats:

##### Bloody Strikes

**Prerequisite:** Lizard Man

**Benefit:** Your claw basic attack also causes ongoing 5 bleeding damage (save ends).

##### Hashikarystyr Weapon Mastery

**Prerequisite:** Hashikarystyr

**Benefit:** You gain an additional +2 to damage when fighting with your racial weapons (scimitars and crossbows).

##### Mehaka Spear Mastery

**Prerequisite:** Mehaka

**Benefit:** You gain an additional +2 to damage when fighting with your racial weapons (spear and javelin).



## Masirians



The Masirians are a mysterious race, divided by ancient politics and war, and cursed with a magically induced immortality and inherent magical aptitude that belies their otherwise human nature. Masirians are prone to wickedness, decadence, and feelings of superiority over normal humans, and some feel rightly so, for the oldest post-cataclysm ruins in the world were all created by the ancient Masirian empires. As a result, Masirians are firmly engrained in trade, politics, and adventure on the Seas of Chirak. Some Masirians in the north, especially those near the White Desert, belong to a dissident sect called the Arcanists, which dislike the modern kingdom of Masiria, and believe it has become a province of decadence for the idle rich and that Masirians should, by right, rule the lesser race of humankind. These Masirian arcanists mix the practices of blood magic with ancestral magic; they also idolize the forgotten Masirian kings as gods (see more on Arcanists in the Ways of Magic section).

### Masirians as Characters

For purposes of character generation, Masirians are humans who have an abnormally long lifespan, with a couple modifications listed below.

**Social Caste:** The Gazetteer includes details on determining the social caste of a Masirian, which is important in determining the character's status and relations in his homeland.

**Longevity:** Masirians usually live 600 or more years, but rarely ever last longer due to wars, plagues, and other disasters, but the near-immortal race never dies of old age, and even the oldest Masirians rarely look more than 40 human years old.

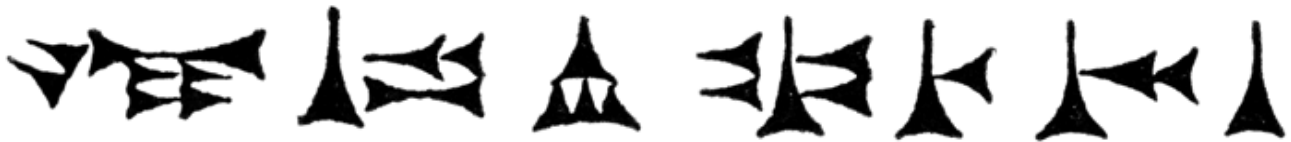
**Ritual Magic Feat:** When choosing a class, Masirians are trained in the use of magic at an early age. As such, Masirians must use their human bonus feat to choose the Ritual Magic feat, regardless of what class they intend to choose.

**Skill Bonuses:** Masirians learn much about magic early in life. They must receive Arcana +2 as a skill bonus in place of one of the normal human skill bonuses (player choice).

## Minotaurs

From the Huron Peaks to the Everdread Deserts and the mysterious trade city of Mindoros, the minotaurs are pastoral nomads tainted by a long history of bloody conflict and oppression. The Nithadians have drawn from the minotaurs for slave soldiers and gladiators. It is very popular to raise captured infant minotaurs in Nithiad, forging them in to formidable warriors to be sacrificed among the warring city-states of the "great empire." The minotaurs have long opposed this, and fought against their enemies for such a great period of time that they are regarded as notorious barbarians and outlaws in most human lands. Some minotaurs do travel to foreign lands and learn that humans elsewhere are different from the Nithadians, and these minotaurs will often journey for years before coming home, if ever. Minotaurs value the company of other humanoids, especially dwarves, elves and tieflings. Curiously, they dislike dragonborn, due to some ancient racial enmity between the two from long ago.

Minotaurs are creatures of the land, and although they might once have been lords of a grand civilization, almost all memory of this is long forgotten. Minotaurs are angry, brooding souls, and they like to speak with violence. They are prone to eating other sentient



species, and consider almost anything fair game for food. They tattoo their skins with the tales of their victories, and a heavily tattooed minotaur is advertising what a formidable fighter he is. Minotaurs also like to sing, usually low dirges dedicated to the enemies they have slain and eaten.



Minotaurs are not uncommon as player characters, for their species and the many subtypes of transformed animals they represent are found in small groups throughout the world. The Huron minotaurs are representative of the most common such minotaurs seen in the Sea of Chirak region, due to the Nithadian habit of capturing and raising them as thralls. Other known tribes of minotaurs include the Gorloni, Hevaroon, Abharo, and Mirihur. The only sedentary tribe of minotaurs, who maintain the ancient trade city of Mindoros, call themselves the Mindori.

Minotaurs of Chirak look much like the classic Greek myth. They are large, but manlike, with muscled, healthy human bodies. Their head is of a bull (or cow if female) with a tail and feet, which are not quite human, but closer to cloven hooves. Female minotaurs are not as tall or burly as the men, but are otherwise recognizable as women by their feminine features.

Most minotaurs are unaligned in nature, but a handful take the side of evil in the memory of Minhauros and the power he stood for, while others revere the new avatar of the Aquarius stone, Mardieur Mardieux, who is also a minotaur. In the region of Maegar and Xoxtocharit, new minotaur and satyr cults are appearing dedicated to the mysterious Hun'hunal.

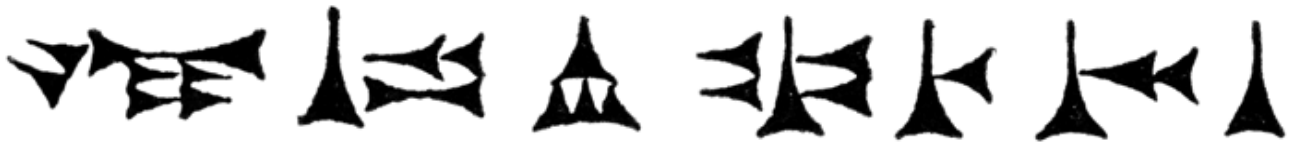
### Minotaurs as Characters

Minotaur statistics for player characters can be found in the back of the MM. In addition to the standard features, Chirak minotaurs have a few extra details worth mentioning:

**Larger:** Chirak minotaurs average 8 feet in height and some grow as large as 11 feet. As such, some Chirak minotaurs 10 feet and larger qualify as large creatures. Some minotaurs become truly large sized creatures (especially rare barbaric minotaurs who worship the spirit of Minhauros).

**Maze Sense:** Minotaurs are uncanny in their ability to understand and wind their way through mazes and complicated directional puzzles. A minotaur instinctively knows his way around a maze (note that it must be a genuine maze) and has an inherent sense of direction. If the situation is in question, the DM may call on the minotaur to make an Intelligence check, with a DC based on the perceived complexity of the complex. Note that mazes, as an art form in intentionally confusing and befuddling enemies, is a specialty of minotaur architects. The maze, in the hands of the minotaur, takes on an almost magical quality. As such, unintentional mazes can still confuse them (such as a city bazaar, or a rat's warrens) but they should be allowed an intelligence check for such structures, anyway.





## Ogres



*“Too short to be giants, too tall to be dwarves, too ugly to be elves and too smart to be human,”* is how the old ogre saying goes. Ogres are cunning yet large brutes in the Realms of Chirak. Considered to have relinquished their claims to the mountainous thrones of the land when the last of the true kings of the ogres surrendered his love to a comely dwarven maiden and was lured to his death in a hail of angry axes, the ogres have since taken residence in whatever nook or cranny of the lands they could find. Some have become wanderers, while others have become dwellers outside of human communities abroad. Ogres are not uncommon to encounter in any human lands.

Ogres are born of the wild, and some claim they may have originally been fey beings that lost their way and embraced primitive lives, or been tainted by demonic inbreeding. Whether this is true or not is unknown, although elves strongly dispute any such claims.

Ogre player characters are big, brutish, and rarely encountered among civilized lands due to their reputation. Ogres are so churlish and unsocial even amongst themselves that they rarely build communities of their own, and usually consist of no more than a handful of families in a small woodland or subterranean community. In spite of this, most ogres are at least peripherally aware of the presence or location of others of their kind, and have a rather complicated and archaic system of participating in marriage through bride wealth.

Occasionally, one might encounter a half-ogre in the world, as some ogres have been known to find human, elf, or orc women to be comely or desirable.

There are some ogres, immensely big and brutish, who are corrupted by chaos and serve the Thousandspawn. These ogres are evil, corrupted beings descended from the old survivors of the armies of the apocalypse. The corrupted ogres rarely manage to form a cohesive society for long, and so are not often found in regions outside of Syrgia and the frozen north, but they do exist.

All ogres live to an average of 120 years if violence and monster hunters don't get them first.

### Ogres as Characters

**Average Height:** 8' to 10' feet tall

**Average Weight:** 400-900 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +4 Strength, +2 Wisdom

**Size:** Large

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** normal

**Languages:** Ogreish, plus one other (usually Tradespeak or Giantish)

**Skill Bonuses:** Insight +2, Nature +2

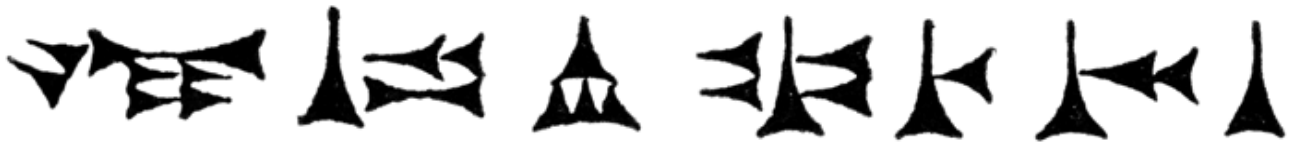
**Tough Hide:** Ogre's have thick skin offering a +2 AC bonus.

**Illiterate:** Ogres have no written language, and cannot begin play literate. An ogre can learn literacy by taking the linguist feat and using one language pick to learn a written script of a single language.

**Large Weapons:** All ogre-sized weapons are one size category larger for damage purposes. They can wield normal human-sized medium two-handed weapons as one handed weapons.

**Philosophical:** For all of their primitivism, some ogres are remarkably insightful and introspective on the nature of the world, and some who have learned to read amass quite a collection of foreign books in their hidden demesne. However, most ogres share their knowledge through storytelling and oral discourse. An ogre may add his Wisdom modifier to any two Intelligence or Wisdom-based skills of his choice.

**Primitive and Brutish:** Due to their reputation, in civilized realms ogres receive a permanent -2 penalty to all diplomacy skill checks. This same problem works in the ogre's favor in other ways, granting a +2 modifier to Intimidation.



**Disguise Issues:** Ogres can't attempt a decent disguise unless they are trying to masquerade as a different sort of large creature, like a troll or minotaur.

**Smash:** Ogres have one particularly effective at-will attack:

**Smash** **Ogre Racial Basic Attack**

*You smash good. Real good.*

**At-Will – Martial**

**Standard Action – 1 target**

**Attack:** Str+2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1D10+Str damage.

**Special:** Your fists are melee weapons for purposes of any exploits, and may be used two-weapon style (two fists) for exploits such as Twin Strike.

## Orcs



Orcs are a young species, brought forth in the waning years of the Apocalypse by the goddess Shaligon, who cut her own flesh to rain drops of her blood upon the world. Where each drop struck, an orc grew from the ground to form her ravenous army. The army, even defeated at the end of the Armageddon, was replenished when Shaligon was slain and the rest of her blood birthed a new wave of orcs. All of these orcs have an overriding desire to slay the servants of the gods who

in turn killed their creator deity. They continue to worship the undead spirit of their goddess, who exists as a sort of gestalt entity in their minds, driving them to madness.

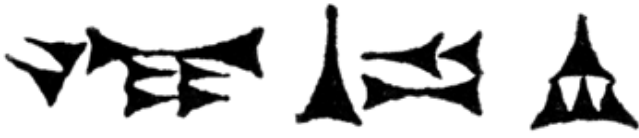
It gets better. The orcs are a bipolar society, where once every 113 to 339 years it flip-flops from a patrilineal system to a matrilineal system. The reason is because Shaligon was hermaphroditic, and would assume dominant male or female aspects depending on the alignment of the stars. The end result is that orcish warlords and soldiers are usually male, but dominated by the women, who are highly proficient assassins and politicians. When the orcish culture is female-dominant, orcish raids are minimal and politics and assassination are favored tools. When the stars change to a male aspect, then the warlords let loose and other cultures are forced to deal with highly aggressive orc raids and invasions.

Luckily for the current era of prosperity in the Seas of Chirak, the orcish culture has been immersed in a matrilineal culture of somewhat more agreeable orcish tribes and chiefdoms, in which the women pull the political strings and the warlords defer their wishes, for the most part. It has been going on like this for close to two centuries now, and unfortunately there is no sane mechanism for determining when the masculine aspect of Shaligon will rise again, leading to a prolonged period of warfare and battle.

Because of the genuinely hostile nature of orcs in relationship to other races, it is not common for them to be found adventuring in mixed racial groups often. Some orcs try to overcome their inherently evil nature, and a few orcs are really half-breeds (born of rape, usually) who find themselves conflicted about their dual spirit. These rare half orcs and pure blood orcs who reject their identity as the spawn of Shaligon make the best choices for player characters.

Orcs are built just like they are defined in the core rules. Almost without exception clerical orcs will serve Shaligon or a similar entity of chaos, such as a thousandspawn strong enough to gain followers, or an avatar on a path of chaos. Orcish warlocks favor the infernal and star pacts, and are never found with the fey pact.

Orcs may be used as player characters using the stats in the MM. Half orcs can be found in the PHB2. Orcs often take the Mark of Shaligon feat (see Eradarii elves section).



### Orcish Racial Feat:

#### Burning Madness

**Prerequisite:** orc

**Benefit:** You can enter in to a frenzy of madness as a free action:

#### Burning Madness

#### Orc Racial Utility

*You open yourself up to the burning madness of your race.*

#### Daily Utility

#### Minor Action – Self

**Effect:** You gain +2 to hit and damage until the end of the encounter, but your AC, Reflexes and Will are at -2 for the duration.

#### Maiden of Shaligon

**Prerequisite:** female orc

**Benefit:** You have been gifted with a mark of Shaligon, indicating you are one of her favored souls. You gain three benefits as a result of this:

- +2 Stealth skill bonus
- +2 modifier to Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate when dealing with other orcs
- Once per day you may reroll any one attack, skill save or ability check but you must take the second roll.

## Shifters



The shifters are a rare, enigmatic race of best-blooded kin that can be found most commonly in Legora and Nubirion, though they have been found in the North on occasion, as well. While it is common belief that the shifters are half-breeds descended from a human and cannesh parent, it is just as true that some shifters descend from lycanthropic ancestry. As such, shifters are a rare species and are almost never found in communities of their own, usually manifesting instead as a surprise to otherwise normal parents who did not realize one of their ancestors had lycanthropic blood, or was cannesh.

Shifters can be found anywhere, although as indicated above they are more likely to be found in remote communities and lands where interaction between shape shifters and humans or elves is more likely. Shifters are commonly misunderstood and often not recognized by most for what they really are. The distant lands of Theliad are the only region where shifters are known to belong to a large community (in Ekarthask).





## Tieflings

The world of Chirak is riddled with planar portals, unintended gateways caused by the stress of reality's near-miss annihilation in the Apocalypse. In the old days, the ancient kingdoms used planar gates for convenient travel and as a means of trading with other worlds. During the final war of the old pantheon, the portals became the gateway through which hellish armies would pass from the Abyssal realms of Perdition and the Outer Darkness to confront the opposing forces. After the last great battle, many of the portals remained open, while others had been ripped open from the very fabric of reality itself, gaping wounds in the cosmic space-time serving as a testament to how much power was cast about in the Apocalypse.

The end result is that many planar beings, tieflings among them, have found their way to Chirak. Furthermore, many tieflings are native to Chirak, having descended from the surviving soldiers of the Apocalypse, who often settled down as permanent residents of this world after the gods destroyed one another. Some could not find their way back, while others found that they enjoyed the comfort of a world in which the gods were now gone.

Tieflings are the remnants of such ancient beings that interbred with the mortals of this world. Players are encouraged to come up with unique and interesting genealogies if they play tieflings. If you like, roll on the following charts to determine your tiefling's unusual background:

Roll on chart I for heritage and chart II optionally for an unusual background story seed.

### Tiefling Hereditary Background Options Chart I:

| D20 Roll | Background                       |
|----------|----------------------------------|
| 1-4      | Infernal (Devilish)              |
| 5-8      | Abyssal (Demonic)                |
| 9-10     | Xylomic (Purgatory)              |
| 11-12    | Malevolent Spirit (Spirit World) |
| 13-15    | Daemonic (Tarteric)              |
| 16       | Rakshasa                         |
| 17       | Elemental-Demonic Infusion       |
| 18       | Blood of the Infernal Machine    |
| 19       | Demonic-Chimeric influence       |
| 20       | Fallen Angel                     |

### Explanation of Backgrounds:

**Infernal:** the tiefling's background stems from devilish taint; there is a 10% chance this taint originates from a greater devil.

**Abyssal:** The tiefling's history was influenced by demonic taint. There is a 10% chance this taint originates from a greater demon.

**Xylomic:** the Xylom demons of Purgatory are evident in your background (see the Monstrous Appendix for more info).

**Malevolent Spirit:** a demon-like spirit of the spirit plane has influenced your heritage through possession or taint.

**Rakshasa:** The vile rakshasa have heritage in your veins.

**Daemonic (tarteric):** The daemons of Tarterus are the ultimate malevolent planar mercenaries, and you are tainted with this lineage.

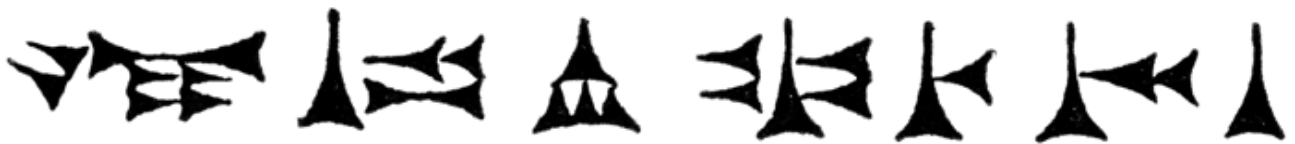
**Elemental-Demonic Infusion:** some entities confuse the boundary between the elementals and the demons, and these beings can reflect their heritage in your lineage.

**Blood of the Infernal Machine:** There is a oft rumored whisper of a planar convergence between evil and perfection, defined by this so-called infernal Machine. Your odd heritage and mechanoid traits reflect this.

**Demonic-Chimeric Influence:** Chimeras of all types are often believed to have been created by demons, and you show chimeric traits of such.

**Fallen Angel:** The angelic entities which served the old gods were not infallible, and one such corrupted being may have influenced your ancestry.





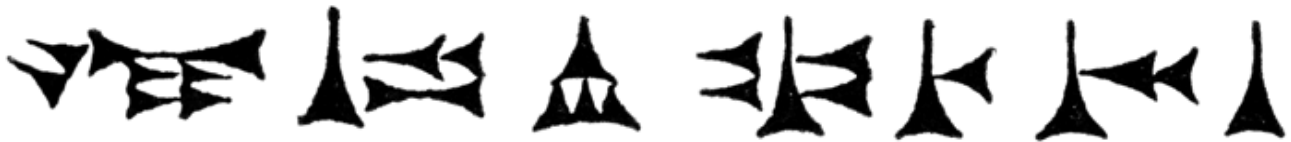
### Tiefling Unusual Origins Chart II (a smattering of sample origins for tieflings)

| D20 Roll | Result   |
|----------|--|
| 1-2      | Tourist from the Planes; you could have any number of bewildering origins  |
| 3        | One Parent is a Demon god, one of the legendary 113 Demong Gods; roll a D20; odds it is mom, even dad                |
| 4-6      | Mother was a Succubus (1-10) or Erinyes (11-20)  |
| 7        | Born in an ancient city and raised by undead nannies   |
| 8        | Servant of a Planar Demiurge   |
| 9        | Professional assassin hired to slay angelic beings and their descendents   |
| 10       | Bastard child of a king, was exiled for obvious reasons  |
| 11       | Normal human, ate a strange fruit one day and <i>whammo</i> , I'm a tiefling   |
| 12       | Agent for a planar being searching for an ancient relic  |
| 13       | You claim to have arrived from one of the twelve worlds in the sky, after wandering through a planar gate as a youth |
| 14       | You hail from the Eristantopolis, the City of the White Desert, where tieflings are not uncommon                     |
| 15       | Great grandfather was an ancient general of the Apocalypse   |
| 16-17    | You were born to two normal parents...allegedly...   |
| 18       | Noble daughter of Kasdalan   |
| 19       | Native to Zinsham in the East  |
| 20       | Found as a baby by druids in a sacred henge  |



*Alidastra has a scheme...*





# Languages of Chirak

There are many different languages in Chirak. The great pre-cataclysmic cultures of the world were unified and throughout the world only a handful of languages were common, though many ancient tongues were preserved as a form of linguistic art. After the apocalypse. As civilization collapsed and cultures fragmented, many different languages grew out of the chaos, although each had its linguistic roots in one of the primary old tongues. There are a number of language groups in Chirak, divided by relationship below. Key language groups include Mythic, Inadasir, and Occultic. For practical purposes, Espanean is regarded as the "common" tongue or the Realms of Chirak, though in the west the common language is Sabradani, and in the east it is Yennani Shu. The single most common language among

all characters is **Tradespeak**, a bastardized dialect not unlike *Esperanto* which borrows from multiple old and new languages to create a common vernacular popular among merchants and traders.

**All characters begin play knowing how to speak their native language and Tradespeak.** If the DM wishes, he can declare Espanean the common tongue.

**Alternative Language Rule:** All characters begin play with their native language and Tradespeak, plus a number of additional languages equal to their intelligence modifier. They gain a new language slot each time this modifier goes up due to attribute increases. Players can still opt for the linguist feat for even more languages

## Mythic Language Group

Espanean  
Grelmanic  
Pellucid  
--Mercurian  
--Dragosian  
--Correnstalian  
Maegari  
Astrualic  
Old Mythric  
True Runic

## Inadasir Language Group

Sabiri  
Pelegar  
Madagar  
Old Inadasir  
Heliosian

## Eshadai Language Group

Syrgian  
Legoran  
Northern  
Cannesh

## Planar Languages

Abyssal  
Supernal  
Planar Common

## Occultic Languages

Xoxtocharit  
Masirian  
Nubiri  
Shokoztoni  
Madalios  
Madagri  
Konan-Dal  
Old Occultic

## Yin Language Group

Yennani Shu  
Xiang  
Lai'Wanese  
Urian  
Xinshamese  
Talael  
Hoagarit

## The Lost Language Group

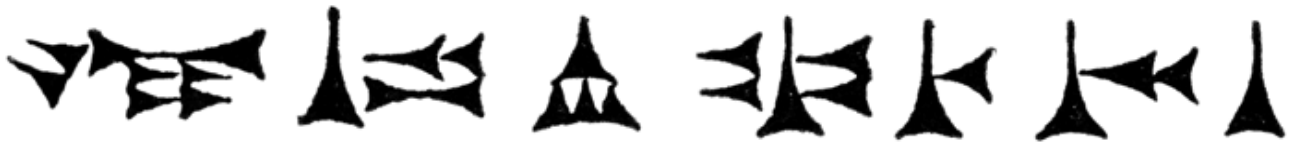
Daman  
Pelaeus  
Kasdalan  
Adenach  
Therian Languages  
--Ermanican  
--Carnassi  
--Tuati  
--Xoriam

## Racial and Other Languages

giantish  
dalevar dwarvish  
pardainse dwarvish  
draconic  
zamedian elvish  
xernethian elvish  
old elvish  
orcish dialects  
minotaur dialects  
cannesh  
Kyurtain Goblinoid  
Eradariin Goblinoid  
Mage's Tongue  
Adenite  
Andosi  
Animate Creator Language  
Tradespeak  
Skeledani  
Sapphiritic  
**Abraheil Language Group**  
Abraheili  
Sabradani

## Thelanic Languages

See the entry on Theliad in the gazetteer for languages in that region.



## Quick Random Homeland Determination

If you would like to let fate and the dice cast their shadow upon the origin of your character, go ahead and roll percentile dice on the following chart. Follow the specific instructions based on race and class for Sub-tables, as well:

### Chart 1: What species are you?

#### Dwarves:

|       |                    |
|-------|--------------------|
| 01-60 | Pardainse          |
| 61-90 | Kossarit Mountains |
| 91-00 | Northern Syrgia    |

#### Elves:

|       |                                   |
|-------|-----------------------------------|
| 01-40 | Xernethian (Pellucid lands)       |
| 41-60 | Tuadathen (Espanea)               |
| 61-70 | Masethetyri (Syrgia)              |
| 71-80 | Kuladoriin (Kasdalan and Pelaeus) |
| 81-85 | Tynzanati (Nubirian)              |
| 86-97 | Zamedian (The West, Madagar)      |
| 98-00 | Eradariin (Lower Dark)            |

#### Minotaurs:

|       |                 |
|-------|-----------------|
| 01-40 | Huron           |
| 41-60 | Hevaro          |
| 61-90 | Nithiad (slave) |
| 91-00 | Espanea (slave) |

#### Cannesh:

|       |               |
|-------|---------------|
| 01-70 | Cannesh lands |
| 71-80 | Syrgia        |
| 81-90 | Murzada       |
| 91-95 | Pale          |
| 96-00 | Dimedar       |

#### Ogres:

|       |                       |
|-------|-----------------------|
| 01-40 | Mercurios             |
| 41-60 | Nubiri                |
| 61-70 | Syrgia                |
| 71-80 | The West              |
| 81-85 | Espanea/Sea of Chirak |
| 86-90 | Xoxtocharit           |
| 91-00 | Hoagarit              |

#### Animates:

|       |                     |
|-------|---------------------|
| 01-60 | Beltraine           |
| 61-70 | The Weeping Lands   |
| 71-80 | Abraheil            |
| 81-90 | Sabradan            |
| 91-95 | Helios              |
| 96-00 | Hedrast*            |
| 71-00 | Roll on Human chart |

#### Fir Bolg:

|       |         |
|-------|---------|
| 01-70 | Syrgia  |
| 71-90 | Legoras |
| 91-00 | Maedar  |

### Humans, Halflings, Gnomes: go to chart 2

### Chart 2: Is your character a warlock? If so go to chart 3.

### Is your character a seafarer? Go to chart 4.

### Is your character primitive? Go to chart 5.

### Otherwise, roll below:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 01-25 | You are From the West (chart 6)                 |
| 26-70 | You are from the Sea of Chirak region (chart 7) |
| 71-80 | You are from the South (chart 8)                |
| 81-90 | You are from the North (chart 9)                |
| 91-00 | You are from the East (chart 10)                |

### Chart 3: You are a warlock from:

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 01-50 | Roll on chart 2 for humans as normal to determine region |
| 51-80 | Masiria  |
| 81-90 | Grelmaine  |
| 91-95 | Xoxtacharit  |
| 96-97 | The City of the White Desert                             |
| 98    | Pale   |
| 99    | Kasdalan   |
| 00    | The Sapphire Kingdoms                                    |

### Chart 4: You are a seafarer by nature from:

|       |              |
|-------|--------------|
| 01-50 | Espanea      |
| 51-60 | Esterhabau   |
| 61-65 | Kaldinia     |
| 66-70 | Syrgia       |
| 71-76 | Sontaniardes |
| 77-80 | Mercurios    |
| 81-83 | Pelaeus      |
| 84-85 | Grelmaine    |
| 86    | Xoxtocharit  |
| 87-90 | Legoras      |
| 91-92 | Abraheil     |
| 93-95 | Masiria      |
| 96-00 | Nithiad      |

### Chart 5: You come from a primitive culture:

|       |                                |
|-------|--------------------------------|
| 01-30 | Adenach                        |
| 31-60 | Nubiria                        |
| 61-70 | Shokozttoni                    |
| 71-80 | Crystite                       |
| 81-90 | Lessi Islanders                |
| 91-00 | The Nomads of the White Desert |



**Chart 6: You hail from the West:**

|       |                  |
|-------|------------------|
| 01-15 | Abraheil         |
| 16-30 | Grelmaine        |
| 31-40 | Sabradan         |
| 41-55 | Pelegar          |
| 56-60 | Helios           |
| 61-70 | Sabiri           |
| 71-75 | Madalios         |
| 76-80 | Crystite Madigar |
| 81-90 | Konan-Dal        |
| 91-95 | Zann             |
| 96-00 | Colonial Espanea |

**Chart 7: You hail from the Sea of Chirak region:**

|       |                        |
|-------|------------------------|
| 01-30 | Espanean               |
| 31-33 | Kaldinian              |
| 34-36 | Sontaniardian          |
| 37-39 | Esterehabau            |
| 40-49 | Legoran                |
| 50-55 | Masirian               |
| 56-58 | Hoagarit               |
| 59-62 | Xoxtacharit (southern) |
| 63-70 | Nubirian               |
| 71-80 | Mercurian              |
| 81-84 | Correnstalian          |
| 85-88 | Dragosian              |
| 89-92 | Shaddizhar             |
| 93-95 | Shokoztoni             |
| 96-00 | Adenach                |

**Chart 8: You hail from the south:**

|       |                    |
|-------|--------------------|
| 01-30 | Kasdalani          |
| 31-60 | Pelaeus            |
| 61-70 | Skeledani*         |
| 71-80 | Khol*              |
| 81-90 | Kulaidor           |
| 91-00 | The Weeping Lands* |

**Chart 9: You hail from the north:**

|       |                               |
|-------|-------------------------------|
| 01-40 | Syrgia                        |
| 41-60 | Zappun (northern Xoxtocharit) |
| 61-65 | Rughit                        |
| 66-70 | Grathenor                     |
| 71-80 | Murzada                       |
| 81-85 | Cannesh lands                 |
| 86-90 | The White Desert              |
| 91-95 | Dimedor                       |
| 96-00 | Pale                          |

**Chart 10: You hail from the east:**

|       |                              |
|-------|------------------------------|
| 01-40 | The Sapphiritic Kingdoms*    |
| 41-50 | U'al*                        |
| 51-60 | Yellow Kingdoms (roll again) |
| 01-20 | Liai'Wan                     |
| 21-40 | Xiang                        |
| 41-60 | Zinsham                      |
| 61-80 | Uria                         |
| 81-00 | Mero                         |
| 61-70 | Ippok*                       |
| 71-80 | Mat'tak*                     |
| 81-85 | Burning Lands*               |
| 86-90 | Erech*                       |
| 91-95 | Therias*                     |
| 96-00 | Theliad*                     |

**Optional Chart 11: Multiple Homelands**

Roll percentiles. On 01-15, you have mixed lineage! You may roll twice for homeland of origin, one for your father, one for your mother. You must then roll to determine your primary homeland, where you grew up and learned the local culture:

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 01-60 | Father's homeland                           |
| 61-95 | Mother's homeland                           |
| 96-00 | both! (Gain both native languages for free) |

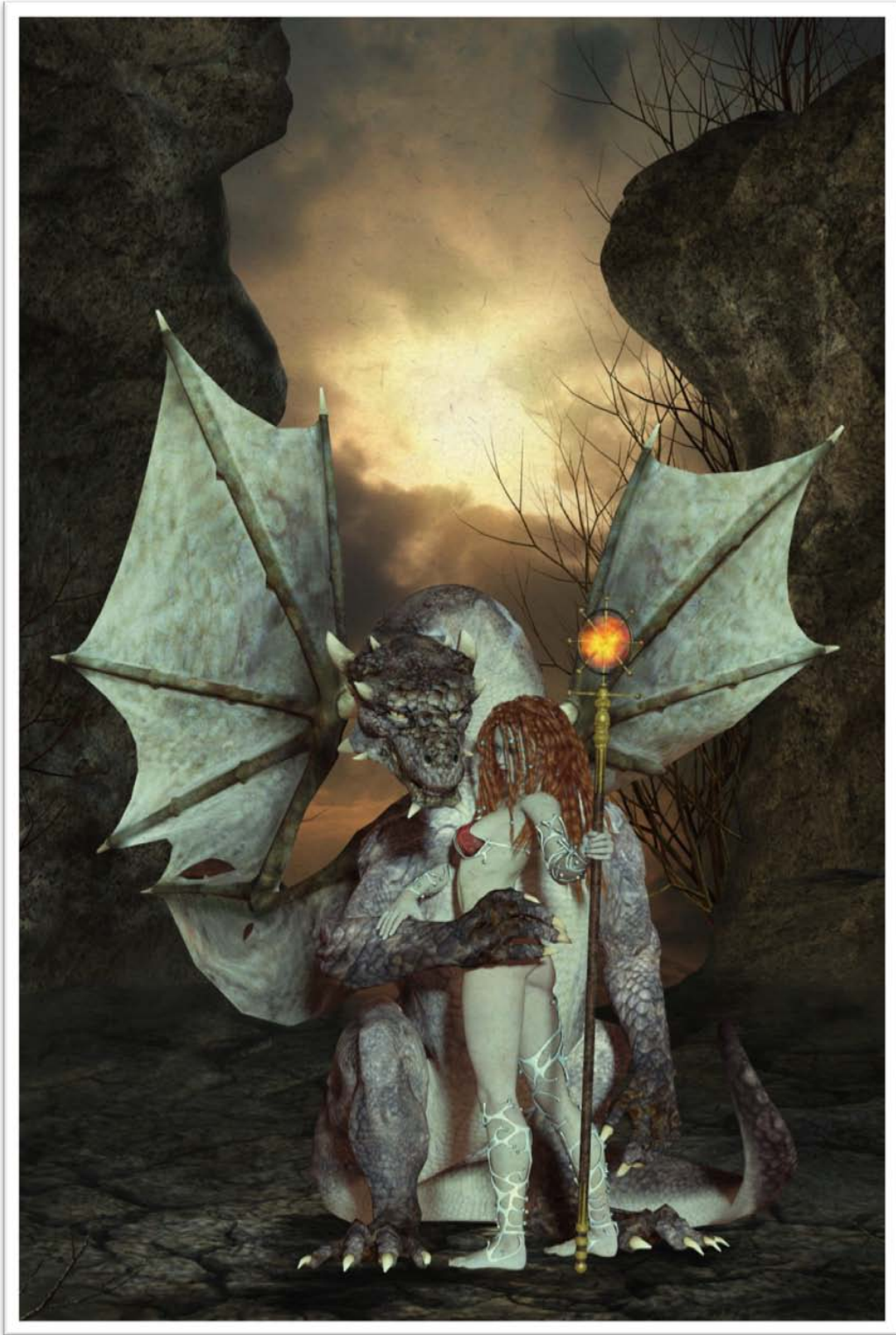
**Optional Chart 12: Extraplanar Lineage**

Roll percentiles again. On a 01-10, you have a strange lineage, which does not apply as above (though you might still determine homeland as above). You may roll below to see what it is:

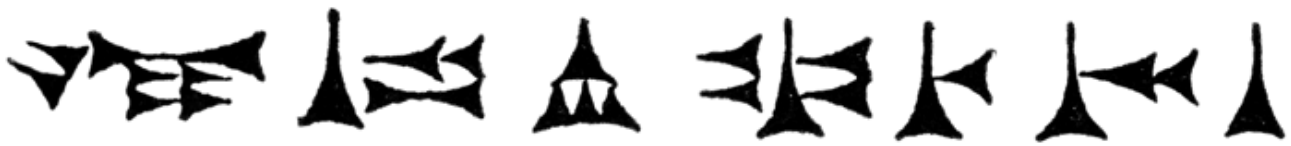
|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 01-60 | Planar heritage! You may choose to be of a planetouched race                               |
| 61-80 | Planar human. You descend from Inadasir stock which escaped to the elemental planes.       |
| 81-00 | Pureblood extraplanar (not at all human, but a pureblood native nonetheless of the planes) |

\*These locations are known mostly from wild rumors and crazy tales told in distant taverns. Suitable for players who would like to have a mysterious background, with the DM's permission!

Skethrys the Xernethian Warlock and Lord Kaos ponder their strange relationship



*Skethrys the Xernethian Warlock and Lord Kaos ponder their strange relationship*



## Chapter III - Cults and Orders of Chirak

In a world where the gods are dead, one's faith may be torn by a sense of despair that you either missed the boat or were found unworthy, and there are false prophets and so-called avatars wandering around all the time filling your head with misinformation. Life in a cult can be very hard.

In Chirak, cults tend to be small but active. There is little in the way of organized religion, simply because it is impossible to maintain a strong church when people can tell, by simply looking within their own inner self during a moment of prayer, that the god you are speaking of is well and truly dead. As a result, only a handful of demiurges and avatars gain any following, and even then it takes a truly dedicated person to maintain faith in a being that they know could easily fall from grace, slip up, and lose their hold on the route to divinity.

Others seek out a different kind of faith, looking to nature and elemental spirits, *celestial Elohim*, the ancestral spirits of the dead, or sometimes looking to darker entities, such as the demons of chaos, or worse yet, the *Thousandspawn*. Not worshiping true gods, these cults nonetheless generate enough faith to discover hidden magic both normal and divine.

Finally, the strongest orders in the realm are, in fact, philosophical. These organizations have replaced strong ecclesiastical orders with dedicated scholars, mages and explorers looking to piece together the truth of what happened. In some cases, as with the Preservationists, they seek to understand what brought on the Apocalypse to prevent it from happening again. In the case of the Arcanists, they want to recover the lost power of old to exploit in the present, so that they might gain power and control to also insure no great debacle ever arises again.

What follows is a summary of popular cults and orders, along with the details (and benefits) of membership for those who wish to join.

### Preservationists

This quasi-religious order of scholars, mages, and priests are dedicated to the restoration and preservation of forgotten knowledge. They are principally interested in the lost lore of the Inadasir culture of the Mythric Islands, the Forgotten People of the White Desert, and the remnants of old cultures in Masiria. The edict of the

preservationists is one of understanding: the will of the order is to restore lost knowledge, understand the error of their ancestor's ways, and to avoid the mistakes of the past. The order venerates the spirits of the dead gods, and seeks to aid the avatars of the new, while thwarting those who walk darker paths to immortality. They respect and venerate demiurges which have chosen a path of mending, such as Kalie'yana and Laddaskar.

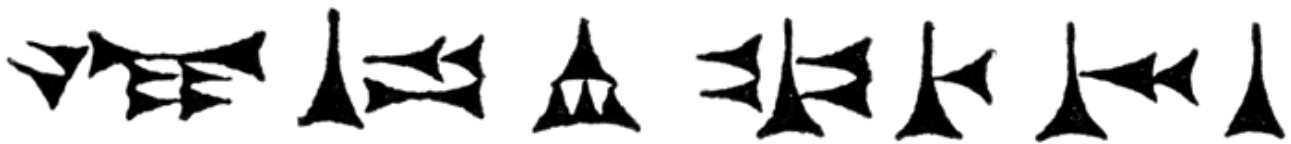
The preservationists maintain a Grand Library and temple in Barcen, Espanea. The oldest institution of the order is found in the fabled City of the White Desert called Eristantopolis, which was founded on the principles of the order. Scholars, antiquarians, monks, and missionaries of the order can be found throughout the Realms of Chirak. Other strong bastions of Preservationists can be found in Barcen, Jenar of Esterehabau, and Pardainse.

**Members:** Scholars, sages, wizards, priests, explorers, and all students of knowledge are welcome. Many nobles join the order in Espanea as the socially appropriate thing to do. Members must swear an oath to uphold the preservation of knowledge and the protection of lost antiquities. They must also swear never to allow old and dark powers to be abused again.

**Membership Dues:** Basic membership is 10 gold pieces a month, which allows the use of local libraries, and the right to stay in hostels and rooms made available for traveling members of the order. Deluxe membership is a one-time fee of 500 gold pieces (monthly fees still apply) allowing unrestricted library access and the right to seek out ritual magic and magic items for sale by fellow members in the order.

**Membership Duties:** Furthering the advancement of lost lore and recovering the memory of past antiquities. Expanding the order to new lands where Preservationists have not yet founded institutions, such as Nithiad, Correnstal, Kasdalan, Pelaeus, The Utter West and the Yellow Kingdoms.

**Magic Available:** Almost any ritual spell can be taught by the right member at the right location. An Insight or Diplomacy check (DC 15+ depending on the level of the ritual) can help to pinpoint which branch of the order has a teacher for the spell in question. Likewise, the preservationists have an excellent variety of magic items for sale, although they are reluctant to part with such items to non-members.



**Special Benefits:** Preservationist members receive a +2 modifier to Diplomacy checks in cities where the order is strong. Members of the order all have total access to the libraries of the order, which are immense and well-kept. The largest such library is at Eristantopolis, and the next largest is at Barcen. In any given library there is a cumulative 5% chance per week of searching that the researcher will uncover a random ritual spell book.

## Arcanists

The Arcanists were founded in Masiria, and are dedicated to a resurrection of the ancient magic they believe were performed by the forgotten people of old. More than that, many Arcanist orders are also dedicated to the restoration of older, more diabolical ways of life, and the ultimate fascist ascendancy of Masirians to the rule of the Seas of Chirak. Many of the non-Masirians who join the order seek to discover the lost formulas of immortality held in secret by the Masirian elite. Still others aspire to learn the infernal chaos magic of thaumaturgy. Arcanists are reviled by other mages, for it is believed that their pursuits keep the very chaos magic alive which was responsible for the fall of the old world. Furthermore, the desire for power in the hearts of the Arcanists often lead them to contact or awaken the demons of old, the fallen shock troops of the dark gods, and in so doing, threaten the safety of the present world.

Arcanists have major centers of operation in certain hard to reach locations. To the west, in the Sabiri lands, the ruins of Kadela are dominated by the Arcanists, who are considered a peculiar, but otherwise neutral force in the region. In Masiria, the Arcanists have many hidden cults and bases, and in Athanar they are the rulers.

**Members:** Witches and warlocks, wizard and shamans, any who are arcane practitioners who do not feel that there is a legacy to the ancient magic which must be suppressed, but instead embraced and coveted.

**Membership Dues:** For 10 gold pieces one may gain access to a hostel, storehouse, or enclave of the Arcanists, but he must first have an amulet or other proof of his membership. Such amulets, brands, or sigils usually cost 100 gold pieces and a test of dedication is usually administered before the recipient is granted the proof of membership. There are no higher fees after this; individual arcanists will offer services to train others in rituals or create magic items for whatever fees they deem appropriate.

**Membership Duties:** The Arcanists are a large force, but not as well-organized as the Preservationists. Many sects

and branches exist, but they are as often working at odds with one another as they are in conjunction. One of the duties of initiates and acolytes is to carry information and requests between sects, to spy upon those branches which seem to be hoarding information and lore, and to seek out new enclaves of lost magic. All members of the order seek personal growth and power, and the Arcanists masters are all very powerful sorcerers.

**Magic Available:** All forms of ritual magic can potentially be found in Arcanists circles, but the student must often pay a fair price in coin and servitude to learn such magic. A Diplomacy or Streetwise check (DC 15+ depending upon the ritual level) in a town with an Arcanist presence will help in identifying which Arcanist or which branch of the order can provide services to the student in question. Magic items, often quite powerful and dangerous, are also available through the order, although many arcanists hoard their favorites and are loathe parting with them, often requiring dangerous jobs as well as coin in exchange for such items.

**Special Benefits:** Arcanists receive a +2 Diplomacy bonus when in Masiria after they become initiates, and amongst other arcanists. Acolytes gain a +2 bonus to Perception checks when studying ancient ruins and lost cities to find clues to ancient magic, forgotten relics and powerful artifacts.

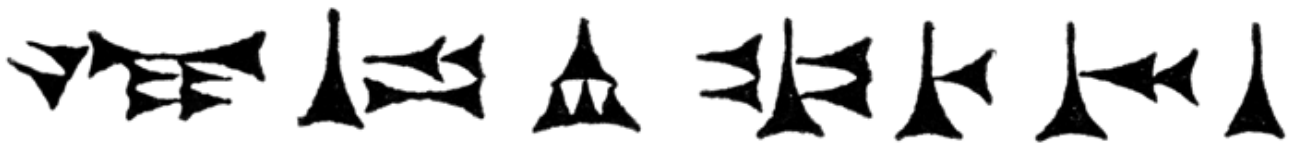
## The Order of the Ebon Skulls:

A fierce secret society dedicated to the demonic entity Kraish'degar and other demons of the Abyssal Chaos. The cult is managed by the highly secretive illuminatus of 12 high-ranking members, and their operations seem to center around Espanea. The cult is layered in a series of escalating ranks, and only the most trusted and vile members are allowed to reach the inner ranks of acolyte and better. Advancement through the ranks is often by assassination. Likewise, the penalty for any traitor, even one who reveals the order's secrets under torture or magical compulsion, is death. Known bases of operation include Barcen and Corlione of Espanea, Khulinon out of Hoagarit, and the Kaldinian city of Mordente.

**Members:** Assassins, spies, anarchists, diabolists, witches and necromancers

**Membership Dues:** The Order doesn't make its members pay for entry, but they must prove themselves, usually through some insidiously evil acts. And once that's done, there are many more dark and vile deeds yet to come!

**Worshiper Duties:** Secretly manipulating the political scene of Espanea and the known world, subverting the



Preservationists, promoting apocalypticism, serving the will of Kraish'degar.

**Available Magic:** The Order's members do not easily part with their magical items and rituals. Nonetheless, carrying favor with an elder member by running deeds for them and doing dangerous jobs can lead potent rewards.

**Special Benefits:** Initiates and above all receive a +2 bonus to Streetwise when in a city with a branch of the Ebon Skulls. Acolytes and better receive a +2 Diplomacy role when dealing with demons. A Religion check (DC 20) will allow initiates to discover the safe havens of the order in friendly cities. All members receive a +2 bonus against Intimidation when resisting efforts to divulge information about the order.

## The Hooded Order of Adenach

One of the greatest sorcerers of all time, Adenach, founded this mysterious order, which can be found among the solitary covens of Adenite, Legoran and Hoagarit lands, as well as in Kaldinian and Espanean monasteries. They are secretive and hide their true selves in public with hoods, but in truth, the Hooded Order has many noble members and they are often interested in the secrets of the order for purposes of power and control. Some claim that the order ultimately still answers to Adenach himself, who may yet still live through magical means in some secluded castle in the western lands.

The order was originally founded as a philosophical form of extremism, a way for men to humble themselves before the gods and heavens, to prove that the survivors and their descendants of the destruction of the world have learned from their mistakes. To this end, the order continues to function, trying to interfere and steer societies clear of dangerous magic and technomancy that could bring about the formula which caused the last apocalypse.

In game play, the Hooded Order is a strange third party which often interferes in the affairs of both the Preservationists and Arcanists. It is a much more political organization, though it stays behind the scenes and prevents its members from exposing their membership in public. The true agenda of the order is swathed in mystery, for it contains many complex dualities: it is founded by one of the greatest sorcerers ever, but seems to discourage advancement of magic. It keeps to the shadows and hides its members' faces, but behind the scenes it exerts strong political pressures. It disrupts both the benign research of the Preservationists and the

selfish acquisition of power of the Arcanists, and then quietly sequesters said knowledge away in hidden vaults for its own use. It's members are often zealots of great religious fervor, but it constantly teaches that all the gods are dead, and it is only through clean, moral living that men can avoid Perdition. Its members openly advocate pacifism, but under cover of shadow they are professional assassins.

An important note: The Hooded Order despises practitioners of unusual magic, such as blood magic, spirit magic, and ancestral magic, and will persecute and slay such mages whenever possible.

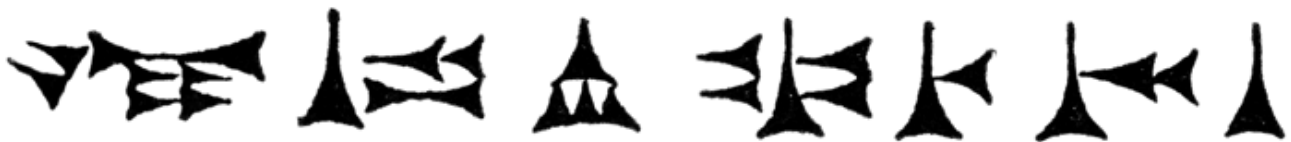
**Members:** nobility, concerned citizens who dislike Arcanists and Preservationists alike, and wizards looking for a more private and controlled rise in power. Many non-mages join the order as well, and become members of a sub-sect called the Spellslayers (usually of the avenger class).

**Membership Dues:** Joining the order is free, but once you're in, they will work to brainwash you, and also expect healthy tithing to the cause, from 10% up to 50% or more of the member's acquired wealth donated to the order.

**Worshiper Duties:** The Hooded Order focuses on rooting out sorcerers who seek to harm the local community. The special militant branch called Spellslayers act as assassins to this end. Other members focus on advancing the Cult of Memories, as it is called, which is a way of venerating the dead gods and honoring what they stood for. The cult's priesthood branch is strongly moralistic, and works to influence local communities to gain power in any way it can, albeit behind the scenes as much as possible.

**Magic Available:** The cult only advocates the use of certain rituals, and only for its mysterious ends, but when it is necessary to impart such knowledge for a job to be done, it will do so. Individual members are usually warlocks, clerics and wizards who will teach their ritual lore, but must usually be sought out.

**Special Benefits:** Initiates receive a +2 Streetwise bonus to towns and communities with a Hooded Order influence. High priests of the order can call upon local chapters for aid, receiving a number of lesser members to assist on matters of relevance to the Hooded Order. High priests become privy to the many hidden agendas of the order, and learn the truth about Adenach. What is that truth? You need to be a High Priest to find out.



## The Concord of Kaledan

In the Espanean city of Barcen, there is a genuine college of magic, operated by seven mages who are descendants of the fabled Kaledan Namasir, sorcerer advisor to the hero of legend, Nosaj, from Legora. The institute serves primarily as a scholarly venture, with a great librarium to rival the Nithiadian libraries, and the Seven take on certain scribal students who show amazing dedication, teaching them the sorcerous arts. All such mages are required to swear fealty to the Concord of Kaledan. Three great towers of this order are known to exist. The first such tower, in Barcen, is most famous. The second tower, in the Mercurian city of Manarak, was founded a century ago by an invitation from the Mercurian king of the time. The third tower exists in the Grelmanic city of Eledar, and was founded less than a decade ago. There, the tower serves as a waypoint for scholars of the order to study the strange western arts of magic.

The Concord is allied with the Preservationists, but maintains its own distinct identity. The Concord is all about teaching magic, and the advancement of new magical paths and philosophies. It enjoys the harvest of knowledge that comes from the antiquarian ways of their sister order, but it is primarily interested in building a new future out of new knowledge.

**Membership:** Any spell caster may join, although they must take an oath to uphold the principles of discover and the acquisition of new knowledge. Artificers especially love the order, and the dwarves of Pardainse are lobbying for a Tower to be built on their island. No one will be admitted to the order that is not young and being given over to it (by their parents, usually), or who is not already a scholar versed in one of the following skills: History, Arcana, or Religion.

**Membership Dues:** A member in good standing is expected to contribute 100 gold pieces, as well as at least one magic item, ritual spell book, or other object of worth per year to the Concord.

**Membership Duties:** The discovery of new spells and magical insight is paramount to the Concord. The acquisition of world lore is also useful, such as with alchemy, astronomy, and any scientific advancement of knowledge. A member who contributes gains extra favor with the order.

**Order Spells:** The order is the best possible place to learn rituals and acquire magic items. Any member can easily find another sorcerer within one of the Towers who will, for a fee and possibly some service provide the

tutelage to learn new ritual spells or help to find or create desired magic items.

**Special Benefits:** Acolytes of the order gain a +2 Perception bonus when looking for unusual clues or data while perusing research tomes. The order has Loremasters and Grandmasters who fill similar capacities, and characters who reach paragon or epic levels may eventually become such.



## Lesser Orders and Cults

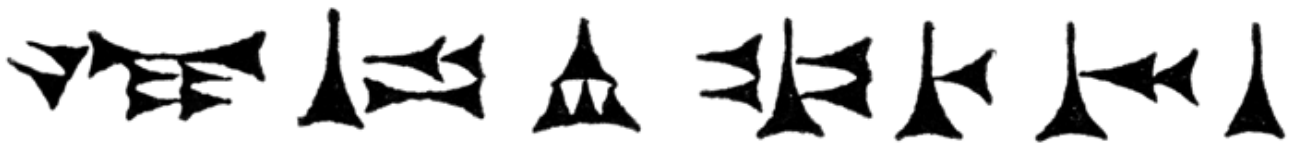
### Elemental Orders

Sorcerers who instead seek to extract mana from the land are practitioners of elementalism. They are especially adept at pulling the raw essence of fire, earth, air and water to fuel their magical designs. As a side effect, their magic tends to reflect the nature of the elements the mana comes from. The Nithiadian mages are especially good at elementalism.

Elementalism is considered a forbidden art in some regions, as it is perceived by many to be the pinnacle of "magical science," only one step below planar magic. It is widely believed that the many miracles of the ancient, pre-apocalyptic world were derived from the fantastic energy harnessed through elementalism.

The art of elementalism is not so much unique as it is a sort of focused brotherhood. Any spell caster who has at least one elemental spell in his repertoire petition (any spell with a fire, earth, air or water descriptor) may petition one of the elemental orders for admission. It usually costs a fee (usually 500 GP, but DMs may let a Diplomacy or Bluff check reduce the cost), may require an advocate for the character, and a certain amount of time dedicated to duties for the order to gain admission.





Once the character is a member of a specific elemental order, then he can gain the assistance of the many other members of the order, as well as its libraries and resources.

The strongest elemental guild is the Order of Water in Esterehabau, followed closely by the Society of Navigation, which is the Order of Air. In Espanea and abroad, the Society of Fire Mages can be found in small conclaves of study, and its members are often renown battle mages. The Order of Earth, sometimes called the Society of Geomancers are rarely found along the seanelanes of Chirak, but tend to be found inland, in the regions of Legora, Grelmaine, and Mercurios.

### The Order of the Oak

Among the Legoran people are the Order of the Oak, a secretive but respected order of druids and sorcerers in tune with the earth and its spirits. These are mages at their closest roots to the land, much like druids, and are venerated for their talents by the Legoran people.

### The Xochtacharit Closed Societies of Magic

The Xochtacharit are a magiocracy, which respects those with the sorcerous talents to hold their own against the One Hundred and Thirteen Demons. They draw their knowledge from a mixture of demon-spirit worship and genuine sorcerous studies, creating a blending of the two fields. As such, the intermingling, competitive societies of magic are compromised almost entirely of sorcerer-priests.

### The Apocalypticists

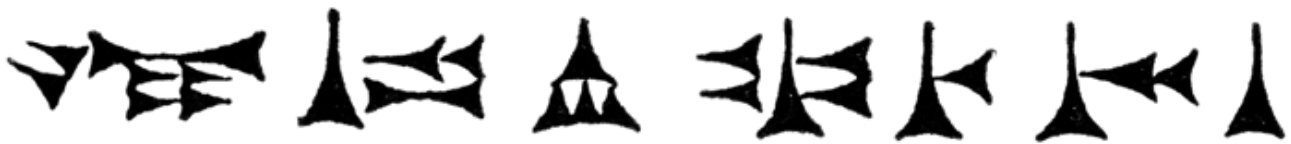
Throughout the Realms, these cults spring up in regions where hope is bleak, or cruel masters force the lesser men of the land to toil under the whip. Even in prosperous lands, the dark song of Ga'Thon can reach the ears of those who are either morbidly pious or decadently corrupt. All such souls, troubled or disturbed, answer the call of the Apocalypticists. This widespread, many-pronged cult is almost universally reverent to the destroyer god, and it is believed that he is still a living god, which demands that those who still live in the mortal plane must embrace him, either through abasement, corruption, the elimination of all want or need, or any countless variant notions of what it takes for Ga'Thon to allow the soul of the good cultist in to the heavens beyond. All members of this cult share such in common: they were left behind, and must atone for their sins to seek the succor of heaven.

Preservationists and other learned men fight this cult's aims, which are really to spread chaos. The confused worship of its followers feed the spirit of Ga'Thon, which was not destroyed, it is said, but merely dismembered and spread across the Realms. If it should ever be strengthened enough to return, then Ga'Thon will finish off what he started.

## Ways of Magic

Chirak is a realm filled with strange and unusual magic. Classical magic is the default form of wizardry, a combination of wizard, warlock, cleric and ritual magic. Wizards, for example, learn to hunt for ancient spells encrypted in a book, and use these spells as mnemonic devices to channel the energy of primal chaos in to form and order. Warlocks call upon dark planar magic and unholy pacts to gain similar powers. Clerics use their holy will to channel the essence of the avatars, or to collect the divine essence of the dead gods to do their will. Druids seek the divine spark of nature, from the mother goddess of the world, to draw forth their magic.

But among all mages, a desire to learn darker secrets abound, and any mage may start play knowing one or more of the following alternative forms of magic, or may acquire such knowledge later on. Each of these alternative forms of spell casting may be treated as templates of a sort, which are overlaid on to the base class of the character, subject to any specific limitations or requirements. Depending on cultural heritage, a character may be required, or at least expected, to have one of the following templates. Classical magic, for example, is rare, almost unknown among the Nubiri, but they regularly practice blood magic and ancestral magic. Likewise, the legorans are prone almost exclusively to the practice of spirit magic. Classical mages are found most strongly in the more civilized lands, such as Nithiad, Masiria, Espanea, and the Pellucid Kingdoms. A few of these magical arts are considered enlightened, such as elementalism and planar magic, and are found almost exclusively among the greatest cities and within the finest temples of magical learning, such as the White City, Barcen, and Mercurios.



## Spirit Magic – Rune Totems

In the wilderness of Chirak, from the Hoagarit to Legora, there is a breed of mage who coerces and steals his spells from the spirit world. The mages of these barbaric lands are wise in the ways of the spirit world, and they speak to the Outer Darkness through mediums called fetches and totems, special animated entities and objects inhabited by simple spirits who trade spiritual energy to power the runic spells of the mages.

Spirit mages are rare among civilized lands much, much more common in barbarian kingdoms and savage tribes of the wilderness. Any wizard or warlock may use the unique magic item of the spirit mage: the Rune Totem.

To master spirit magic a wizard or warlock must first acquire a rune totem. The totem is usually found through a vision quest or dangerous adventure, which will lead to the discovery of the totem. The rune totem works as a special sort of arcane implement, and if a Wizard or Warlock uses it, then he will gain the special power of the rune totem.

### Rune Totem

Level 5+

*An object of variable dimensions; usually a stone with runes or a small carved wood figurine.*

Level 5 +1

Level 20 +4

Level 10 +2

Level 25 +5

Level 15 +3

Level 30 +6

**Implement (rune totem)**

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1D6 damage per plus

**Power:** Commune with Spirit

*You may speak with the spirit of the rune totem to gain hidden knowledge.*

**Daily – Arcane**

**Standard Action – Personal**

**Attack:** Int vs. Will (of spirit; default is 15+½ item level)

**Success:** The wizard communicates with the fetch spirit of the rune totem, beseeching it to call up a ritual power for his use.

The ritual cannot be higher than the wizard's level. The spell will be cast by the spirit for the wizard, who must supply the component cost for it or it will fail.

The spirit will know 1 ritual spell for every +1 of the rune totem. It can only offer those spells. The ritual spells will be no higher level than the magic item's level.

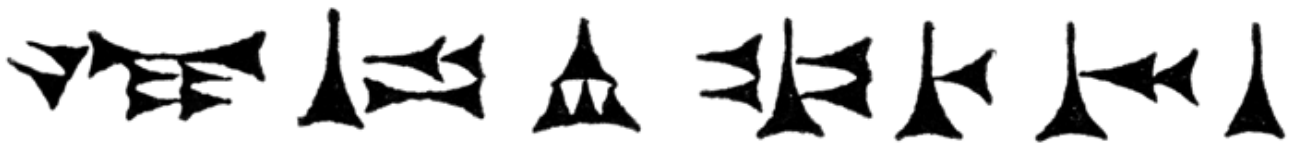
**Failure:** The spirit rebukes the wizard, who loses 1D10+½ item level in hit points of psychic damage and may not call upon the spirit for 24 hours.

**Other Totems:** New totems are found, not easily, but often in the most unusual places. An Arcana skill (DC 25+) check can reveal the etheric presence of totem spirits, but the spirit mage must declare before checking just what he is looking for. Spirit mages can also find suitable objects in which to trap a fetch. For example, a warrior who died in battle protecting his children could have a totem spirit crafted from one of his bones, and a likely candidate would be exposed by this spell.

Spirit totems come in all types. As such, not all totems contain magic spirit fetches. A twig shaped like a dryad's form could hold a nature spirit, which will serve as a totem, but may not know spells in the manner of a normal fetch. Some totems are imbued with malign entities; the mage won't know until he tries to commune with the fetch, but such is the risk involved in being this sort of spell caster. In theory, if the spirit mage is strong enough and the spirit in question has spells, he can still utilize it, but without some clever and regular negotiations, he will constantly have to deal with assaults and attempted invasions by the malign fetches. Some particularly willful and evil spirit mages like this, however, utilizing these fetches for additional evil ends.

Whenever a spirit mage tries to find or create a totem, the DM should rule that on certain occasions the spirit will be malign (such as when the wizard fails an Arcana check by 10 or more). Additionally, when the DM creates totems to be found during the course of play, he can pre-determine what type of spirit such totems contain.





**Creating a Totem:** The Enchant Magic Item ritual can be used to prepare a totem for use. The base cost of 800 gold pieces (for a basic +1 rune totem) is for the object being enchanted, and for incense and etching materials (that are destroyed afterward), plus the wizard should go a full evening without sleep. The DM will determine what level and what spells the totem spirit knows.

Spirit totems can be found fully formed and ready for communication, usually in the bag of another wizard. These totems are often old, venerable spirits, and may not be so easy to control or learn from.

**Destroying Totem Fetishes:** Should a spirit mage ever wish to destroy a totem fetish, he may do so through a couple of ways: he can destroy the spirit within, usually through magical combat (see the Monstrous Appendix for spirit information), or he can try to physically destroy the totem, releasing the spirit, although the spirit will often fight to prevent this. If he destroys the spirit, its power is released and the totem becomes an ordinary object. The next time the spirit mage attempts to use a rune totem, he will be at a -4 penalty to such actions due to the resonance of conflict which springs up around his own person in the spirit plane. This resonance dissipates after a successful attempt to use a new rune totem.

In the second case, in which the mage tries to destroy the totem (be it via Disenchant or throwing it in a volcano) the totem is simply destroyed. The fetch has a guarded interest in keeping the totem intact, as it is a direct tether to the mortal realm for the spirit, although as a rule only about 10% of them would like to be freed. When a totem is destroyed, be it intentionally or accidentally, the spirit is instantly released and its flees to the spirit plane. The mage loses use of the rituals, for he did not (and could not) learn them from the spirit in a normal manner. He will have to learn the rituals normally, or find another rune totem.

## Blood Magic

The practitioners of blood magic believe that magic is an aspect of the physical form and its connection to the mortal soul is linked through vitreous, sanguine fluids. They append their casting with physical sacrifices and can gain additional benefits when a sufficient sacrifice is given. This is a form of magic found among the Nubiri, Hoagarit, and Xochtacharit cultures, but its practitioners are highly secretive. Blood mages use all other forms of magic, be it rune magic, sorcery or divine magic to stronger effect with their blood sacrifice.

How the Blood Mage Works:

Blood mages are wizards who pursue the path of diablerie, eventually mastering it with the paragon path of the Blood Mage. Learning this path is a difficult process, and unless it is chosen at the start of a character's career, will require much time, effort, and a mentor to gain. Over the course of play, the DM should require the student mage to find a mentor who is himself already a Blood Mage.

The only way to learn blood magic without a mentor is to seek out a malign being called a blood spirit (see the Monstrous Appendix). This is a type of Spirit which will attempt possession of the student. If it succeeds, it causes 1D6 points of bleeding damage every round until exorcised, or the host dies. If the prospective blood mage defeats the blood spirit, he may steal its power at the moment of death; he may then follow the paragon path of the Blood Mage.

### The Bleeding Dagger

Blood mages can acquire a special bleeding dagger. This dagger is specially designed for its task to aid the mage in his casting. The dagger effectively works by drawing the blood of its victims and channeling it in to energy for the blood mage, to be used in a Blood Pool (see below).

#### Bleeding Dagger

Level 11+

*An ornate dagger with a lean groove running down its wicked, curved blade. The hilt is carved of ivory, and a thick, ruby red stone is set in the pommel. It glows with an eerie light when the dagger is used.*

Level 11+3

Level 21 +5

Level 16+4

Level 26 +6

#### Implement (bleeding dagger)

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1D8 damage per plus

**Power:** Sanguine Channeling

*Foes you strike find their blood unnaturally drawn in to the dagger and channeled in to dark energies.*

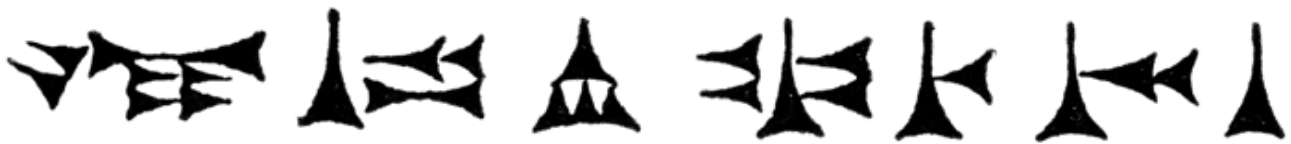
**Encounter – Arcane**

**Standard Action – one target**

**Attack:** Dex vs. AC

**Success:** The wizard draws the damage done in to a blood pool. The dagger can absorb 5 points of damage from targets for each plus it has. The dagger only absorbs damage it inflicts.

**Enhanced Bolstering Blood:** This damage may then be channeled via the Bolstering Blood ability in to additional damage (the amount of damage absorbed by



the dagger is added to the damage projected by the wizard at the time of use).

**Blooded Skill:** The wizard can spend one blood pool point to gain a +1 increase to the next use of any Intelligence, Charisma, or Wisdom based skill.

## Ancestral Magic

Ancestral magic is potent among the more primitive realms of Chirak. It is a process by which one is lent the power of spirits, ghosts, and the ancestral dead. It is closely related to spirit magic, but the source of the mana is from the ectoplasmic energy granted by ancestral spirits, rather than from a rune totem. The wizards of the Yellow Empire in the Utter East, and certain obscure cultures in the north are especially attuned to this magic. Nubiri are also famous for their ancestral magic, and use the decorated skulls of their forefathers as their attuned fetish.

Ancestral mages who are sorcerers, and are often called magi or *houngan*. Divine ancestral practitioners are usually shamans, bokor, witch doctors and other titles.

### The Ancestral Mage Feat

**Prerequisite:** Level 1 (see below) in any Spell Caster class, Wis 13+

**Effect:** The Ancestral Magic feat allows a spell caster to use ancestral focus items (see below) as a mastered implement. In addition, the spell caster gains a permanent +2 bonus to Diplomacy or Bluff checks with spirits.

The ability to perform ancestral magic is an inherited trait, and should be chosen at character creation. The DM may allow a player to choose this feat at a later date if the plot would allow the spell caster to “discover” his latent talent for ancestral magic.

### The Ancestral Focus Item

Ancestral mages require a focus through which they channel their concentration and the spiritual energy of the ancestral spirits. This device is usually an object of importance to the magician, a holy symbol, a staff etched in ancient runes, or, as among the Nubiri, the ornately decorated skull of one’s ancestral father or mother. If the character received the Ancestral Magic feat at character creation, then he starts with one focus object to which he is attuned. Additional focus objects (or replacements) can be acquired later on (see below).

This focus replaces the need for any Ritual spell tomes, regular spell books, holy symbols, or other implements normal to the class that are necessary for spell casting.

Optional implements are still just fine, i.e. a wizard may continue to use his normal mastered implement, but with this feat he may now use his focus item to collect spells instead of a spell book, and may also use it for ritual magic he learns, as well.

All of the spells an ancestral magician knows are channeled from the spirit realm of his ancestors through the focus item, and so the focus is vital to the casting abilities of the magician. If he loses his focus item, he may still cast his class powers, but at a -2 to all rolls and effects until he recovers or gains a new focus item. Rituals tied to the focus item are only possible with the focus item in his possession.

Spell casters who attempt to use a focus item may do so, but they are unable to access its special abilities without the ancestral magic feat.

## Ancestral Focus Item

### Level 1+

*A special object inscribed with ancient runes to allow communication with the ancestral spirits of your people.*

**Level 1 +1**

**Level 16 +4**

**Level 6 +2**

**Level 21 +5**

**Level 11+3**

**Level 26 +6**

**Implement (ancestral focus item)**

**Enhancement:** Attack rolls and damage rolls

**Critical:** +1D4 damage per plus

**Power: Mana Battery**

*You imbue the focus item with some of your own power, to be used at a later date.*

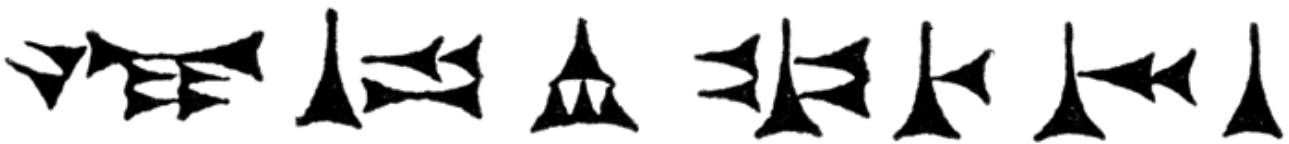
**Daily – Arcane**

**Standard Action – Personal**

**Effect:** The spell caster imbues one of his own powers in the focus item. This may be any encounter or daily effect he already knows. He may then activate that spell through the focus item at a later date, as if it were the item’s own power.

**Replaces Spellbook and Ritual Tome:** If the user has the Ancestral Magic feat, then the focus item replaces any ritual magic tome and spellbook in his possession. The focus item is used to store all spells known to the wizard. Clerics with the feat use the item as if it were a holy symbol implement, as well.

**Hidden Mysteries:** The ancestral spirits of the focus item know one ritual spell for each plus of the item, of a level no higher than the level of the magic item. The bearer of the focus item who also has the Ancestral Magic feat may attempt to learn those rituals so that he can use them (see below). This is in addition to any ritual spells he learns and stores in the focus item.



To gain access to the ritual spells known by the ancestral spirits in the focus item requires that the caster attempt a skill challenge to tap in to the conduit of the focus item. If he makes a three critical successes, one each for Arcana, History and Religion (one per day) before having three failures, then the spirit contacted is a benevolent ancestral spirit, and it will teach him a new ritual spell. If any skill check was a critical failure (roll a natural 1), then the focus item is damaged, and loses its connection to the spirit realm. The item becomes inert! The DC for this challenge is 15 plus the effective level of the item.

If the skill challenge succeeds, then the spell caster will make direct contact with a random spirit on the other end, which he must then overcome in combat. If he succeeds, then he learns one new ritual spell. If he fails, then he suffers any and all consequences of the spirit's possession.

The spell caster may engage in this action as many times as the spirit has ritual spells to impart. Each time he succeeds, however, subsequent skill challenges gain a cumulative +2 bonus to each check as he becomes more familiar with the wiles of the spirit.

**Losing the Focus Item:** If the spell caster loses the focus, or it is destroyed, then the caster's ability to perform magic is diminished (see above) until it is replaced. The replacement of such an object requires that the caster assume a quest to bind another spiritual focus in to a new object. In doing so, he must quest for 1d6 weeks, engage in a specific adventure at the DM's discretion, and utilize the Enchant Magic Item ritual.

Alternatively, the mage may perform the sacrifice of another sentient living being and reduce the cost of the Enchantment in half. Magicians of good morality will choose not to do this, but an evil spell caster may well succumb to the ease of this option, which is always an evil act. The mages of Xoxtocharit regularly seek out such sacrifices as necessary.

A wise ancestral magician will have more than one focus, and such is permitted. A magician may have 1/4<sup>th</sup> their POW in focus objects. Having a backup is a good idea. All spells in the repertoire of the ancestral mage can be utilized through any single focus to which he is attuned.

#### Random Ancestral Focus Item Chart:

When first receiving an ancestral focus item, roll on this chart to see what kind of item it is:

| D20 Roll | Item Type              |
|----------|------------------------|
| 1        | Decorated skull        |
| 2        | Ornately painted femur |
| 3        | Old wooden shield      |
| 4        | candelabra             |
| 5        | Wooden staff           |
| 6        | Wand                   |
| 7        | Club                   |
| 8        | Shawl                  |
| 9        | Bracelet               |
| 10       | Tiara                  |
| 11       | Earring                |
| 12       | Chunk of obsidian      |
| 13       | Horseshoe              |
| 14       | Mummified hand         |
| 15       | Lucky rabbit's foot    |
| 16       | Bull's horn            |
| 17       | Silver chalice         |
| 18       | Gemstone               |
| 19       | Ceramic tablet         |
| 20       | Engraved holy symbol   |

#### Focus Items by Region

The following is a list of traditional ancestral foci by region, according to those areas that commonly practice ancestral magic:

**Adenach:** The shamans of Adenach find rare and precious stones, which they work with petroglyphic symbols to invoke powerful ancestors.

**Hashykarystir:** The lizard folk of this region revere the power of the ancient dragons, and the ancestral mages of this land scour the earth looking for the bones of dead dragons and giants, from which they prod forth the powers of ancient spirits.

**Helios:** The desert nomads of Helios, much like their distant eastern cousins in Nubirion, find that the ornately carved, gilded and decorated skulls of their revered ancestors make excellent foci.

**Hoagarit:** The horse masters of Hoagarit construct elaborate staves of equine bone, usually topped with a horses' skull, from which to evoke the magic of the horse spirits.

**Lessi Natives of Kaldinia:** The island folk called the Lessi dwell in a structured harmony with the Kaldinians of the



Sea of Chirak. They seek out the bones of their ancestors, constructed in to wands and staves, through which to channel their magic. Some also search the sea, looking for sharks and other powerful beasts to slay and harvest bones to add to these foci.

**Masiria:** The ancient Masirians have long venerated ancestral magic, but it is forbidden to draw forth upon the spirits of their own dead without committing heresy. As such, those who wish to avoid heresy look to the bones and skulls of powerful entities, such as demons and seraphim, on the desert plains where once the greatest battles of the Apocalypse were fought.

**Nubirion:** The Nubirians channel the ancestral spirits of their forebears directly, crafting elaborate globes from the skulls of their forefathers and calling upon their ancestral spirits directly for aid. They also look to powerful beasts, such as elephants and crocodiles, for dangerous magic.

**Sabiri:** The nomadic Sabiri respect ancestral magic, and craft ornate stone heads, through which the spirits of the very ancient past are channeled to draw forth powerful spells. At one time, the Sabiri mastered this art, and carried out judgment through these massive stone idols, but the craft has largely been forgotten and most ancestral mages among the chalk-skinned nomads hold small but ornate foci crafted of obsidian and basalt.

**Xoxtacharit:** The Xoxtacharit seek to master all forms of magic, and those mages among their kind who revere ancestral spirits craft elaborate head-garb, staves, and knives, all carved from the bones of their ancestors and often much more recently sacrificed victims.



#### Random Contacted Spirits:

Roll on this chart when using ancestral magic items or rune totems to see what sort of spirit is contacted. The modifier is applied to the second chart, which determines its initial attitude toward the bearer of the item.

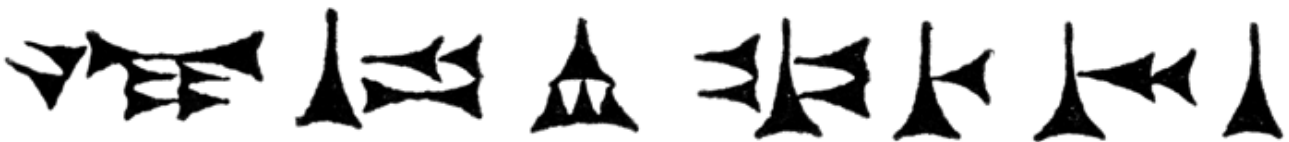
| D20 Roll | Type of Spirit | Alignment    | Mod |
|----------|----------------|--------------|-----|
| 1-2      | Plaguebringer  | chaotic evil | -25 |
| 3-4      | Mindblighter   | chaotic evil | -20 |
| 5-6      | Gloomwarden    | unaligned    | -15 |
| 7-8      | Deathhaunt     | unaligned    | -15 |
| 9-10     | Terrorgaunt    | evil         | -10 |
| 11-12    | Mercurial wisp | unaligned    | 0   |
| 13-20    | Benign Spirit  | good         | +20 |

#### Spirit Disposition on Contact (apply modifier):

| D100 Roll | Reaction               |
|-----------|------------------------|
| 01-20     | Extremely Hostile      |
| 21-40     | Aggravated and Hostile |
| 41-60     | Hateful but Curious    |
| 51-80     | Disaffected            |
| 81-85     | Mildly Interested      |
| 86-90     | Friendly but Unhelpful |
| 91-95     | Friendly and Helpful   |
| 96-00     | Immediate Ally         |

### Planar Magic

A rare breed, planar mages draw their sorceries from extra-dimensional sources. The lands of Chirak are directly connected to at least four such otherworldly domains, which in turn reflect the nature of the apocalyptic past of the land. These domains include: **Perdition**, sometimes also called the **Abyss**, through which one can arrive by seeking out the **Rift of Chaos**. Perdition is believed to be the final battle ground of the gods of old, and is also believed to hold the gates to the **Greater Beyond** through which the Heavens of the Cult of the Lost Gods can be found. Mages who draw from this source are called diabolists and warlocks. The **Feywild**, from which the faerie kin and the elves of lore once came, was utterly destroyed in the Apocalypse, although shadowy remnants of it are said to exist in other dimensions. Other domains include **The Planar Realms**, fabled lands of the forgotten gods and other dimensional realms containing different shadows of creation, the **Dreamlands of Ethenur**, the **Ethereal Outer Darkness** of the lost spirits and the lands of **The Far Realm**, also called simply the **The Beyond**.



Mages connected to The Beyond are privy to esoteric knowledge and realms beyond the ken of understanding, and are feared and despised. They are frequently obsessed with the pursuit of ancient artifacts and sacred objects. Finally, there is the **Temporal Plane**, from which time itself flows. Time is a very important and very dangerous factor in the Realms of Chirak, and a very esoteric order of mages called the chronomancers practice with it. Many, many other planes exist, including the myriad outer planes, the many elemental planes, and the strange and unfathomable inner planes.

#### Planar Magic Feat

**Prerequisites:** Wizard or Warlock, Arcana, and Int 15+

**Effect:** The planar mage is essentially a normal spell caster who has learned to achieve greater spell effects when connected to or drawing from his or her plane of focus. Wizards and Warlocks can learn this feat.

The mage can use this feat with a +2 bonus to the Arcana skill to identify magic or creatures of planar origin. He can automatically identify portals and rifts to planar realms, and can learn to activate those gates with an Arcana check (base DC 15 plus appropriate modifiers). He can also tell if the gate is one or two ways, an important thing to know.

#### Planar Attunement Feat

**Prerequisites:** Planar Magic feat

**Effect:** The planar magician becomes attuned to a specific plane of existence. He gains a +2 bonus to his attack and damage rolls when casting magic on that plane, and a +2 save bonus against spells cast on him by creatures from that plane. The spells of the caster take

on the type identifier of his native plane, as well (see below). These add an additional effect to the spell, listed below.

Additionally, magic the spell caster uses will take on a trait or element of the influencing plane. For example, if that plane is the Shadow Realm, for example, then shadow will always figure somehow in to every spell, even if it merely appears to wreath the caster in its darkness when he casts spells.

If the spell is summoning or creating beings to aid the caster, or summoning demons or other beings, they will always produce denizens native to that plane.

**Type Effects:** All type effects turn damage or effects in to its type (as well as the existing spell type, if any) and so creatures that would be affected by that type will react accordingly (i.e. a creature which is weak against radiant will take damage as if it were hit by a radiant spell.)

I have included type effects not normally seen in the following lists, to provide options for new types you may wish to introduce, or to provide guidelines on effects that may be introduced in future rule books of the official game.

#### Sample Spell Effects by Plane:

##### Perdition, the Abyss

**Type:** Fire, Chaos or Cold (either, but choose one at the time of casting). **Effect:** Looks a lot like a warlock. Spells are tinged with eldritch fire, and the sounds of screaming souls can be heard. Brimstone fills the air around the caster.

##### Greater Beyond

**Type:** Radiant **Effect:** The caster's magic is accompanied by the sound of eerie bells and golden light.

##### Shadow Realm

**Type:** Shadow **Effect:** The caster and his magic are wreathed in penumbral shadows.

##### The Beyond, The Far Realm

**Type:** Psychic or Chaos (pick one at time of casting) **Effect:** Black energies and dark, half-seen glimpses of *something from beyond*.

##### Outer Darkness

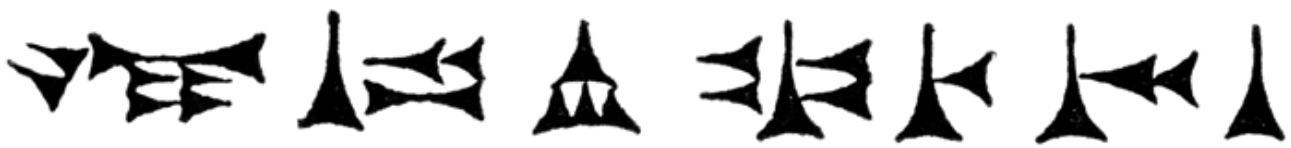
**Type:** Psychic or Necrotic (pick one at time of casting) **Effect:** The caster and his target seem to contort and twist in strange and horrible dimensions.

##### Dreamlands

**Type:** Illusion or Sleep (pick one at time of casting) **Effect:** The caster and target seem to be wreathed in a dream-like energy, in a half-dream state.

##### Temporal Plane

**Type:** Time, Force **Effect:** The caster and his target seem to be out of sync with normal time.



## Other Arts of Magic

### Artificing

Artificers are shapers, who draw from elemental magic as well as their own blood magic sources to shape, alter, and mold primal essences. They literally create and change things, imbuing unliving matter with spirit, and as such, magical properties. This practice is almost exclusively in the domain of the dwarves.

Artificers are almost invariably specialist mages who focus on a variety of magical creation feats. To create an artificer character, one must choose the new Artificer skill. The Artificer is also likely to have magical talents reinforced with the Enchanting skill. There is a close connection between artificing and elemental magic, and members of both arts often collaborate to achieve common ends.

More on artificers can be found in the appendix, with the Artificing skill and its many applications.

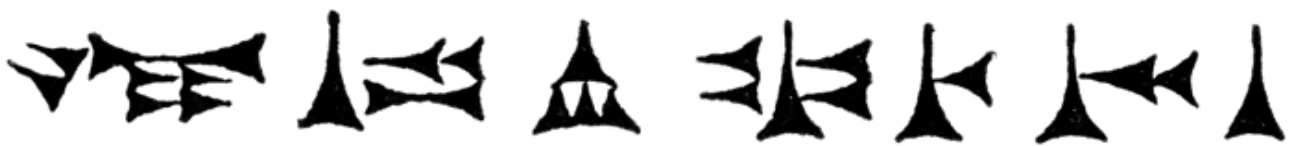
### Forgotten Magic

There are several types of forgotten magic, and they are described as such because these techniques of extracting and using mana were wisely or unavoidably forgotten. One documented example is that of Sacrificial Homeopathy, a severe ritual magic form which involves strange ritual practices to summon forth mana through complicated sequences of movements and sacrifice. It is a predecessor to Blood Magic, but requires mutilation and bone-breaking practices to work. The boccors who practice it are few and far between, and it is almost extinct everywhere except among the Nubiri. Next is Soul Magic, the capture of living souls and the subsequent extraction of their vitreous mana, affecting the victim whose soul has been affected. Lastly, and truly forgotten, is the prehuman magic, the magic of the entities of the past, ancient colonizers who were old when the gods had not yet conceived of men (or men had not conceived of gods). Warlocks struggle to understand, but thankfully fail to master this dark magic.



*Ruins of the Temple of Malib on a remote island in Kaldinia*





## Chapter IV - The Divine Hierarchy



*The Temple of the 113, Usamanitza, Xoxtocharit*

The Realms of Chirak are united by a common religion which permeates the ancient lands. Long ago, about two thousand years ago by the best reckoning of the Preservationists, a great cataclysm occurred. This cataclysm destroyed most of the old realms, and forever sundered the original ancient people.

Depending upon which school of thought you subscribe to, this event, which has little or no historical record beyond the evidence of ancient destruction, was either a rebirth of the land or a near-miss apocalypse. Some feel that the apocalypse was fulfilled, and that the survivors are castaways, failures forbidden from entering paradise.

In the Realms of Chirak, All men do believe a few common details. They know that there was once a great astrological force, and that this force fueled the ancient gods. They know that this force was sundered, and split into twelve aspects in accordance with the signs of the zodiac, which are believed to be cardinal directions of the soul. And finally, they know that somehow, those lesser gods or spirits which still exist today seem to be inextricably linked to the Zodiac Stones.

The Break-down of the current understanding of the gods will be detailed below, with the zodiac stones

aligned for comparison. A list of the old pantheon, showing the gods who died is also presented, as is a list of the churches and cults that dominate the current landscape of religious fervor.

### The Nature of the Divine

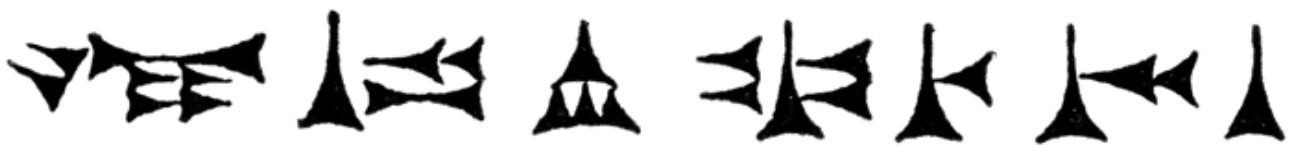
In the old, pre-apocalyptic world each god embodied the aspect of his or her stone. The stones were defined not only by their heavenly aspect (constellation) and alignment, but by a principle driving force, which reflected one infallible aspect of nature. It is the fate of any being that should attain one of these stones that they, ultimately, must take on the burden of that aspect of existence, or be found wanting.

The twelve stones define the twelve points of creation as follows:

| Stone       | Cosmic Embodiment |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Capricorn   | Law               |
| Aquarius    | Life              |
| Pisces      | Peace             |
| Ares        | Strife            |
| Taurus      | Power             |
| Gemini      | Duality           |
| Cancer      | Death             |
| Leo         | Light             |
| Virgo       | Earth             |
| Libra       | Knowledge         |
| Scorpio     | Chaos             |
| Sagittarius | Nature            |

In the hierarchy of the divine, older gods are considered true gods, while the younger, newer ones are considered avatars, demiurges, or forces of nature (spirits).

Most modern theologians who still study the old gods no longer revere them as living beings, or even as spiritual embodiments, but rather as symbols, or ideals. A priest who studies and follows the ancient teachings of Durinalia, for example, is a priest who espouses the cosmic virtues and ideals of "Law" as a cosmic concept. There are no priests anywhere in Chirak today who specifically pray to Durinalia, but they almost certainly



exist as priests who revere this aspect of creation and often pray hopefully to the unknown mysteries of the cosmos in the hope that a new avatar will arise to take on the power of the Capricorn Stone and add strength to the Law of the Cosmos it embodies. A handful might even know of the elvish avatar Gathas, who has served as the caretaker for the stone (or a large chunk of it) for centuries now.

Not all “gods” worshiped in Chirak today are divine entities or even beings on the path to the divine. Indeed, there is an entire subclass of powerful beings identified by the Preservationists and other students of theology as “spirit lords.” There are an unknown number of these spirit lords, although several dozen are known to exist. Most spirit lords are actual spirits, denizens of the so-called “spirit planes” (be they primordial, astral, or beyond) who are otherwise tethered by their nature to Chirak. The world in general is believed to have countless lesser spirits serving as the animating force of all existence; there is little doubt among theologians that Chirak is an animistic realm. Some of these spirits have become so powerful that their sorcerous and divine prowess exceeds that of lesser avatars and demiurges. These beings, while never able to achieve true godhood (because the stones can only bind to native mortals of Chirak, it is believed) often masquerade as such, seeking followers and even granting them limited powers of the divine. Far Therias is a realm where the spirit lords have reigned supreme, and even created a lesser pantheon of pretender gods in a realm which has all but forgotten the era of the Apocalypse.

Other entities are known to pretend to godhood as well. Though the Xoxtocharit themselves do not believe their “one hundred and thirteen demon gods” are real gods, they nonetheless worship them as such, feeling that in the absence of a true pantheon of gods, the demon lords who are the ancient, immortal spirit generals and servants of the old gods are the natural inheritors of the old pantheon’s legacy. The demon lords like to think so, as well, and do all they can to secure greater power amongst themselves in constant bitter squabbles both in the mortal realm and the primordial planes.

Today’s religions are a strange mish-mash of beliefs, all overshadowed by the knowledge that once, two thousand and more years ago, there were twelve true gods who ruled the universe, and almost destroyed it. That is the nature of the divine in Chirak...



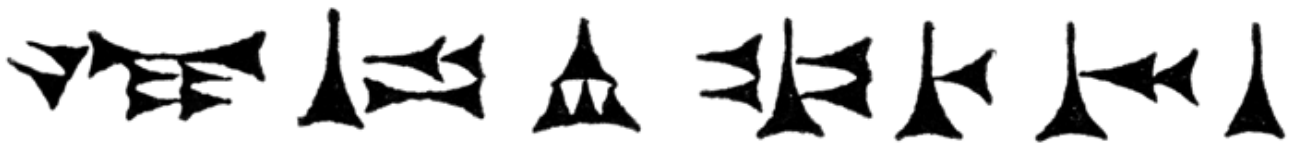
*Image of Pallath, Mythric Isles*

## Mythology of the Apocalypse

There is a great deal of contradictory information about the era of the Apocalypse, and some hidden truths mixed within. What follows is a short account of some of this lore on the fate of the gods.

While all of the gods had physical forms and dwelt in their favored cities on the mortal plane, they also wandered the planar realms and beyond. Some of the old gods even journeyed to the stars, and at least one was by necessity a resident. Pallath, the ancient lord of the sun, ruled his domain from a sacred floating metal city that crossed paths between Chirak and the sun itself. Some optimistic servants of the sun god believed Pallath to be trapped forever more in the sky during the apocalypse, but it is more commonly believed he was ultimately slain, plummeting to the earth as a meteor in the West.

Ga'thon was one of the betrayer gods, and his spirit was believed by many to be exiled from the mortal world for failing to bring about the apocalypse by the sacrifice of Akquinarios and Pornyphiros. Only magic or strong ancient summonings can reveal his aspect. A very few scholars contend that this belief is false, and that Ga'thon's spirit may, somehow, be trapped in the Mortal Plane instead, but can only be communicated with in the Spirit World. There is still a third popular belief that Ga'Thon was slain at the end of the Apocalypse, and his body fell to the earth, and from it spawned one thousand offspring of evil, each of which contains one thousandth of Ga'thon's original spirit. Such is the



mystery of the gods that few scholars ever achieve consensus on such matters

Pornyphiros, the twin deity, is considered to be special, for some tales claim his dual nature was the downfall of the world. The order of the Arcanists believe that this god, in one form, heralded the apocalypse, and then, in a turnabout, the other aspect of the twin gave its life to forever more stop it. The duality of Pornyphiros makes his spirit an important aspect of study for darker magical circles. Indeed, it is believed that the concepts of good and evil are manifestations of the spirit of Pornyphiros, and that whatever avatar or demiurge should carry succession to his zodiac stone must eventually bear the same burden. Unlike in many other fantasy universes where good and evil are two divided aspects of a greater objective philosophy, in Chirak the concepts of good and evil are believed to be two sides of the same being.

There are gods which are now considered spiritual echoes of themselves, although they were in fact believed to have been destroyed, sacrificed, or otherwise lost in the apocalypse, but were very powerful, and so their essence lives on and acts through the Zodiac Stones. All stones are considered to hold the spirit of all of the ancient gods which held them throughout the ages, but only certain of these spirits are remembered today.

Finally, and most importantly, the Zodiac stones are real artifacts of power, which no longer dwell in the divine realm (some claim this is because the divine realm was truly destroyed by Ga'thon). The zodiac stones seek out ideal keepers, and over the generations, periodically a stone comes into the hands of a particularly worthy or strong-willed individual, who in turn learns its secrets and begins the path of the avatar. In time--a great deal of time--that keeper of the stone might rise to the status of a demiurge. Demiurges to appear this way since the apocalypse are *Milina*, daughter of Minhauros (who, himself, began the path shortly before the apocalypse), *Gathas*, *Kalie'yana*, *Piscrael*, *Laddaskar*, and *Kon'hun*. Indeed, some of these demiurges replace prior demiurges or avatars which appeared before them, but ultimately failed.

Currently, the only known new avatars include a minotaur and a priest of Pallath. *Mardieur Mardieux*, of the Huron Minotaurs, who has taken on the Aquarius Stone and studied at the Tower of Kaledon and is now said to be wandering in the West, seeking answers to his new duty as a tenant of the god stones. *Maretz*, a philosopher priest who believed that Pallath the god still lived, went on to become a powerful servant of his deity, and eventually united several shards of the Pallath

Stone, and even ascended to the City of the Sun itself, where he aided in mending the cancerous damage done by the chaos of Ga'thon to the life-giving orb. There are rumors of an avatar bearing the Libra Stone (some stories even speak of two or even three avatars), following the path of the wanderer, but these rumors have been going on for centuries without proof.

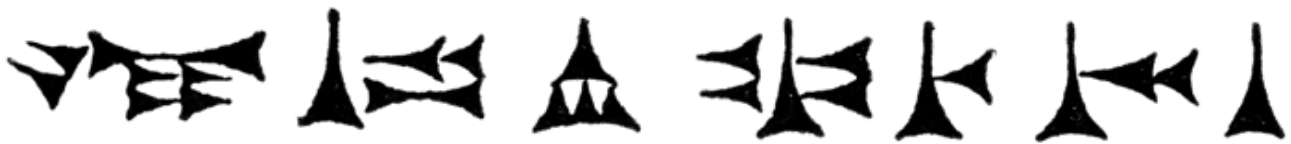
Another element of this myth is that at least one stone, the Leo Stone, was destroyed by Minhauros when he was but an avatar, to thwart the sun god Pallath. Some claim that this is why Pallath is forever more trapped in the body of the sun. The stone was said to have rained down upon the land for a century, destroying the western realms and reducing the memory of those people to dust. Eventually, from the seeds of the blasted stone came the cylovites, cruel, corrupted beings which enslaved the survivors of this event. It was said to be one of many terrible things which happened during the apocalypse.

This last tale, kept alive by the Preservationists, is particularly interesting for it also suggests that Pallath was a powerful ancient god, and fueled much of the magic and might of the ancient Mythic people who ruled before the apocalypse. His destruction, they say, was surely what allowed the corruption of Ga'thon and Shaligon to spread wide and far.

In the end, no one will really know the true link between the stones and the gods save perhaps for the gods themselves. But there are many cults and religious orders dedicated to speculating on this, while venerating the aspects they find favorable. These shall be dealt with next.

Each of the above beings may be considered the principal deities of the realms. In addition, there are many lesser demiurges, spirits, and other worshiped beings such as the animal and weather spirits of the Legorans and the angry ancestral gods of the Hoagarit which are a part of the greater pantheon. Those will be addressed below.

The following describe the specific details, in brief, of each cult. Be aware, however, that regional differences and even variations from city to city make each cult a less-than-unified whole. No two cult sects are going to look alike, for the most part. As such, the previous chart is the best guideline for what sort of divine spells and runes are most favored by a given cult, while the specific details of a particular sect should be determined on a case by case basis.



## Cults and Orders of Chirak

### The Monastic Order of Laddaskar

The Monks of Laddaskar are found in monasteries throughout the Pellucid Kingdoms. The deity Laddaskar is a benevolent demiurge of the land and harvests, and teaches the principles of a good community and moral approach to life. It is a deity of the common people, but embraced by the whole of Mercurios. While the monks of Laddaskar are called monks, padres, and so forth, they are actually of the cleric class, being largely non militant.

Laddaskar is a very old demiurge, and likely close to true godhood, for it is said in the records of the Preservationists that Laddaskar was alive during the apocalypse, and was the greatest student and priest of the Gerigos, the god of the Virgo Stone. Gerigos, lying near death on the bloody western fields of battle, and seeing the great wave of the flood that was to come from Akquinarios' purge, sought out Laddaskar and gave his follower the stone before he died, in essence insuring that Laddaskar could teach himself the way of the stone in a pure manner, without the death print of the spirit of Gerigos corrupting the nature of the stone (as happened with almost all of the other stones). It is also, because of this, the only stone which is said to be completely intact; no shards of the Virgo Stone exist, and therefore no lesser avatars or demiurges.

**Restrictions:** Monks of Laddaskar lose their status of monk if they ever take up a vocation outside of their

priesthood, even if it is a civil servant or similar occupation.

### The Esoteric Servants of Pornyphiros

Pornyphiros was the fallen god of man, said to have stood beside Akquinarios at the end times and given his own life two and a half millennia ago for the survival of his mortal children. By doing so, he and his father Akquinarios sealed the gateway into the Abyss, and thus postponed the apocalypse.

Even today, after his mortal form was destroyed, and his spirit is nothing more than a whispered memory in the minds of man, Pornyphiros' power is felt. He is an enigmatic protector of the dead in the afterlife, the patron of man, and the favored name called upon by diviners. A secretive, rare order of priestly monks follow his path, but they hold allegiance to no monastery or temple, instead dwelling in remote corners of the world and choosing selective followers. Some of his followers learned of the rumor that four great avatars of Pornyphiros dwell in the Western Kingdoms, and seek to discover the truth of this.

The esoteric order is divided in to three clergies, one of thought (the monks), one of faith (the priesthood), and one of might (the knight paladins).

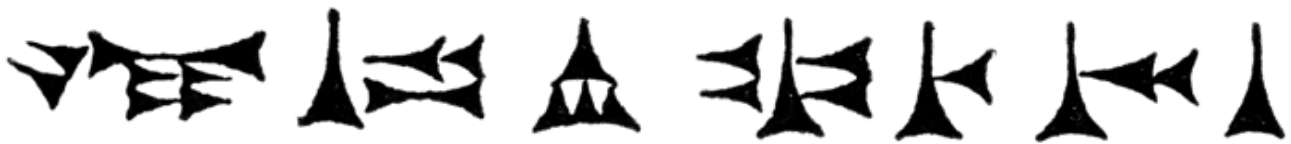
**Restrictions:** Only humans are granted divine abilities by Pornyphiros' spirit, for it imbues only humans with such abilities.

### The Priesthoods of Legoras

The priests of Legoras revere a number of greater spirits, each powerful, mystic elemental beings which work in conjunction with one another to oversee the Legoran lands. Legoran priests pick one particular spirit to revere, or sometimes an aspect from two different spirits.

The spirits of the Legorans are functionally equivalent to avatars, but are in fact closer to the *medium spirits* of the divine and infernal servants of the old gods. Like the demons and Elohim, the Legoran spirits are powerful, and have sometimes even captured a portion of the god essence, but they are not true divinities.

The spirit-gods of legoras are known for granting favored spirits in their service the boon of flesh, allowing these spirits to manifest in the mortal world as their divine agents. These ancient beings, known as devas, are immortals that reincarnate on death in to forms that converge with their moral and ethical focus, which is usually geared to suit the spirit lord they hold allegiance to.



The spirit-gods and their cults are:

### **The Fire Cult of Klthruhak**

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This dire spirit is the bringer of fire and war. Klthruhak appears in imagery to be a great ogre-like being or giant armed with immense weapons of incalculable destruction, and he is said to dwell in a region of perpetual warfare in the primordial realms. His followers are all men, and his cult is dedicated to battle.

### **The Maidens of Shikanak**

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Shikanak is the keeper of the sea and protector of men. A mermaid like being in form, some thought Shikanak to be a manifestation of Kalie'yana, although at least one Preservationist scholar claims to have met Shikanak and asserts she is some elder spirit. Her followers are exclusively women.

### **The Riders of Khosunak**

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The master of storms and the winds. An invisible horse by appearance. Madmen and witches worship him, for it is said that those who are touched by the visions of this diabolic god are driven insane. His cults are feared throughout Legoras.

### **The Cult of Gathka**

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The lord of the dragons and dwarves of the earth. A great giant, said to have been the one to sue the dwarves for peace in the age-old battle between their kinds. Clerics are usually legoran dwarves and giants, who often come in hidden monasteries hewn from the mountainsides.

### **The Cult of Gothisku**

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This is the master of the hunt. A powerful archer with the head of a wolf. Only loners and landless men may follow him. He is a patron of hunters, rangers, woodsmen, trappers and furriers.

### **The Servants of Shaligon in Legoras**

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Shaligon is feared as the destroyer goddess in Legoran lore. This is the only true demiurge/god in the midst of the Legoran cults. To worship Shaligon is to embrace the willful destruction of humanity and all followers and their descendents of the gods who opposed Shaligon in her glory. See the Shaligon priesthood stats for more on these evil clerics.

### **The Black Knight**

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This being is not so much a god as a terrifying force of chaos, though it is worshiped by the monstrous denizens of Legora. The Black Knight is widely regarded as a demonic being that periodically manifests in times of strife, encouraging the collapse of reason in favor of conflict. Many tales of this Black Knight suggest he is known for seducing Legoran maidens, corrupting good heroes to do evil, and that his children are regarded as cambions and tieflings at best, and hideous monsters at worst.

### **The Cult of Spirits of the Land**

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These are the servants of the beasts and the woods. The druids and shamans of Legora worship the greater spirit of the woods and animals, a being they call simply the *Primal Anima*. This is a nebulous spirit, which exists only in dreams and visions, and is a sort of gestalt of the greater spirit world. The Cult of the Spirits is very loosely organized, but is strong among the hidden enclaves of Legoran traditionalists.

### **The Cults of Shaligon**

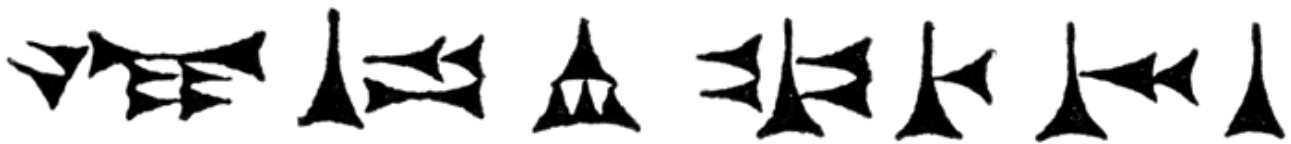
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Shaligon may once have been a demiurge of some power, but became a greater power in the wake of the apocalypse. She is now a close to a true god, and an angry one. Some say she will be the next being to call upon the apocalyptic times, but for now her presence is relegated to that of dangerous influence.

Shaligon's greatest following is among the Hoagarit nomads and orcs of the Kossarit Ranges, but she appears everywhere. She is said to dwell in the night sky, in the constellation of the great beast. Her hidden covens across the Sea of Chirak call upon her for divinely inspired evil and malice. Shaligon thrives on adversity and suffering, and uses her followers to cause as much pain as possible.

Shaligon is generally referred to as a she, but has been known to change gender randomly. Her most recent incarnations, as a giant 13 armed woman, have been consistently female. Older shrines will often depict male aspects. The Hoagarit, likewise, always venerate the male aspect of Shaligon.

Shaligon is the only god said to have given birth to herself, after impregnating herself, an impressive feat. She is also said to have slain her tutor, the elder god Medgenon. Indeed, some say it was her betrayal of Medgenon, at the goading of Minhauros that began the Apocalypse.



**Restrictions:** Any who are of sufficiently evil bent may serve Shaligon. Her promise is that all who serve and obey will live for eternity. This is true; any worshiper of Shaligon will automatically return as an undead being a fortnight after death, if they are worthy.

Shaligon is universally revered and feared among all orcs and their relations, for their creation myth begins at the time of Shaligon's wounding, when she was cut from the heavens by (some say) Piscrael in an act of betrayal. Her blood flowed across the sky to fall as a rain, from which sprang the first of the orcs. It is regarded as a truth that the orcs did not appear until after the Apocalypse, and did not exist before that time.

## The Cults of the West

In the Western Lands, demiurges and avatars unheard of by the people of the Sea of Chirak region exist and thrive. The most active of these demiurges are the pantheon of Pornyphiros, four sons and daughters of the dead god, each with one quarter of the Gemini Stone.

### Phylos

This is the mysterious Lord of the Red Armor, a warrior without peer, conqueror and instigator. Phylos is universally regarded as male by most followers, though true devotees know she is female. Phylos is known for resurrecting great heroes as shades to act as her agents throughout the West.

### Dyshara

The enigmatic woman Dyshara is the Sorceress of the Azure Tower, the mistress of the Elements, and on occasion called Queen of the North (the north as Abraheilites see it). She dwells on her island in the western ocean, providing advice as an oracle and seer to the kings of Abraheil, while watching the world from her tower, looking for clues as to the destiny of man. She is a schemer, and not above playing games with her fellow avatars and demiurges to get what she wants done. She has recently taken an obsessive interest in the avatar Mardieur Mardieux, though to what end none can say. This interest has been opposed by the mysterious entity Molabal of Pelegar, who has attempted to lure the minotaur avatar into following him.

### Obohon

The ancient one, wisest of the wise; the fool, the charlatan, the duplicitous two-face; the ancient of ancients; all are names Obohon is known by. His exact

nature is a mystery, his exact interests seemingly a contradiction. He wanders the land in many guises, and some suspect he is a changeling or doppelganger, or a powerful illusionist. He seems to delight in confounding or opposing his fellow avatars at all opportunities, and he takes special interest in any new stone-bearers and avatars that enter the lands of the West.

### Meretrox

The scourge, the bringer of death, the receiver of pain; the masked reaver, the observer and other grim titles are all attributed to this being. Meretrox seems to delight in his role as avatar of death, and seems to be gifted with an uncanny ability to sense when momentous events involving the passing of great personages is to happen. Though Meretrox is seen as a formidable entity with this death aspect, he is also determined to insure that death carries with it a natural progression, which in the Realms of Chirak means (to those few who know) proper reincarnation. Anything which stops or hinders the natural process of reincarnation is sought out by Meretrox and his agents to be eliminated, including undead, necromancers, and other forces that would steal souls for dark purposes. The cult of this avatar is very busy in Pelegar.

Each of the Lords of the West are venerable demiurges, mortal beings gifted with the divine spirits freed with the death of Pornyphiros at the Apocalypse, granted mobility and will to pursue the needs of the land they now must oversee. Each is aspected with different interests, and the overwhelming need to pursue those interests. The alignment of each is four ways, and works as follows:

*Phylos - Meretrox / Obohon - Dyshara.* Phylos' will is opposite Obohon. Meretrox is opposite Dyshara. That is to say, what Meretrox most needs to continue his existence, the cycle of death, is what Dyshara must oppose. Likewise, Phylos thrives on war and conflict, while Obohon, as eccentric and bizarre as he is, must pursue the path of peace and contentment.

This partitioning of opposites is caused by the fact that each of the four divinities is imbued with a quarter of the power and energy released by the dying Pornyphiros at the time of his death. Pornyphiros was the embodiment of Gemini, the twins, and therefore each aspect of his divinity must have a dual nature. Each of his twin elements were separated, and so created their four opposites. The feminine aspect created Dyshara (Iife)



and Meretrox (death), while his male component created Phylos (chaos) and Obohon (order). Some scholars have wondered that the genders seem to be unbalanced, but that is not true, for in fact Dyshara and Meretrox are male/female aspected, and Phylos, mistakenly thought to be a man, is in fact a woman, and Obohon is male. Thus, the duality of Pornyphiros is sustained in his offspring.

When one of the divinities is killed or passes on through unknown means, a new mortal is chosen to replace the old. This is an occurrence that happens every few centuries. None of the current batch has been replaced in almost five hundred years; Phylos was said to have been replaced during a great war about six centuries ago in which she was killed during the siege of Gabban-Dur in a bloody campaign against the southern kingdoms of Abraheil and Konan-Dal.

### The Demiurge Cults of the Sabiri:

Among the clans of the nomadic Sabiri, two demiurges are venerated. Sharing the strength of the Sagittarius Stone, **Kobal** and **Amorgas** are the twin powers of the Sabiri people. They also revere several "demon gods," immortal spirits of old that sought to gain divine power.

### Kobal

Kobal is a great giant, with a bison's head and the form of some sort of extinct (?) minotaur, who wanders the land physically, while his mind travels the outer realms of the celestial kingdoms in astral form. He is preceded by the great and overwhelming storm of Kobal, a perpetual weather event which is noted for its torrential rains, winds, and lightning. The eye of the storm is centered on his form, and Sabiri priests placate him through sacrifice.

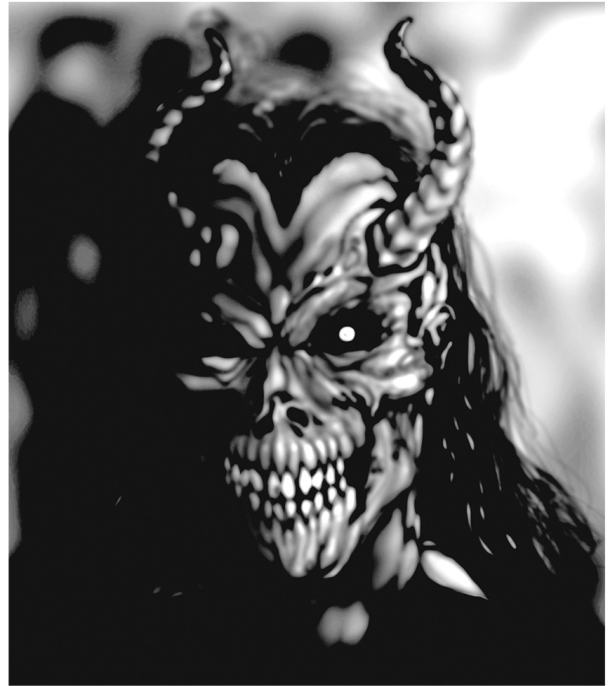
Kobal's followers are Shamans. They seek the guidance and council of spirits to understand their mysterious god, and periodically offer up women to sacrifice as his ritual brides, that he may spar hardships upon their clans.

### Amorgas

Amorgas is the much more benevolent goddess of the Sabiri women, a Sabiri girl who was made a sacrifice to Kobal centuries ago, but who won the beast's heart, instead. She escaped from him with a fragment of his power, a shard of the Sagittarius Stone, and began her own trek as an avatar, eventually becoming the calm counterpart to Kobal's otherwise unchecked rage.

Amorgas' followers are always women. They are a secretive cult, and men are not permitted to view what

they do. The matriarchs of the cult perform their own special rituals to seek the favor of Amorgas, and to push away the threat of Kobal from their clans.



### The Demon Gods of the Sabiri

The Sabiri do have a handful of dark spirits which they worship, but do not recognize as gods. These demon spirits are said to have served Shaligon, and were spawned from his/her loins over the last two thousand years. Three of the most diabolical such demon spirits are:

### Colobon the Asp

The dark spirit of the Asp is worshiped by a fanatical cult of mercenary assassins who serve a unique purpose in Sabiri society as social equalizers. They will strike and commit deplorable acts which are, perhaps, necessary where no one else will. Colobon itself is said to be a dark serpent which moves beneath the earth of the great plains, seeking new victims, and only those branded with the living snake tattoos of the Servants of the Asp are protected from its appetite.

### Boolion, Gatekeeper of the Outer Darkness

The dark and mysterious entity Boolion was once worshiped by the fighting cults of Fartheren, but Boolion is one of the last great old demon lords who was trapped



in the Outer Darkness and seeks forever to escape in to the mortal plane. His servants, ghoulish minions with humanoid forms made of flowing black, clotted blood over bone, can be found and unlocked in dark coins of black gold. Once unlocked, they seek to possess men to start cults of Boolion to build up the power necessary to open a gate to free him.

### **Vargre, Servant of the Flame**

A mysterious entity, Vargre is said to have stolen a portion of Pallath's soul on his fall and with it the secrets of the elemental realms of flame. His minions of the Towers of the Flame are pyromantic sorcerers among the Sabiri who seek to uncover his secrets. Like all Sabiri mages, they tattoo themselves with the arcane spells their studies of Vargre impart.

### **The 113 Demon Gods of the Xoxtocharit**

The mysterious and decadent Xoxtocharit are said to worship 113 distinct "demon gods" in their lands, all of which are said to be fallen servants of the betrayer gods. Sacrifice to these gods is a regular affair, and the demands of worshiping these mysterious extraplanar deities can be quite taxing. There is one entity among them called Hun'hunal who claims to be a true god, born anew, though none believe such a claim. Other gods of the 113 include **Ezruache, Mazadras, Camazotz, and Xeticatl**.

In terms of raw power, most of the 113 are not actually anywhere close to godlike power, and in game terms they range from level 18 to 35. Almost any demon prince is likely to belong to this unusually specialized pantheon, and there are many particular demons of an unaligned nature, who have long ago lost their connection to the chaos force of Ga'Thon that corrupted their kind during the Apocalypse, and are surprisingly benevolent entities (for demons).

### **The Mysteries of the Pelegar**

The demon-haunted lands of the Pelegar are rife with ancient evils, dark entities which sometimes hail from the Abyssal realms, beings which have escaped their outer darkness and found refuge in the cursed lands of the Pelegar. The Pelegar people are a stoic lot who accept that their heritage has put upon them the legacy of these ancient evils. Some of the more well-known of these evils include:

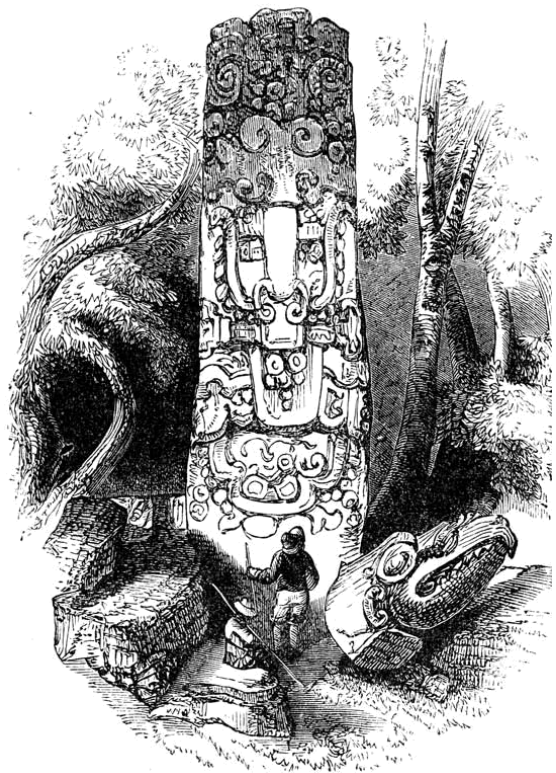


### **Shmaga'thael, the Mortal bane**

A dreadful spawn of Ga'Thon, an entity which dwells deep in the bowels of the Kossarit ranges. It has numerous dark cults, and perverts its favorite worshipers in to dark minions.

### **Gloom**

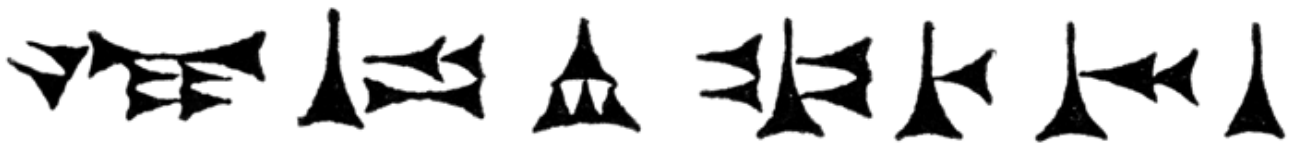
The entity known as Gloom is the solitary guardian and terror of the gate city of Valen. It serves one purpose: to kill any prospective avatars of the fallen gods which seek to enter the lands of Pelegar. Gloom is believed to have been an immortal seraphim that was badly scarred and driven mad during the Apocalypse, and his obsession with the destruction of all avatars stems from an inherent desire for revenge. He seems to care little for the citizen of the city he dwells within, though the people of Valen find him at once a terrifying yet comforting being, for no other, more terrifying entities have survived entry in to their city.



### **Molabal**

The gluttonous being of outer darkness is a dream stealer, and is said to have its soul essence locked within the Pillar of Night in the heart lands of the kingdom. Molabal delights in using its night visitations to incite





madness and paranoia in the nobility of the Pelegar; indeed, the old adage among the Pelegar about how nobility and madness go hand in hand is Molabal's doing. He has taken an obsessive liking to the western avatar Dryshara (of Abraheil) as well as the Theliadian ascended immortal named Nimrasa (see the gazetteer entry on Theliad for more about Nimrasa). Molabal is very popular among the denizens of the Nightwood, especially the nihilistic wolver.

## Groups with Cult-Like Elements

As discussed in an earlier section, there are a number of special orders in Chirak which, while not dedicated to any single deity, are nonetheless powerful organizations and teach a variety of magic. Individuals of these orders very likely also belong to some cults, and so may offer some divine teachings or magic through the order, as well, if it is permitted by the organizations he or she belongs to.

Some additional details are provided below to get a sense of the relationship these orders have to the religious cults. This section will be useful for handling how a cleric or paladin might see such an order, as opposed to a wizard, warlock or other class who joins it for non-religious reasons.

## The Order of the Preservationists

Not a cult or church to any single god, the Preservationists are a philosophical order dedicated to preserving and evaluating the lost knowledge of pre-apocalyptic civilization. The Preservationists began as a movement out of the fabled City of the White Desert, where some of the best-preserved records of the ancient past were said to be kept, as well as the mythic tomb of Chirak himself. From this city, a movement to protect and understand the lore of ancient men, and to prevent another apocalypse arose, along with the need to recover this forgotten lore and preserve it from those who would destroy or abuse such information, such as the Arcanists.

While the membership of the Preservationists is diverse and contains individuals from many walks of life, its core servants are priests who have dedicated themselves to the philosophical edicts of their order. Preservationists have grown as a force throughout the region of the Sea of Chirak, and are now endorsed or recognized in Espanea, Mercurios, and Syrgia. The order has many key headquarters, including the principle center of learning in Barcen, Espanea, from which it tries

to gather and understand the lost history of man, while changing society around itself to be a better place.

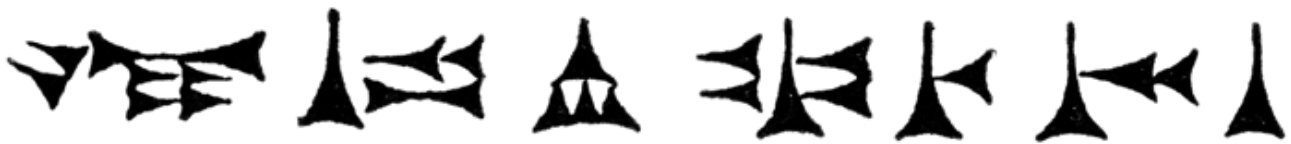
Members of this order who are priests usually focus on a handful of favored deities or demiurges. The divine power of a Preservationists cleric comes from his principles and beliefs about the inherent good and ultimate destiny of man as a developing being, and so he may choose any domains that reflect his particular interests.

## Arcanists

The mysterious arcanists are normally not recruiting, save those they specifically see fit to approach. The arcanists are the opposite of the Preservationists, in that they seek to attain the lost knowledge of old and hold its potential for their own exclusive use. The doctrine of the arcanists is that the gods are gone, justly so, and man is now sole inheritor of the earth. They seek to squelch the appearance of any avatar that appears, to find the lost zodiac stones, and harvest the magic within for their own ends. An arcanist who joins a cult does so for purely selfish purposes, and is often found out.

## Apocalypticists

Really more a series of different cults, the apocalypticists group in to three categories: *redemptionists* are those who feel they were left behind on the mortal plane, doomed to continue their squalid lives, reincarnating again and again until they learn the secret to heavenly ascension, that they may at last join the gods in divine rest. *Inheritors* are similar to arcanists in that they believe that they are the lucky survivors who are destined to once more inherit the earth, those their aims are religious and political, and not focused on the acquisition of magical power. The *Fallen* are a cult of those who feel that they were left behind because they were not found worthy, and have no hope of redemption. While these folk tend mostly to suffer in their own misery, a subgroup called the Nihilists actively seek to follow the worship of the demons, the foul soldiers of the evil gods who still make their way in to the mortal world through planar rips and gates. These cultists seek to bring about the final destruction of the world, contending that the gods failed to finish the job.



## Cults and Powers in the Sea of Chirak

Many of the gods and demiurges of the land are principally worshiped in the Seas of Chirak region, although their presence is often felt further abroad. Some of the old gods are still very important in this region, as are their avatars and demiurge successors. Here are a few examples of such:

### Minhauros

Minhauros, the fallen minotaur god, who seized the Taurus Stone and damaged it after becoming a demiurge, then was cast into the Abyss and became the Prince of Demons. Minhauros' undying spirit lay dreaming within the bowels of his body and the essence of his Taurus stone for millennia, seeking to pervert and control those who sought to follow the path of the avatar of the Taurus Stone. Through one such follower, he gained control of the man's body and mind and spawned Milina, his only daughter, whom he took a fondness for. Some say he also spawned a son, though little is known of this child.

Minhauros eventually saw his plans come to fruition when the metaphysically powerful Mardieur Mardieux fell in to his trap and became ensnared by the minotaur god. Mardieur was slain by Minhauros' minions in the halls of his great corpse, a mountain in the outer darkness, and he swapped souls with the Mardieur. In exchange, Minhauros granted the soul of his powerful victim as a gift to his loyal follower, the lich mage Malenkin. This proved his undoing, as opposing forces conspired to release Mardieur's soul in to a new body, cloned by Malenkin, in his efforts to create a new divine minion. Mardieur escaped, and was subsequently drawn

to the Akquinarios Stone, which had rested in the grave of its last avatar; a Xernethian Elf named Queylinzar Itharian, who died six centuries earlier. It had been exhumed by grave robbers working for Lady Poe in the south, and Mardieur took it on, and was eventually chosen by the stone to follow the path of the avatar.

Meanwhile, Minhauros, walking among men, assembled his legions of the abyss and seized control of Barcen, the Capitol of Espanea and heart of civilization in Chirak.

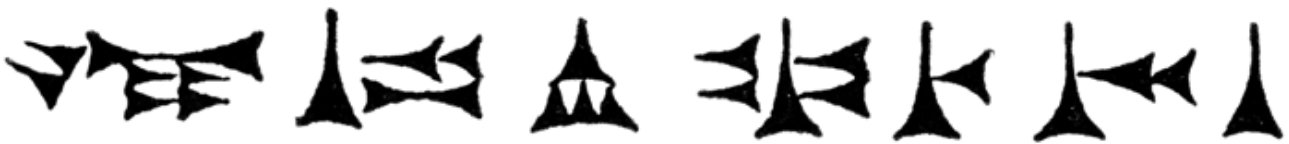
When Mardieur received his training at the Tower of Kaledon, he bonded with the stone and was able to seek out and destroy Minhauros in his corrupted possessed body, freeing Espanea from his tyrannical rule. Minhauros' soul was locked forever in the Taurus Stone then, which was taken by the chronomancers of the Tower of Kaledon to the fabled Mythric Isle of Time, and locked forever more in eternal peace in the Temple of Eternity.

Despite his fall, there remains a significant, very evil, cult dedicated to Minhauros in Espanea and abroad, throughout the Thousand Islands. Whether for want of another faith, or through the desire of power Minhauros represented, this cult hangs tenaciously on to his worship, and a handful of priests and mages seem to thrive on the dangerous credo of usurpation and carnage that Minhauros objectified.

### Milina

Milina is the daughter of Minhauros, who at once loved and hated him. Milina holds a shard of the Taurus Stone which carried her down the path of the demiurge, and she is now the sole keeper of the essence of the stone. She was always opposed to Minhauros, yet was his unwitting pawn on more than one occasion, including leading Mardieur Mardieux to Minhauros' rotting corpse and a fatal trap, where Minhauros began his bid for world domination and resurrection. Milina now wanders the Realms of Chirak seeking enlightenment and the means to heal the corruption Minhauros wrought through the essence of the Taurus Stone.

Though Milina seeks to heal the corruption of the Taurus Stone, as an avatar, her will is only partially manifest in it at this time, and there are still corrupt followers out there. Thus, the domains of travel, fire, good and earth are lent to the stone through her will, but destruction, chaos, and war are powerful engrams left over from the still powerful taint of her father.



### **Ga'Thon and the Thousandspawn**

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Ga'Thon is the old destroyer god, who once ruled the Abyss and opened the gates of the Apocalypse to scourge the world. He was killed by Akquinarios, but he killed Akquinarios too, as Pornyphiros shut the gates with his own life. His spirit lingers on.

Ga'thon's body is said to have been sundered in to a thousand pieces during the war, but each piece became a living spawn, with a portion of the dead god's essence (the term in the West is the "thousandspawn," and it is a popular epitaph). Some have shards of the Ares Stone. Some are mindless offspring, perpetually seeking destruction. It is said that great tentacled beings in the atmosphere destroy all who seek to attain the heavens by means of magic. In the depths of the Kossarit mountains, where much of Ga'thon's body is said to have died, some very powerful sentient offspring such as Shmaga'thael still dwell in darkness, seeking escape from their stony prisons. The collective conscience of these beings are said to, as a whole, comprise the dark soul and mind of Ga'Thon, but that only when they lie dreaming does the consciousness of the dead god awaken and seek to reunify his sundered form through his dark cults and offspring.

Elves and other fey folk despise Ga'Thon, for he destroyed the Feywild first before moving on to annihilate the world of Chirak. It is said that in the West, a great expanse of basalt holding the bodies of countless fey folk, petrified forever more, can be found imbedded in this expanse called the Weeping Wall.

### **Kon'hun, Hidden Lord of the Sands**

---

Kon'hun is the hidden lord of the sands, a keeper of ancient lore and forgotten history. He is determined to prevent another battle of the divinities.

Kon'hun is a demiurge of the Sagittarius Stone, and he holds about half of the stone (the other half being held by Kobal and Amorgas, the demiurges of the Sabiri lands). Konrad is revered strongly now as the god of the stone, but Preservationist records indicate that the original god of the Sagittarius stone was called Medin'iel, and he was a benevolent deity who was revealed to have a great propensity for rage and anger, which welled up in the apocalypse when he drove a killing blow through the god form of Medgenon, the ancient god whom was killed in the apocalypse and replaced by Shaligon, and is now lost to time. Indeed, it is said that Shaligon knew that Kon'hun's anger was great even if his nature seemed pacifist, and arranged for the events to turn out as they did, to insure he could step in and seize the Scorpio Stone.

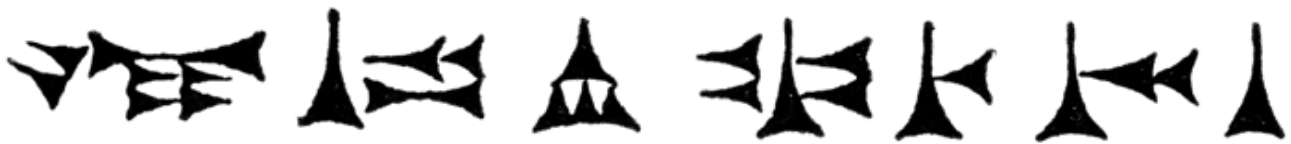
Because of this, Konrad fell, but his spirit was left with great wrath and great remorse at the same time. This suffused the stone, and avatars to come had much to overcome. When the stone came to Konrad more than a thousand years gone, he took the essence of it and turned the energy around, focusing it on remembering the past and never forgetting what had come before. As such, Konrad is a common patron of the Preservationists.

He is called the Hidden Lord of the Sands because it is said that he still dwells in the mortal lands deep beneath the sands near the City of the White Desert.

### **Kalie'yana, Lady of the Seas**

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Kalie'yana is the demiurge of the seas, and a daughter of Akquinarios who was coveted by Ithenor, the god of the Pisces Stone. She is also opposed to the minions of the Abyss. Kalie'yana serves as the keeper of knowledge for Mardieur Mardieux, the newest avatar of Akquinarios. Kalie'yana herself is not of human descent. She was a Nereid, a nymph of the water, and became over time a revered patron of sailors in the Seas of Chirak. She was said to have been chosen by a lost



demiurge of Ithenor who found himself subconsciously driven to love her as the dead god once did, and vested her with the Pisces Stone to help repair the damage of the great flood he caused during the apocalypse when Akquinarios sought to extinguish the many abyssal gates which had opened in the land, releasing the legions of chaos in to the mortal realm.



### **Akquinarios and Mardieur Mardieux**

Akquinarios is the great martyr, the god who destroyed the destroyer Ga'Thon. His memory lives on, and his spirit is powerful. Many greater spirits were created from his essence. Akquinarios is truly gone, but he has a young avatar named **Mardieur Mardieux** to follow in his steps. Recently, in the Island region of Esterehabau, a temple of Akquinarios has been uncovered by the preservationists. Pilgrims have begun to gather, as the divine presence of the Aquarius Stone is being felt by the faithful, signs that a new avatar walks the land. This new movement is called The Aquarius Cult.

This avatar, Mardieur Mardieux the minotaur, has begun a vision quest to master the stone as it's avatar. He is said to walk in the unknown lands of The West, searching for divine mysteries of old. Mardieur has united the primary stone and its known shards, and is currently on the quest of ascension. In cities such as Fartheren, local cults have sprung up dedicated to specifically to him in his wake. Over the years, as he becomes more powerful, the spirit of Akquinarios will wane and Mardieur's will wax. He has only a few dozen followers now, and only a handful have begun to seek divine gifts, but as the decades and centuries go by, his power will supplant the spirit of the old god.

### **Pallath**

Pallath is the divine sun god of old, and the god of the sun today as far as anyone knows. He is radiant and eternal, but historically interacted very little with the mortal realm. Much of his history is buried in forgotten lore.

Pallath was said to have been the first god to die in the great betrayal of the apocalypse, and his body was said to have plunged from the Solar City to the earth as a great meteor. A few sages of the Preservationists have determined that his essence must have fallen in the region of the Crystite and Cylovite lands. It is said that an elvish queen of the region once had a shard of the stone of Pallath, but little more can be said.

Today, it is said that the city of the sun is still kept burning through the efforts of Pallath's celestial minions, called the Elohim. These winged beings are said to have the divine spark of his essence, and so long as one of them lives the sun will burn on.

There are a few followers of Pallath, clerics who seem to receive the essence of his divine will, suggesting Pallath does have a avatar or demiurge in the realm who serves to channel to power of the Leo Stone to worshipers

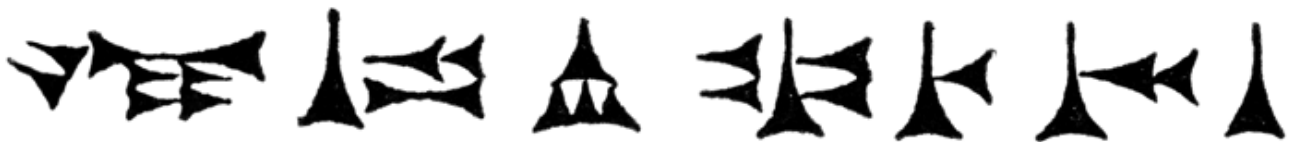
It is also known that a great tree spirit of the Zamedian elves in Cylea was reunited with a shard of the Pallath stone, and it may be an avatar. The Cylovites revealed that they do, indeed, seek the shards of the Pallath stone for some as yet undetermined purpose, which might have to do with understanding their own existence. In the region of Pelaeus it is said an avatar named Marez has risen, who seeks to unite the shards of the Leo stone, as well.

### **The Secrets of the Animate Religion**

Animates are a relic race, a mysterious collection of elemental constructs made of various materials, powered by primordial energies. They are well aware of this, and as a civilization animates are strongly aware of their nature as created beings, although they also feel that they are destined to evolve beyond the limits of their creators. Indeed, most animates see the frailty of humanity and the other fleshy races as the reason for the collapse of the old civilizations and the death of the old pantheon.

Animates have a hierarchy of castes based on the design of each animate. While most animates are destined to remain within the caste they are built for, some can excel and advance beyond their rank. Animate castes include:

**Workers:** the lowly assemblers and engineers who keep the animate cities alive



**Collectors:** the curiosity-driven knowledge and lore seekers who explore the world

**Guardians:** the caretakers of animates and their way of life

**Protectors:** the powerful defenders of animate cities, and the instigators of war

**Logicians:** the tacticians and thought masters who coordinate the grand design

**Masters:** the masterminds who control the cities and commune with the nodes

**Great Nodes:** the controlling intelligence behind each animate city hub, seen as gods

All animates believe that the great nodes are divine intelligences, created by the gods to succeed in their wake. Animate characters should choose a great node to worship, usually the one from their home city. Known nodes include the following, although there may yet be more:

### The Oculus of Beltraine

Deep in the bowels of this ancient city rests an immense animate node of crystal, metal and elemental forces. The Oculus is regarded as an infinitely wise being by all animates regardless of affiliation. The Oculus is a creator, an architect and artist who manufactures beautiful new animate creations. It has an insatiable desire for knowledge and most of the known collector models serve the Oculus. Servants of Oculus tend to be lawful good clerics and paladins.

### The Nethragram of the Black Dome

This malevolent node holds a strong belief in the superiority of animates as a created species, and the need to supplant and replace living organisms by force, if necessary. The Black Dome's violent xenophobic tendencies towards their natures stem from Nethragram's fanatical interest in extermination. Servants of Nethragram include dark paladins, clerics, avengers and invoker animates of an evil nature.

### Logoryth from the Far West

This mysterious agent of duality can be found somewhere in the far west, in an undetermined animate city remnant said to be in the region of Abraheil. Its existence is semi-legendary among animates of the Sea of Chirak region, and those few wandering collectors who claim devotion to Logoryth are of many different alignments and persuasions.

### Nokaratos of the Coliseum of Light

The mysterious Coliseum of Light in the Kaz'Dul mountains of Xoxtocharit is considered by most to be a ruinous wreck, but some animates from this lost city have been reactivated, and seek to unearth their forgotten great node. Not much more is known of this entity, although it surely had a purpose and interest related to the mysteries of the coliseum. The few animates who revere this node are usually unaligned and quite mad.

### Spindrococ of Pale

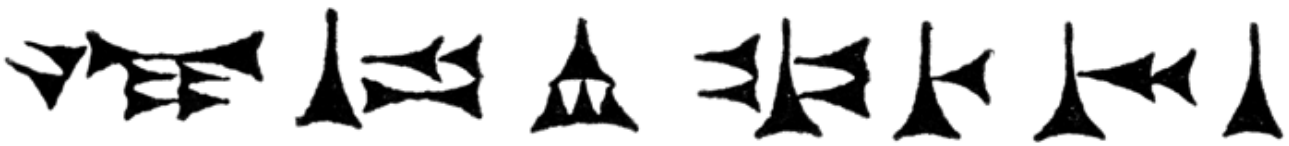
Far to the north, beyond the ice shelf of Pale at the edge of the world, where primordial ice engulfs the edge of creation there is said to be a frozen city dominated by the enigmatic constructs of Spindrococ. Little is known of these mysterious animates, save that they hardly ever communicate with humans, and usually treat biological beings with curious disdain.

### The Unification of the Great Nodes

Each divine intelligence is believed to be one aspect of a whole, and that if united they will complete to form a machine god mind. The problem is that each one feels "it" is the most important part, and must therefore be in control, and so they have not yet decided upon how to approach this. Furthermore, there are 12 Nodes necessary to complete the process; one of the jobs of the collectors is to discover the locations of these missing nodes. Luckily, animates are only just beginning to evolve as a distinct species. Should any one city node become sufficiently advanced that it would seek to subjugate biological beings and conquer opposing animate city nodes, then that particular group of animates could become a dire threat to all beings.



*One of the mysterious Chambers of Beltraine*

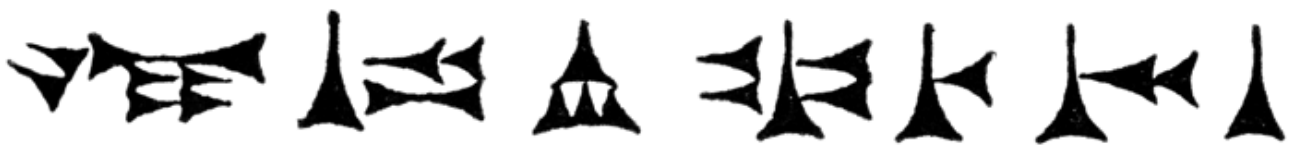


## Popular Demiurges and Lost Deities

| Stone       | Aligned God/Description  |
|-------------|--|
| Capricorn   | <b>Gathas</b> , the mystic demiurge of law and civic duty, lord of kings<br>A golden man, like a statue, with four faces   |
| Aquarius    | <b>Akquinaris</b> , mystic savior of the Realms of Chirak<br>A great humanoid manta-ray like form  |
|             | <b>Mardieur Mardieux</b> , young minotaur avatar of Akquinaris on his mythic quest for enlightenment; shrines in Barcen and Fartheren  |
| Pisces      | <b>Kalie'yana</b> , demiurge of the seas<br>mystical elfin woman, part of the sea, surrounded by fauna.  |
| Ares        | <b>Ga'thon</b> , many-armed god of the apocalypse, harbinger of doom<br>undulating, tentacled black mass, ever changing and multiplying  |
|             | The Thousandspawn, one thousand primordial entities imbued with a portion of Ga'thon's godflesh and spirit, as well as his malevolence   |
| Taurus      | <b>Minhauros</b> , the minotaur-god of corruption<br>Horned minotaur god   |
|             | <b>Milina</b> , demiurge daughter of Minhauros, a tiefling woman, can polymorph to minotaur at will  |
| Gemini      | <b>Pornyphiros</b> , the twin god, dual-aspected, savior and destroyer<br>A male/female Siamese twin, back-to-back, undulating, changing   |
|             | The Four Avatars of The West: <b>Phylos, Obohon, Dryshara and Phylos</b>   |
| Cancer      | <b>Piscrael</b> , demon lord demiurge of the seas<br>A great crab like behemoth, or a great tidal wave   |
| Leo         | <b>Pallath</b> , forgotten sun god<br>Said to be destroyed, his visage now lost  |
|             | <b>Maretz</b> , a devout priest who found enough shards of the Leo Stone to become an avatar   |
| Virgo       | <b>Laddaskar</b> , demiurge of the land, caretaker, harvester<br>A kindly man, of middle years   |
| Libra       | <b>The lost one, the wanderer</b><br>A many-formed wandering mystic, sometimes with no body; rumors suggest he might not be one entity, but three separate individuals, each with one third of the Libra Stone |
| Scorpio     | <b>Shaligon</b> , purveyor of darkness, death, evil, Hoagarit demon god<br>The form of a thirteen armed woman, with two mouths   |
| Sagittarius | <b>Kon'hun</b> , hidden lord of the sands, demiurge of blight<br>A spectral being of sand, which can become human if he wishes   |

The above chart provides a quick list of the most commonly known of the old gods who are still revered in some form as well as the most recent young avatars and demiurges to take on the duties of certain zodiac stones.





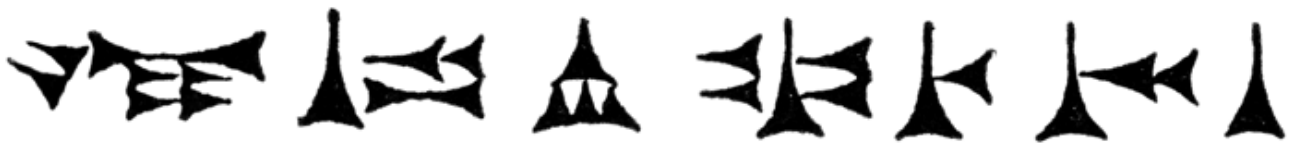
### The Zodiac Stones by Type, Talismanic Aspect, and Alignment

| Stone       | Type:    | Core Symbol  | Chirak Element         | Alignment    |
|-------------|----------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Capricorn   | Onyx     | The Goat     | The Tablets of Law     | Law          |
| Aquarius    | Jasper   | Water Bearer | The Manta Ray          | Law, Good    |
| Pisces      | Ruby     | The Fish     | The Nereid             | Law          |
| Ares        | Topaz    | The Ram      | The 13 points of Chaos | Chaos        |
| Taurus      | Garnet   | The Bull     | The Demonic Minotaur   | Chaos        |
| Gemini      | Emerald  | The Twins    | The Siamese twin       | Unaligned    |
| Cancer      | Sapphire | The Crab     | The dragon of the deep | Chaos        |
| Leo         | Diamond  | The Lion     | The Circle of the Sun  | Good         |
| Virgo       | Zircon   | The Virgin   | The farmer             | Lawful good  |
| Libra       | Agate    | The Scales   | The mystic             | Unaligned    |
| Scorpio     | Amethyst | The Scorpion | Thirteen Armed Woman   | Chaotic evil |
| Sagittarius | Beryl    | The Archer   | The Ghost              | Unaligned    |

### Lost Gods: Succession List

| Stone        | Fallen God   | Successor         | Rank of Successor |
|--------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Capricorn:   | Durinalia  | Gathas            | demiurge          |
|              | <i>How Durinalia fell is unknown</i>   |                   |                   |
| Aquarius:    | Akquinarios  | Mardieur Mardieux | avatar            |
|              | <i>Akquinarios died creating a great flood that drowned the abyssal legions</i>  |                   |                   |
| Pisces:      | Ithenor  | Kalie'yana        | demiurge          |
|              | <i>Uncertain; said he died of grief shortly after the apocalypse ended.</i>      |                   |                   |
| Ares:        | Ga'Thon  | Thousandspawn     | various           |
|              | <i>Ga'thon's body split in to a thousand offspring in the Battle of the West</i> |                   |                   |
| Taurus:      | Minhauros  | Milina            | demiurge          |
|              | <i>Fell at Beltraine, died in the Abyss, then reborn and killed in Barcen</i>    |                   |                   |
| Gemini:      | Pornyphiros  | Phylos            | avatar            |
|              |  | Dyshara           | avatar            |
|              |  | Meretrox          | avatar            |
|              |  | Obohon            | avatar            |
|              | <i>Fell at Abraheil in the Shattered Lakes; his death ended the Apocalypse</i>   |                   |                   |
| Cancer:      | Malib  | Pisrael           | demiurge          |
|              | <i>Destroyed in the Great Flood by Akquinarios</i>                               |                   |                   |
| Leo:         | Pallath  | Maretz            | avatar            |
|              | <i>Pallath was slain in the City of the Sun and fell in the Crystite region</i>  |                   |                   |
| Virgo:       | Gerigos  | Laddaskar         | demiurge          |
|              | <i>Gerigos fell in the great Battle in the West</i>                              |                   |                   |
| Libra:       | Zephyrys   | The Lost One      | avatar            |
|              | <i>Killed in Beltraine deceitfully by servants of Minhauros</i>                  |                   |                   |
| Scorpio:     | Medgenon   | Shaligon          | greater demiurge  |
|              | <i>Medgenon was slain by Shaligon. This act began the Apocalypse</i>             |                   |                   |
| Sagittarius: | Medin'iel  | Konrad            | demiurge          |
|              |  | Kobal             | demiurge          |
|              |  | Amorgas           | avatar            |
|              | <i>Medin'iel fell in the great final battle in Perdition</i>                     |                   |                   |

The above list is a comprehensive succession chart of the old gods and the specific demiurges and avatars that have taken up the stones after them. This list provides the most accurate (current) depiction of the owners of the various zodiac stones and shards. In cases where more than one avatar or demiurge exists for one stone, then it is evident that one entity is the principle demiurge and the others are avatars who have been granted shards from the main stone. A case in point is



Konrad and Kobal, who each share about one half of the Sagittarius stone, and are each demiurges. Neither can advance to the point of godhood without the other's half of the stone. Amorgas is an avatar with a shard granted (actually, stolen) from Kobal.

Another case is with the avatars of the Gemini stone, which each have one quarter of the total stone. None will advance past the rank of avatar until they decide to choose one who will unite all four stones, but all four feel compelled to keep the shards separate, as the spiritual resonance of Pornyphiros compels them to for reasons presently unknown.

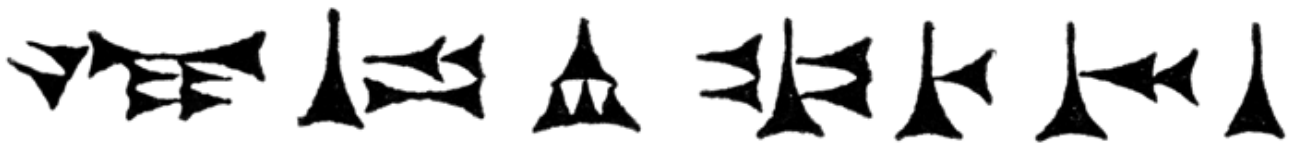
## Cults of Chirak:

The following chart provides a summary of the more popular known cults of Chirak. This list is by no means comprehensive, but it does provide an overview for quick reference, and a summary of cleric domains related to each cult. The principle alignment of the cult members is also listed. Note that clerics and paladins will generally be found in any cult.

**A Note About False Cults:** Not all cults in Chirak actually impart divine magic. Some worship beings who are in no way divine, or lesser spirits who cannot impart spells to their followers. Others are wholly fictitious, or still worship gods long since dead and gone. Just because a cult is false does not necessarily mean its followers do not receive divine gifts; it is one of the curiosities of Chirak that a man can cast divine magic and yet worship a god who is either dead or nonexistent. This is due to the saturation of divine energy that was released on the death of the gods and that still lingers to this day.

| Cult Name                        | Domains of Influence  | Alignment         |
|----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
| <b>Priesthoods of Legoras</b>    |   |                   |
| The Fire Cult of Klthruhgak      | Change, Sun, Strife, War  | unaligned         |
| The Maidens of Shikanak          | Darkness, Love, Moon, Sea, Storms                                     | good              |
| The Riders of Khosunak           | Death, Destruction, Storms, Wilderness                                | evil              |
| The Cult of Gathka               | Earth, Fate, Freedom, Wilderness, Winter                              | unaligned         |
| The Cult of Gothisku             | Freedom, Protection, Skill, Wilderness                                | good              |
| The Cult of Spirits of the Land  | Earth, Change, Storms, Wilderness, more                               | unaligned, others |
| <b>The Cults of the West:</b>    |   |                   |
| The Knights of Phylos            | Hope, Justice, Protection, Strength, War                              | lawful good       |
| The Servants of Dyshara          | Arcana, Creation, Fate, Knowledge, Moon                               | good              |
| The Followers of Obohon          | Change, Fate, Freedom, Strife, Trickery                               | unaligned         |
| The Cult of Meretrox             | Darkness, Death, Destruction, Strife, Undeath                         | evil              |
| <b>The Cults of the Sabiri:</b>  |   |                   |
| The Shamans of Kobal             | Death, Earth, Strength, Tyranny, Winter                               | unaligned/evil    |
| The Priestesses of Amorgas       | Hope, Love, Luck, Moon, Protection, Vengeance                         | unaligned/good    |
| Assassins of Colobon The Asp     | Darkness, Death, Fate, Trickery, Vengeance                            | chaotic evil      |
| The Cult of Boolion              | Destruction, Poison, Torment, Undeath                                 | chaotic evil      |
| The Flame Cult of Vargre         | Civilization, Knowledge, Sun, Tyranny                                 | unaligned/evil    |
| <b>The Cults of Pelegar:</b>     |   |                   |
| The Cult of Shmaga'thael         | Arcana, Darkness, Madness, Strife, Trickery                           | chaotic evil      |
| The Followers of Gloom           | Darkness, Death, Protection, Vengeance, Winter                        | chaotic evil      |
| The Mystery Cult of Molabal      | Darkness, Justice, Skill, Torment, Wilderness                         | evil              |
| <b>The Seas of Chirak:</b>       |   |                   |
| The Cult of Minhauros            | Death, Destruction, Strength, Strife, Tyranny                         | chaotic evil      |
| The Followers of Milina          | Arcana, Luck, Poison, Skill, Sun, Trickery                            | unaligned         |
| The Akquinarios Cult             | Civilization, Creation, Justice, Protection, Sea                      | good              |
| The Minions of Ga'Thon           | Madness, Strife, Torment, Tyranny, Undeath, War                       | chaotic evil      |
| The Priestesses of Kalie'yana    | Fate, Knowledge, Life, Protection, Sea                                | unaligned         |
| The Cult of Konrad               | Change, Death, Earth, Life, Skill                                     | good/unaligned    |
| The Rare Followers of Pallath    | Civilization, Creation, Justice, Life, Strength, Sun                  | lawful good       |
| Hidden Order of Laddaskar        | Arcana, Civilization, Earth, Hope, Justice, Love                      | lawful good       |
| Esoteric Servants of Pornyphiros | Change, Civilization, Creation, Fate, Protection, Skill, Strife, Luck | unaligned/good    |
| The Cults of Shaligon            | Destruction, Madness, Poison, Strength, Strife, Tyranny, War          | evil/chaotic evil |





## The Secret of the Zodiac Stones and the True Nature of Gods

Only a handful of beings alive, such as the caretakers of the *Pallath Esemanthis* or the chronomancers of the *Island out of Time* understand any of the information about to be divulged. Demiurges, avatars, and other immortals have sometimes learned the secrets of the Zodiac as well, or at least a portion of it. For game masters, of course, it is handy to know what the Big Secret is, so I am going to outline it here for you (all details subject to change according to your campaigns needs, of course).

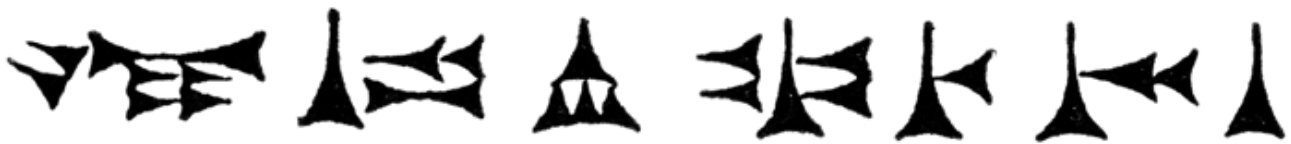
First, the time of the gods was a very long period, so long in fact that prior to the apocalypse man had already lived ten thousand years under the lordship of the divine beings they called gods. The memory of their origins had been lost to time even then, obscured by myth and lore of wildly contradictory nature. In truth, much of this confusion was caused by the gods themselves, who saw fit to make the secret of their nature as obscure as possible. The fact that one sufficiently motivated mortal could, under the right circumstances, come to take possession of a zodiac stone and rise to the status of godhood was sufficiently threatening that the gods agreed by pact to hold this fact secret from the mortals they cared for.

In a twist of irony, the gods themselves could not readily speak truth about the origins of the very stones they were bonded with. No single divine entity of the pantheon at that time was an original god, one who claimed to be the first to bear the burden of the sacred stones, even though some professed to be (most notably Akquinarios, Pallath and Ga'Thon). Since the gods were generational and changed over very long periods of time, this only made matters more confusing. A deity could be known by several names and have multiple origin stories, for example. In fact, such tales and names were a reflection of the existence of multiple gods and their various origins, but all for the same stone. To make matters even more confusing, it is known that all of the zodiac stones carry something best described as an imprint of the soul of their bearers, a portion of each prior divinity's essence and personality if you will, which projects out through the new owners. This element of the zodiac stones is thought to be a mechanism for insuring that the ultimate will and purpose of the stone be properly fulfilled by the next generation of successors, by allowing the prior owners to provide a

spiritual sense of guidance to the current living bearer. By this means was the spiritual intent of the stone preserved from terminal corruption in the wrong hands. Put another way, the stones work best with those of like mind, and those of opposite intent tend to find them a frustrating and ultimately deadly artifact to manipulate.

So, the important facts about the gods and the zodiac stones include the following:

- The Zodiac Stones existed before the gods did (so it is or was believed by all avatars, demiurges and gods). The most ancient of all known texts believe a primordial creation force called *The Divine Wind* brought them in to being.
- The stones impart their will and intent through like-minded bearers, to fulfill their divine purpose.
- The demigods are legion, but a true god is only possible with a fully intact stone. A stone which has been fragmented can be carried by many avatars, however, until its shards are reunited, after which it must be bound. There may be ways around this with the right ancient sorceries.
- Followers of the gods, such as priests, who receive divine magic are receiving the spiritual energy emanating from the stones, by way of their worship of the bearer (avatar, demiurge, or god).
- The Apocalypse devastated the last stable pantheon, and that pantheon contained gods who had largely been in existence for ten thousand years or more.
- The nature of the force which created the stones is lost to time. It may never be discovered.
- There are only twelve zodiac stones, and there have only ever been twelve stones.
- Among the modern day avatars and demiurges, no being presently bearing a stone that walks the path of divinity is yet a true immortal (god). The demiurges are further along the path, but they still have many millennia to go before they achieve true transcendence with their stones.
- Although gods are immortal in that they will never die of natural causes, no god of Chirak (or any lesser stage) is immune to the sword. A true god may require the energy of a small sun to destroy his physical form, yes, but he can still be destroyed. The stones, however, are nearly



unbreakable except through the direct application of another stone's power, or by the will of their own bearer, who can create fragments as he so desires.

- Even if a zodiac stone were shattered in to ten thousand shards, it would still be possible to reunite and bond the pieces in to a whole. In fact, the shards have a curious way of doing just that through the clever manipulation of their bearers.
- Just because a being comes to possess a zodiac stone, it does not at all mean that he can learn to harness its divine properties. He must be found willing and capable by the stone first.

There are two key things to understand about bearing a zodiac stone or shard: First, the bearer must achieve sufficient awareness of the stone, such that he can begin to tap in to its hidden depths and magic. Second, once he has done so, there is no going back. He has tasted the divine energy of a zodiac stone, and it forever marks him. As a result, other avatars, pernicious planar entities, and more horrible things such as Thousandspawn will seek him out, so that they can take that power and destroy him, if possible.

The following will serve as an artifact template for a zodiac shard, followed by a template for a zodiac stone. If a portion of a shard is discovered, it must be united with other shards; when brought together they will automatically merge. 1D10 shards will have to be found to create a full stone. That does not mean there aren't more shards, just that the number was enough to rekindle the power of the larger stone.

Each zodiac stone is semi-sentient, imbued with the spiritual essence of its former owners. Unlike normal artifacts, the zodiac stones never directly communicate their desires or interests to the bearer of the stone or shard. Instead, the owner must get lucky, experiment, and otherwise work to unlock the nature of the stone. Once the bearer becomes sufficiently attuned to the stone (has a high concordance) then he can, in fact, begin to shape the focus and nature of the stone to his own personality, effectively adding his own psychic imprint to it. At that time, the bearer has begun the path of the avatar (see more below on that).

### Zodiac Shard Template Paragon Artifact

*A sharp, glimmering shard of gemstone, from one to five inches long, which seems to hint at strange secrets locked within its magically reflective depths.*

**Level 20 magical item (no sell price)**

**Body Slot:** May apply to Head, Neck, Hands or Waist when attached to a headband, necklace, ring or belt buckle.

**Property:** Zodiac Shards grant a +2 skill bonus to an appropriate skill:

|                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Capricorn:</b> +2 Insight | <b>Aquarius:</b> +2 Arcana    |
| <b>Pisces:</b> +2 Athletics  | <b>Ares:</b> +2 Arcana        |
| <b>Taurus:</b> +2 Endurance  | <b>Gemini:</b> +2 Bluff       |
| <b>Cancer:</b> +2 Intimidate | <b>Leo:</b> +2 Religion       |
| <b>Virgo:</b> +2 Diplomacy   | <b>Libra:</b> +2 History      |
| <b>Scorpio:</b> +2 Thievery  | <b>Sagittarius:</b> +2 Nature |

**Property:** Zodiac shards grant the bearer the ability to re-roll any one skill, attack, save or damage roll once per day and choose the better of the two rolls. This power may be used twice daily at 21<sup>st</sup> level.

**Property:** *Augury* - If the stone bearer makes a Charisma check (DC 22) while focusing on the stone, he or she may receive the benefit of an augury, in which a spirit servant of the stone will manifest and answer three questions in a suitably vague manner for up to five minutes. This ability is a Daily Utility.

**Property:** The bearer of a shard may acquire the Path of the Avatar Feat if he so desires.

**Powers:** Zodiac shards grant a special power, depending on the type of the stone. This ability does not manifest until the bearer is in dire straits, and he must expend an action point to use the power. Thereafter, the power will be freely available for use:

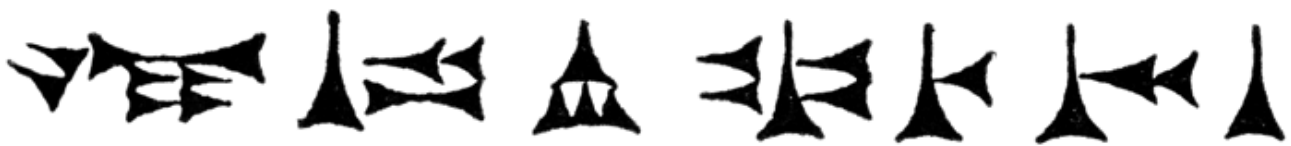
**Capricorn:** Ease Suffering power (as Warlord Utility 10 spell), and Lay on Hands (as Paladin ability)

**Aquarius:** Breathe Water (At-Will – Personal – Free action - grants water breathing indefinitely)

**Pisces:** Divining Pool (Daily – Personal – Effect: emulates one of the following rituals: detect secret doors, commune with nature, discern lies, speak with dead, or consult mystic sages. Effect chosen before activating the spell)

**Ares:** Soul Flaying (as Warlock Attack 13 spell)

**Taurus:** Indomitable (At-will - Minor action – personal – Effect: You are rendered magically immovable; push and slide effects will not affect you for the remainder of the encounter unless you wish them to. In addition, you double the squares of any push or slide effects you cause)



**Gemini:** Mirror Image (as Wizard Utility 10 spell) and Invisibility (as Wizard Utility 6 spell)

**Cancer:** Drowning Wave (Encounter – Area Burst 3 - Standard Action – Int vs. Ref – Hit: Foes are struck with drowning damage for 2D6+Int modifier in damage and all targets knocked prone; 3D6+Int damage at level 21. Miss: Int damage against all targets in area, and knocked prone.)

**Leo:** Turn Undead ability (as Cleric feature; doubles number of uses for cleric) and Cure Serious Wounds (as the Cleric Utility 6 spell)

**Virgo:** Undaunted Stride (as Ranger Utility 10 effect) and Evade Ambush (as Ranger Utility 6 effect)

**Libra:** Gain Ritual Magic Feat and 4 rituals: Consult Mystic Sages, Consult Oracle, Shadow Walk, Speak with Dead); does not require Ritual Tome for these spells; they are imbued in the stone

**Scorpio:** Shadow Form (as Warlock Utility 10 Spell) and Sign of Ill Omen (as Warlock Attack 7 Spell)

**Sagittarius:** Sunder Armor (as Warlord Attack 7 exploit) and Improved Initiative Feat

### Goals of the Zodiac Shards

- Find a new Bearer worthy of the underlying goals of the stone, who can follow the path of the avatar.
- Unite the shard with other shards, to strengthen and renew the primary stone.
- Restore the faith of the people of Chirak in the divine spirits.

### Role playing the Zodiac Shards

The shards have no voice, and their interaction with the stone bearer is empathic, at best. Sometimes the owner of the stone will feel that it wants something done differently, or feel that it is resisting (or receptive) to a certain action. At other times, it is silent. Part of the process of finding in avatar is insuring that the potential candidate prove himself without influence from the stone, so that his worth is genuine and not artificially enhanced.

### Concordance for Zodiac Shards

| Concordance                          | Starting Score 5 |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Gain a level                         | +1D6             |
| Owner is of same alignment as stone* | +1               |
| Owner unites two shards              | +3               |
| Owner recreates a whole stone        | +5               |
| Owner completes quest for shard      | +1               |
| Owner goes against stone/alignment   | -2               |
| Owner loses stone                    | -5               |
| Rival shard-bearer is thwarted **    | +1               |
| Rival shard-bearer is aided**        | -1               |

\*See the Zodiac Stones by Type, Talismanic Aspect and Alignment chart for stone alignments

\*\* Rival shards will have an opposite alignment to the stone. Unaligned stones have no rivals.

#### Pleased (16-20)

The shard bearer is rising to the challenge of becoming an avatar. He may take the avatar feat when he next has a slot available, and meets the remaining requirements.

#### Satisfied (12-15)

The bearer is doing what the stone wants, and is learning how to use it, taking the first steps towards becoming an avatar.

The stone's skill bonus rises to +4.

#### Normal (5-11)

The shard has neutral feelings towards the bearer. He may have potential, it is waiting to see.

#### Unsatisfied (1-4)

The bearer is not pursuing the goals of the stone, although he is not working against it, either. He must spend an action point each time he wants to activate a power until the concordance rises.

#### Angered (0 or lower)

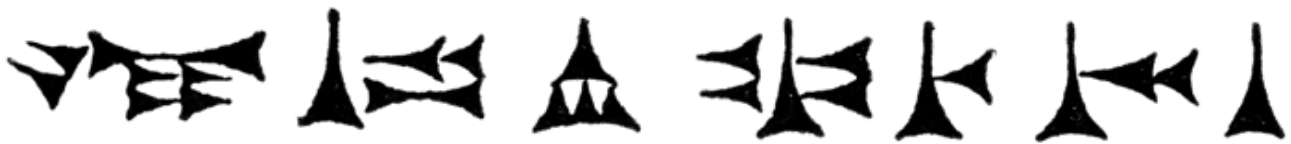
The shard is out of alignment with the bearer and discontent with his actions (or lack thereof). The powers of the stone stop working. The stone will disappear one day (25% chance each day), effectively dropping from the bearer's person when he is unaware, and will conveniently find a new bearer.

### Paragon Feat: Path of the Avatar

**Requirements:** Possession of a Zodiac Stone or Shard; Level 11 or better, Concordance Score is 16+

The bearer of a zodiac stone or shard has become attuned to it, and the stone merges in some way with the bearer's flesh. He is now a conduit for its power.

The caster may attempt Arcana or Religion checks to unlock knowledge of the powers of a Zodiac Stone



(shards have no more than one power). The stone will grant one additional daily power use to the avatar, with one power immediately revealed. Each level that the avatar advances, he may make an Arcana or Religion check (DC 40 minus current Concordance) to see if he can learn a new daily power. If he fails, no power is revealed. The avatar gains an additional daily power slot for the powers revealed by the stone at level 25 and level 30. If The zodiac stone is acquired after reaching those levels, then he may make a skill check once a month to unlock new powers, and gain new daily slots until he has all 3.

Finally, the bearer of the stone ceases to age. This process will reverse if the character is killed or the stone is cut from his or her body. To do so, the attacker must inflict damage to himself until he is bloodied, and spend at least one full combat round digging it out. This will also eliminate all other effects of the feat until the stone is recovered.

**Zodiac Stone** **Epic Artifact**

*A thick, glimmering gemstone, about the size of a fist, filled with flickering images as if it is a portal to the world of souls.*

**Level 30 magical item (no sell price)**

**Body Slot:** May apply to Head, Neck, Hands or Waist when attached to a headband, necklace, ring or belt buckle. If the bearer has the Path of the Avatar feat it has merged with his flesh in a location of choice.

**Property:** Zodiac stones grant a +2 skill bonus to an appropriate skill:

- |                              |                               |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Capricorn:</b> +2 Insight | <b>Aquarius:</b> +2 Arcana    |
| <b>Pisces:</b> +2 Athletics  | <b>Ares:</b> +2 Arcana        |
| <b>Taurus:</b> +2 Endurance  | <b>Gemini:</b> +2 Bluff       |
| <b>Cancer:</b> +2 Intimidate | <b>Leo:</b> +2 Religion       |
| <b>Virgo:</b> +2 Diplomacy   | <b>Libra:</b> +2 History      |
| <b>Scorpio:</b> +2 Thievery  | <b>Sagittarius:</b> +2 Nature |

**Property:** Zodiac stones grant the bearer the ability to re-roll any one skill, attack, save or damage roll once per day and choose the better of the two rolls. This power may be used twice daily at 21<sup>st</sup> level.

**Property:** Augury - If the stone bearer makes a Charisma check (DC 22) while focusing on the stone, he or she may receive the benefit of an augury, in which a spirit servant of the stone will manifest and answer three questions in a suitably vague manner for up to five minutes. This ability is a Daily Utility.

**Property:** Divination – If the stone bearer makes a Charisma check (DC 24) or spends an action point he

may gain the benefits of the ritual spell Consult Oracle. This is a daily power.

**Property:** The bearer of a shard may acquire the Path of the Demiurge Feat if he so desires, and gains Concordance of 16 or better.

**Property:** Create Shards – an avatar of the zodiac stone may willfully fracture a shard from it to pass to another. This action can be used to create champions to aid the primary avatar. If more than 4 shards are created in this manner, the stone is no longer whole and is considered a shard, as well. Zodiac shards created in this manner can also be used to device potent weapons and implements (see shard weapons and implements, later). Such devices, used by the bearer of the stone, are not considered against the intent of the stone, as they are still in the wielder’s possession.

**Powers:** Zodiac stones grant special powers, depending on the type of the stone. The initial ability is the same as the ones granted by the Zodiac Shards (see above). In addition, the zodiac stone grants a unique daily power to a bearer who has the Path of the Avatar or Path of the Demiurge feats. **This power is a daily manifestation and an action point must also be spent to activate.**

There may be other powers that can manifest for the stones, and the DM should feel free to devise different abilities if he wishes.

**Capricorn:** Commanding Voice – The avatar may speak as a free action to paralyze friend and foe alike on the field (*Daily - Free – Arcane Psychic; Area close burst 20 – Attack: Int vs. Will – Hit: All desired targets in the designated area are dazed until the end of their next turn – Miss: all targets are stunned until the end of their next turn*)

**Aquarius:** Tidal Strike - The avatar may call forth a tidal wave of destruction in the shape of a great manta ray. (*Daily - Standard – arcane, implement; ranged burst 10 – Attack: Int vs. Ref – Hit: All targets take 5D10+Int damage in area and are knocked prone – Miss: targets take half damage and are knocked prone*)

**Pisces:** Word of Knowledge (*Daily- Standard – Arcane - Psychic; Ranged Burst 10 – Attack: Int vs. Will – Hit: All foes are shifted to an alignment chosen by you (save ends). – Miss: foes are at dazed until the end of your next turn*)

**Ares:** Crawling Chaos – A horrific, mutating disease spreads throughout the battlefield, altering all it touches (*Daily - Standard – arcane; close burst 10 – Attack: Cha vs. Ref – Hit: all affected targets suffer 2D10+Cha damage and are weakened (save ends) – Miss: half*



damage and all foes are weakened until the end of your next turn)

**Taurus:** Body of Stone – You send out a wave of primal force that turns your enemies to stone (*Daily - Standard - Primal - Area Burst 10 - Attack: Con vs. Fort - Hit: All foes are immobilized (save ends). Second Turn: Immobilized foes are stunned (save ends). Third Turn: All stunned foes are turned to stone. Miss: affected foes are stunned (save ends).*)

**Gemini:** Word of Truth – You utter a word of truth that penetrates all barriers of unreason (*Daily - Standard - Arcane, Psychic - Area Burst 5 - Attack: Int vs. Will - Hit: chosen targets are charmed (save ends); they will not attack the caster or her allies for the duration of this effect, although efforts to change their behavior must be role played or managed through skill checks decided by the DM. - Miss: targets are stunned until the end of your next turn*)

**Cancer:** Mother of all Floods – You call down an all consuming wave of water from the primordial elemental plane (*Daily - Standard - Primal - Area Burst 20 - Attack: Int vs. Ref - Hit: Foes are struck with drowning damage for 10D6+Int modifier in damage and all targets knocked prone - Miss: half damage against all targets in area, and knocked prone.*)

**Leo:** Burning Might of Pallath – You speak words of power, and the very radiance of the sun descends to incinerate your enemies (*Daily - Standard - divine, radiant - close burst 20 - Attack: Wis vs. Will - Hit: all targets are engulfed in radiant flame for 6D10+Cha damage, and you slide all targets 1+Cha modifier squares away from you - Miss: half damage and slide all targets 1 away from you*)

**Virgo:** Planar Mastery (*Daily Utility - Standard - arcane, teleportation - Close Burst 2 - Attack: Int vs. Will (against unwilling targets only; willing targets may choose to submit to the effect) - Effect: Teleport yourself and all affected targets in range to a different plane of existence or another region of the world via teleport instantaneously. Any attempt to travel to a region unfamiliar to you requires an Arcana check DC 20+2 for each individual being teleported or you will appear at a location of the DM's choice*)

**Libra:** Acquire 4 new rituals: *Forbiddance, Loremaster's Bargain, Voice of Fate, True Portal*; you do not require Ritual Tome for these spells; they are imbued in the stone, although the level requirement must be met before they can be accessed. The ritual caster cost for these spells is halved.

**Scorpio:** Shadow Rift – You summon a small army of the undead to the battlefield (*Daily - Standard - arcane, shadow - range close burst 10 - Effect: You summon 20 minion undead of no greater level than your own level-4. These undead are independent of you, and will not attack you or allies you designate, although they are independent of your own actions and their behavior will be determined by the DM; they remain until the end of the encounter or 5 minutes have passed*)

**Sagittarius:** Detonation – You emanate a wave of force that shatters the armor and weapons of your foes (*standard - Arcane, Implement - close burst 10 - Str vs. Ref - Hit: foe AC is reduced by -5 until the end of the encounter, armor is sundered, and foes 4D10+Str damage - Miss: half damage and -2 to AC until the end of your turn; Sunder effect: at the DM's option this effect does not end at the end of the encounter and requires a repair cost equal to 25% of the armor value or 10% on a miss effect to restore the armor to normal; use this option for campaigns with a realism focus*)

### Goals of the Zodiac Stones

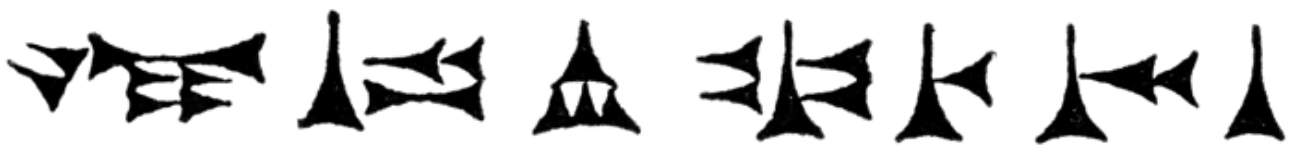
- Begin a new cult in the name of the avatar
- Advance the avatar to the path of the demiurge
- Spread the word of the power of the stone through the bearer
- If the bearer is not yet an avatar, refer to the zodiac shard requirements and concordance for additional information

### Role playing the Zodiac Stones

Much like the shards, the full Zodiac Stones are more of an empathic force, a manifestation of the collective spiritual essence of its prior bearers, the most recent of which would usually be the last god to wield it during the Apocalypse.

As a whole, zodiac stones manifest the will of their spirit more strongly, and the bearer will often get a good or bad feeling when his actions seem to be strongly aligned with or against the stone. Overall, the stone makes its interest in advancing a good avatar more well known when it is whole.

Note that when a bearer of a Zodiac Shard unites it with enough other shards that the artifact is reunified in to a single stone, the concordance earned by the bearer does not reset; it carries over in to the new, mended object in his care. Only one who finds an adopts a new stone must start from the beginning.



## Concordance for Zodiac Stones

| Concordance                           | Starting Score 5 |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| Gain a level                          | +1D6             |
| Owner is of same alignment as stone*  | +1               |
| Owner unites a missing shard to stone | +3               |
| Owner creates a shard for another     | -3               |
| Owner completes quest for the stone   | +1               |
| Owner makes a shard weapon/implement  | +1               |
| Owner goes against stone/alignment    | -2               |
| Owner loses stone                     | -5               |
| Rival shard-bearer is thwarted **     | +1               |
| Rival shard-bearer is aided**         | -1               |
| Lose 100 followers                    | -1               |
| Gain 100 followers                    | +1               |
| Gain a new temple                     | +3               |
| Lose a temple                         | -2               |
| Demiurge loses all followers!         | Drops to 1       |

\*See the Zodiac Stones by Type, Talismanic Aspect and Alignment chart for stone alignments

\*\* Rival shards will have an opposite alignment to the stone. Unaligned stones have no rivals.

### Pleased (16-20)

The stone bearer is rising to the challenge of being an avatar, and he may now take the Path of the Avatar or Path of the Demiurge feats, when he has feats lots available and meets the requirements.

### Satisfied (12-15)

The bearer is doing what the stone wants, and is learning how to use it, taking the first steps towards becoming an avatar.

The stone's skill bonus rises to +4, and he may access all powers.

### Normal (5-11)

The shard has neutral feelings towards the bearer. He may have potential, it is waiting to see. He can access the base power (same as the shard's) but not the daily powers.

### Unsatisfied (1-4)

The bearer is not pursuing the goals of the stone, although he is not working against it, either. He must spend an action point each time he wants to activate a power until the concordance rises, and he gains no skill bonus.

### Angered (0 or lower)

The stone is out of alignment with the bearer and discontent with his actions (or lack thereof). The powers of the stone stop working. The stone will disappear one day (50% chance each day), effectively dropping from

the bearer's person when he is unawares and cannot be found.

If the bearer is an avatar or better already, and has physically bonded with the stone, then he will suffer a permanent -1 modifier to all skill, attack, damage and save rolls for each negative point of concordance accrued.

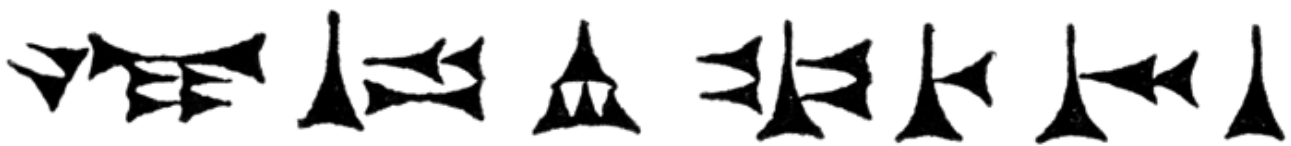
The stone will also attempt to influence others to try and seize it, while curious coincidences of fate will inevitably lead to the possible demise of the false avatar or his separation from the stone.

## Using the Zodiac Stones in Your Campaign

Zodiac Stones are intended to be focal points of whole campaign arcs. They are the end-goal award for many players, and are vital to attaining epic destinies such as the path of the demigod; without one it is impossible to achieve that epic destiny in Chirak. They are artifact level devices, and are prone to turning your campaign in to a story about that avatar and his goals. This can work well in some gaming groups, especially amongst friends who've known each other a long, long time, but in groups with little cohesion outside of the gaming table it can lead to a sense of imbalance, and therefore you might want to be careful about who attains this power and how much of it is ever accessed. It is perfectly reasonable to assume that more than one lifetime would be necessary to ever achieve the level of power these stones offer, which can be well outside of the scope of the average campaign!

Another possibility is to introduce an NPC in the background who is known to possess a stone, as a plot arc involving the player characters working under this character as their patron. This would allow for the occasional "shock and awe" moment when the avatar displays some profound power and amazingly glorious insight in to the nature of the divine and his place in it, followed by his turning to the characters and informing them that his life is so complicated and busy being god-like that he could really use their help resolving that local political dispute, goblin uprising, orc warlord, or barbarian incursion that's causing trouble down along the borders.

A third unusual story arc which works well for DMs and players who enjoy a higher powered level of gaming is to somehow work out a plot in which all of the player characters eventually end up with shards or stones. This could be a hinge on the main plot, in which perhaps some fabulously powerful wizard (I would use the legendary Kal Vassos (agent of the chronomancers,) or



Zam Redar (for an evil campaign) but you should come up with your own suitably high powered patrons, of course. sends the PCs on a series of quests to test their mettle, then decides they are worthy of the acquisition of the stones or shards in question.

An especially interesting campaign in this light, which would work best for groups in which inter-party conflict is permitted (also called pvp in the computer game world) could involve this group of player characters receiving shards of the same stone, and the ultimate goal of proving their worthiness involves uniting those shards from their allies in to one solid whole, creating a true Zodiac Stone from its shards. Good parties will probably come to a consensus and pick the worthy heir, and evil parties will make the DM's work easy as they begin plotting to destroy one another!

However you decide to handle it, just remember that you want to pick a path that will be most enjoyable for your group as a whole. If leaving shards and stones completely out of the game (with an occasional faux stone appearing, or myths and tales circulating to make the player characters curious) is what it takes, then by all means follow this path! 90% of my campaigns revolved around plot elements totally unrelated to the acquisition of a shard or stone, and there are at least 2 players out there in campaign land right now who actually own stones and are completely unaware of it.

### Epic Feat: Path of the Demiurge

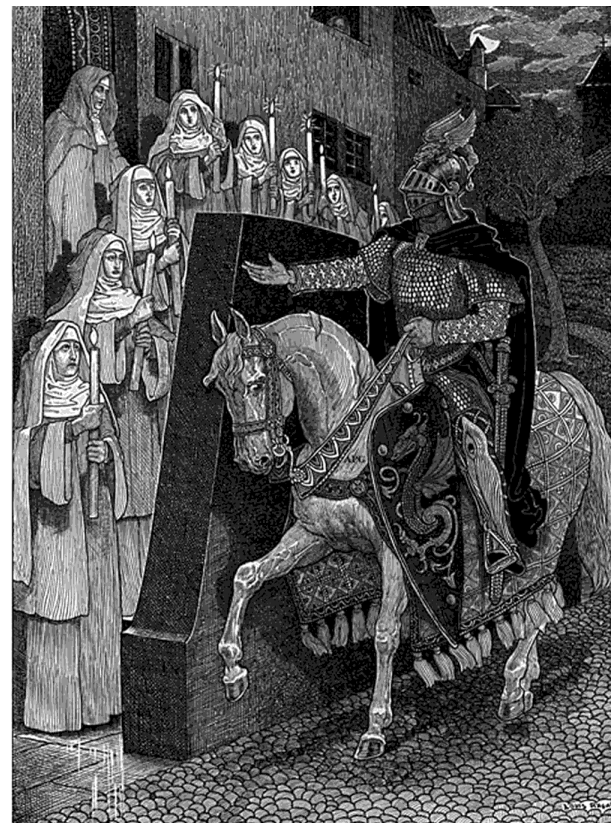
**Requirements:** Must have Path of the Avatar feat; level 21 or better, Arcana and Religion trained, must have acquired Charisma times 10 in dedicated followers and a cult in your name.

**SPECIAL:** The Path of the Demiurge feat is a prerequisite for the Demigod Epic Destiny (choose this feat if possible at level 21 to also follow the demigod epic path)..

**Effect:** The avatar has graduated to the realm of the demiurge, a process that often takes centuries. In addition to all abilities of the avatar, the Demiurge can now grant divine magic to others, 1 cleric or paladin follower per day per point of concordance he has with the zodiac stone.

The demiurge is immortal (does not age), but removal of the stone will negate this trait, as with the avatar ability. However, the demiurge retains a psychic connection to the stone, and can innately detect where the stone is at any given moment, without regard for distance. Only strong magic designed to obfuscate its location can prevent his detecting its presence.

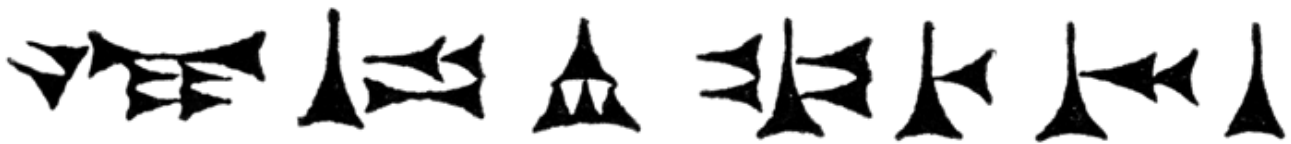
At this stage, the Demiurge begins to feel the connection between his inner strength through the stone and followers. He will begin to accrue followers, starting initially with his base followers (the ones he earned himself, the hard way). Each month he must make a roll on the followers chart below. If the Demiurge loses 100 followers (Follower rating drops by 5), he will lose concordance. If he ever loses all his followers, his concordance immediately drops to 1! Naturally a demiurge needs to increase his following to have a prayer of gaining the Path of the God feat.



### Followers Chart

The demiurge gains a new feature called Followers. The Followers score equals the demiurges' current concordance plus his class level. The followers score multiplied by 20 is a rough estimate of the size of the demiurge's current cult.

To check monthly, first let the demiurge make a Save against misfortune; on a 10 or better, he adds 1D20 to the base followers check. On a failure he subtracts 1D20! Next, if the die roll comes up 1 or 2, you either add or



subtract the roll and roll again. Keep doing so for as long as you get a 1 or 20.

The total roll will thus be the above die roll plus his current Followers score. Consult the following table to determine interesting events. The cult of the demiurge is a living thing, and it has by now begun to grow, change, shrink or even alter without his effort. Nonetheless, the demiurge can take some actions to influence the chart rolls as follows:

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Spend a month recruiting   | +2 |
| Performed major deed/quest | +1 |
| Slew a legendary foe       | +1 |
| Performed a public miracle | +1 |

| Demiurge Followers Monthly Chart |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Roll                             | Result   |
| 0-5                              | Disaster! Plague and Famine Strike; -10 Follower pts |
| 6-10                             | Rival cults! -8 pts                                  |
| 11-12                            | Dark Omens! -5 pts                                   |
| 13                               | Shaligon! -20 pts                                    |
| 14-20                            | Warfare! -3 pts                                      |
| 21-25                            | Lack of interest in cult -2 pts                      |
| 26                               | Shaligon! -10 pts                                    |
| 27-30                            | Changing opinions -1 pt                              |
| 31-40                            | Curious interest +1 pt                               |
| 41-50                            | Word gets around +2 pts                              |
| 51-60                            | Holiday in your name! +4 pts                         |
| 61-70                            | Prophets sing of you! +6 pts                         |
| 71-75                            | King adopts your cult! +8 pts                        |
| 76+                              | They Love Me +10 pts                                 |

Note that it is easier to lose followers than to gain them on this chart, at least until you get some major momentum.

### Beyond Epic: Path of the God Feat

**Requirements:** Must have held the Path of the Demiurge feat for at least one century, be Level 30, and the stone bearer must have at least 5,000 followers.

**Effect:** It is unlikely....boy I hope it is....that anyone attains this feat without centuries or even millennia of work. But when they do achieve it, they formally ascend to the rank of godhood.

The chief advantage of godhood is the same as being a demiurge, but now the god can freely move to the Planar Realms at will, and can prepare and retain ritual spells at will and as often as he feels like it. He no longer has any practical limits on how many followers can be

granted divine abilities; it depends more on how many of them are able to be so imbued through their own abilities, instead.

Gods depend on their followers for their power. The follower points continue, but at this level of activity the god usually doesn't gain more than a +1 unless he rolls 100 or more; anything else washes out on the table. Bad luck can still lead to crippling losses, however, and other gods may now conspire to steal followers away.

Gods are immortal, but can be killed. Although there are no physical requirements for godhood, it is unlikely a deity gets this far without also enhancing physical traits, even if only through magic, and so should be a fearsome opponent.

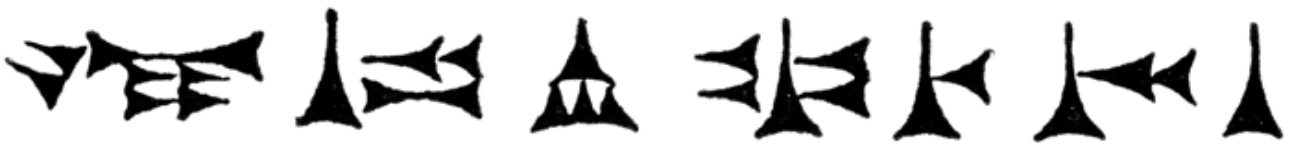
When using divine magic, a deity no longer is restricted by the tenets of the zodiac stone. He has mastered it, and may now draw upon it to cast magic which it normally wouldn't grant through its attunement.

### Notes on the Legendary Path to Godhood

I serious doubt anyone will make it through ordinary play to the Path of the God, but one could certainly start a campaign there if you wanted a sufficiently unique play experience. In 17 odd years of gaming in Chirak, I've only had two avatars enter game play. Mardieur Mardieux, the Huron Minotaur, was a PC who attained the Aquarius stone. Father Maretz was another PC who gained several shards of the Pallath stone and began a process of reuniting them. In game terms, both characters reached a pinnacle when they hit the Path of the Avatar, but it would be many more years of play to reach the Path of the Demiurge. Still, these legendary abilities will help DMs who want to see what it takes to actually design and stat out a deity!





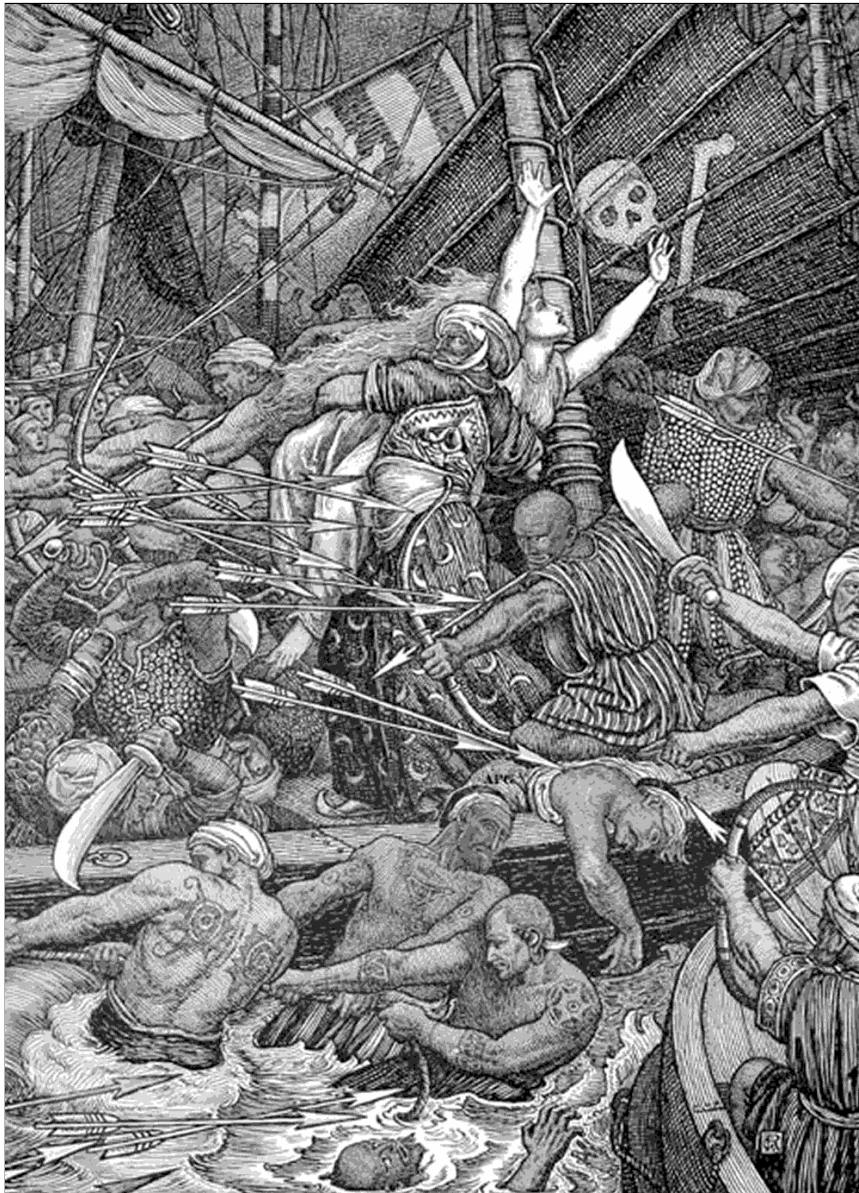


### The Myth of the Godkiller weapon

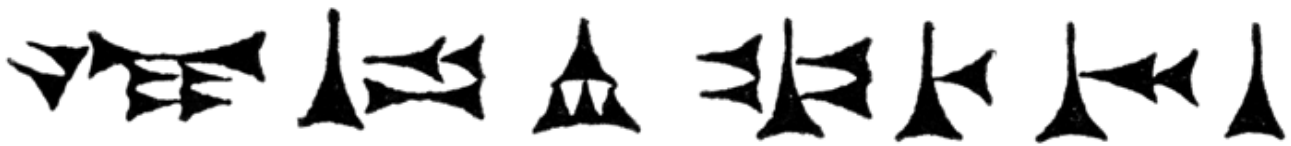
Although the gods are immortal, they are never truly all-powerful in the sense of other cosmologies, and retain physical forms throughout their existence. Like men, the gods of Chirak could be slain, and so they were in the Apocalypse.

The myths of this war tell of a weapon so profoundly vile and powerful that it could kill a true god with but one blow. As the story goes, the first kill was with this weapon, used by Minhauros against his predecessor, at

which time he took the Taurus stone and began his own ascent to godhood. Though the tale is sometimes confused on when it happened, most scholars agree it probably took place a few centuries before the actual Apocalypse, but that in all likelihood Minhauros had this devastating god-killing weapon in his possession the whole time. It is believed that the same weapon was used to slay many creatures, and gods, by Minhauros and his assassins in the war. Its location today is unknown.



*Shaddizhari raiders strike against a Nithiadian ship to capture Hellicaria the Sorceress*



## Chapter V - A Gazetteer of the Realms of Chirak

### Key to the Entries:

**Name:** The name by which the kingdom is most commonly known, followed by a one-sentence blurb defining the core notions behind it.

**Cultural Level:** There are several cultural levels in the Realms of Chirak, as follows. If a region is listed with two cultural levels, then it contains elements of both, or is in transition from one to the other:

**Stone age:** the culture has either not yet progressed in to metalworking or has regressed to a period before such crafts were known. No metal-based tools except through outside trade are available. Some cultures may have a limited amount of copper or gold metalworking skills, but mostly for purposes of ornamentation.

**Bronze age:** The culture has developed essential metalworking skills, and is somewhere between copper and bronze age in development. Such cultures have begun using metalworking for utilitarian purposes, like warfare, but iron and steel implements are still found only through trade with outsiders.

**Steel age:** The culture has progressed to working with iron and the techniques of folding it in to steel. Such cultures are on their way to more refined weapons, armor, and tools, facilitating cultural development.

**Renaissance:** The culture has advanced in science, culture, and art. The revolution of discovery has pervaded the culture, and it is on the forefront of Chirak's progressive lands. Gun powder may exist in such kingdoms, although it may not yet be exploited for warfare.

**Steam age:** A certain few progressive societies begin to discover the lost arts of artificing, and recapture this technology. The steam age reflects the rediscovery of such arts as steam power, elemental harnessing, construct creation, and planar invention. Gunpowder becomes accessible in this period, though it is sometimes found among the renaissance cultures, too.

**Decadent:** This society has either reached its peak and collapsed, or is clinging to older values from a lost age or struggles in the wake of a fallen empire. It often has the trappings of a renaissance or steam age society, but has lost the means by which to maintain and develop such inventions and progressions.

**Population:** A rough estimate of the total population of the region. No census exists, of course.

**Government:** A short description of the principle governing force.

**Rulers:** Any rulers of note.

**Religions:** The primary religions of the area.

**Language:** the primary local dialects.

**Social Titles:** specific social titles and details unique to the realm.

**Coinage:** any unique coinage or trade practices.

**Allies:** allies, trade partners, and special relations.

**Enemies:** known foes and opponents of the realm.

### Stone Age Weapons in Chirak

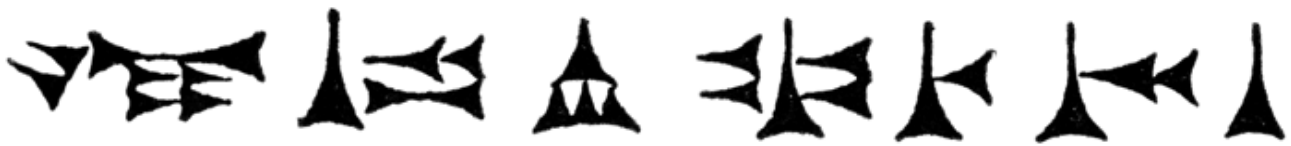
Typical stone-age weapons include spears, clubs, stone and bone daggers, axes, javelins, bows, adzes and short swords (called macas) which use obsidian or sometimes bone (such as shark's teeth) sewn along a wooden board as a cutting/slashing tool.

Weapons crafted of bone and stone do damage as described, but have a chance of breaking in combat. If an attack with such a weapon rolls a natural "1" the weapon must make a save or break (10 or better on D20).

Optionally, such weapons may do less damage against metal armor at the DM's discretion. Metal armor may be treated as having Resistance 2 against stone and bone weaponry; if the character attacking an armored opponent takes a -2 penalty to his chance to hit, he may bypass this resistance, aiming for exposed or unprotected regions instead.

**Parties interested in a useful guide for RPGs on early technology and its advancement are encouraged to seek out *GURPS Low Tech*, a fine resource for any game system.**





## Abraheil

The westernmost kingdom standing guard over dead Pornyphiros

**Cultural Level:** steam age-decadent

**Population:** 1 million

**Government:** decadent collection of varied city-states

**Rulers:** several (see text)

**Religions:** The reverence of the four demiurges of Pornyphiros

**Language:** Sabradani

**Social Titles:** commoner, landowner, knight, baron, count, duke, prince, king

**Allies:** Allied with the southern kingdoms, sometimes with Sabradan

**Enemies:** The Pelegar, Heliosians

The kingdoms of Abraheil are possibly the most venerable lands of all Chirak. Steeped in the ancient lore of the past, still clinging to ancient beliefs, fashions, art and architecture which can all be directly traced to pre-apocalyptic times, Abraheil is a relic of forgotten history. The regional obsession with the ancients is built on false notions, and the citizens of Abraheil harbor strange hopes and expectations that have prevented their society from advancing past the fragmented remnants of the nearly forgotten cultures left over in the wake of the apocalypse. Still, they have good reason for this: in their midst, the petrified body of a dead god stands.

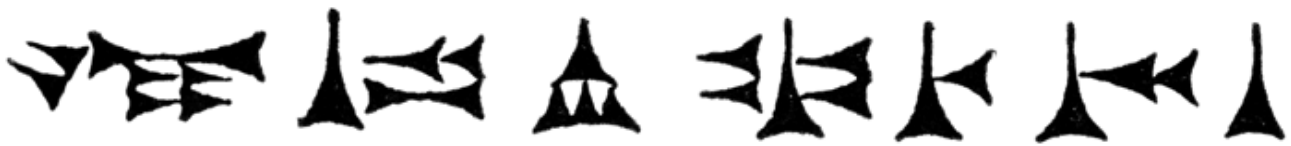
Deep in the heart of the West is the sacred site of the **Fallen Castle**, a great fortress built around the petrified remains of the twin form of Pornyphiros, reaching to the sky as his dual forms are frozen forever more. Here, an ancient enclave of warriors and priests who venerate the ideology of the fallen god stand in guard, holding to an ancient prophecy that one day the deity will be resurrected. They are strongly opposed to the four demiurges of the land, feeling that when they can force the four to relinquish their power, then Pornyphiros will return. Some of the members of this order are nearly avatars in their own right, as their proximity to the essence of their god creates strong divine magical energies, which saturate the members of the order.

The pervasive closeness of this divine energy has created some unique situations for the land of Abraheil. Radiating from the great crater of Fallen in which Pornyphiros' two hundred foot form stands are the Shattered Lakes, great and jagged canyons of water left from the Great Flood, which were once great rents in the earth caused by Pornyphiros' death. Throughout this

blasted land, life returned, and the civilization that supports the Fallen Castle grew up, creating a unique society of highly democratic philosophers and mystics, seeking to understand the meaning of the lost gods, and the future of mankind. These kingdoms include **Vaden**, the seafaring city state, **Zaspar**, the trade city of the north, **Mekulos**, the city-state of the protector guilds, and **Noelindos**, the capitol of philosophy and the arts. Each city is ruled by an elected regent, but each city has agreed to a sense of mutual cooperation and peace for many centuries. The foreign threats of Sabradan, the northern barbarians, and the suspicious **Konan-Dal** are enough to keep the four great cities working together to provide mutual protection and trade.

West of the region lies the **Ocean of Infinite Sorrows**, which is said to have been filled with many more lands, for as far as can be imagined, but all were engulfed in the great flood, drowned forever. Out upon the ocean lies the Isle of the Azure Tower, wherein the scheming avatar Dyshara works hard to manipulate her subjects hidden away within the cities of Abraheil. Likewise do her siblings also seek such manipulations, though they usually have more success in the neighboring lands; only Dyshara of the avatars receives any respect among the enlightened folk of Abraheil.





## Adenach

**Primitive Stone age society of aboriginal nomads**

**Cultural Level:** stone age

**Population:** perhaps 500,000 or more

**Government:** egalitarian clans

**Rulers:** no single ruler

**Religions:** The Hooded Order of Adenach.

**Language:** Adenite, Tradespeak

**Social Titles:** no social titles

**Coinage:** trade only

**Allies:** The Adenites see the Shaddizhari and Huron minotaurs as friendly.

**Enemies:** Nithiad, Hoagarit, Xoxtocharit

In the wake of the great apocalypse, mankind was faced with many choices. Some rose from the sea-drenched, ruptured lands and tried to rebuild. For some cultures, this was a centuries' long process. For others, such as the people of Adenach (called Adenites, plural and singular), no recovery was ever possible. The people of this once beautiful, lush forestland were shattered, as the great floods stripped the land clean of life, and left it a harsh, dry wasteland. The scattered remnants of humanity could barely survive, let alone prosper.

Early on, the prophet Adenach, an immortal sorcerer who survived the deluge, rose amongst the survivors of his people and began to preach of the destruction. Adenach was among the handful of powerful men to survive, and he felt that this was because of a form of divine forgiveness. The gods had destroyed their creations in anger, and themselves as well. Those few who survived were given a second chance at humility and redemption. His wanderings served to stabilize the people around him, but he also taught a new, humble philosophy. This philosophy was to eventually be epitomized by the Hooded Order of Adenach, a cult of quiet sorcerer-philosophers who espoused the virtues of simple living and humble acceptance of the universe. To this day, the monastic roots of the Hooded Order are still scattered in secluded monasteries throughout Adenach and beyond.

Because the old ways were intentionally forgotten by the people of the land, the realm was eventually named Adenach after its great savior from old. The people learned to deal with the harsh environment around them, and moved on to a new way of living. The new philosophy of living was passed down orally, from generation to generation, and the old pre-cataclysmic

ways were stamped out. If a remnant of the past was exposed, then there was no question it was to be destroyed.

Over the last two millennia, this has created a seemingly simple, static culture throughout the regions of Adenach. Not even Nithiadian intrusion could disrupt this culture, as Nithiadian outposts sought to enfold the local people in to the Republic. In the end, every regent of Nithiad to strike out in to Adenach territory was inevitably given over to accepting that the harsh, inhospitable nature of the land and the resistant mentality of its residents were simply not worth the cost involved. Today, Nithiad has several trade routes which run through the Adenach territory, co-existing peacefully for the most part with the Adenach communities.

Adenach as a culture is primitive. They have refused to advance beyond simple metallurgy, relying on basic bronze smelting and lithic instruments to create most complex tools. Iron or steel are seen as corrupting of the spirit, and a philosophically sound Adenite will not touch the metal. Likewise, the rest of the Adenite technology remains simple, mired in an early agrarian civilization that consciously refuses to grow. Irrigation is still done by simple well digging and hauling or directing the water in trenches. Buildings are adobe, or wood structures, and some Adenite communities still dwell in the mountains and canyons in cliff dwellings and caverns.

Social complexity is also intentionally stunted. The egalitarian society makes a nominal acceptance of authority, in which a pool of the wisest and most able men and women are grouped in to a voting group which makes the decisions and judgments for the community. It is common among the Adenites of the plains to choose a chief elect, a man whose prowess at leadership is accepted by all, and allow him to preside over the community council. This is a practice considered inappropriate in the mountainous communities, although even they have unrecognized authority figures. All communities respect the sorcerer-priests of the Hooded Order.

Adenites have a bilineal marriage system, in which the families of both husband and wife are important in establishing relations. Traditionally, the elder of the two marrying will take the other in to his or her community, and the title of a family is based first on village/clan name, and second on a combining of the two family names. There is a complicated system by which one determines who in what village can be married, a system which may have come in to existence in the early years



75 Miles

**The West**

To the mysterious northlands of Tumindale

The Azure Tower

The Ocean of Infinite Sorrows

Madrigar

Crystite Lands

Fondarit Woods

Sabradan

Abraheil

Helios

The Sea of Numinos

Skinsadan

Peninsula

Knos

Zameia

Lyca

Koimek

Madallios

Galegar

Diabaras

Grand River

Bordertown

Draken Mountains

Alex

Shirin-Dur

Lake Haville

Suspir

Falendan

Uuden

Dalevar

Brightmore

Ompicos

Vadain-Hel

Orlin

Swamps

Gal'Korst

Yertores

Meculos

Noelindos

Sus Pindar

Gassan-Dur

Uren Hom

Guratt Lands

Pillar

Vanholm

Pelegar

Gale Tansuj

Uulas

Valen

Kadela

Fartheren

Uvalin

Temple of the Spider

Zynai

Zen Hettar

This way to Westgate

Ruins of Not

Polmark

Shaignothic Mtns

Enderas

Reaver's Deep

Silverwood

Zimvarin

Konan-Dal

Gabban-Dur

Turalen

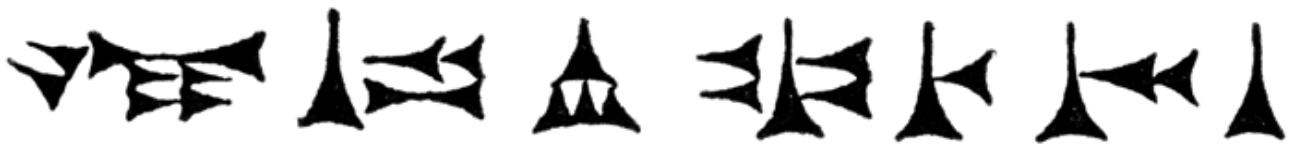
Dul'it'Dan

Dul'Haadar

Point Defiant

Southward to Lost Therias

Zann



of the land, when few people were left to intermarry and rules had to be established to avoid taboos.

Adenites are not a weak people, and physical prowess is appreciated. The culture nurtures physical capabilities, and unarmed fighting skills are considered second to none among the Adenites. They are also efficient at fighting with the simple weapons they allow themselves. Many young men in each community willingly take up the knife, obsidian blade, and javelin to protect their land.

Since Adenach is located in the southern lands from the Sea of Chirak, it is, in fact, poised on the brink of an even greater wasteland, stretching as far as the eye can see. The Boiling Mountains to the distant south of Adenach have never ceased to produce new and terrible horrors from the great cracks and rents in the land, and the Adenites closest to this region are accustomed to it. A special monastic order, once of the Hooded Order but now separated by new traditions almost a millennia ago exist in this region. They call themselves the Holy Sons of Kon'hun, Protectors of the South, and they broke with the tradition of the Adenites long ago when the founder of the order, named Cabel Hasaros, found a holy text to the Hidden Lord of the Sands. He did not destroy the book, but instead learned to read it, and discovered within the pages a secret that he felt placed his homeland at the center of the holy world. The nature of Kon'hun was harsh survival and death, But those who could overcome these obstacles were considered blessed. He looked out upon his land, and realized that it must have been razed in the cataclysm to create a kind of living shrine to his people.

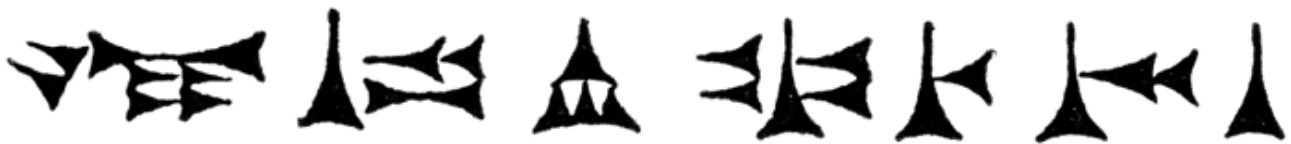
When Cabel Hasaros' indiscretions were revealed, he was cast from his order, and he fled with the book to the south, where he established a new order. During this time, it was said that a great rent in the Boiling Mountains erupted with a gate of chaos, and that Cabel and his followers became invigorated by their worship of Kon'hun, and succeeded in destroying the outpouring of demonic beings. Thereafter, they have always been quietly accepted by the Adenites as the protectors of the south.

### Playing an Adenite

Adenites are tough, as they have social convictions that override practicality or efficiency at times. Adenites are a human group, and have all human traits listed in the PHB, but they also have the following cultural restrictions, especially when traveling abroad:

- Adenites will refuse, in principle, to use any weapon or device of anything greater than Bronze Age complexity. Because of the severely ingrained belief system, an Adenite starts play with a -2 skill check penalty on any skill that involves any effort at using such "technology". An Adenite who has adventured in other realms for at least one year may begin advancing his modern skills. Such an Adenite is called "corrupted" by his peers and "civilized" by other men. This Adenite may remove this limitation when both the player and the DM feel that the character has ventured in civilized lands long enough to gain a sense of familiarity.
- Adenites are also a more rugged, hardy lot than most men, and as a result they may always treat Nature as a class skill.
- Adenites are illiterate, and must buy off illiteracy by using a language slot for the language they wish to learn to read and write. The cultural reluctance to accept written language is so deeply rooted in Adenite culture that a character must make a wisdom check of DC 20 -2 for each language he is already literate in to learn to read and write a language before spending the slot.
- Adenites are most likely to take primal classes, such as the barbarian, shaman, druid and other earthy classes, although rangers, fighters and rogues are not uncommon, as well. Among NPCs hunters and farmers are common. Adenite wizards are heretical, as they must be literate to perform magic, and so are not usually seen except among the rarest of circumstances.
- 





## Ruined Beltraine

**Advanced Steam age society of magical constructs**

**Cultural Level:** steam age

**Population:** unknown, but Collector 7 once stated that Beltraine contained 22,000 unique animates.

**Government:** egalitarian rule by mechanistic commonwealth

**Rulers:** The Oculus (see Appendix VI)

**Religions:** the First Creator.

**Language:** The Animate language, Tradespeak

**Social Titles:** broken down by duty, this includes: collectors, guardians, seekers, workers, overseers.

**Allies:** The animates have sought to make friendly contact with all cultures of man.

**Enemies:** the arcanists desire access to the secrets of Beltraine.

The ruins and catacombs of Beltraine are legendary for their wealth and danger among adventurers. Resting beneath the ruins of this great city, which is perhaps the finest and most well preserved of all the ancient pre-apocalyptic ruins, nestled in between strange denizens and lairs of the Lower Dark is an ancient city managed and maintained by the animates.

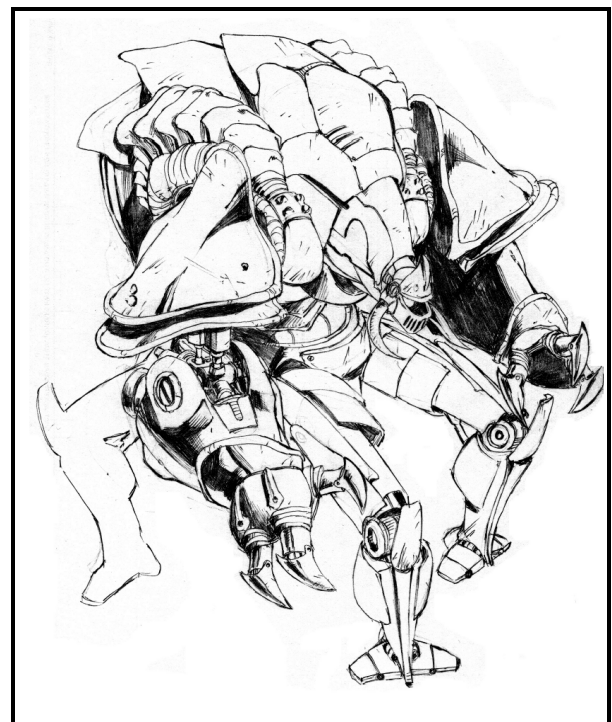
Located in the center of the Everdread Desert, Beltraine is the epicenter of this strange animate culture of sentient beings spawned from magic. This society, comprised of a collection of golem-like constructs gifted with thought are called Animates, or Animators, and some mages believe they are strange survivors of the old world, continuing tirelessly to serve their lost masters, or at least seek to learn what happened to them.

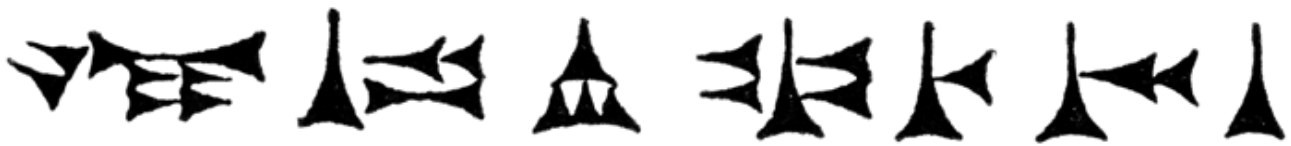
The ruins of Beltraine remain beyond the help of these Animates, but a compound nestled amidst the ruins and occupying a fair percentage of the ancient catacombs is where the mysterious society of the Animates dwells. It is said that their leader is a great and ancient Animate who serves as the director, or brain, and that this being learned the magic of artificing in order to continue the survival of its own kind. Many different kinds of Animates have appeared as a result. Only a few members of this sentient species are relics from the old days, and even fewer among them remember the times of the Apocalypse and before.

Cohabiting the ancient catacombs with denizens of the deep, lizard men, subterranean minotaur tribes, and stranger things, these animates periodically send out humanoid (or occasionally four legged) entities to record

what goes on in the world, and search for clues to the nature of the world and what has happened to the society which created them. These beings are called Collectors, or sometimes doppelgangers and changelings by some men. Collectors appear to be a humanoid construct made of metal plates, ceramic part, fibrous joints and a rubber-like mixture of sealant. The collector's eyes are usually steel-imbbed jewels. Collectors are taught the tongue of the land they are to be sent, where they will spend decades exploring and researching, collecting data for the Great Brain.

Animate collectors from Beltraine may be chosen as player characters (see Chapter II on new races). Animates of the Black Dome may not normally be player characters, as they are a little too screwed up, but they, along with other animates, can also be found in the Monstrous Appendix section as potential foes and NPCs. For more on animates of the Black Dome, see the entry on The White City of Eristantopolis.





## Cannesh Tribelands

Iron age humanoid shape shifters of the Utter North in loose clans

**Cultural Level:** iron age

**Population:** perhaps 50,000 cannesh, 50,000 humans

**Government:** rule by clan-based chieftains

**Rulers:** no specific rulers stand out; see description for more

**Religions:** animistic spiritualism.

Language: Cannesh, legoran, rughit, Syrgian, Tradespeak

**Social Titles:** most social titles are by profession (merchant, trader, warrior, chief)

**Coinage:** no common coinage, lots of trading by goods

**Allies:** the cannesh maintain few regular alliances.

**Enemies:** all neighbors are potential enemies.

The cannesh are an enigma of the north. Clearly spirit-like in nature, the cannesh are composite beings, embracing both the essence of humanity and the essence of the beast. Binding these two elements together is their mysterious, ancestral connection to the ephemeral spirit folk of the utter north.

The cannesh tribelands are a huge swath of territory which is almost entirely uncharted and forgotten to man. A handful of legoran rangers, called the Northern Watch, are dedicated to keeping guard along the loosely defined borders of their kingdom, against forces unknown. Those who have seen the ancient tomes of the Northern Watch claim that there is much to fear in the north, and that some of the greatest demonic generals of the apocalypse were exiled to the glacial depths of this permanent winter land.

Beside the scattered tribes of the cannesh and the keeps of the Northern Watch, one can find occasional villages of hearty barbarians called the rughit, a swarthy northern tribe of men who migrated in to the region from even more distant northern climes, and fought several long and bloody wars with the cannesh before being grudgingly accepted by the shape shifters. The most famous of the rughit communities is Belharos, a small city in its own right ruled by the Jarl king named Dane Hennost.

The rughit are, these days, respectful of the cannesh, even if they are still suspicious. They are more worried about the Syrgians in the east and the legorans in the south. The Syrgians are an avaricious lot of traders, and have made it their business to bring commerce in to the region. While they have been successful in gaining trade

agreements with the hidihirin cannesh and the rastakats, as well as a few lesser tribes, they have found the men of rughit strongly opposed to their efforts. Still, trade with the legorans make treks through hostile rughit territory worthwhile. Likewise, not all cannesh respect the Syrgians, and the bacgruit tribe is especially resentful of the outsiders.

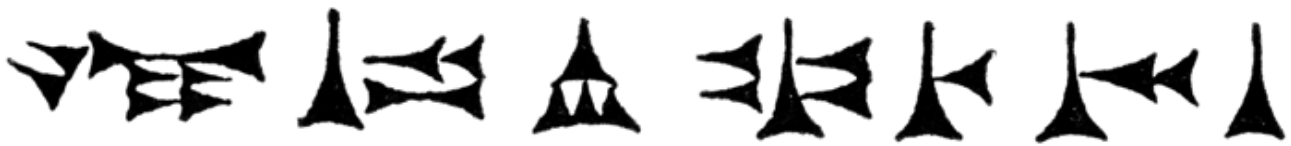
Among the cannesh, the great tribes include the bacgruit (the bear folk), hidihirin (the rabbit folk), vollfluen (the wolf folk), rastakats (the raven folk), and several other lesser tribes include the menharit (badger folk), shenebit (skunk folk), astakari (serpent folk), and willendri (fish folk). In addition, rare cannesh are born as the feyweres (cannesh lords), who can shapeshift in to any animal form they wish. These feyweres are sometimes found ruling other cannesh communities, but some have gathered as their own tribal kingdom in the utter north, and are said to have commiserated with the demons locked away in glacial prisons.

The cannesh are everywhere in the north, and tribal boundaries are loosely defined, as they are a migratory people, usually with a defined summer and winter home, which they move between seasonally. During spring and summer, the tribes spend their time in their own period of trade amongst one another, as well as exchanging wives, captured slaves, and engaging in a variety of bloody sports, of which counting coup on the enemy (rather than taking their life) if the goal. These mock battles are used to ready young cannesh for the inevitability of war, and on occasion, a more hostile tribe will decide instead to engage in a real battle, choosing a legoran keep, rughit community, or Syrgian caravan to target for destruction. Such raids are most often done by the violent vollfluen or bacgruit tribes, but lesser tribes such as the astakari and menharit have been known to participate in such raids.

The cannesh are not unified by any single leader. Several prominent tribal chieftains stand out among the flock, including Grhaebas Lom of the bacgruit and chieftainess Terndas Shialle of the hidihirin. There are tales in the utter north, however, of a cannesh feywere tribe ruled by one called Groltain the Infernal, a trueborn shape shifter who has gained much thaumaturgical knowledge from the legendary Ice Beast Damistor, an ancient demon-lord who was encased in the Mendrith Ice Shelf by the Elohim shortly after Pallath was destroyed in the Apocalypse.

Visitors to the utter north are often approached by Preservationists, scholars, and cartographers with funding for their expeditions, and a promise of much





wealth if both maps and knowledge of the region can be returned (for so few explorers are ever seen again). Some preservationists claim that the greatest fallen kingdom of man was once centered in the north, an empire of the lost era called **Eshadai**. No written word or memory of Eshadai save in second or third-hand accounts from old Inadasir and Mythric texts have ever been found, and a discovery which proved the existence of Eshadai in the north would be worth a fortune.

Cannesh are a viable player character race, and several common tribes along with a few feats can be found in Chapter II.

## Correnstal

**medieval war torn society of city states in constant turmoil**

**Cultural Level:** steel age

**Population:** 2 million

**Government:** oligarchic monarchy

**Rulers:** King Jerrod Zephyram

**Religions:** The official state religion is the Order of Memnos

**Language:** Correnstalian, Dragosian, Tradespeak

**Social Titles:** commoner, landowner, knight, baron, count, duke, prince, king

**Coinage:** copper, silver, and gold pieces

**Allies:** Nubirian trade alliances, some alliances with northern and eastern kingdoms

**Enemies:** Mercurios, Dragos

Correnstal is a steel age society frequently wracked with internal conflict and civil war. The current rulership is divided out between four powers, including the long ruling king, Jerrod Zephyram, and elderly man in his nineties who is near death. Two regents, including Jerrod's only legitimate known heir named Quinna, who was his bastard daughter spirited away to the Kyurtaim Mountains to hide an adulterous misstep, and the ambitious Prince Caspios, who is in perpetual disagreement with Jerrod and is a nephew to the acting king. In the midst of this is a charismatic half-elf named Urso Vanasas, who claims to be no less than the resurrected First King of Correnstal. Although his initial appearance, quelled the ambitions of the throne's rivals for a short time, and his quick actions (as well as his backing by a strong personal army that firmly believes he is who he says he is) saved the kingdom from an invasion by Dragos, it looks as if Correnstal is headed for civil war.

Jerrod has ruled with an iron fist for a generation, but now the nobles of the land sense death in the air and prepare for his downfall. Prince Caspios will stop at nothing to gain total power, and Quinna wants what is right, but is suspicious of this mysterious newcomer who claims to be the legitimate first heir to the throne. Correnstal may not survive.

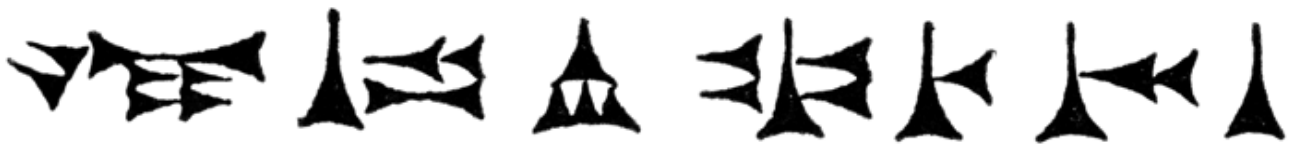
Correnstalians are a rough, opportunistic lot. The purity of ethics brought to some lands by the Preservationists has never made it here, and the local church, dedicated to Laddaskar, is rife with corruption. Rogues, fighters, neutral or evil clerics, and the occasional wizard are not uncommon here.

Correnstal is a dissident nation of Pellucid origins. First founded about six hundred years ago, the region of Correnstal was populated by men of old Pellucid who traveled to the region running from the Dryfarian Mountains to the Kyurtaim ranges, which are the easternmost border of the Nubiri kingdoms. In this time, it is said that the great leader of men was a king who sought to found an empire away from the realm of his father Urso Vanel, and that this so-called first king was named Urso Vanasas. His mother was elvish, of the Skardini Elves of the Kyurtaim Mountains, and she bade him to go forth and found his kingdom among his human relatives.

In the legends, Urso Vanasas traveled to this land, and discovered that the ancient Skardini elves were long gone, and had left their elvish cities to travel to unknown regions. The menace which drove them away was a pervasive war with the goblins of the mountains, and these goblins were a powerful force, on the cusp of becoming a horde which could threaten all of Old Pellucid. Urso Vanasas, in his years as king and founder of the Correnstalian realm, committed to war against the goblin kin, and before his death, he had driven all of the goblin hordes back beneath the earth, as well as the trolls of the Dryfarian ranges.

Correnstal was a client kingdom of Old Pellucid until its collapse as an empire about four centuries ago. Since that time, the kingdom has recovered from the dark ages of the Pellucid collapse and is now tentatively united under one king.

Indeed, warfare seems to be imminent in the land, and some nobles suspect foul play. The goblins and their red elf allies are resurfacing in the Kyurtaim mountains, as well in the region of the Dyalanthor mountain province, a region of some nine townships and a large number of hamlets and villages. Some interesting areas in that region are described below.



## Adventure Location: Cuveros

This small city of about six thousand is ruled from **Castle Villanfor**, built along a cliff of the mountains arching over the city. There **Lord Ricard Aden** maintains his power as the overseer of the best trade route there is through the Kyurtain mountains.

Cuveros is a lovely community, a township of perhaps 5,000 nestled in the most hospitable corner of the Kyurtain Mountains. It is also the capital of the Barony. Here, nestled along the down slopes of the mountains along this valley, is the multi-tiered Castle Villanfor. Castle Villanfor is almost 1,000 years old, and was said to have been built in olden days to serve as an outpost against the once endless armies of the lost eastern cults of Shaligon by the Old Pellucid Empire.

Lord Aden does not like being forced to take sides, but for two years that is what he has been forced to do by the King in the east and the prince in the west. Initially, he served under Lord Galveston, until he was killed in a siege three years ago, and shortly thereafter massive civil war erupted for two Summers. When Caspios proclaimed himself heir, he seemed to bring some calm to the conflict, and Aden gave his word to serve the prince, but Caspios immediately began taxing the province heavily, and using armed men to enforce the taxation. Aden considered fighting back, and some of his people have, for most of the lords of Correnstal dread sieging the famous Castle Villanfor.

Now, the situation is uncertain, and rumor has it that a small army of the King's men march this way, and intend to force his allegiance back to the insane ancient ruler.

Some Major Features of Cuveros include **The Cathedral of Dawn**, a house of worship for the **Priesthood of Memnos**. This is a vast, gothic structure, where the enigmatic priests of the little-known demiurge Memnos worship their shadowy benefactor in quiet solitude. The worshipers of Memnos are penitent, and flagellant clerics who seek redemption through self abuse, as well as the unscrupulous weeding out of sins wherever they see them. They feel that all gods are gone, even Memnos, but that his soul as a savior was so strong that his spirit lives on in the High Priest of the temple, who dwells in the Capitol of Correnstal.

Memnos is a mystery to scholars of the occult and arcane. Some believe he was an avatar who became a demiurge, though with which Zodiac Stone is unknown. Some church depictions show him with what is believed to be a shard of the Capricorn Stone, of the Civic Lord Gathas, said to be the Patron of Civilization. However,

the strange beliefs Memnos proselytized in his time are often contrary to the authoritarian nature of Gathas, so some wonder if this is true.

Near Cuveros, the village of **Emberlan** is on the front line of the frontier, and near the heart of the old Goblin subterranean lands, as well as the old elvish ruins. Emberlans only real authority is Sheriff Mills.

The region of Emberlan is protected by **Wendor Keep**. Baron Kabel Wendor is a benevolent ruler of the people in his small barony. He dislikes Sheriff Mills, but puts up with him. He has four sons, the youngest his squire, the other three all serving in the militia at Cuveros for the time being. He is loyal to Cuveros, and will accept the dictates of the city.

Near Emberlan are the ancient elvish ruins of **Zypherieth**. Long ago the elves fought the goblin wars and drove the goblins out of the mountains, or deep enough that they might never return, presumably forever. They then left, exhausted and depleted from the protracted battle. Overgrown remains of this temple complex remain to mystify the locals. Hidden beneath is an old dungeon, a subterranean staging point for the war against the goblins. This is one of the goblin exits, and it has become evident recently that the goblins are preparing a major assault against man. Leading and advising the goblins, horribly enough, are a subspecies of elf known only as Red Elves, who mark their bodies with red tattoos and branding marks. These elves are believed to be descendants of the original elves who were captured in the war of the goblins and made to be slaves, but over time, being more intelligent than the goblins, they turned the situation about and became the new masters. Unfortunately, this was not before more than one new generation of these Red Elves had been born under the rule of the goblins, and imbued with the sense of harsh cruelty and hatred of ground dwellers. The red elves have a cult of Shaligon in their midst, and their leader is an elvish woman named **Sythania**, the aide and secret commander behind the goblin king **Flabbag**.

About 100 miles north is **Mountainfire**, the last great stronghold of the ancient Mountain Dwarves. No one has heard from them in better than twenty years, and it is presumed that they have dug so deep they have forgotten to come back up....

**Archer's Peak** was once said to have been a crude fortress of early colonists from the old Pellucid Empire who hold up here against the goblin menace, now Archer's Peak serves mostly to harbor bandits and fugitives.

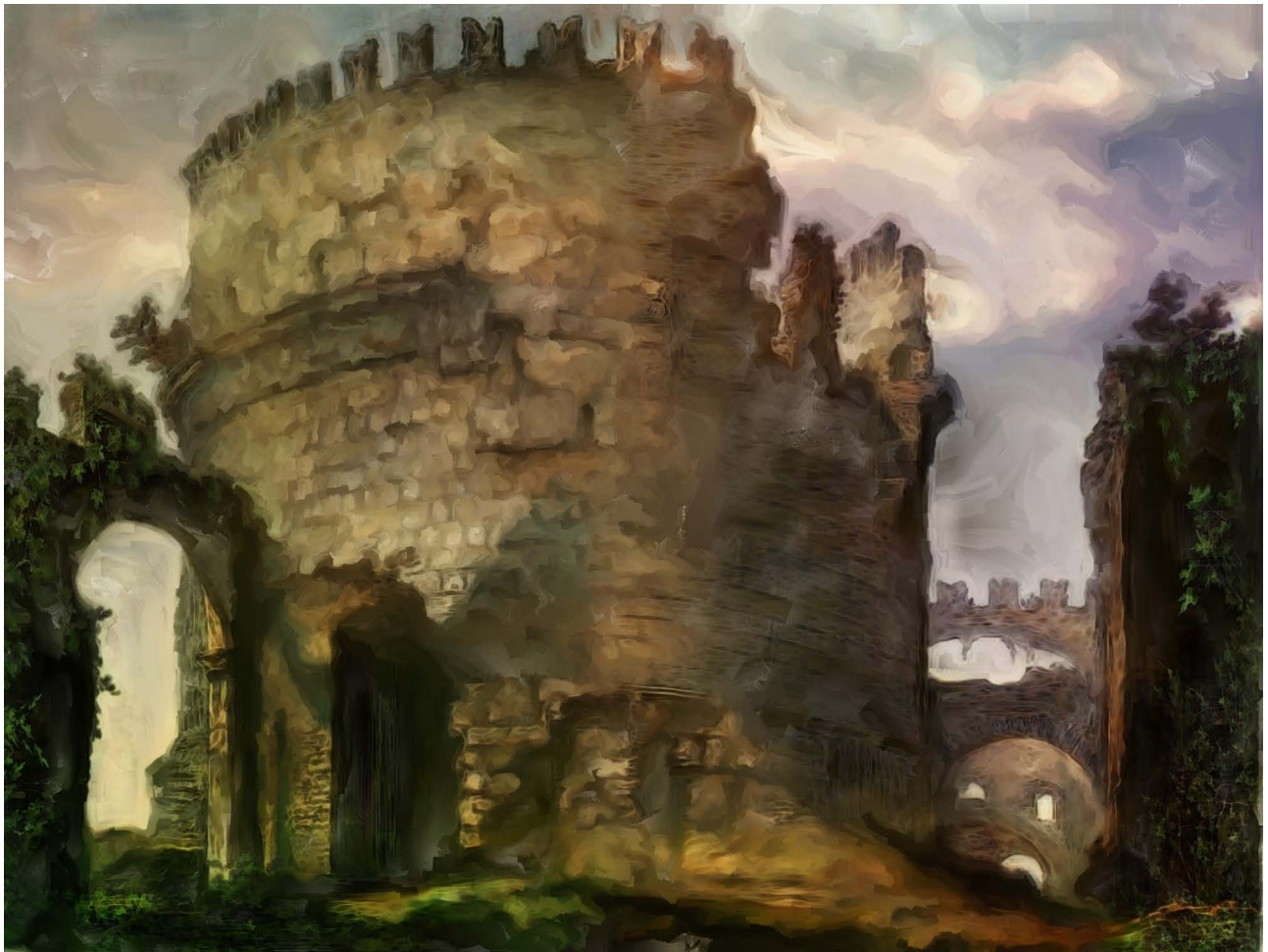


Not far from the peak is the once abandoned **Fallmoor Keep**, which is now, oddly, occupied by a garrison of Dragosian soldiers operating under mercenary conscript of the king himself. Goblin forces have also been seen in this region, and locals are becoming suspicious. It is rumored that the keep is now managed by a Dragosian noble called **Feral**.

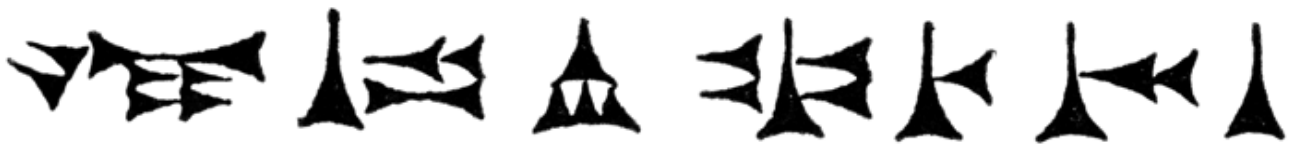
Today, Cuveros struggles between two major power centers, being the Western Lord of Ollaram, where Prince Caspios rules, who is directly opposed to all rivals

for the throne. Two years ago, Caspios was certain he could rally the barons behind him, and being nephew to the king he sought the Church of Memnos' backing to proclaim himself rightful heir to the throne. Now, he is not so sure, as rumor has it that the King has made an allegiance with the Necromancers of Modrosk, the closest Dragosian neighbor, and that his sanity and health seem to be returning. He is certain that this "new" Urso Vanasas is an imposter, and he feels that Quinna is too weak to rule, even if she is legitimate.

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*Fallmoor Keep*



## Crystite and Madagar

**dark age cultures surviving amidst a magical plague of crystalline beings**

**Cultural Level:** iron age

**Population:** about 100,000 cylovite overlords and some 2 million thralls, with an unknown population of free peoples; approximately 100,000 beings in Madagar

**Government:** Rigid Species and Caste-based Empire; Madagar is a loose confederacy

**Rulers:** The Cylovite Supreme Overlord; in Madagar: Paricus Donalien

**Religions:** unknown

**Language:** Crystite; in Madagar: Sabiri and Grelmanic

**Social Titles:** Unbonded slaves, Thralls, overlords, masters, Supreme Overlord

**Coinage:** none known; trade is done in gemstones

**Allies:** No sane realm allies with the Crystite Kingdom

**Enemies:** All sane beings oppose the Crystites

The Crystites are a mysterious race of beings located in the great valley in the northern end of the Cossarit ranges. It is said that a fragment of an unknown zodiac stone, possibly from Pallath, fell in the valley and struck a source of magical corruption, from which sprang the living essence that became the Crystites.

The Crystites have three forms. The **Cylovite Overlords** (also called Overseers) are living beings of crystal substance, and among these, a feudal society of loose baronies has arisen, as they enslaved the local people of the land to perform their bizarre constructions and fulfill their needs. The second are the **Cylovite Hybrids**, in which the crystal form parasitically locks on to a human or humanoid and corrupts them, using their flesh as a vessel; the mind of the host becomes intermingled with the alien desires and will of the invading essence. The third and final form of the Crystite presence is the Cylovite Golems, great crystalline humanoid beings which work ponderously to maintain the great crystal keep at the center of their land, and rule over the two other lesser Crystite forms. Some claim that the golems are also parasitic beings, but the hosts are the evil spirits of the dark sinkhole in which the shard fell two millennia ago, and that they are the true evil behind the Crystite energy.

One certainty of the Crystites is that their ultimate goals are inimical to humankind, and organic beings are seen only as hosts, labor, or fodder. Many people of the land are living in little better than stone-age circumstances. There is a movement, begun some

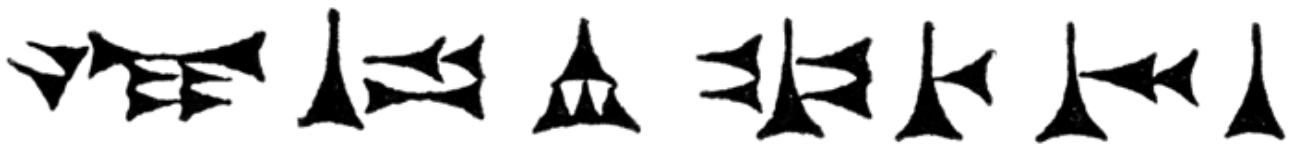
centuries ago by a foreign human paladin, to overthrow the Crystites, but it is hampered by limited resources. No other western kingdom dares to approach the region, out of fear of unleashing the Crystite parasites on the rest of the world. Indeed, only three realms even trade or war directly with the Crystites (that are known). This includes the men of the southern kingdoms of the region, an isolated cluster of cities and communities which struggle to maintain their freedom from the Crystites. These lands are called **Madagar**, and are centered around two cities, called **Knos** and **Alex**, from which the humans have found freedom and destroyed their Cylovite overseers. The current king of this region is the son of the man who brought the kingdom freedom, called **Paricus Donalien**, a young knight dedicated to Pallath.

The sedentary people of Madalios also engage in trade in the region, mostly with the Madagar people. In between these two human realms are the reclusive **Zamedian elves** of the **Draken Mountains**, who are wild elves that have fought the destructive nature of the Crystites for two thousand years some say, ever since the first incursion destroyed their ancient kingdom to the north.

### Cylovites as Characters or Villains

The Monstrous Appendix has full details on the various types of Cylovites that can be encountered, and Hybrids can be played as a template (see Chapter II).





## Dragos

**ambivalent medieval kingdom ruled by necromancers and dragon lords**

**Cultural Level:** steel age

**Population:** 1 million

**Government:** magiocracy

**Rulers:** The Dragon Council, which answers to the Black King, Forethus Dom

**Religions:** Apocalypticists are common among the people of Dragos, and well they should be. The state itself endorses no religion, though a veneration of the ancient dragons holds sway, and the black dragon Charybdos is treated like a god, with its own priesthood.

**Social Titles:** commoner, landowner, knight, baron, count, duke, prince, king

**Allies:** Dragos is known to forge strange alliances, including with its sister state Kasdalan.

**Enemies:** Dragos is always in conflict with Correnstal and Mercurios.

Long ago, rule by magiocracy was established in Dragos, and eventually the three most powerful sorcerous factions arose: The Necromancers, The Dragon Mages, and the War Mages. Each Order of Magic battles for control of the land, and one truly great sorcerer tends to win out. Presently, the land is quiet, but local lords await the chance for the next chink in the armor of their dark king.

There are rumors that Dragosians are quietly infiltrating the turbulent political scene of their closest neighbor, Correnstal. There are also rumors that some factions within the kingdom are petitioning Lady Poe of Kasdalan for admission to her kingdom as a client state. Few of these rumors are actually substantiated, although sightings of Dragosian troops in the Kyurtrain Mountains, holding conference with the Eradariin Red Elves and goblins have been reported.

Witches and wizards are common, as are mercenaries and thieves, often with some skill in magic. The bulk of the population consists of frightened peasants and thuggish militia.

The Dragosians are said by some (usually veterans of border wars in Mercurios and Correnstal) to employ berserk ogres. It is believed that they actually capture the much more peaceful ogres of the Eastern Wilderness and submit them to strange experiments and necromantic chemicals, to drive the humanoids in to madness. They lock them in to iron armor with spiked

weaponry, then drive them forth as front line shock troops in their border wars.

It is said that a race of Ebon Elves dwells in the lands of Dragos and plays off sides in their civil wars. These elves are believed to be related to the Kulaidoriin from further south, and call themselves the Nithmariil. These elves are an enigma to most other elvish communities, being very solitary, and rumors abound that they, too, practice necromantic arts, as their Dragosian neighbors do.

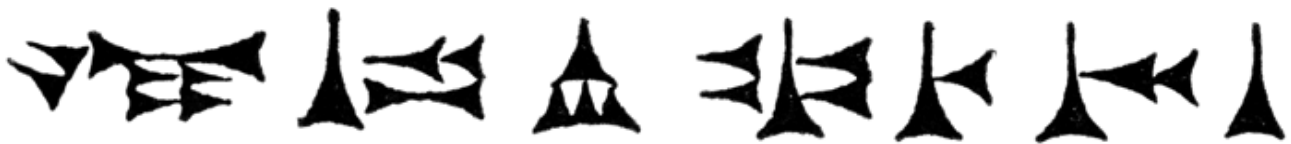
### Dragos and the Kasdalan Connection

The Dragosian language is a hybrid of Kasdalan and Mercurian (from the old Pellucid dialects). The reason, buried mostly in the past, is that the kingdom was settled by the warriors of the old Kasdalan army that once ravaged the Pellucid Empire. When Kasdalan's forces at last were stopped due to the internal conflict of its own leaders (Zam Redar and Lady Poe; see the entry on Kasdalan for more about this) a large number of troops chose to settle in the region rather than return home. Many were mercenaries, and even more were male sorcerers and necromancers, who had no place in the regime at home under Lady Poe's rulership. Like the distant empire of Daman, Dragos was thus founded by these dissident and lost soldiers of the era of conquest.

### Necromancy in Dragos

The necromancers of Dragos are notorious for their dark arts and ruthless control of the land's government. Many of the Dragosian sorcerers in this land are expatriates (or their forebears were) from Kasdalan in the south, seeking refuge from the kingdom in which all male children with sorcerous talent are put to death.

The exact origins of this legacy of necromantic rule stems from the founders of Dragos. Among the many soldiers who settled in the region were a cabal of loyalists to the deposed Zam Redar. They conspired early on to cement their rule in the region and to protect themselves from the meddling of Lady Poe in the south. Since that era, the Order of Necromancy in Kasdalan has grown strong, and more than a hundred senior members are believed to belong to it. Their influence is felt far and wide; Dragos is singular in its acceptance of the undead as a source of labor, protection and as units of war. Among the nobility, many seek to escape death through the ascension to undeath, but the necromancers tend to subjugate these beings, as well to their will; they want absolute control over the risen dead, and free willed beings such as liches and vampires are regarded as a



threat to the established rule. Adventurers in Dragos may well find job opportunities available to exterminate or capture rogue undead beings when visiting here.

## Eristantopolis, City of the White Desert

**Oldest post apocalyptic city in the world and home of the preservationists**

**Cultural Level:** decadent

**Population:** approximately 25,000 (The City), 50,000 (Eristantopolis)

**Government:** republic

**Ruler:** Lord Calamos Diatharon in the City, Magistrate Diagonen in Eristantopolis

**Religions:** The seat of the preservationist movement.

**Social Titles:** social titles have been dispensed with.

**Coinage:** copper pieces, silver pieces, gold pieces, gold crowns, platinum pieces

**Allies:** The City trades with Masiria mostly, and via certain merchants to other nations.

**Enemies:** The arcanists of Athanar are strongly determined to conquer the City.

The hidden City of the White Desert is the heart and source of the preservationist movement, as well as the source of a mysteriously advanced culture of men, and “gray elves” called the **Denedaki**. Not much is known of these elusive people by outsiders, and they are careful not to divulge too much of their nature.

The City of the White Desert is more commonly known by its residents as Eristantopolis, named so after the legendary Capitol of commerce and knowledge in the pre-apocalyptic world. This mysterious region is ruled by an ancient, seemingly immortal being called **Calamos Diatharon**, believed by Theliadans northwest of here to be another ascended immortal. Others claim Calamos is an avatar that carries a fragment of the Sagittarius stone, a zodiac stone which was known to have fragmented in to an unknown number of pieces during the apocalypse, but all of the other avatars or demiurges of this stone are enigmatic, amoral beings with little concern for mortals (Kobal, Kon’hun, etc), and Calamos is believed to empathetic to be related to these avatars by power. The truth of this matter may never be known.

The City established the edicts of Preservation about 550 years ago. Part of the process was the founding of an order of dedicated missionaries to spread the philosophy and establish new centers of learning and

advancement for the order. Since that time, the preservationists have passed on to become an autonomous entity, but the City is still regarded as the spiritual center of the order, and many preservationists, as years go by, seek pilgrimage to this remote location to learn of their order’s origins. Many retire here, on arrival, and impart their body of knowledge to the Libraries of the city, which are said to be the greatest in the Realms.

The City is not a fully functioning unit in itself. Defended by self-appointed guardians and protectors of the land called the **Knights of the White Desert**, and served by the enigmatic **Denedaki gray elves**. Within the walls of the city the elected **Magistrate Diagonen** and his many appointees before him keep the trade lanes open and provide a safe route for outside contact with the city.

It has been a long-established fact that the nearby city-state of **Athanar**, has coveted the wealth and lore of Eristantopolis, and sought to disrupt trade and ultimately destroy or conquer Eristantopolis, as Athanar is ruled by the arcanists, as well as having a strong following of Apocalypticists. Athanar’s current warlord is the half-demon Gaminok Magrenz.

A nebulous and threatening ruin known as the **Black Dome** is located in the center of the three region, south of the White Desert. Here lies one of the known enclaves of Animates, but unlike the curious mechanoids of Beltraine, the constructs of the Black Dome seem to be suffused with chaos magic and corruption. No being is permitted to travel within a mile of the Black Dome without being destroyed, and no one has managed to penetrate its secrets. The arcanists of Athanar have tried hard, desperately seeking the power it offers, or an alliance, but the animates of the Black Dome will tolerate no one.

### The Denedaki

The Denedaki are a unique crossbreed of elvish race, for they are closer to eladrin than they are to the lesser elves that roam wild across the lands of Chirak. Though the Denedaki are but a few hundred in number they are very dedicated to the preservation of lost knowledge. Their kin move quietly, largely unrevealed among the elvish cultures of the world, seeking to better the dying and lost cultures of elves abroad. It is thanks in large part to the denedaki that the elvish language remains similar across many dispersed tribes.

Denedaki characters are created as eladrin. They are rarely of chaotic alignment, and such extremely rare gray



elves are usually outcasts. Denedaki are also deeply spiritual but eschew all religious beliefs in any gods, spirits or pretenders, ascribing to the philosophy that the destiny of all elves in the future is determined by those who are alive here and now. They feel that the fey realms, now destroyed, can only be revived in the mortal world, if the elves can but be unified and directed in to efforts to do so.

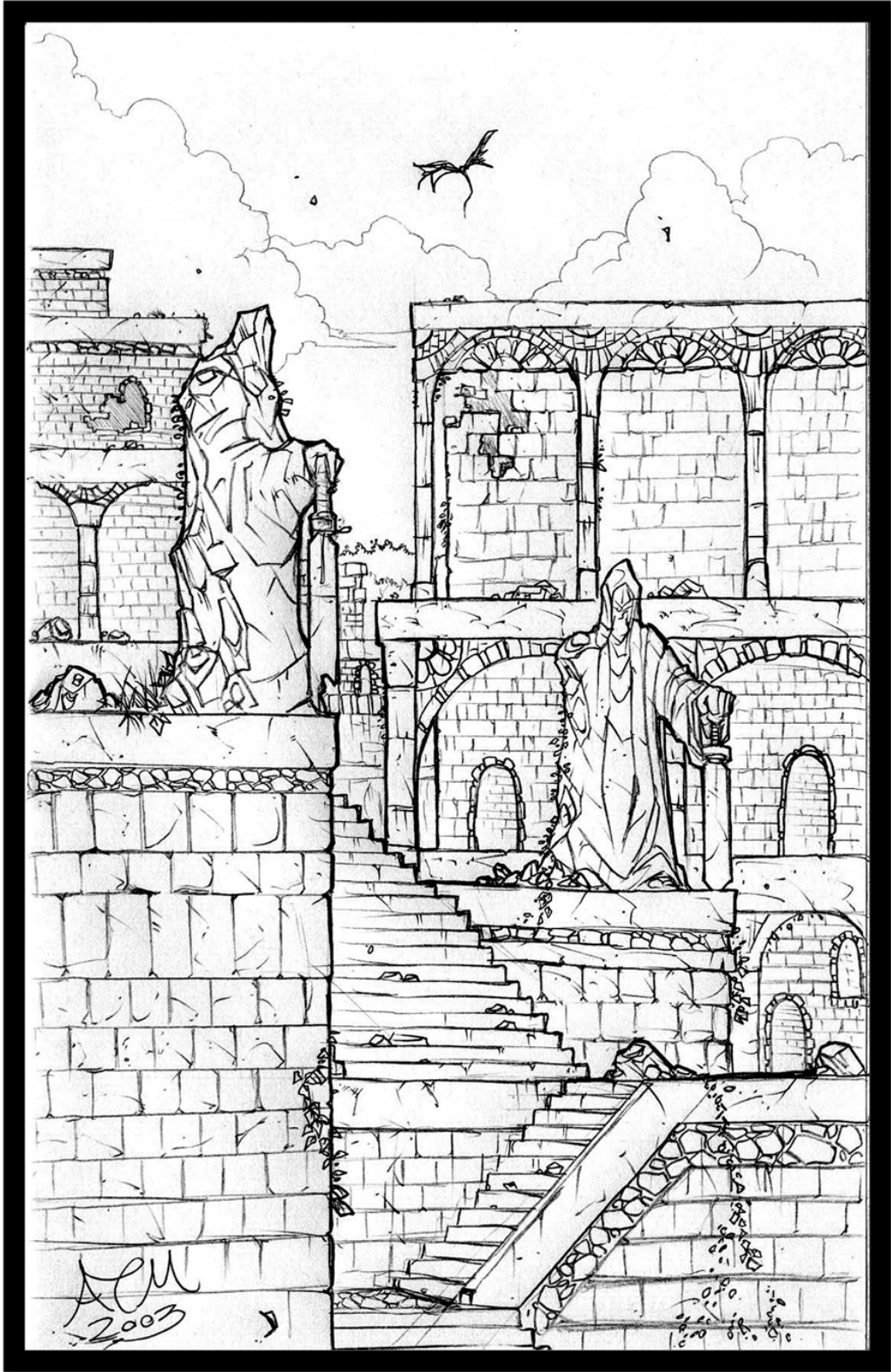
### **Eristantopolis and Theliad**

The northwestern realms of Theliad lie just beyond the expanses of the White Desert, and the Theliadians have a mixed relationship with the people of Eristantopolis. More about this relationship can be found in the section on that land.



*The Lost Temples of the Old City in Eristantopolis*

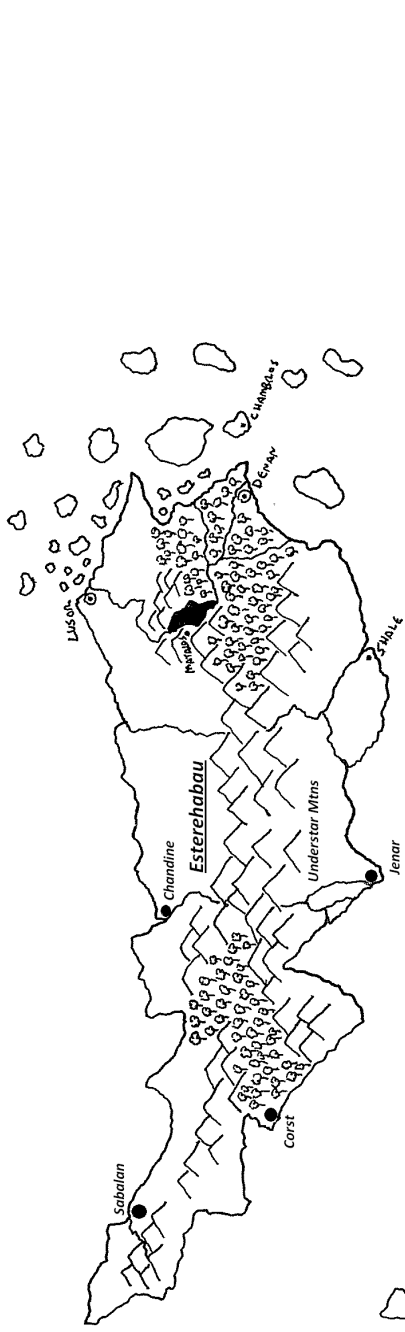
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The Sea of Chirak: Espanea, of the Mythric Isles

■ = 20 miles

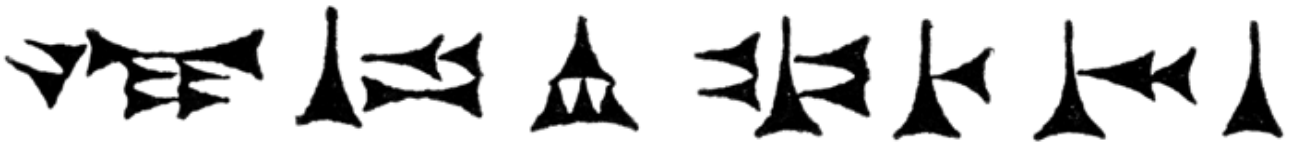


Forgotten Isle

The Sea of Chirak

The Kalninian Expanses





## Espanea

**Renaissance seafaring kingdom that unites the Sea kingdoms**

**Cultural Level:** renaissance

**Population:** 1.5 million

**Government:** aristocratic monarchy

**Rulers:** King Marcus Darego

**Religions:** The official state religion is the Order of the Preservationists. The Espanean Preservationists favor Kalie'yana, Akquinarios, and most recently Mardieur Mardieux.

**Language:** Espanean, Tradespeak

**Social Titles:** commoner, landowner, knight, baron, count, duke, prince, king

**Coinage:** copper pennies, silver pesos, gold doubloons

**Allies:** tentative alliances with Mercurios, Legora, Esterehabau. Strong alliances with Masiria, Grelmaine, and Pardainse

**Enemies:** Nithiad, Hoagarit, Xoxtocharit

By far the most powerful force on the Sea of Chirak, Espanea is a hub of commerce, culture and knowledge throughout the region. Espaneans are renowned for being great sailors, adventurers, and explorers. The Preservationists are well established here, as is the Magical College of the **Mages of Kaledon**, and an esoteric order of Planar Mages called the **Luminaires of the Concordance** is known to work out of Barcen.

The island kingdom has a history going back many centuries, but only within the last three and a half has it become a prominent power in the land. With a long-lasting alliance with the dwarves of Pardainse, the Espaneans have gained access to the lost technomancy of the dwarven gunsmiths and boat crafters. The dwarves, though few in number, benefit from the extra protection the Espaneans provide their kin. Even without this aid, the Espaneans are renowned for their seamanship and beautiful galleons; though galleys are still more common in the Sea of Chirak, the Espanean wind-driven vessels are remarkable works of technology for the day. Armed with elemental cannons and alchemical fire from the dwarves, the Espanean Navy is nearly invincible.

The aristocracy of Espanea is a patriotic lot dedicated to the king, **Marcus Darego**, who was also a rebel against the recent rule of Minhauros reborn. Born a prince and ruling after his much esteemed father, Darego was deposed by the chaos legions who sought to carve their home in his lands, but escaped to lead a brutal guerilla

war against the evil until the avatar of Akquinarios arrived to aid them and destroy Minhauros. Darego is the most charismatic leader in all of the Realms of Chirak, some believe, and has gone on to write a treaty of peace with the Nithadians as well as make new alliances with the Legorans and Mercurians.

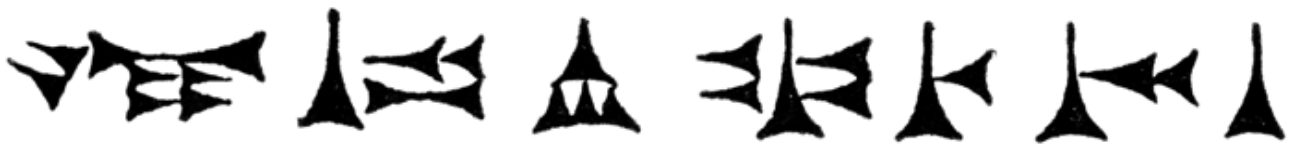
### Barcen

The capitol of Espanea, the fabled city of Barcen began as a small colony centuries ago from the original immigrants to this land, which were the forebears of the Espanean people. Barcen grew with time, becoming the impressive metropolis that it is today, with a core population of nearly fifty thousand. The seat of the Espanean throne, center of the First Tower of Kaledon, and protector of the Grand Libraries of the Preservationists, Barcen is a marvelous metropolis to behold, and center of cultural advancement in the Realms (in spite of Nithadian contrariness).

Barcen today is a sprawling city that outgrew its defensive walls a century ago. Great plantations and villas stretch out in to the countryside where the vintage Espanean wines are produce in vineyards. Along the coast, professional fishermen ply their trade, and in the dock region, clothiers and dyers work their trade, taking the inland cotton farm product and spinning it in to fine clothing, which is then dyed in the garish colors produced from shellfish extract which Espanea is famous for.

The city is defended from the **Bastion**, the center of operations for the King's Men, a special force of highly trained soldiers, all proficient in the Pardainse Musket, which are provided as part of the treaty of cooperation with the Pardainse dwarves. The Bastion is headquarters to approximately three hundred stalwart guardsmen, each a proficient musketeer and swordsman, all dedicated to serving the interests of the king through Barcen and the kingdom beyond.

**The Palace in Barcen** is a great, jutting structure of mostly basaltic stone on the northern side of the bay, overlooking the entire city from its perch atop the highest overlook in the area. The towers of the palace are said to go as high as twenty stories, and much of the ancient architecture is said to have been there since long before the Espaneans came to settle. Some say it was a Mythric ruin, still standing after the apocalypse, and old stories speak of how it was once cursed, and the first men of Espanea fought terrible beasts before liberating the palace.



The city is especially famous for its **Grand Libraries**, the largest enclave of Preservationists in the civilized world outside of the White Desert region. The great, hexagonal temple is a center of philosophic learning and thought, manned all year by a thousand dedicated acolytes of the ideals and ways of the preservationists. The Grand Master of the order in Barcen is **Leonus Decarlo**, a dedicated scholar and student of antiquity, who is said to have mastered ancient magic, as well as communed with the spirits of the dead gods. He zealously protects the many ancient texts of the Grand Libraries, and is remorseful of the damage caused during the reign of Minhauros.

The **First Tower of Kaledon** in Barcen, sometimes called the **Wishing Tower** by the common people who seek to leave offerings to the learned mages within in exchange for magical services, is considered the first of the towers founded by this select guild of mages. Allies of the preservationists, the members of the Order of Kaledon follow the dictates of their founder, the man after whom they have been named. This mage was said to have recognized the need to restore the lost magic of old, and to recover the knowledge in a responsible manner, that the glory of man not be forgotten or corrupted once more. They are closely tied to the preservationists, and often work together on special tasks. The order is opposed to the arcanists, who are believed to be as harmful as the apocalypticists.

Other groups of note in Barcen include the rather well-known **Obsidian Order** thieves' guild, which is said to be the strongest guild of rogues in the city. **The Order of the Golden Rose** is group of knights templar who have dedicated their worship to a mysterious figure known only as the Golden Rose, whom some claim is an avatar of unknown properties. The Golden Rose appears as a simple woman who walks the lands of the island seeking to offer healing and protection to the needy, and her knights are mostly men who have been touched by her soulful will such that they are compelled to do good deeds in her name. **The Luminaires of the Concordance** are also known, an order of planar mages who are often blamed for the events which led to Minhauros' rise, as their octagonal temple contained the fabled Tome of Planar Lore which was used to open the chaos rifts which led to Minhauros return in the first place.

## Corlione

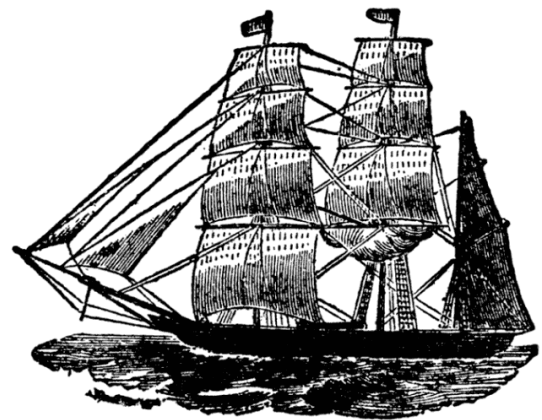
Second of the great cities of Espanea, and famed for its naval yards, Corlione is ruled by Darego's cousin **Pedrak Estovado**. Estovado is young and learning the ways of

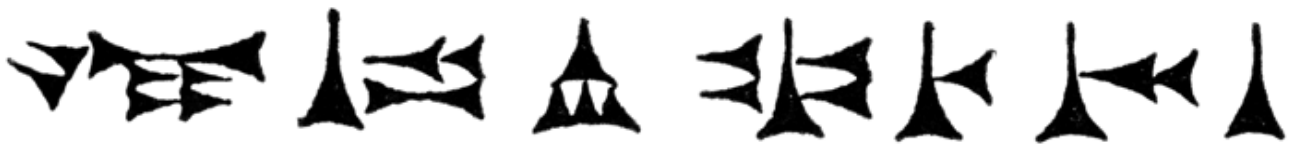
rule in the wake of his father's death during the insurrection of chaos, but he tries to be fair minded. It is his mother, a scheming woman named Madra, who looks for necromantic divinations to assist in her power games, who causes him trouble behind the scenes.

Corlione is famous for its shipyards, and the guild of Shipwrights produce the finest vessels in all the Seas, such that even Pardainse dwarven artificers will commission key members of the guild to build their hulls before producing their famed airships and steamships.

Corlione also contains a temple of worship dedicated to Kalie'yana, the demiurge of the seas. No sailor feels comfortable passing through without making an offering of prayer to this temple.

It is also said that a hidden order dedicated to Piscalael has forced its way in to the seedy underbelly of Corlione, though few can say if this is true. There are several loosely connected thieves' guilds in the city, and they claim that they are fighting a desperate turf war against this hidden threat which seeks to take control of them.





## Esterehabau

**Renaissance island kingdom of elemental sorcerers and scholars**

**Cultural Level:** renaissance

**Population:** About 750,000

**Government:** monarchy

**Rulers:** King Lucus Drakhalam and Queen Ehelein Zemar-Demonari

**Religions:** Elemental Spiritualism. Kalie'yana is the only demiurge venerated publicly. Piscrael is worshiped ravenously by the rogues and villains of society.

**Language:** Esterehabau, Espanean, Tradespeak

**Social Titles:** commoner, landowner, knight, baron, count, duke, prince, king

**Coinage:** copper pennies, silver pesos, gold doubloons

**Allies:** tentative alliances with Legora, Espanea. Strong alliances with some Hoagarit tribes, and the Xoxtocharit. Modest trade alliance with Syrgia.

**Enemies:** Nithiad, Sontaniardes, Kaldinian Alliance, Grelmaine (piracy between these two is common).

The people of Esterehabau are like the second cousins of Espanea, being adventurers, rogues, sailors and warriors of the sea and trade. However, they are a small kingdom, and simply do not make as great an impact as their close neighbors. Esterehabau people do have a close and friendly trade relationship with the Hoagarit and Xoxtocharit, however.

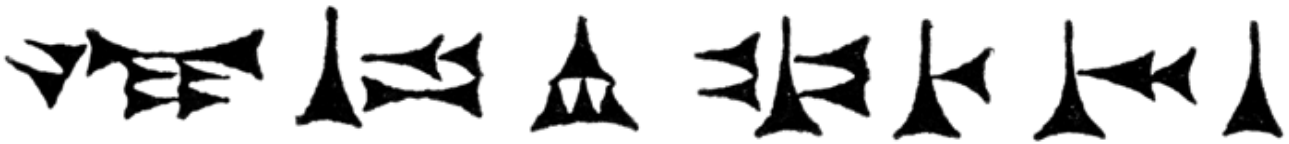
The kingdom of the island is a tight monarchy, which has passed down the matrilineal line of Zemar for generations. The matrilineal lines of Esterehabau are very important, and this has to do with the fact that the strongest mages of the land are all female. As such, the nominal true power of the land is Queen Ehelein Zemar-Demonari. Her husband is Lucus, married in to her clan line. While she holds his name, the Zemar title does not go away, and her three daughters will eventually be chosen from to inherit the throne. Her two sons will carry on in the Demonari line as generals and agents of the throne, but can never ascend to it.

All sorts of characters are native to this island kingdom, especially rogues. There is a sophisticated order of hydromancers on the island as well. The water elementalists order of the hydromancers produce some of the finest elemental mages and navigators in the realm. The skills of such a mage are worth a great deal of gold to all seafaring nations. The Order of the Hydromancers is also sufficiently powerful that the

monarchy of the land rarely disputes its will or interests, and the head of the order, **Lady Zon Tachos**, is chief advisor to the king and queen.

The capitol of the kingdom is **Jenar**, where the **Palace of Eternity Falls** is located. Built around a great water fall that cascades in to the Sea of Chirak, the palace is a sight to behold, and the hydromancers have used their magic to create some breathtaking effects in fountains, statues, and natural escarpments where water defies gravity. The **Temple of the Hydromancers** is also located here, as is an ancient **Hall of Monuments**, where a great statue dedicated to Akquinarios, as well as a newer statue to Kalie'yana, can be found.





## Grelmaine

**Feudal warlords united by culture and heritage**

**Cultural Level:** medieval

**Population:** About 1 million

**Government:** feudal duchies

**Rulers:** The most respected warlord is Yaro Avistos

**Religions:** A groundswell of small cults dedicated to various minor spirits is common, but the aristocracy is divided between the Spiritual Circle of redemptionists and a new arcanist-inspired cult called the Inheritors.

**Language:** Grelmanic, Espanean, Tradespeak

**Social Titles:** commoner, landowner, knight, baron, count, duke, warlord

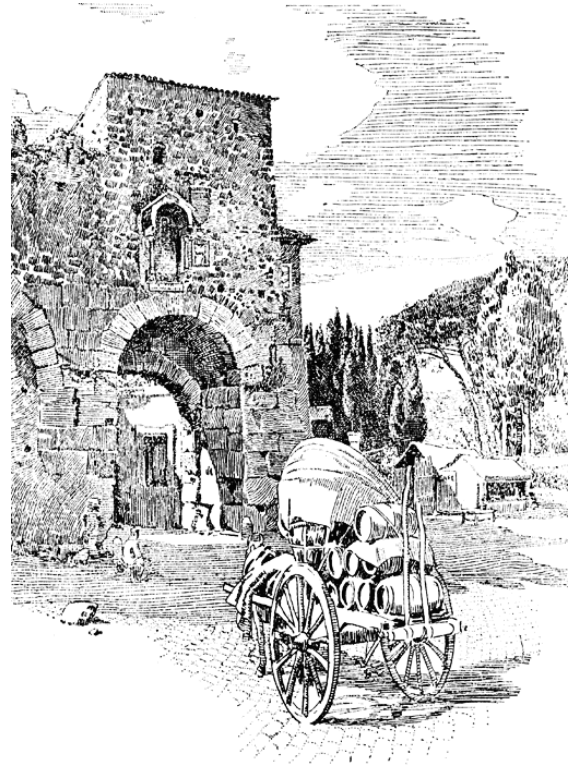
**Allies:** tentative alliances with Masiria and Nithiad. Strongly allied with Espanea.

**Enemies:** Sabiri, Sontaniardes, Kaldinian Alliance, Esterehabau.

The Grelmanic clans are a loose unity of fiefdoms that have no regular king. Each greater duchy is ruled by a clan warlord that spends most of his or her short life jockeying for control over their neighbors while trying to forge new foreign alliances to back them. Grelmaine is resource-poor, and so is reliant on foreign trade. Those who gain the most foreign allies (and mercenaries) tend to be the strongest.

Grelmaine is a land of bleak steppes, windy, grassy turf long ago scoured by glacial movements. The region is often frozen in a wintry down of snow, and has short summers. It seems that most of the Sea of Chirak's stormy weather hits the eastern lands, and little comes to the desperate shores of Grelmaine.

The Espaneans are allied with about half of the clans in Grelmaine, and provide support to those who insure trade routes remain open. Grelmaine is currently locked in civil war caused by the appearance of the new philosophical-religious movement called the Inheritors, a group of neo-arcanists who believe that the Grelmanics are true descendents of the Inadasir and must rightfully reclaim their ancient, lost lands.



The Grelmanics are not good seafarers, though they have a modest navy. Likewise, the appearance of gunpowder weapons is a new phenomenon for a people who have little understanding of technology, but the Espaneans happily act as gun-runners for Grelmanic wars. Finally, lending some credence to the idea of Grelmanics as descended from the Inadasir, an alarming number of these people have magical blood, and sorcerers are unusually common in their lands. An entire guild dedicated to battle mages who work the fields of war for their preferred side is not an establishment within Grelmanic culture. While the Guild of Battle Magic plays favorites within Grelmaine, they are known to offer up their better arcane soldiers to the highest bidder in foreign countries as outstanding spell-wielding mercenaries.



Unexplored Territory

Lake Eregen

The Dead Sea of Khorus

Masiria

Atos

Tolmirek

Xaxican

Petel

Aten'Val

Ruins of Bral

Drazalin Marshes

The Dark Tower

Esebrian Steppes

Breseggan

Zaternygoro Mtns.

Lake Akhao

Dzuruid Mtns

North Varnahk River

Eledar

Mistichlyes Forest

Murom

Makhram

Grelmaine

Kaltoros Mtns

Ruzhin Isle

Altyr River

Jezoar

The Western Path

Klabbische Isle

Chernigor

Rivald

Kilsner

Ft. Valos

Kozak Isle

Saragol

Savyn

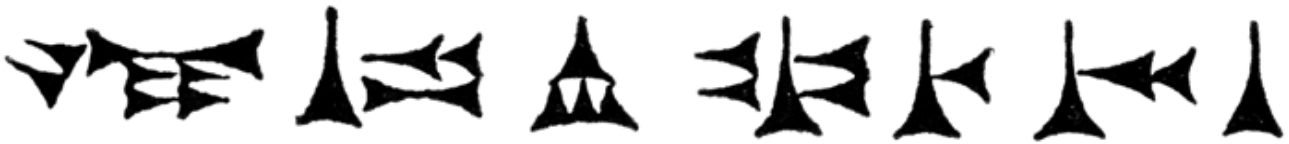
Randival

Luvosk

Mountains of the Moon

The Grelmanic Coast

20 Miles



## Hashikarystyr

**Dark-age tribal kingdoms of fast-breeding war-driven lizard men**

**Cultural Level:** iron age

**Population:** 2 million or more

**Government:** a mixture of tribal chiefdoms held together by a crude monarchy

**Rulers:** The King beneath the Sands, Hryvin, and the Lord Regent Hylakylak

**Religions:** Kon'hun and the Seventy Spirit Gods, chief among them being Vennylos, Spirit of War.

**Language:** Lizard man

**Social Titles:** thralls, minions, overlords, chieftains, war masters, regent, king

**Allies:** Some trading with Adenach, Shaddizhar.

**Enemies:** Everyone else, especially Mercurios.

This is a land of vicious tribal lizard folk called the Hashikarystyr (spelled sometimes with various “i’s” or “y’s” depending on the translator), ruled by a cruel subterranean king named **Hryvin** who seeks a holy war against humanity. Driven by mysterious spirit gods beneath the deserts, and protecting their borders with ancient magical war instruments, the lizard folk are a tough lot.

Hashikarystyr are slim, lithe beings, standing between five and six feet in height (females being shorter) and covered in intricate but protective scales for protection. They often have coloration and pattern that reflects their desert environment and grant them camouflage benefits. Most Hashikarystyr are stoic, quiet beings that are meticulous about their daily business and protective of their kin. They are not prone to evil ways, though there is a strong tendency among their kind to pursue the edicts of the demiurge Kon'hun, hidden lord of the sands, who is said to have released seventy great spirits of guidance, most prominent of which is **Vennylos**, Spirit of War.

Hashikarystyr tribes do not like to interact much with civilized folk, but subterranean variants of the Hashikarystyr tend to be more social and politically active in the Underworld communities. To the Mercurians, Hashikarystyr are a threat, but some nomadic tribes trade with the Adenites in the east in peace.

The Hashikarystyr lands are broad and expansive, but almost entirely comprised of desert land, with a rugged coastal forest along the coast called the **Scale Wood**. The lizard men fight the human encroachment violently

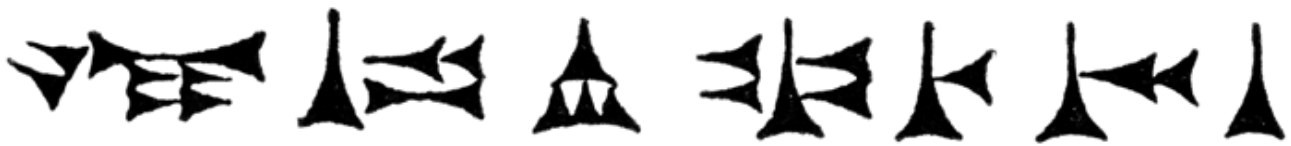
along the border of the **Great River** and throughout the Scale Wood, as the Mercurian capitol of Eddernine is situated at the isthmus of the Great River, where it dumps out in to the Sea of Chirak. The Iron King Dukas has sworn that he will be remembered for subduing or ending the Hashikarystyr threat, and has poured much of the kingdom’s economy in to what some feel is a hopeless crusade against the lizard men.

The center point of eastern defense along the Great River is **The Tower of the Basilisk**. Located along the Pellucid/Hashikarystyr borders, this legendary tower is a center of prime military strength for the warring lizard men clans. Once ruled by Regent Hyklys, the slayer of Padre Kryvysk’s clan (see Mercurios and Manaryk for more details), this regent was destroyed by Mardieur Mardieux and replaced by **Lord Regent Hylakalak**, of the **Blackscale clan**, which are less aggressive against the humans, and seek only to subjugate rival clans along the Great River. Hylakalak has been known to seek a new stone to power the great head of the basilisk in the tower from the animates of Beltraine. Hylakalak is subservient to the subterranean rule of King Hryvin, but in the surface lands he considers himself true king, and some suspect he conspires to wrest control from his rival beneath the sands.

The Tower is a great construct, five stories high, with two top levels revealing a lighthouse like structure containing the great stone head of a basilisk on a pivot. With a stone of power from the Animates, or the original Basilisk Stone (held by the Tower of Kaledon), it can create a searchlight effect that, when one is cast in its conical gaze, requires a DC 24 Fortitude save or the target is petrified. It is considered impregnable when it is in working order.

### Hashikarystyr as Characters

Full details on playing this war like race of lizard men can be found in the chapter on new races in Chirak.



## Hoagarit Lands

**Iron Age, highly aggressive nomadic horse clans**

**Cultural Level:** bronze age-iron age

**Population:** Unknown, but may be as high as 5 million

**Government:** Loose clan structure, with occasional unity under a Khan Warlord

**Rulers:** No dominant ruler presently, but Warlord Mak'ak and Warlord Ahrikan are popular these days.

**Religions:** A mixture of ancestral blood magic and worship of two deities, Yarabe and Yusoka.

**Social Titles:** loose social stratification among slaves, horse-owners, clan leaders, and khan warlords.

**Coinage:** No local coinage. They deal in trade goods and raw materials.

**Allies:** The Hoagarit have some loose trade alliances with the Xoxtocharit and Esterehabau.

**Enemies:** Most everyone else, especially the Legorans, Espaneans, Nubiri, Shokoztoni, and anyone else they march on.

The Hoagarit are a strong, violent people dedicated to warfare and a nomadic life that they have pursued for centuries, or perhaps even longer. The first Hoagarit rode down in to the eastern lands of the Seas of Chirak on a great crusade, following a legendary warlord called Mak'hol. They pillaged and burned their way through the Xoxtocharit territories and sacked the eastern kingdoms they encountered. They utterly devastated the dying coastal kingdom of Old Castonia, and sent the survivors scattering to the winds. And there they stayed, settling in to the coastal hills and plains of the land they came to call home.

The preservationists argue that the Hoagarit are racially descended from the Xoxtocharit, and point to the fact that the Xoxtocharit and Hoagarit maintain trade relations and diplomatic connections even in the present. However, some more radical scholars suggest that both groups descend from a much older race of man, perhaps even from the fabled Sapphire Kingdoms. No one really can say. Still, Xoxtocharit's principle language and the Hoagarit tongue have many similarities, and a man who speaks one but not the other can understand what he hears about half the time.

The Hoagarit themselves have a long, grueling tale of their ancient migration, and how their venerated first warlord Mak'hol led them from an ancient homeland called Sharippan, said to rest at "the edge of the world's curve." Each tribal lord of the Hoagarit claim that that

their bloodline can be traced back to this land, and that each one was spawned from the blood of their sun god, whom they call Yarabe (their name for Pallath, the preservationists have decided) as he was killed by the night god Yusoka (their name for Ga'thon) in the Great Conflict. They say that they were told to look for the realm of life in the Bowl of the World, by the Sea of Life. And so they traveled for generations to the Seas of Chirak, and settled here some centuries ago. They say that it is here in which Yarabe will rise again for his final conflict with Yusoka, and the final battle will begin with the Hoagarit as Yarabe's loyal generals. Preservationists who have made the Hoagarit their specialty like to dismiss such fanciful talk of another apocalypse as the words of the ignorant or savage, for the mere prospect is disturbing.

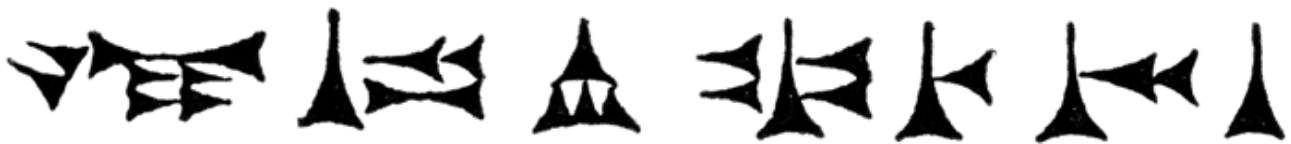
This fatalism is pervasive in the militant Hoagarit culture. They are a dangerous neighbor to all around the, and on occasion a truly powerful warlord has arisen who will lead his tribe on a crusade against neighboring lands and abroad, spending a decade or more in rampaging warfare.

The Hoagarit are motivated by their belief in destiny, and many times now, a Hoagarit man has risen from the ranks to become one of these reaver warlords. This desire for unity suddenly becomes a need to unite all of the people of the Seas of Chirak, and that is when the horde becomes a deadly threat to all men. The last such incursion was stopped by the Legoran people at a great price about a century ago, and the Legorans are deadly enemies of the Hoagarit. Likewise, the Nubirians and Shokoztoni are filled with hatred for the Hoagarit and engage in warfare with any of the nomads who come too close to their lands.

The Hoagarit as a social group are a community of sixty-seven major tribal clans, each one consisting of a few hundred to sometimes a few thousand members. It is believed that there may be as many as a quarter million Hoagarit or more out there, right now.

Each tribal group is dedicated to the art of the horse as a way of living, for warfare, mare's milk, and even meat if needed. They also raise goats and yaks, in large migratory herds. The Hoagarit dwell in yurts and long houses, and will settle for months at a time before moving on. Occasionally, communities will stay put for a year or two. They never engage in agriculture, but the women will harvest nuts, tubers and berries seasonally from natural sources.





## Khulion

The Freeport of Khulion is the only non-Hoagarit community in the land beside the mysterious city of Pale. Khulion is named after the last great Hoagarit overlord to lead the horde against the Legorans year ago, conquering the Shokoztoni in the south and driving his forces all the way to Masiria before being stopped. In fact, it is said that but for a band of Xoxtocharit assassins, Khulion would never have been stopped (though the Legorans like to think they were chiefly responsible).

During his rule, however, Khulion founded his namesake port in a trade agreement with the Nithiadians that brought them many fine steel weapons for their assaults. The port remained viable even after the defeat of the horde and the death of the overlord. It is run in a curiously unique system of rule, dominated by Hoagarit and Nithadian interests. The trade benefits (as well as a very slow cultural infusion of outsiders) have proven highly beneficial, and so the port remains viable. Still, it has been sacked at least once a year now since it

was founded by the more traditionalist clan of the Night Devil's Black Horse Tribe, a radical clan still dedicated to the subjugation and destruction of all non-Hoagarit cultures.

## Hoagarit as Player Characters

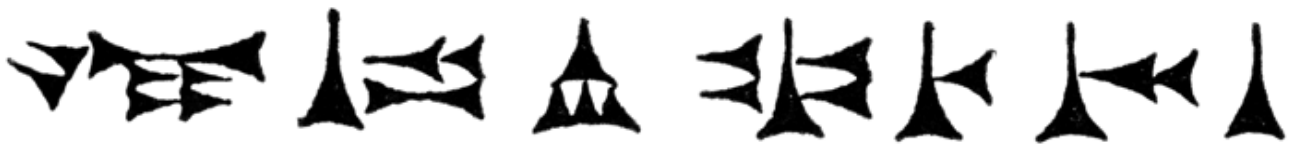
Hoagarit characters are normal humans, with Mongol features and a rabid dedication to the horse in all aspects of life. All Hoagarit PCs must use their human bonus feat to pick Mounted Combat as their feat if possible.

The elite of the Hoagarit are the horse lords, who follow the **Way of the Black Horse** and hold a strange veneration for Yusoka, the Night Devil God. The belief of these elite knights is that they must learn the ways of their enemy to best him, and see Yusoka as the harsh taskmaster against which they must measure up.

Hoagarit have very few arcane spell casters, though not a few warlocks herald from the region, and most of their clerics are shamanic.



*"The Hoagarit warlord Shizvenosos studies his domain"*



## Huron Lands

primitive lands dominated by simple minotaur tribes and other beings

**Cultural Level:** stone age-bronze age

**Population:** unknown, but estimated at around 100,000

**Government:** egalitarian clans

**Rulers:** no central rule.

**Religions:** spiritual elementalism.

**Social Titles:** mostly egalitarian, with tribal leaders chosen for strength and charisma.

**Coinage:** none.

**Allies:** Some trade has been done with the Shaddizhar and Adenach.

**Enemies:** The Huron violently oppose the Nithiadians.

The many minotaur tribes of this land are unfriendly to man, for they have been preyed upon for centuries by the Nithiadians as slave stock. Minotaurs of the Huron lands each belong to a special tribe, and are highly nomadic and pastoral.

Barbarian, druid, warden and ranger classes are very common here. Minotaur mystics are as likely to be sorcerers or monks as druids. They venerate earth spirits and tend to disdain the gods, for they have an ancient past in which their own kind once was participatory in some way in the apocalypse. As such, most minotaur tribes have a shaman who is in touch with the elemental forces, and seeks to draw his divine magic from those elemental beings.

Few have ever crossed the desert and returned to say what was on the other side. Rumors of whole cities of the ancients, preserved in the sand but utterly dead, are pervasive among some quixotic Nithiadian scholars, but the rare minotaur scout who has come to know the Everdread region simply scoffs at such nonsense, and claims no greatness, only death, lies in the deserts.

Certain members of the Luminaires of the Concordance in Espanea claim that the Realm of Dreams was ruptured in key regions of the mortal plane, and they say that the Huron Lands were one such location. If true, then it is considered possible that the "Dreamtime" minotaur shamans speak of in their homeland maybe a real phenomenon, places in the plains and hills of the Huron Lands where gateways to the demiplane of dreams open up and create strange effects.

The wilderness of Huron extends all the way to the coast lands of the Sea of Chirak. Here, the **Jagged Coast** is the northern and western coast land of the region considered part of the greater Huron lands and also part

of Beltraine's territories. The desolate region, with sparse shrubs and few trees is a harsh land, although some minotaur tribes such as the Sandstrider Tribe live uncomplicated lives as fishermen and beachcombers. The Sandstriders are ruled by Elder Melenieux, who seeks the council of the minotaur witch Catharghha.

There is one prominent coastal city in this region, called Morlon. It is a free port, ruled by the estranged sister of Marcus Darego, the king of Espanea. Trissania Darego is more commonly known as the Sea Fox, and her pirate enclave is a safe harbor for any ship of any land.

Inland from the coast can be found a few unusual ruins, including the **Lost City of Eredor**, ruled by the Gnome **Antigonus**. The city is dominated by a gnomish elite, which relies on a willing servitor race called the Slaves of Eredor (**Eredites**), who are descended from Sabiri blood. They have the chalk white skin characteristic of their lineage, but lack the fire of their northern nomadic cousins, preferring a sedentary life instead. In addition, the third largest member of the city's population is a race of tieflings who claim to have descended from Pollidarchus himself.

The **Polliduri Gnomes** are the ruling caste of Eredor, and are secretly pioneers behind efforts to create a permanent elixir to cure the gnomes in this region of the disease of "goblinism" as they call it (amongst themselves only, of course!)

The Jagged Coast is also haunted by the mysterious Behemoth of the Jagged Coast; this immense serpent appears on both land and sea, and terrorizes ships that sail too close to the region. It is in fact a great mechanical land and sea dragon, created by Antigonus, and used to shatter ships that he feels threaten the security of Eredor.

Eredor itself has an ancient guardian who willingly serves the Polliduri gnomes. He is the Minion-Automaton called Morgason, a clockwork animate of unique origin, which appears as a paladin in golden plate, riding a mechanical horse. He will challenge and destroy anyone who seems to be a threat to his ancient city.

Also along this stretch of coast can be found an ancient ziggurat surrounded by immense stone idols called the **Watching Gods**. These immense statues look like giants with immense heads, with luminescent metallic eyes. These ominous relics encircle the **Ziggurat of Pollidarchus**. They have golden eyes, which release awful magical radiation when touched. The watching gods are a warning to all to stay away from the ziggurat.

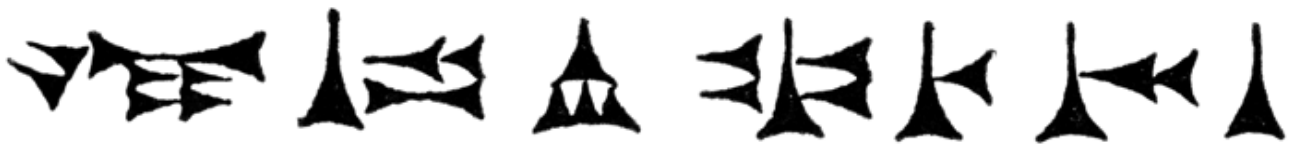


The Ziggurat of Pollidarchus is said by some scholars to contain the entombed body of one of the greatest generals of the apocalypse. Pollidarchus was a member of the near-forgotten race called the Thraedarii, about which almost nothing today is known, save that they were giant-like, four armed vampires with pale skin.

### **Eredor the Name and its Popularity**

The name of the ancient city resonates well among scholars of Chirak, for it was once said to have been the capitol of the Mythric Empire. As a result, there are actually more than a few cities and townships across the world that takes this name for their own. Whether the Eredor of the Huron Lands is, in fact, related to this near-mythical city of old is unknown.





## Kaldinia

**Progressive seafaring culture that permeates the Sea of Chirak**

**Cultural Level:** renaissance

**Population:** unknown, but perhaps a total population between members of 500,000

**Government:** An alliance of city-states and regents

**Rulers:** several (see description)

**Religions:** various, though Kalie'yana is revered by Kaldinian sailors

**Social Titles:** commoner, landowner, knight, baron, count, duke, prince, king

**Coinage:** copper bits, silver pennies, gold pieces

**Allies:** Espanea is often an ally, as is Grelmaine, Sontaniardes, and Esterehabau.

**Enemies:** Likewise, the ally nations are sometimes at war with the Kaldinian alliance. Nithiad has always been in opposition.

The Kaldinians are a loose affiliation of independent city-states that stretch out over several dozen islands. These city-states are united in their independence, resisting all efforts at unification from Espanea, Sontaniardes and Esterehabau.

Kaldinians are a rough lot of rogues, brigands, privateers and pirates who loosely cling together in their collective desire for freedom from others. Rogues, warriors, and sea rangers of all types are frequently found in Kaldinia.

Searching for the Kaldinian kingdom on a map is a tough job, since the Kaldinians are more readily known for their ships and small patchwork fleets than they are any single known land-mass. Some of the cities of the Sontaniardes region claim affiliation with the Kaldinian alliance, for example. Likewise, the western isles in the Grelmanic to Masirian regions are said to contain half a dozen known members of the Kaldinian alliance. The nature of this alliance is such that, if you want to consider yourself an independent seafaring ship, city, or nation, then you swear allegiance to the king of Kaldinia, and (in theory) earn the protection and aid of all other such members so sworn.

This belief in the existence of a king of Kaldinia may be true; it is said he sails from port to port with a fleet of ships, trading, raiding, or doing as he wishes. His name is said to be **Johnus** in one story, **Maeridus** in another. Maybe there is more than one "king." No one can really say, for few men claim to have met this enigmatic figure. More likely, several independent sea captains or city

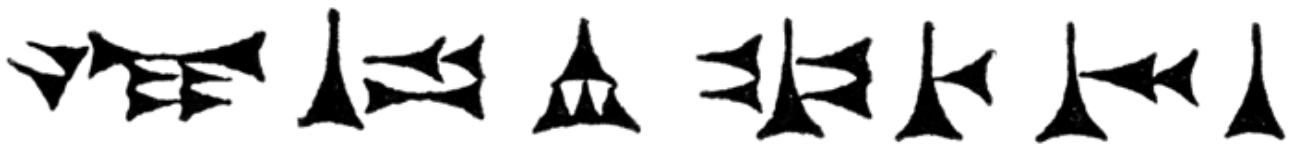
lords claim the honor, and over time, the issue of who the true king is has become progressively more confusing.

## Mordente

The unofficial "capitol" of Kaldinia can be found in the reasonably large island-state of **Mordente**. Here, the city regent named **Braeggos Dendumar** rules with an iron fist on a volcanically active island, with four prosperous but sometimes transient cities under his control. Mordente is said to be a trove of ancient treasures, a portal in to a submerged city, buried beneath the great waves of lava which Mount Kulimbar spews forth every year. An entire subculture of tomb-raiders have developed on the island, fiercely competitive as they seek to find new tunnels which lead back down in to the surprisingly intact subterranean ruins of the forgotten Mythic city beneath. Preservationists and arcanists alike have been known to pay good coin for some of the discoveries, and more than one such raider claims they have seen what appear to be living cultures, of men and humanoids, dwelling in the deeps, keeping animates as slaves. No reliable report has yet surfaced, however. It is known that the ruins which stretch out in to the bay along the coast are occupied by a race of shark men called Skerradi, though little else is known of these beings.

## Valdemar and Pael

Other known members of the Kaldinian alliance are the southern port of **Valdemar**, which has maintained independence from Nithiad for two generations now. Eastward lies the city of **Pael**, which claims ownership of a small island-isthmus region in extremely hostile Hoagarit territory. Pael is ruled by the exiled Xoxtocharit **Meridochus**, a potent necromancer who has lived a hundred years without aging. His city stands only because he is so feared by the nomads of the region. Gradually, traders and sailors came to set up shop around his fortress, finding that Meridochus cared not to impose laws on the people, but was content with using his soldiers and undead to protect the region from outward interference. So long as no one threatens his power, the people of Pael remain safe. The city joined Kaldinia thirty years ago, with the blessing of Meridochus' chief seneschal, **Makrot**, who supervises the City Council.



## Kasdalan

**Southern kingdom of Old Pellucid ruled by the Necromancer Queen**

**Cultural Level:** steel age-renaissance

**Population:** Perhaps 2 million of the living, and at least as many undead some suspect

**Government:** Imperial dynasty

**Rulers:** Lady Poe is and for as far back as the history books say, always was empress.

**Religions:** Lady Poe permits no worship save perhaps to Ga'thon or Shaligon.

**Social Titles:** thralls, peasants, barons, lesser lords, overlords, necromancer lords, generals.

**Coinage:** The copper sun, silver moon, gold crown, platinum royal.

**Allies:** Kasdalan has a loose alliance with Dragos.

**Enemies:** Kasdalan has been a thorn in the side of all Pellucid lands since the old empire fell. Mercurios and Correnstal are enemies, as is Pelaeus and the Skeledani nomads in the south east.

The Kasdalani Empire in the Deep South is a powerful nation ruled by a Necromantic cult, at the head of which is the ancient Sorceress called **Lady Erissa Poe**. Poe enforces her rule with her many children, and controls her mages though the promise of necromantic immortality. This is a dangerous place to live in, heavily oppressed and ready for war against hostile and fearful neighbors.

Lady Poe is said to have twelve daughters, possibly more, all spawned from strange rites and consummated by lovers both undead and soon to be found dead afterward. The most legendary of Lady Poe's exes is Zam Redar, a Thousandspawn whom she married and manipulated in to leading a vast army many centuries ago to conquer and unite the old Pellucid Empire and beyond. When Zam Redar threatened her power, Lady Poe took the immortal godspawn and cast him down the gullet of an immense desert worm.

Lady Poe herself will tolerate no male suitor to the throne, nor will she allow a son to be birthed; she has used her magic, if necessary, to alter the sex of the child in the womb, or killed it on birth if necessary.

In a feud with the avatar Mardieur Mardieux, Poe lost many of her children in conflict; the minotaur who sought the path of Akquinaris took a certain pleasure in dispatching her agents and her daughters when traveling through her lands, and thwarting her necromantic schemes against Mercurios in the north. She has one

known daughter who has recoiled from her mother's ways and (while still pursuing necromancy) seeks a way to atone for her family. This daughter is named **Arvyllia Poe**, and she travels with the rough Company of Khorst in the Syrgian lands to the far north.

Poe rules from **Mordren**, the capitol of her domain around the black waters of Lake Astrahar. Her chief general, Lord Cervicus, stands ready to engage in conquest or defense in the fabled Bastion of **Castle Lost**. Other prominent cities along the lake include Polahar, Tursos, and Pitch. South of the lake is the great swamp, in which the dreaded City of Skulls, an ancient college of necromancy, can be found. It is said that the first Dragosian necromancers fled from this city two centuries ago to start their own kingdom, and have feared to look back upon the region ever since, knowing what terrors can be found within.

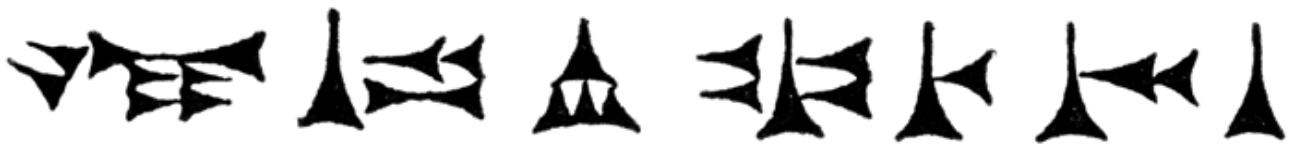
Kasdalan may be so blighted because it rests in a region which was profoundly affected by Shaligon during the apocalypse, and some claim that the throne of the old empire from which Shaligon was most venerated could be found in the region. Beyond Kasdalan in the utter south lies a no man's land which stretches in to territories feared by all, including the Weeping Lands, the Dreaming Plains, and the Dark Empire of the Seeping God.

### Lost Tales: Kal Vassos, Zam Redar, and of the rise of Lady Poe

*Spoiler Alert! Player's who read the following section should feign ignorance around their GM, lest grudge monsters beat the hell out of you.*

Once, centuries ago, Kal and Zam were young wizard apprentices studying under the tutelage of a now long-dead but great man named Tykarnias. Tykarnias was a rebellious soul himself, and he was perhaps overly permissive of his adopted sons and apprentices, letting them delve in to mysteries and magic perhaps best left untouched.

Kal and Zam were both orphans at a young age. Kal was an infant child found abandoned in the Mythric Isles by Tykarnias towards the end of his adventuring days. When discovered, he was preserved, seemingly perfectly, in a time-distortion bubble. Tykarnias deduced that Kal was, in fact, a child of true Mythric blood, and that he had been saved from death as a last act of defiance by his parents, using a time-displacement spell.



Tykarnias in interacting with the bubble ended the spell, releasing the young child to a world far removed from his own time.

Zam Redar was the son of a chieftain who ruled a clan of loggers along the Legoran coast, and by the age of three he displayed profound natural powers of sorcery. Tykarnias found the child two months after his expedition to the Mythic Isles, while moving along the coast of Legora in search of a famous ruin. The village in which Zam was found had been razed to the ground in an attack by Blood-Drencher clan orcs, and all of the villagers had been slaughtered. Curiously, Zam was unharmed, but a hundred and more orcs around him had all been slain. There was a unique anima radiating an aura of dark magic around the child, and Tykarnias could sense a true sorcerer's blood within the child. He adopted Zam as well, and named him after the chieftain of the village, whom he had known before in life on previous visits, for the child, bore the marks of leadership. In later years Tykarnias would learn that the chieftain's wife had encountered a dark force within the woods of Legora, and that this entity had manifested as a black knight with whom she had frequent relations, until she became pregnant. Such was Zam Redar's origins, though they were not to be known until much later.

Both children, in time, proved to be uniquely gifted in the magical arts, albeit in two different manners. Zam Redar's perpetual anima seemed steeped in dark sorcery, which flowed naturally through the child's blood. Kal Vassos was born in to natural power as well, and had about him an aspect of invocation, coupled with a natural penchant for wizardly lore. Tykarnios could not have been luckier to have two such gifted apprentices, though in time they taxed even his ability to keep up.

Tykarnios lived in a remote keep along the borders of what are now Mercurios and Nubirion, where he traded with all folks of the time. In his day Mercurios was a province of the Pellucid Empire, and Nubirion was a wild, untamed land with only the mysteries of the Yellow City to penetrate its vastness. The region was rife with ancient magic, a legacy of the cataclysm, and Tykarnios relished his studies in such. He was no arcanist, but his methods would not have been approved by the budding order of the Preservationists in far Eristantopolis.

The boys grew up under the tutelage of Tykarnios for magic, while their father's retired adventuring ally, the Pellucid knight Morricks aided them in more physical arts, such as swordplay and horsemanship, neither of which were as good at such. Still, they did try. A third tutor, the elder priestess Nimrasa of southern Ur provided them

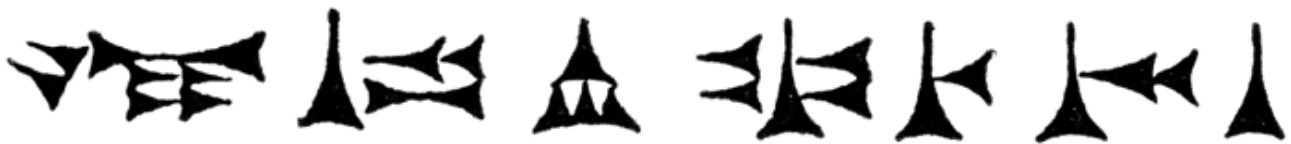
with proper studies in religion and history. Nimrasa, though forbidden from marriage by her religion (for she was dedicated to the worship of Laddaskar) nonetheless was dedicated to Tykarnios and had stayed by his side for many decades. She had never borne children, and could not. The two adopted sons were a secret joy for her.

Life went well for this curious family of wizards and their adventuring allies who periodically visited. When the boys turned of age, they were tasked with journeying to the Pellucid Capitol, known even then as Mercurios. There, Tykarnios intended that they present themselves to the emperor, and that in turn they would dedicate themselves to him and his rule.



*Lady Poe*

When Kal and Zam arrived, a journey in its own right for the two who had seen less of the world in person than in books, they did indeed present themselves to the service of the emperor, who was delighted to have the two sons of his valued ally and advisor as his new young agents. It was during this time that Zam Redar met the young Lady Erissa Poe, then princess of her father of Kasdalan, the King Gilharad Poe, who was negotiating a treaty with the Pellucids to insure peace and safe trade between their borders. Zam and Erissa became enamored with one another almost immediately, and did a terrible job of disguising their relationship. Indeed, not two weeks after the talks of treaty began, Gilharad left in anger when he learned of the tryst his daughter was having. The damage, however, had been done.



Kal Vassos remained loyal to the king, and petitioned Lord Kaledon himself for entrance in to his exclusive tutelage. He later went on to become the true advisor of the king when his father perished, and one day would be approached by the Order of the Chronomancers, who recognized his unique tether to the time stream, for entry in to their order.

Zam Redar, however, renounced his father's name, and after being expelled from the courts of Pellucid in shame for his dalliance with Lady Poe, he set out on his own, to explore the world. He traveled for many years, and in his quests he discovered many powerful and ancient artifacts. Though none know for sure, Kal Vassos is certain that Zam was responsible for Tykarnios's death, as Zam later showed he had acquired their father's Robes of Wizardry, an artifact otherwise unattainable.

It was in the deep south of the Everdread Desert that Zam Redar found the Orb of Dragonkind, hidden in a ruined fortress where a last stand of the Betrayer Gods was made. Here he also met a powerful, ancient being named Skaddras, a Shadow Dragon which recognized Zam Redar for what he was: a Thousandspawn, a child of the chaos god Ga'thon. This was revealed to Zam Redar, who upon discovering his nature, realized his true potential was as yet undiscovered...

Meanwhile, Lady Poe was the youngest child and only daughter of her father, Gilharad, and the Poe line had always been prolific, such that there were seven sons ahead of her who were destined to rule Kasdalan. It had always been a peculiar trait of Kasdalani blood that the women tended to have a strong talent for wizardry, and Erissa Poe was no exception. Her development of these talents was interrupted by the birth of her bastard child, a daughter she named Tyrea. Tyrea was unusual, and could speak as an adult by the age of one. Indeed, it seemed that Tyrea was a Thousandspawn, born of Zam Redar's bloodline, and that unlike her father, she was fully aware of her nature from infancy. She told Lady Poe that she was destined for greatness, and that she would teach her how to manifest her destiny. Shortly after her child turned one year old, rumors of diablerie and witchcraft grew rampant, and Lady Poe was forced to flee with her daughter or be destroyed.

Ten years passed and in this time Zam Redar grew powerful, Kal Vassos joined the Chronomancers in studying the secrets of the time stream, and Lady Poe fled in to the swamps of Kasdalan, where she met the death cults of the Apocalypticists, who revered only the passing of the soul and the eternity of death. Each became important in a different fashion, and at last, after much time had passed, destinies once again

converged.

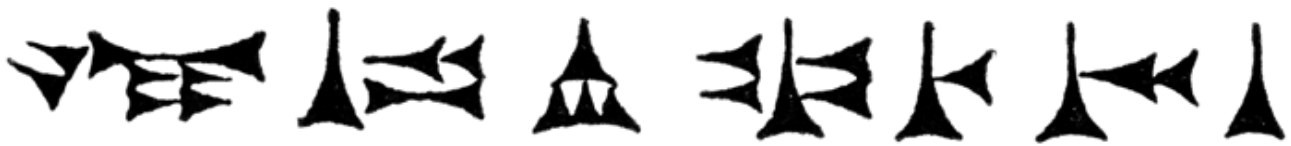
Zam Redar, now powerful in a manner he had not previously imagined, sought out his true father, the Black Knight Voskos Redar of Legora. The two fought, for it difficult for Thousandspawn to tolerate one another. He nearly slew his father out of mere spite, choosing to steal most of his magical powers, instead. He then journeyed southward, after experiencing a sudden vision of Lady Poe, and remembering his lustful encounters with her.

When Zam Redar reached Kasdalan in the south, it was with a small army of draconian and mercenaries at his command. He quickly set about using his sorceries to depose and slay the elder Gilharad before the king even knew he was threatened, and then quickly invaded the land while its leadership was in disarray. Upon reaching the capitol, he declared that the rightful heir to the throne would be the first Kasdalani true blood to best him in combat.

One by one, the nobles, knights and princes of Kasdalan fought Zam Redar, each perishing against the man who wore chaos-inscribed armor, upon a steed that was at once horse-like and draconic. It was not until a sharp-eyed woman with raven black hair, now twenty five years of age with a young daughter at her side, that Zam Redar was fairly beaten. Matching sorcery for sorcery she soundly demolished his defenses and he immediately bowed before her, granting Lady Poe the rule of the kingdom. Lady Poe, knowing he had let her win, bade him to stay within Kasdalan, and be her captain of the armies. He consented.

Thus was born the reign of Lady Poe. In the decades to come, Kasdalan would be shaped as she desired, as she learned much from her captain and lover, as well as her half-god daughter. In time, her quiet, cautious ways coupled with her own profound instinct for magic allowed her to become more powerful than either Tyrea of Zam. Thanks in part to her participation in the death cult; she even learned the secret of conquering death.

Kasdalan grew powerful under the reign of Poe, and after a decade she consummated her well-known affair with Zam in marriage. She and Zam had several more daughters, and though it was never known if she had male children, most were sure any so born would be slain. Eventually, with seven strong daughters and her husband, it was decided that Kasdalan deserved to rule the world, and so the great and ancient war against Pellucid and the other neighbors of their kingdom began. Decades later, the Kasdalani would be the greatest nation in the world, having laid claim by force to more land than any post-cataclysmic realm. It was only hubris



that laid low Zam and Poe, and their empire with them.

It began with Tyrea, the first daughter, who was loved by both, until the second daughter, and then the third, and so forth. Tyrea was jealous, and despite her vast knowledge and magic, she still had a child's sense of emotion and jealousy. She attempted one day to slay her sisters in a fit of anger, and her parents ultimately banished her. She was sent to the far corners of Kasdalan, and locked in a tower protected by demons under Poe's command. Poe had grown powerful, but feared her daughter, who had taught her so much.

Tyrea eventually grew wise when she realized her prison was too strong for her to escape, and she seduced the demon Mazradache that had been tasked as her jailer. She had a child of mixed demonic and divine blood. The girl she named Tythia, who grew to become a comely beauty. Tythia she raised carefully, grooming the child to insure the ultimate revenge against her parents, and eventually she sent her daughter forth in to the world, to play the role of a witch and lady knight in the service of Zam Redar's conquering armies.

By this time, Zam Redar had spent forty years ravaging the land, and he had brought Pellucid to its knees. He had taken residence in his father's now abandoned keep on the edge of Nubirion while he contemplated whether to move north or east with his armies, and it was then that he noticed Tythia, who had served loyally as a shield maiden in his army, and now commanded her own company of conscripts from the region. In turn, Tythia seduced him, and convinced him to journey eastward, toward the Sapphiritic Kingdoms in search of great wealth. In the midst of her seduction she spirited away the orb of Dragonkind, replacing it with a false artifact, as proof of the seduction.

With the betrayal complete, Tythia contacted her mother magically, and let her know that the deception was a success. Tyrea, in turn, arranged for word to get back to her mother, Lady Poe, that Zam Redar had betrayed her love. Though doubtful at first, Poe soon came to believe when Tyrea presented her with the Orb of Dragonkind. Enraged, it is said that Lady Poe banished the prison tower and its captor to the Far Realms.

Lady Poe, so enraged that she could not bear herself, quickly fell upon her old sense of retribution, which she had developed in the old days thanks to her father and brothers. She journeyed ahead of Zam Redar's position and deep in to the Skeledani Lands, where she negotiated a treaty with the Skeledani in exchange for their loyalty. She then called upon the dragon lords using the orb, and negotiated with them a betrayal as well, and in exchange she promised to free them from the

orb's control. Lady Poe then arranged for an ambush of Zam Redar's forces, once they were east of the Kyurtrain Mountains and deep in to the journey eastward. She chose her three most loyal daughters with the greatest talent for magic, and when the time was right, they struck.

In the end, Zam Redar's own legions were cast in to disarray, unwilling to fight against their queen, and Zam Redar was left to fend for himself with his most loyal legions and his dragons, who then turned upon him, and though his sorcery was enough to drive them back, it left him depleted and weak. It was then that Lady Poe came upon him, weakened upon the battlefield, and promised him an end to this. She assaulted him, as did her daughters, with powerful magic, until Zam Redar was spent and unconscious. They placed him in an ancient sarcophagus, said to have held the body of a lost god. This container was made of primordial material that resisted magic, and Poe bound it with even stronger chains and spells. As she placed him in the sarcophagus, she reached out and ripped from him the anima which had been with him since childhood, and bundled it in to her womb with dark sorcery.

In to this coffin she cast the Orb of Dragonkind and his other artifacts, to keep her promise to the dragons. She then carried the sarcophagus southward, to the Dreaming Plains, where she called up one of the ancient Great Wyrms of the earth, and used her magic to force the worm to swallow the coffin whole. The ancient earth lord then returned to the bowels of the earth, not to be seen again for several centuries. So ended the first reign of Zam Redar.

When Lady Poe was done with her vengeance, she realized that the mistress of her husband, Tythia, had fled. She looked among her most vile knights and agents, and found the undying elf Orgain, whom she sent to find and destroy the woman, lest she cause more trouble for her grandmother in the future.

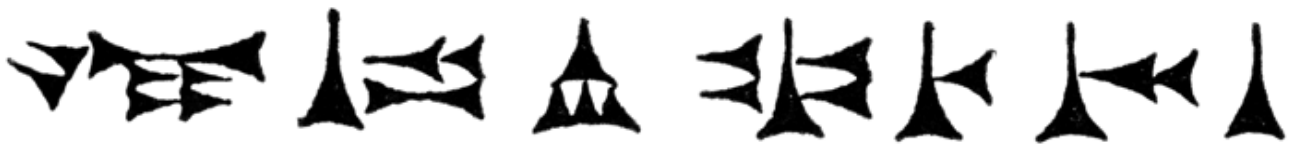
Lady Poe went on to rule Kasdalan to the present day, and she gave birth to several more daughters, twelve in all, using the anima of chaotic energy that she stole from Zam Redar. She was so bitter about the experience, that she declared that no males in her kingdom would be allowed to be born who displayed sorcerous talent, and such would be put to death. She made the death cult the state religion, and dispersed the armies of Zam Redar's reign, caring not to rule so vast an empire, and seeing dissent fomenting in every corner of the empire. In time, Kasdalan's borders shrunk to what they are today, and new kingdoms arose from the ashes of Old Pellucid.



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Young Zam Redar and Tythia



## Legoran Kingdoms

Early Iron Age society of northern agrarian feudal kingdoms

**Cultural Level:** iron age

**Population:** 1-2 million estimate

**Government:** four clan-based jarldoms called Carton, Dorishk, Tabanad, and Kolidania

**Rulers:** several rulers including Molvarson of Carton, Grubal of Dorishk, Gerthos the Wise of Tabanad, and Mitara the Warrior Queen of Kolidania.

**Religions:** Legoran faith is a unique form of elemental and spiritual worship, mixed with totem magic (see description below for more info).

**Social Titles:** slaves, commoners, nobles (land owners) and chief-kings (jarls).

**Coinage:** the winter (copper), spring (silver) summer (gold) and fall (electrum) pieces.

**Allies:** Legorans seek few allies, but trade with Espaneans and Nithadians alike. They have some minor relations with the cannesh of the utter north, and the Syrgians.

**Enemies:** Hoagarit and Legorans do not mix. They are similarly unimpressed with Masirians.

The Legorans are a proud, tough people, dedicated to protecting their way of life and pursuing the beliefs of their gods, spirits, and ancestors. They are comparable to a number of different barbarian cultures on Earth, but the Hittites, Celts, Vikings, and Olmec might all be drawn from for good comparisons. However, no single group is particularly representative of what the Legoran life is like. That is best understood by the following descriptions.

The Legorans are socially stratified into slaves, commoners, nobles, and chief kings. The average man can hope, within his lifetime, to rise up in rank and achieve a better status for himself, with the exception of most slaves, which are usually the prisoners of enemies who must serve at least seven years before gaining any freedom. Legorans are patriarchal, and the household unit revolves around the man. Few women adventure in Legoran society.

Legoran Clans are also divided by animal motifs, the animal motif representing the perceived strengths of the most popular patriarch ancestors of the clan. Common clan motifs are Raven, Bear, Otter, Wolf, Mammoth, Sloth, Sabre-tooth, and Great Lizard. To distinguish between the many clans with common animal themes, a second, descriptive

designation is usually given, such as "Fast Swimming Otter Clan," or "Great Fishing Bear Clan". Even "Enemy Trodding Mammoth Clan" out there!

The Legorans have outstanding wood carved work, with strong bird-motifs, and the images of entwining elemental figures from their religious teachings. The Legorans are also known to have some of the finest noble warriors, comparable to the Thanes and Myrmidons of Earth.

Legorans have a complicated hierarchy of beings that arrive from Gathka, the Earth Mother. From Gathka were born four entities: Airacleds, Fauraeleds, Darahels, and Hyrohels (Air, Fire, Earth, and Water). These four are associated with what are seen as the four communities of spirits (Air; mephits and fey folk, Fire: giants and dwarves, Earth: draconians, Water: man and his ancestors). Each group is watched over by a particular god: Klthruhgak, god of War and Fire; Shikanak, goddess of the Sea and Man; Khosunak, god of Storms and Air; Gathka, mother goddess served by the draconic beings. In addition, there is Shikanak's son, seen as the one who taught man to survive, and the god of the hunt. His name is Gothisku. Finally, out of each of these gods came a portion which, combined, formed the entity Shaligon, a dark god of evil and malice. Shaligon has a part of himself in each of the other gods, but also exists as a single entity.

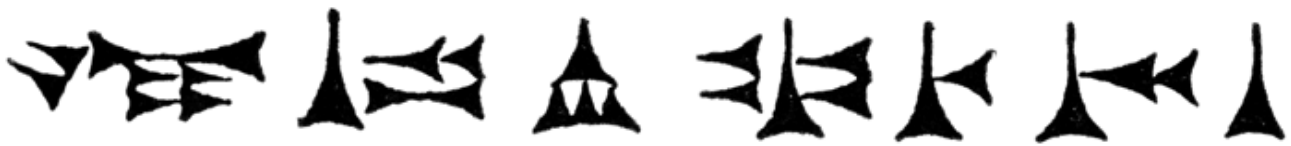
There are four major Legoran kingdoms: **Carton, Dorishk, Tabanad, and Kolidania**. Each has united in times of stress, and held wars against each other at other times. Their relationships are in a constant state of flux, depending upon which clans are in control of the resources.

### Characters from Legora

Barbarians are the default class of the Legorans. Indeed, the barbarian character is almost seminal to the way of the Legoran lifestyle.

#### Rangers

Legoran Rangers are part of an elite order of knights which claim fealty to the True King of the Woods, the fabled Gothisku, Lord of the Hunt and ancient teacher of man. The rangers revere this wild demiurge, and if he favorably aspects upon a living king, they will also ally themselves with that king. The order of rangers in Legora is also known to practice magic, and may choose to learn something of the ways of druids or clerics in the process (through multi-classing).



### Legoran Warlocks

Warlocks in the Legoran realms are special, considered touched by the spirit plane, and are believed to be mad. They are often thought of as witches and warlocks.

### Legoran Wizards

All Legoran spell casters learn to cast magic through one of three methods, or sometimes even a combination of them. Spirit Magic is a common method of spell casting, using a rune totem to gain the ways of Spirit Magic (see the Magic Section). Through this magic they learn to use a spirit totem to gain their spells, reaching in to the spirit world.

Legoran wizards can also call upon a unique spirit, called a fetch. A fetch is a supernatural being that works in much the same manner as a familiar, but takes on an unusual supernatural quality. A fetch might look like a small shadowy form, clay homunculi, an invisible worm, a horned serpent, a wooden doll that moves, and so forth.

Beginning wizards of Legoras automatically start with a Fetch, which is a special form of living implement magic item, and may take implement mastery with it (granting them their Charisma bonus for saves once per day as a free action). They also favor the Staff as an implement.

| Fetch   |           | Level 1+        |           |
|---|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| <i>An object of variable dimensions; usually a stone with runes or a small carved wood figurine.</i>  |           |                 |           |
| <b>Level 1</b>  | <b>+1</b> | <b>Level 16</b> | <b>+4</b> |
| <b>Level 6</b>  | <b>+2</b> | <b>Level 21</b> | <b>+5</b> |
| <b>Level 11</b>   | <b>+3</b> | <b>Level 26</b> | <b>+6</b> |
| <b>Implement (fetch)</b>  |           |                 |           |
| <b>Enhancement:</b> Attack rolls and damage rolls   |           |                 |           |
| <b>Critical:</b> +1D6 damage per plus   |           |                 |           |
| <b>Power:</b> Power of the Fetch  |           |                 |           |
| <i>You touch the fetch to gain extra magical power..</i>  |           |                 |           |
| <b>Daily – Arcane</b>   |           |                 |           |
| <b>Free Action – Personal</b>   |           |                 |           |
| <b>Effect:</b> The legoran mage using the fetch may use its daily power to restore one Encounter or Daily spell he has already used, without having to rest.  |           |                 |           |
| <b>Power:</b> A fetch is a tiny magical construct, and has 10 hit points. It shares the defenses of the wizard who owns it. The fetch has A Str, Dex and Con of 10, and an Int, Wis and Cha of 13. It has no natural attacks. |           |                 |           |
| <b>Power:</b> As a standard action the wizard can look through the eyes of his fetch to see what it sees. Radius of one mile.   |           |                 |           |

## Maegar

### Barbarian steppelanders of the North

**Cultural Level:** Iron Age barbarians

**Population:** approximately 100,000

**Government:** tribal chieftains and city states ruled by self-proclaimed kings

**Rulers:** No single ruler; popular warlords include Sarados, Axtan, Charadas of Andos, and Menolixar the Bloody

**Religions:** the Legoran pantheon

**Social Titles:** loose social cast based on earned rank through battle and deceit

**Coinage:** the winter (copper), spring (silver) summer (gold) and fall (electrum) pieces, same as Legoras.

**Allies:** Maegar is barely a region united by its own mish-mash of cultures, but its chieftains and warlords try to maintain open relations with Syrgia and Xoxtocharit.

**Enemies:** Despite cultural similarities, the Maegar war regularly with Legoras, and spend as much time battling their allies when provoked. They are strong enemies of the Hoagarit to the south.

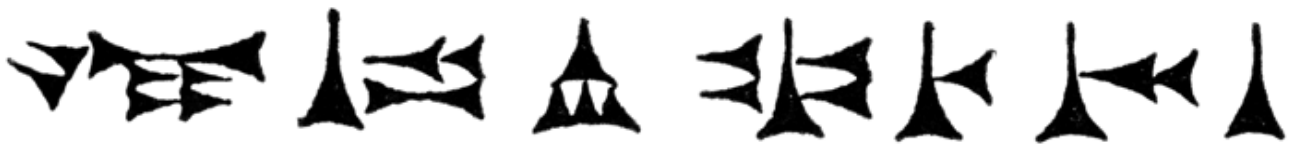
The loose affiliation of clans in the region of Maegar does not recognize any formal borders, either between themselves or other nations. Roughly ten barbarian chieftains, self-proclaimed warlords and oligarchic wise men seem to rule the disparate clans of this region. The only noticeable bastion of culture lies in the Freeport of Andos, which rests in a critical juncture along the overland trade routes and the Northern Seas.

Maegar culture is a curious mishmash of its neighbors, with a close resemblance to the Legorans in the west and the Syrgians in the north. Some components of Xoxtocharit culture even make it in to the region, and the demon god cults, while feared and reviled in public, are privately worshiped with sacrifice in the hope that they will offer up powers the Legoran gods do not.

Maegar have an intense hatred of the Hoagarit, and seasonally seek to ride south to engage in large scale war games with their nomadic neighbors. They are also prone to frequent raids in to the Legoran kingdoms, although few warlords of Maegar would seek to confront the Syrgians, who they grudgingly respect.

### The City of Andos

Lord Charadas (of mixed Syrgian and Maegar descent) rules Andos. Charadas uses his cultural affiliations with the Syrgians and Maegar to keep fluid open trade between overland and coastal routes going through



Andos. He is a fair regent, but maintains a strong militia and standing defense to insure the city's continued freedom from foreign influences. His relations with Xoxtocharit are cooler, but the open trade policy is still avidly pursued by many Xoxtocharit merchants.

Andos is a Freeport with mixed ties to Syrgia, Astrual, and Maegar. Andos is regarded as a safe harbor for all northern kingdoms, although it has cool relations with the coastal city states of Xoxtocharit. The city is primarily human in mix, with a small population of dwarves, elves (frost elves of the Nypharinian tribe), halflings, gnomes, tieflings and dragonborn. It has an unusually high percentage of animates in its midst, although no one knows where these animates arrive from, and they do not say.

### Locations of Interest:

- *The Wailing Dog Tavern* (major gathering spot for mercenaries)
- *The Black Wren Inn* (favorite wayside in for travelers and merchants)
- *The Palace* (located adjacent to the bay, on a rocky overlook)
- *Murderer's Row* (in the slums, where the thieves' guild and the Ebon Ankh work)
- *The Pillars of Remembrance* (a vast necropolis built by the Apocalypticists as a church of remembrance)
- *The Temple of Hun'hunal* (built only two years ago, a ziggurat managed by Xoxtocharit pilgrims)

### The Ebon Ankh

This order maintains a guild branch within the city, a select brotherhood of assassins and thieves who operate under an ancient covenant. The highest ranks of the Ebon Ankh are actually necromancers and diabolists who serve the Demon Gods of Xoxtocharit, and use their somewhat nebulous but tolerated standing within the city to further the ends of the 113. Chief patron among their deities is the mysterious one called the Life Taker, whose symbol is, in fact, the black ankh in reverse.

### The Cult of Hun'hunal

This cult has captured the interest of Lord Charadas, who has joined it and let them build a new temple on top of the Old Temple Hill, where it is said a lost cathedral of the ancient god Akquinarios once stood.

The cultists are a mystery, and they have placed four

immense dolmen-style standing stones outside of the city walls, about a mile apart from one another. They engage in weekly pilgrimages to these stones. They are also importing vast amounts of marble and other stone from distant quarries to complete the temple, and have hired the legendary sculptor Estedanio Veramas of Esterehabau to craft a giant likeness of their god in the center of the temple.

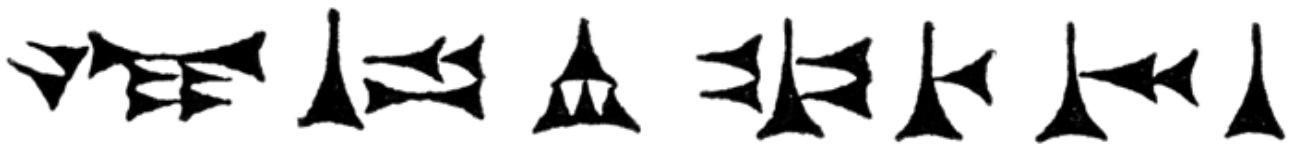
Rumors abound that the cultists engage in ritual sacrifice. Some claim that there is a vast cavern reachable only by the catacombs of the old graveyard in which the cultists sacrifice humans and others to their supposed god. Many in the city feel that it is another one of the 113 masquerading as a deity, as they are prone to do. A large number of citizens of Andos have converted to the god's worship, and attend the open-air events that happen weekly, and are filled with garish ceremonial dances. A few wonder that the temple is guarded very carefully by satyrs and minotaurs, who themselves cause trouble wandering the city streets.

### Other Personalities in Andos

There are at least two distinct personalities in the city of Andos: Lady Ennata Poe and her beloved elder father Zam Redar, who has fled to this distant city while he recovers from the injuries he sustained two years ago. He came here under the invitation of the only daughter he has that remains loyal to him.

Villa Redar is located on the outskirts of the city, outside of the walls, and is itself under construction, a veritable mini-fortress in its own right. Unbeknownst to most, he has placed it over an especially labyrinthine region of the lower dark, where Zam Redar had called upon the service of dark races to help construct his new lair. These beings have disturbed many other local denizens, including the troglodyte clans in the region that have now migrated in to the sewers and catacombs beneath the city proper.

***On The Map:*** *Andos is located on the southernmost tip of the Glittering Ocean to the north, and can be found on the north-east corner of the Sea of Chirak main map (East Side).*



**Random Encounters in Andos:** DMs can use this table to spice up any wandering adventures in the city of Andos, which is a major hub between the northern oceanic traffic and overland traffic southward, to the Sea of Chirak region.

## D% Random Encounters in Andos

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 01-04 | A processional group of cultists to Hun'hunal create a big row   |
| 05-08 | Drunken gang of minotaur and satyr temple guards causing trouble   |
| 09-12 | Ebon Ankh press gang looking for young rowdies to round up   |
| 13-16 | Xoxtocharit pochteca (merchants) and entourage pass by   |
| 17-20 | Legoran traders with pelts and wares, plus a talking badger for sale   |
| 21-24 | Cannesh folk arrive with wares, but an argument is erupting  |
| 25-28 | Syrgian merchantman looking for fresh sailors to go north  |
| 29-32 | Orcish warlord Churzach under invitation of the governor touring the city w/bride  |
| 33-36 | Xoxtocharit princess passing through on way to wedding event   |
| 37-40 | Astrualite mercenary company arrives, with tale of a battle against Hoagarit   |
| 41-44 | Maegar chieftain and crew visiting city, causing minor trouble   |
| 45-48 | Preservationist missionary teaching children and the homeless  |
| 49-52 | Arcanist meeting other members of his order looking for bodyguards; he has a unique device he is worried they will try to steal  |
| 53-56 | A lone ogre arrives, offering a magic carpet that he says has a "few leagues left in it"   |
| 57-60 | Animate and guardian moving through city, working for Kraeytor Zahn  |
| 61-64 | Kaz'Duli tribesmen arrive to trade goods; include a captive wild devil ape with them   |
| 65-68 | A public execution is underway; the criminal is a northern sea pirate named Rezendar. He begs for revenge against injustices committed against him and his men by sea captain Gozeman.   |
| 69-72 | A giant sea turtle with a tiny city on its back arrives in port, crewed by sahuagin traders  |
| 73-76 | A woman named Zythatra is accosted by four assassins; attackers claim she is a devil!  |
| 77-80 | A dragon flies overhead, then lands and enters the palace in human form, an elf named Midra.   |
| 81-84 | Nypharinian elves arrive, to trade their ice wrought goods for more mundane items.   |
| 85-88 | A rugged Espanean soldier named Estovardo with a small crew of mercenaries mistakes the PCs for his mark: thieves who stole a valuable treasure from Barcen, a book of rituals   |
| 89-92 | A strange ice ship from Pale arrives, crewed entirely by ice golems and a strange trio of sorcerers. The lead sorcerer is an eladrin woman named Veria Athantonaes. They are looking for adventurers willing to travel to Pale to confront the legendary Ice Lich Khezdra'Numak  |
| 93-96 | A mad cultist spewing gibberish draws runic symbols of Piscrael over and over again on various walls, occasionally stopping to speak in Tradespeak that he "Will soon be free from his watery grave."  |
| 97-00 | Gnoll traders arrive outside of town, and beg for trade opportunities. They have woolly rhinos in their midst, and offer various skins, furs, and stolen goods from the lower dark. They have a trio of slaves, including a blonde eradariin elf named Lobos, a half-orc woman named Xatha, and A severely beaten mind-flayer called Quixsar, who appears to have been lobotomized! Quixsar begs for help from any who see him, offering riches for those who help him return to glory and gain revenge against his kin for doing this to him. |



## Masiria

**Ancient, Caste Based steel age society of decadent near-immortals**

**Cultural Level:** decadent steel age

**Population:** approximately 1.5 million

**Government:** Hereditary Imperialism

**Rulers:** Queen Mythistir and the Twelve Warlords

**Religions:** Civic deities such as Hylmalon and Kylgunor

**Social Titles:** See the description below. Masirians have a rigid caste system and many titles.

**Coinage:** copper dekats, silver rukels, gold pylams, platinum medar, and erabel electrums

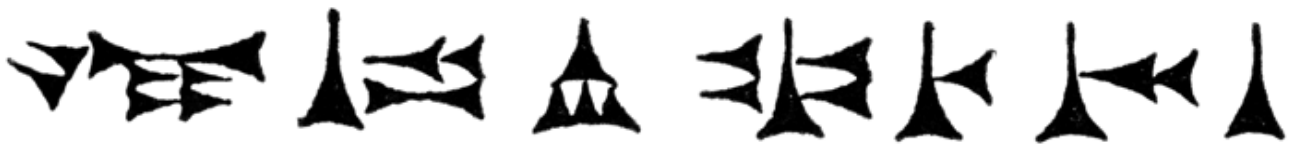
**Allies:** Masiria has alliances with the City of the White Desert, Grelmaine, and Espanea.

**Enemies:** Masiria has nebulous relations with Nithiad, and wars regularly with the Legorans.

Masiria is an eastern neighbor to the Legoran Kingdoms. While small by comparison to its neighbors,

but powerful in its concentration of resources, Masiria remains one of the strongest, longest lasting kingdoms of the Realms. There are only seven major cities within the blasted, desert realm of the Masirian territory, but each great city is venerable, strong, and steeped in antiquity.

Masirians fought a great war long ago, shortly after the Apocalypse, in which few survived. The ancient, long-lived society was fractured in to several factions. The traditionalists dwell in their native kingdoms, a barren land sucked dry of life from their war along the northern shores of the Sea of Chirak. The Arcanists are a vicious faction, now almost cult-like in its following, which has spread throughout many kingdoms as a hidden order of mages who seek to reclaim the lost power of old for themselves. Finally, the Antiquarians of Masiria are a small but dedicated sect of explorers and researchers, who work in alliance with the Preservationists to chart the post-Apocalyptic world and uncover the lost



knowledge of the old kingdoms, so that all may benefit from it.

These cities cluster around the great **Lake of Katanak**, and the **Myran Delta region**. In the Katanak region can be found the **City of Temples, Castantopolis**, said to be the oldest city in the world (it is built atop the ruins of an even more ancient, pre-apocalyptic city). Nearly as ancient, but post apocalypse is **Dystrapolis** along the Myran Delta, a city that deals with frequent seasonal deluges from the river. The ancient sorceress **queen Mythistir**, the Masirian empress, rules over both of these major cities, and has a palace in each. She is said to be over a thousand years old, and rules through the **Twelve Warlords**, her husbands, to enforce the ancient caste system that Masirian society is mired in.

The Masirians are more than human, said by some to have infused their blood with that which was spilled by the wounded gods at the apocalypse. More cynical and realistic sages suggest that it was the blood of demons from which Masirians acquired their unusual traits and longevity. Masirian nobility seem to have endless life spans to mortal men, and even the commoners are given to a prolonged life which usually ends in death through the hardship of their caste. Likewise, most Masirians display at least a nominal predilection to magic, and even the simplest of the Masirian culture can perform some minor incantations with little effort.

In spite of the longevity of their kind and their affinity for magic, Masirians are so mired in their caste system that only the highest echelons of the elite are allowed any practical benefits in lifestyle from magical talents, and the common classes are suppressed in any magical development or use. Some suspect this is to insure that the caste system carries on as it has for a thousand years. Others suspect that there is a sort of malignant fear among the Masirians of their own kind and what they, as individuals, could be capable of. In a strange way, the Empress and her warlords are almost like keepers of the decadent society they oversee, insuring that no stark ember jumps from the carefully tended fire to start a raging inferno.

Masirians are considered the best architects in the world, and are only marginally rivaled by the Nithiadians. Even the Nithiadians admit to the architectural supremacy of the Masirians, however, and they often send their architects to the Masirian cities to study the constructs of the masters.

The finest ancient architecture of the Masirians can be found in the basin of the Dead Sea, where the remnants of the most ancient cities of the Masirians, predating the revolution of the Arcanists, weather away the millennia.

Here, ancient necropolises, pyramids, ziggurats, and other constructs dot the land, all filled with adventure and mystery.

The Masirians have mastered stonework canals, complicated water ducts, massive irrigation systems, and a complicated network of paved roads. Their largest cities have structures stretching to six and seven stories in some cases, though earthquakes have been known to devastate these structures.

### Religion of Masiria

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The Masirians place little emphasis on religion, and have remained a fairly godless people since their ancient social revolution a millennia ago. Some civic gods are worshiped, though these gods are little more than ancestral demiurges with a nominal priesthood to their name. Castantolis' civic god is **Hylmalon**, the legendary king and architect of the city. Hystropolis worships **Kylgunor** as its patron god, a mysterious wanderer who came from the White Sands of the north, it is said, to found the great Librarium of Hystropolis, and then die defending it from the arcanists.

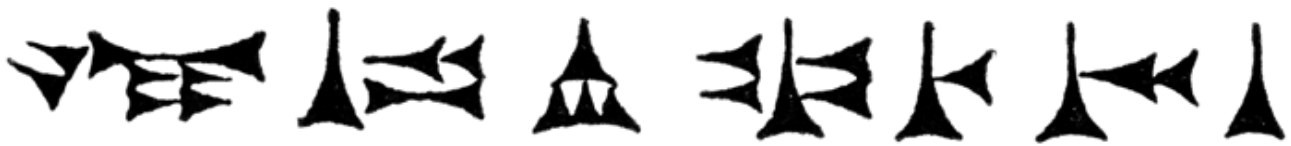
Priests of Masiria will inevitably worship a local civic god, and the civic gods are all ancestral spirits and demiurges. Most have a range of unique characteristics which determine their domains. Hylmalon, for example, is Protection, Good, and Earth, while Kylgunor is Knowledge, Good, and Travel. The cult of Shaligon is known to have a secret following among the Masirians.

### Masirians as Characters

The chapter on races in Chirak contains the basic information on Masirians are player characters. This section includes additional data, including how to determine social caste.

Masirians are physically identical to humans. The average Masirian is of a dark and swarthy nature, and almost all Masirians have black or dark brown hair. A handful of Masirian nobility are given to blonde hair, due to ancient relations with the Legorans in the past, but Masirians who intermix with other races of men find that their half-breed offspring lose their unique magical talents and longevity.

Masirians mature as normal humans do, but at about thirty years of age, they physically cease to mature any further, and thereafter, they seem to age about 1 year for every 50 years of actual life. A Masirian who is one thousand years old will appear to be about fifty years of age. No Masirian is known to be older than a thousand,



however; the Empress has habitually put to death the eldest of the society, and some suspect that the Masirians acquired their longevity about one millennium ago. Some Masirians have sought to cheat the executioner and flee to other lands as they get old enough to draw the attention of the empress, and civil wars have also erupted over this matter. It has been observed that those few Masirians begin to develop a peculiar madness which eventually kills them, though the queen has evidenced no such madness herself.

Masirians are almost all given to some small magical talent, which is above and beyond the conventional magical prowess in normal humans. All Masirians are expected to learn the Ritual Magic feat, and most will pursue the path of wizardry or the warlock. Even if they do not, they inevitably dabble.

Masirians are part of a strong class based hereditary system, and unless a Masirian starts as an aristocrat at character creation, then he will not be considered part of the elite class. Your Charisma will determine your Caste ranking. Take your Charisma score, add a 1D20 roll to it and check the following chart, based on your starting cultural base caste (rolling 1D10):

Characters who are of the noble caste may multiply their wealth by the wealth modifier indicated for starting funds. Much of the implied wealth listed in the caste listings are socially perceived, based on the ties of the character to his extended, ancient family. Unless other arrangements are made, all Masirians are assumed to be second or third children in their house, and unlikely to become the rulers of their house anytime soon. This forces such Masirians to seek their fame in adventuring.

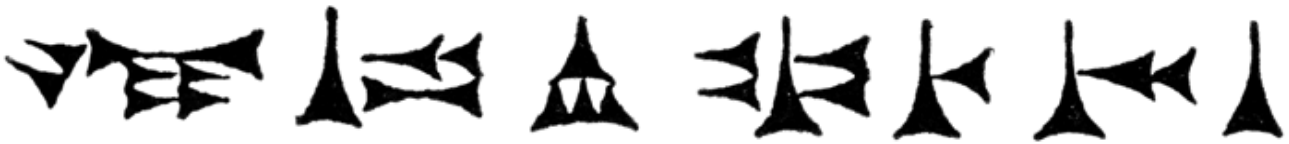
A character may marry one tier up or down from their inherited caste. A man may marry above his station, and his caste status will rise to the next tier. A woman who marries a man above her caste will also rise. A Taldiem is the only common caste that can therefore rise in rank to elite in this matter. A less common class may be rewarded with advancement up one rank by a Dasan or higher noble, to get to the Taldiem caste, but that's the only hope they have of any further advancement.

Masirians occupy a wide variety of professions, but the nobles will never partake of the more mundane and plebian professions if at all possible. The chief exception is soldier or mercenary, as the Masirian nobility is often prone to riding off to war in a vainglorious attempt to recapture a sense of mortality once again.

**Roll 1D10 first for noble or common caste, then Charisma Score+1D20 for rank within caste:**

| Charisma+1D20 | Wealth | Noble (1-2)                            | Commoners (3-10)          |
|---------------|--------|--|---------------------------|
| 1-13          | X1     | Citizen Democritos (roll on commoners) | Slave (criminal, laborer) |
| 14-18         | X1     | Taldiem Democritos (scholar)           | Slave (servant, farmer)   |
| 19-22         | X1     | Citizen Democritos (wealthy)           | Landless Serf-Cominas     |
| 23-26         | X1.5   | Citizen Gentretos (baronet)            | Cominas, Landed           |
| 27-30         | X2     | Equite'an (landless knight)            | Deminos (trained laborer) |
| 31-33         | X3     | Equite (landed knight)                 | Deminos (wealthy trained) |
| 34-35         | X4     | Dumarte (Baron, Small land)            | Mulacritos (professional) |
| 36-37         | X5     | Edumuarte (Large Barony)               | Mulacritien (valued pro)  |
| 38+           | X10    | Dasan (Noble-Provincial Council)       | Taldiem (soldier/scholar) |





## Nithiad

**Progressive steel age republic dominated by a triumvirate of warlords**

**Cultural Level:** steel age-renaissance

**Population:** approximately 3.5 million

**Government:** republic

**Rulers:** A senate and appointed regent. The current regent is Calliadus Dominus

**Religions:** The Cult of the Lost Gods

**Social Titles:** slaves, thralls, commoners, land owners, equestrians (knights), war masters, governors, senators, generals, regent

**Coinage:** copper remali, silver dinar, gold luminar, platinum drakar

**Allies:** Nithiad is a precocious nation and makes few allies. Nonetheless, their traders are welcome in most ports, provided they are not accompanied by warships.

**Enemies:** Espanea and Mercurios are Nithiad's strongest opponents.

The powerful Republic of Nithiad is seen internally as a powerful unity of Cities ruled under republican rule, with the borders guarded by careful standing armies held by the Generals who dedicate their tactical services to the protection of the land. Outside, Nithiad is seen as a biased, squabbling mess of city-states, which lash out all too frequently at their neighbors and maintain unrealistic diplomatic approaches to their neighbors.

Fighters of all types, including War Masters, are famous in Nithiad. Nithiadians are very political, and very ideological, and clerical orders venerate philosophies represented by spiritual ideals, rather than gods. Rogues aren't so common, due to the strict punishments meted out in Nithiadian cities.

The Nithiadians are slavers by nature, and their culture presumes a strict caste of the haves and the have-nots. If you are a native Nithiadian, you get at least essential protection and rights, and if you own land, you can vote and participate in the republican gatherings. If you are wealthy, too, then you can run to be a senator and join the elite council of the senate, which advises and seeks to keep harmony between the civic affair is charged with, and the military affairs which are kept in order by the regent generals they appoint.

Slaves in Nithiad are comprised of two types: those who are captured in battle and those who are hunted in neighboring lands. Many Nithiadian slaves come from Adenite or minotaur stock, the two regions most desired for slaves locally. They are also known for taking slaves

from orcish tribes in the region, or for raids in to Legoran, Hoagarit, and Shokoztoni and Nubiri territory.

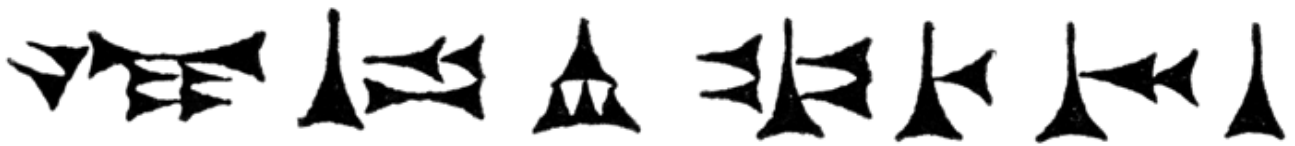
The current ruling regent general is a man named **Calliadus Dominus**, and he was the second in command of the invasion of Mercurios some years ago when Nithiad sided with Minhauros after the senate was either beaten in to submission or assassinated by the demon god. When the fleet was defeated, it was Dominus who rallied and saved the bulk of the troops and resources, insuring that Nithiad was not unprotected.

Nithiad is a fairly godless realm. They maintain an official civic temple of worship to the pantheon of the Lost Gods, and there is a hopeless sort of belief that the spirits of the lost gods can be restored, if not through worship, then the recovery of the ancient zodiac stones. The Grand Temple of the Zodiac, in the capitol city of **Kalynthia**, contains a great atrium with twelve immense statues to each of the lost gods, and a special center point where the sacred stones can be placed, should they be found. Among the Cult of the Lost Gods is a special sect, called the Guardians of the Spirit, a militant sect which sends out agents to seek out those known to carry, or claiming to carry these ancient stones, that they may be recovered to the grand temple. In fact, each statue seems to have a complete stone in each place, but only the priesthood knows which are genuine and which are place holders.

### The Civil War and the Rogue Nemarchas

Within the last year a major coup has fallen upon the city-states of Nithiad. Calliadus Dominus was almost overthrown by one of his favored generals, the rogue Nemarchas. Nemarchas was one of the generals who sided with the risen god Minhauros in but a few years earlier, and was among those who survived the fall of their risen deity to survive to fight another day. Still mad for power, he sought to usurp the rule of the regent. He failed in his bid for power, and has fled south with his loyalists, who now call themselves the Company of the Scarlet Hand.

Nemarchas has served for some time in the capacity of mercenary commander in the south, fighting whomever the sheiks would hire him to, until a recent discovery. In the deep mountains of Zettaram during a battle against the **Athbadhar Nomads**, his men trapped the bandit-raiders in a deep valley within the mountains and attacked. In the middle of the strike an earthquake cleft the valley in two, shadowy angelic entities manifested and fought with great intensity, slaying dozens of men on

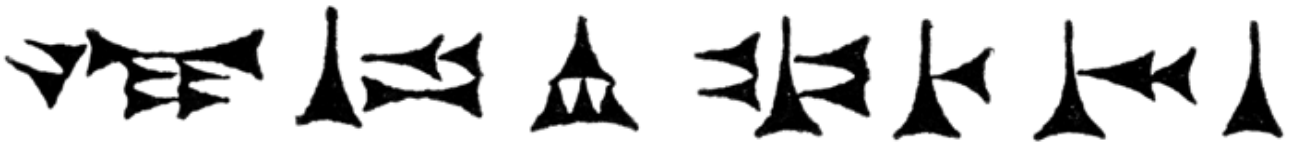


both sides. When all was done, Nemarchas had beaten the razaphar down, and taken one captive. From this being he learned of the cleft in the floor of the valley, opened by an earthquake, and the passage downward to the lost tomb...seeing an opportunity to fund a new army from a lost king's wealth, he set about to pillaging the upper levels of the complex for ancient valuables, that he might at last return to Nithiad and conquer his homeland, making himself no mere general or regent, but instead Emperor.

The first expedition from the mountains brought a vast quantity of wealth, although Nemarchas' brokers are trying not to spill too much in to the greedy hands of Arenjun's nobility (and other caravans move wealth to other Shaddizhari cities, and even across the sea to Espanea and the Kaldinian Kingdoms). Recognition that too much sudden wealth of artifacts would look suspicious has insured that Nemarchas order his men to move slowly. Even so, it is likely that they will draw the attention of the Chronomancers or the Preservationists...



*"The ruins of the Statue of Pallath, at the Great Atrium, Kalynthia"*



## Nubirion

**A stone to Iron Age smelting pot of rain forest cultures and kingdoms**

**Cultural Level:** bronze age-iron age

**Population:** approximately 5-7 million

**Government:** varied, from chieftains and kingships to city-states with exotic republics and ancient dynasties.

**Rulers:** many different rulers.

**Religions:** Mostly ancestor and spirit worship through blood magic.

**Social Titles:** varied, depending upon the local government and culture.

**Coinage:** various. The old Nubirian coinage included the copper ruyat, the silver derekat, the gold rashitat, and the electrum pindale.

**Allies:** Nubirians have trade alliances with many, including Correnstal, Mercurios, sometimes Nithiad, Espanea, and Xoxtocharit.

**Enemies:** The Hoagarit are the most persistent foes of the Nubirians.

There are many Nubirian kingdoms, clans, and cults, and defining them all in one passage is impossible. The Nubiri are a great mess of complicated people of all different cultural levels and interests. Nubiria is also the center of Blood Magic practitioners, and many other arts banned or hated by other realms.

Often, outsiders get confused about where the Nubiri cultural lands end and the Shokoztoni lands begin. The safest way to describe it is as follows: the Shokoztoni are in the west along the coast, and have settled in many regions of the Nubiri jungles and along the Varkal River, and the Nubiri are simply everywhere else. Another way to look at it is if the people you are speaking to know Tradespeak, work metal, and have a civilization, then they are probably Nubiri. If they are primitive, or greet you with a wildly gesticulating blood shaman and attempt to run you through with curare-tipped spears, then they are Shokoztoni.

The people of Nubiria remember a time in their ancient tales when their land was united by a great king, and Nubiria was whole. Now, they are a fragmented society, dominated by several prominent kingdoms. The most notable kingdom is centered around the city-state of **Varkal**, along the river of the same name. Varkal is dominated by an old King called **Jadros Nistor**, who rules fairly compared to his kin. He has many sons and daughters, but loves Syria Nistor the most, and wishes to marry her to a brother that they may rule in his stead.

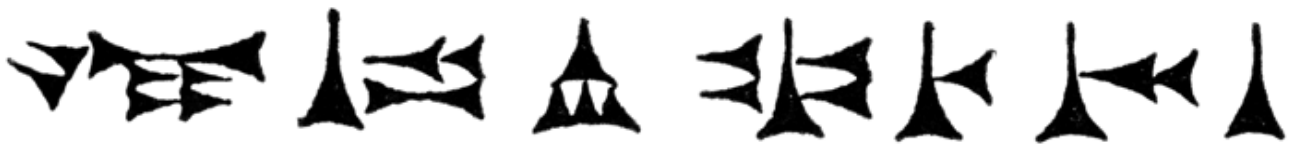
She opposes this, and wanders the world to stay far away.



## The Yellow City

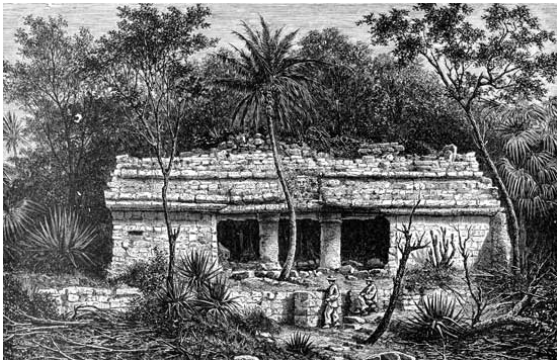
The Yellow City is considered a fable by most, but a handful of tenacious merchants and adventurers have visited this city state. Also part of Nubiria from old, the people of the Yellow City are dedicated to an ancient puritan ideal in which they seek to cleanse their souls in preparation for a glorious afterlife, but that they must work hard in the present to do so, or they will be reincarnated until they at last achieve a desired karmic balance. This belief in reincarnation is contrary to the darker picture of the afterlife and ancestral worship carried on by most Nubiri and Shokoztoni, but the mysterious monks and citizens of the Yellow City claim it is the true way to atone.

The Yellow City has a ruling chieftain, a sort of king who must not go by that name, called Draegon Ghaz. Ghaz's chief concern is the protection of the city and its people at all costs, and he is allowed to do so by building an impressive force of regional soldiers and foreign mercenaries, who in turn actively seek out threats in the region and exterminate them. The brutality of the Yellow City's standing army and its leader is renowned by all



neighboring tribes and chiefdoms, but is in stark contrast to the pacifistic populace they protect. The soldiers who join this army are promised an assurance that in a future reincarnation they will be retired from military duty, that they may cleanse their souls and pass on to the divine afterlife. The mercenaries are regarded somewhat less fondly, paid in gold from the many secret mines managed within and around the Yellow City's territory that they may later go on their way, as thankless heathens who are doomed never to ascend in the afterlife. Very few of these mercenaries seek to convert, or are allowed to do so without proof of their dedication to the city's sacred focus.

The Yellow City receives its name from the bounty of yellow lotus flowers that grow along the vines of the ancient city. The city itself is a mix of new and old architecture, and is believed to be built on the ruins of a still largely intact pre-cataclysmic city of old, though no arcanists or preservationists are allowed to study these ruins to determine who or what built it.



### Lobros and Shazar of Tedron Province

The strongest and most militant of the Nubirian peoples are found in the **Tedron Province**, so named from the old era of the Pellucid Empire when this region was but at the fringe of that once mighty realm. Held to a culture of ritual warfare and perpetual strife, the region is always in conflict, both real and ceremonial. The ancient cults of the cities of **Lobros** and **Shazar** are locked in this strife which outsiders claim stems from their embrace of chaos. Still, the Tedron Nubirians are among the few people who are easily accessible, passing down their great river in boats laden with trade goods, seeking finely crafted Nithadian weaponry and Espanean blades in exchange for the amazingly rich deposits of coal, metal ore, and gold they seem to have in abundance.

## Pardainse

### Steam age Island kingdom of dwarves

**Cultural Level:** renaissance-steam age

**Population:** approximately 100,000 thousand

**Government:** royal dynasty with new democratic republican overlay

**Rulers:** The King of Pardainse is Molren Gulindar. The Queen is Elheen Shar.

**Religions:** Pardainse embraces the philosophy of the Preservationists

**Social Titles:** commoners, land owners, knights, governors, senators, generals, king and queen

**Coinage:** copper bit, silver penny, gold peso, larger gold crown, and platinum royal

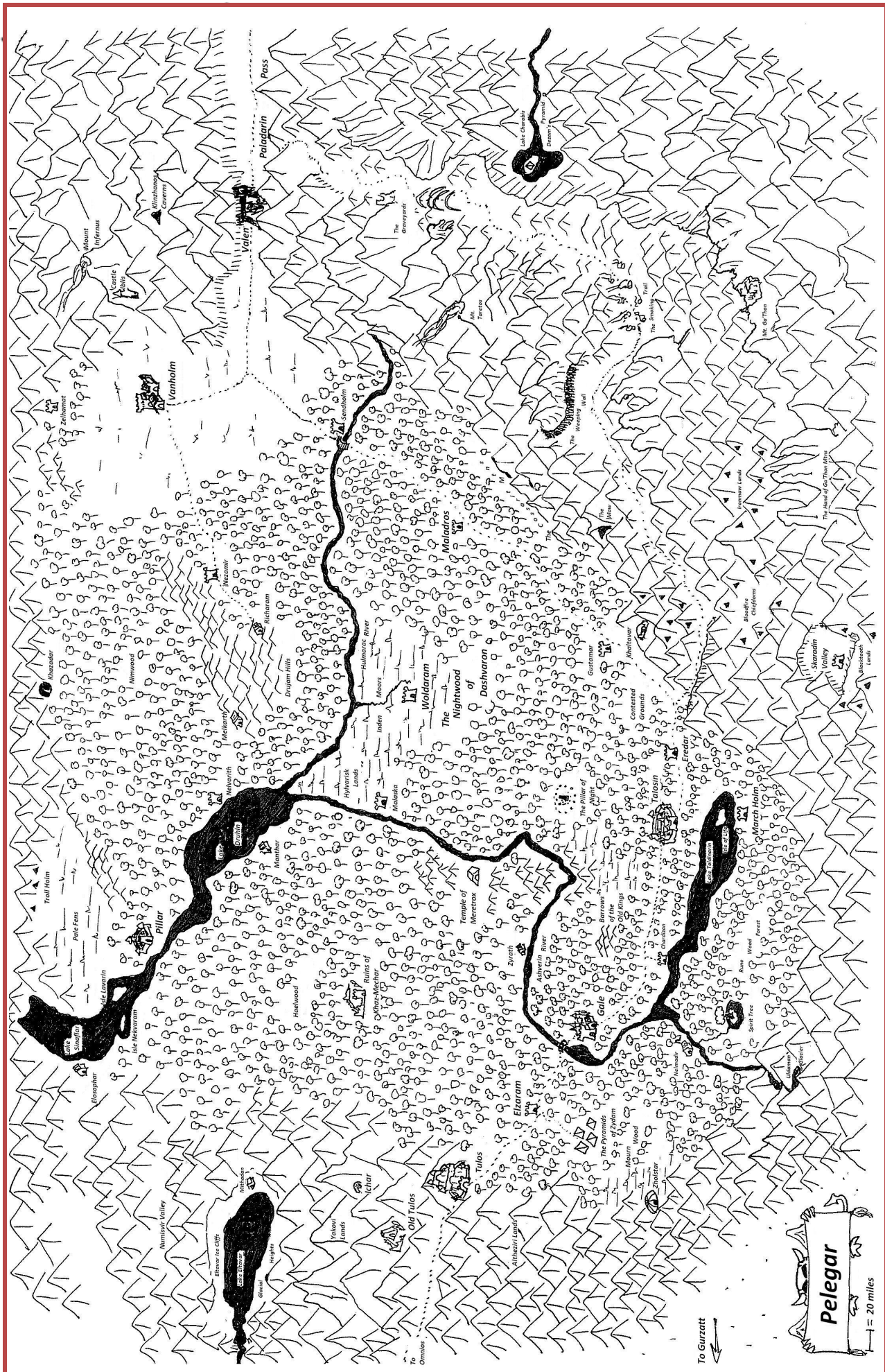
**Allies:** Pardainse is closely aligned with Espanea, and trades with Grelmaine, Legora, Masiria, Esterehabau, Kaldinia and Sontaniardes.

**Enemies:** Pardainse has few enemies. They are considered far more valuable as allies.

There are few dwarves in the Realms of Chirak until you go far north, but in the Burgeness Islands, a reclusive culture of seafaring dwarves have made a home, and prosper greatly with their close allies, the Espaneans. It is the dwarves who practice artificing, merging machines with old magic to create steam powered devices, gun powder, and cannons which they sell to the eager privateers and merchants of the Sea of Chirak.

Throughout the world, relics of old technology and magic abound, waiting to be discovered, but the dwarves of Pardainse are the only modern civilization to develop new wondrous items, and they are effectively in the middle of a "little renaissance." Pardainse is a small kingdom, but filled with artificers, scholars, researcher and adventurers. It is a picaresque study of social evolution in action.

Visitors to Pardainse are surprised at how structured and friendly the dwarves are, and how much their own society seems to mimic those of the rest of the Kaldinian civilizations. Pardainse dwarves are far removed from their mountain-dwelling kin, having long ago compensated for and moved beyond whatever tragedy drove them from their ancient mountain homes.



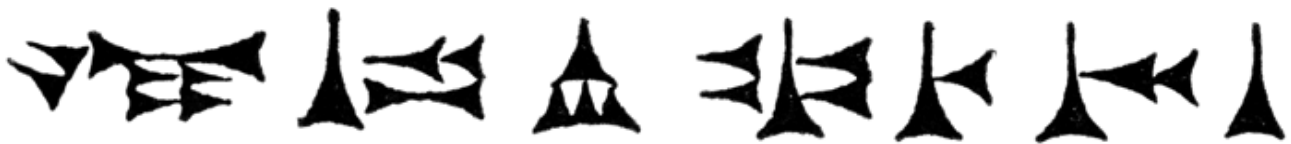
The map depicts a complex landscape with a central river system. Key locations and features include:

- Top Left:** Mount Infernus, Castle Hablis, Vanzhoirn, and the Pass.
- Top Center:** The Graveyard, Mt. Toranos, and the Smoking Trail.
- Top Right:** The Home of the Thon Above, the Blackstone Lands, and the Staradin Valley.
- Center:** The Nightwood of Dashvaran, Woldarum, and the Halmarze River. Other nearby areas include the Malaros, Malakos, and the Pillar of the Pillar.
- Bottom Left:** Lake Vindlar, Lake Nektaram, and the Humarze Valley. Other features include the Troll Helm, Pale Fens, and the Elmore Ice Cliff.
- Bottom Center:** The Temple of Merox, the Ashverin Bar, and the Zyrath.
- Bottom Right:** The Pyramids of Zydum, the Mourn Wood, and the Zhoatlar.

To Gurzatt

**Pelegar**

20 miles



## Pelegar

### Decadent, Demon-Haunted Kingdom of the Distant West

**Cultural Level:** steel age

**Population:** approximately 2.5 million

**Government:** alliance of city-states ruled by monarchy

**Rulers:** Different by city state, but Vialle Dianeni of the Dreaming City is looked up to by all.

**Religions:** The faith of Pelegar is tested by its haunting entities

**Social Titles:** slaves, commoners, land owners, knights, barons, lords, kings

**Coinage:** the nick-name for coins in this land is "bones," Ex: "I'll pay 3 gold bones for that."

**Allies:** The Pelegar are isolationist and don't like outsiders. They trade through middlemen, and only deal directly with the Sabiri.

**Enemies:** The Sabradan are the greatest enemies of the Pelegar.



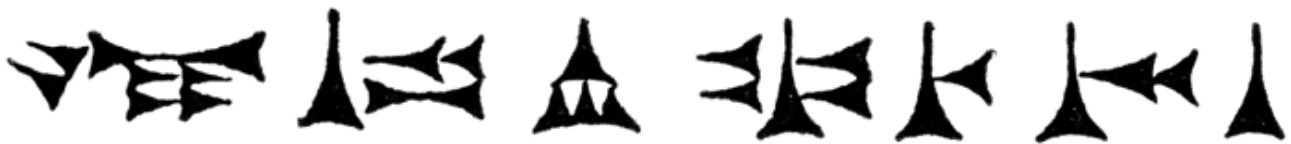
The only clear passage through the Cossarit Mountains going east and west, and the only easily accessible pass, Pelegar is poised in a unique position of being one of the few readily available regions by which the east and the utter west can converge in relative safety.

Pelegar is divided in to three cultural groups which are all descended from the soldiers of the final war of the Apocalypse that resolved in this region. Most populous of these local groups are the western hinterlanders, a breed of private, uncouth mountain men who dislike the people of almost all other lands and even refuse to learn foreign languages. They live as herders of reindeer, build great houses from the massive oaks of the forests that range along the lower slopes of the immense Cossarit range, and fight their local wars with more bravado than blood shown on the battlefields. The hinterlanders refuse to learn any other languages, and dislike all foreigners, though they make excellent mercenaries because of this disdain. Many enjoy levying heavy taxes on raiding caravans that pass through the range. They are also hardened by the conflicts they experience with the clans of Dalevar dwarves, Skull biter goblins, Blood fire Orcs and the many giants in the mountains.

The Central Pelegar culture, known as the lowlanders, are the old aristocracy of the land, men who claim to have the oldest elite heritage in the land and a natural right of rule. The lowlanders are driven by ancient politics and intrigue. They recruit most of their forces from those who dwell about them in the mountains to continually pursue their ages-old Machiavellian plots and wars of intrigue.

The westernmost culture of the Pelegar is centered in the city of Tulos, and they are known as the zealots, for the city of Tulos is a monument city of ancient temples and shrines to the fallen gods, as well as to the demon gods and evil spirits which haunt the lands of Pelegar. The zealots are seemingly more open and diverse of thought than their brothers, but are in fact the most dangerous and xenophobic of all. They are strong followers of the principles of the cults of the Lost Gods, and believe that they are the only hope of salvation, of providing sanctuary from eternal damnation for all those who have been left behind in the mortal plane. The zealots are as diabolical in their devious schemes as the lowlanders.

Pelegar labors under an ancient curse, one which explains why the people of the land are so grim and unhappy with outsiders. It is said that the land was cursed by the terrible evils which were dealt to it, as the Battle of the West, where so many countless demonic



beings and gods fell, took place in this land. The ancestors of Pelegar are believed to have been servants of the betrayer gods, followers of Ga'Thon, and indeed Shaligon herself was said to have come from Pelegar in the ancient days. When the war was over, the land was wracked with the residual essence of evil as well as the mounds of the dead. The surviving men of Pelegar were left to dispense throughout the remains of their fallen kingdoms, to carve out a life for themselves branded forever as the men who sided with the apocalyptic forces of destruction. All other men shunned them, and the very essence of the dead god Ga'Thon seeped in to the souls of the men, tainting them forever more.

Though two thousand years have passed, and much of the old ages have been lost to memory, the curse of the land still pervades all of its inhabitants, and ancient demon spirits trapped in the mortal realm haunt the land. Creatures such as Gloom, Shmaga'thael, and Molabal continue to taint the land, while finding that they, too, are locked to it for mysterious reasons. To pass the time, these entities play maddening psychic games with the inhabitants.

There are also two unique species in the region of Pelegar: The **Yakovi** yak folk of the Tulos area, and the **Simviriin** cat folk, who dwell throughout the Cossarit region, but seem to thrive in the Pelegar area, and are tolerated as a nuisance by the men of the land, like gypsies and mummers.

Throughout the woodlands of Pelegar dwell small enclaves of elves, unseelie descendants called the ithiri, believed by many to be dangerous entities who have a capricious hatred toward humanity. Ithiri are rarely seen in the company of normal mortals and usually feared by men when encountered. They are believed to have been permanently affected by the close proximity of the Weeping Wall in the Cossarit Mountains, where the remnants of the fey realm were expunged from the dying flesh of Ga'Thon and frozen in stone forever.

Major locations in the region include:

### **Valen, the Neutral City**

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The immense walls of Valen, the gateway city, stretch from one wall to the other of the Cossarit Pass. The walls are as high as two hundred feet, built over the ages by many dedicated hinterlanders who seek to preserve the privacy and integrity of their land from any outsiders.

Valen is said to have been founded shortly after the apocalypse, and its age shows. The city is a great and maddening maze of multileveled streets and towering

buildings with a pervasive gothic architecture. Here dwell both hinterlanders, lowlanders, and zealots all in harmony (on the surface) in what is agreed upon as the only neutral city of the land. Ruled by three regents named Lord Gale Medeban of the hinterlanders, Pastakar Ranhadal of the zealots, and Cherathas Delitharia (the younger sister of the queen of Talosin), Valen is carefully kept as a neutral territory for all disputes.

Behind the curtain of Valen, the dark being Gloom rules with a quiet perseverance, maintaining its eternal charge as the slayer of Avatars. It was summoned long ago to insure that no avatar of any god should enter the Pelegar land seeking forbidden knowledge, or to lift the curse of the people. Gloom is ruthlessly efficient and enjoys the flesh of avatars in a vampiric manner. He despises all holy men, in fact, and preys upon anyone who is not a member of the Cult of the Lost Gods.

### **Talosin, The Dreaming City**

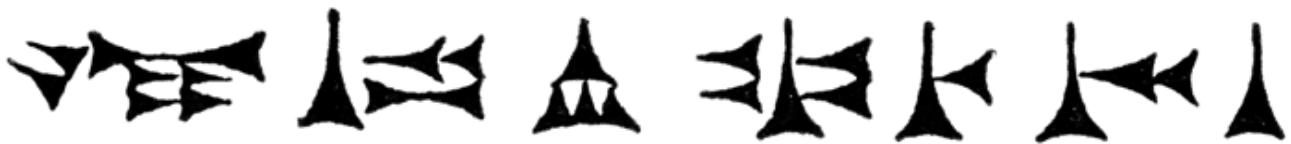
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With the Kossarits looming like a great and endless wall of darkness, Talosin is nestled in a fertile basin of green along two major rivers that cascade down from the mountains. It is called the dreaming city, for its lowlander nobles are said to dwell in decadent squalor, and rely on their thralls to keep them comforted and safe. The city is ruled by a king or queen chosen by the Servants of the Dream, mages who have learned to divine through dream magic the hidden will of the land. The current ruler is a young woman named **Vialle Dianeni**. Her youth and energy have prompted a new era of warfare, as she struggles to unite the decadent nobility in to an effective force against encroaching orcish raiders from the mountains as well as the overwhelming armies of the Empire of Sabradan in the west.

### **Vanhholm, City of Relics**

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The quiet and murky city of Vanhholm is ruled by a council of three nobles, the chief of which is Cartus Vindaros. Behind the council is a figurehead king, the enigmatic Vykos Dagham. Vanhholm is a relic city, in which the population goes about its daily affairs in a dreamy state, but the life of the land seems gone. Only the threat of Dalevar incursions rallies the people, and then only briefly. Strange beings and predatory undead are rife in the region of Vanhholm, and some suspect that the torpor of the people is in part an ensorcellment caused by these entities which use the population like



fodder. The suspected leader of these beings is a vampire called Eris the Red, an ancient being, said by some to be a soldier who was alive during the apocalypse, who drank deeply of the blood of Ga'thon, and whose enervated life force was corrupted in to a permanent servant of the destroyer.

### **Pillar, City of War**

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Pillar is a militant community, and many of Pelegar's finest warriors come from this region. Warfare as a sport is common here, and the grand arenas are a fabled attraction for those seeking the glory of war and bloodshed for sport. The ruler of the city is Corbas Halone, a violent and dangerous man who is known to be the famous general who repulsed the now infamous Omnios Invasion of two decades ago, in which the Sabradan Empire sought to exterminate the Pelegar once and for all under Emperor Suvias.

Pillar is haunted, like its fellow cities, by an entity of dire nature. Memneres is a fallen Elohim, it is said, once the general of Pallath, the fallen sun god. Memneres is said to have betrayed Pallath for the love of a demon woman named Trivvetir, and when he realized his error, he remorsefully threw himself in to the Battle of the West, but was slain. The blood of Ga'thon seeped in to his mortal wounds, and he was resurrected as the undead that he now is. Memneres now lives only to be sated by the perpetual war games of the Pelegar he incites, relishing in the deaths of the cursed people.

### **The Pillars of Night**

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Nestled deep within the Nightwood of central Pelegar rests an ancient henge. This is the **Pillar of Night**, the center point of the being **Molabal**, which pervades the realm with its dark dreams.

Little is known of what or who Molabal is. This entity is regarded as a deity among most locals, and worshiped throughout Pelegar as such. His temples offer smaller versions of the strange set of standing stones that move in a swirling pattern to a great obelisk in the center, where offerings and prayers are made to the mysterious god. He is said to be a lord of dreams and nightmares, and that one must appease him to gain one or cease the other. His power is so great that on occasion during certain hours of darkness some images from the realm of dream can become manifest for a time, it is said.

There is a rumor that the avatar Mardieur Mardieux traveled to the Pillars of Night about two years previous, and walked the pattern to seek out Molabal for

questions. He was never seen again, spirited away, some believe, to the realm of dream.

### **The Cossarit Mountains**

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Pelegar is centered in a great basin within the Cossarit Mountains, which is said to be a range formed out of the Battle of the West, the famous last battle of the Apocalypse. Some say that Ga'thon's body fell to the earth and draped itself across the land, and that the very flesh of Ga'thon is the whole of the mountain range. Others say it was merely the blood of Ga'thon that scarred and pitted the land, creating the mountains by eating in to the earth where the lowland regions now lie. No one disputes the mountains are haunted and filled with secrets.

At the heights of the ranges, along certain paths such as the southern **Smoking Trail**, you can see rusted and petrified remnants of the apocalypse, including the rusting hulks of ancient golems, the bleached or burnt bones of fabulous ancient beasts, and other more horrifying sights such as the Weeping Wall, the great wall of volcanic basalt in which the souls of countless fey folk were trapped when Ga'thon split the fey realms asunder and engulfed its people in his body of destruction. Along the Smoking Trail, it is said great smokestack like pipes emerge from the earth and belch perpetual flames from some unknown furnace in the mountain. Indeed, the mountains are laden with cavernous expanses which run like veins through a body and are filled with countless terrible denizens.

One famous underworld habitat is Zyntal, where the heart of the Dreadforge is said to rest, an ancient machine from before the apocalypse which is held by the Arcanists. Another location, *the Temple of the Spider*, is said to be a compound of worship to the ancient demon god **Ezruache** (said by some to also be Ezruache of the Xoxtocharit).

### **Tulos, the City of Monuments**

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Better called the City of Memorials, Tulos contains more ancient temples and shrines to the forgotten gods than anywhere, and the culture of the zealots wholly embraces the Cult of the Lost Gods. The people of Tulos and the surrounding lands believe strongly that the survivors and their descendants of the apocalypse are all sinners, unforgiven and left behind by the gods, and one must understand the error of their ways and seek to appease the undead spirits in order to be redeemed and pass on in to the true heavens from which they have been banned. They despise all other faiths, especially those of the Preservationists and the avatar and





demiurge descendants of the gods, and will persecute any such beings to appear in their region. The current fanatical high priest of Tulos is a hairy, wild eyes bishop called **Terminos**.

In the region of Tulos, a rare and reclusive breed of minotaur called the **Yakovi** dwell as peaceful caretakers

of a haunted region called the Ruins of Old Tulos, which is said to be the remains of the old city, as it was before the apocalypse. The Yakovi are a reserved, peaceful breed of humanoid, with the heads of great Yaks, a creature that is common to the region.



The Streets of Tulos

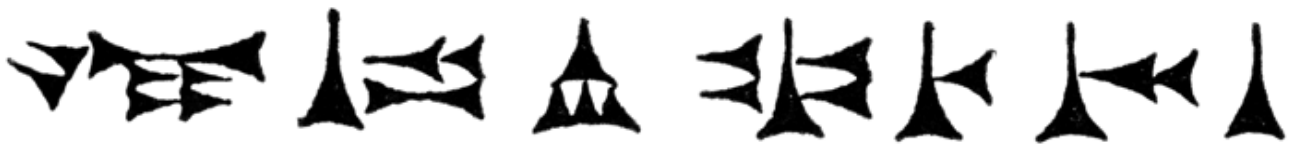
## The Brewing Civil War

### Gunrunning and the Impending Civil War

There are many insurgents in Pelegar, who seek to topple the power of the families of Vanholm. They are being backed by no less than the **Regent Gamael Drizan** of Omnios in Sabradan. Through a variety of “lapses” in border security and the deeply entrenched network of mercenary underworld connections, Drizan’s agents have begun to foment anger and rebellion in the hearts

of the country nobility which has been estranged by the dark lords of Vanholm and their mysterious ways. Guns and more conventional weapons have been funneled in to the country to insure that those who wish to act are well equipped. They are even given silver arms and armaments to aid them in conquering any fear they might feel over the undead.

Opposing this incursion by the regent of Omnios is another Sabradani power even greater: the **Royal Agency of Investigations (RAI)** in the name of **Queen**



**Millikias** herself has taken an interest in the matter, and has dispatched agents to ascertain the nature of the Pelegar insurgency, as well as who is smuggling so many weapons in to what is seen by the queen as a small but incredibly dangerous kingdom. The RAI's lead investigator is a senior commander in the **Order of the Phoenix Carabiners** named **Aton Gracos**, and his men are combing the land for evidence of what is happening.

In the midst of all this intrigue there is yet another party of interest: the Lamias, an ancient society of vampiric serpent women who are the self-proclaimed daughters of the Queen of the Seventh Night, have risen from their subterranean lairs, driven by the call of Lamashtu's haunting dreams, portents of the collapse of Vanholm evident. The Lamias are ancient enemies of the vampires, driven beneath the earth shortly after the end of the Last War, and they have been eager for revenge ever since.

The lamia **Etana** is presently investigating the matter, and brings with her loyal draconian troops to assist in her investigations. They want to do what they can to insure the coup is successful, without directly implicating themselves as being responsible should the vampires prevail.

### **The Mystery of Lamashtu, Queen of the Seventh Night**

Materializing in the dreams of many sleepers, this ancient queen of Pelegar was the ruler of all during the waning years of the Apocalypse. She is sometimes also called the Queen of Blight or the Queen of the Unfeeling Darkness. Her true name is Lamashtu, and she is the heart and soul of Pelegar, though long subsumed in to its darkened, bloody soil. Recently, however, a spark of life has welled within her entombed form, and she has begun to awaken. The incident began with a simple event: a battle in the Nightwood of Pelegar between **Lord Kam Dasir** who slew the wolver warlord **Banishar**. Unknown to both they fought upon the same battlefield where Lamashtu herself had been slain twenty-six hundred years ago. As the two fought to the death, impaling one another upon their blades, their blood flowed freely to the ground and awoke the demoness, giving her soul much-needed sustenance.

Lamashtu clawed her way to the earth, and found the two who had restored her, granting them unlife that they might continue to serve her. She has so far used her recovering magic to begin restoration of her ancient throne in Dashvaron Castle, calling upon all ancient beings who would seek to aid her. She has sent forth

both her agents to seek out other allies, and has made contact with her children, the lamias.

Lamashtu's intent is clear: she seeks to reconquer Pelegar, and to destroy the descendants of those who brought about her downfall, which includes the humans, wolvern, minotaurs and elves of the land, as well as the thieving humans who stole the secret of vampirism from herself and her children...

### **The Insurgents**

The leader of the insurgents is **Lord Kyle Avarsten**, a highlord out of Sendholm. He is closely assisted by **Lady Madrasia**, who is a tactically wise and clever woman (and secretly a lamia, though he seems not to know). He has enlisted the complicity of dozens of other lesser nobles, as well as forged alliances with the rulers of Zelhamat, Gustamar, Maladros, Talosin, Gale, Nelvarith, and others. Resistant so far is the Council of Valen, which is itself strong enough not to be influenced by Vanholm, and sees no point to rebellion, though its rulers are quietly looking the other way on the matter. Likewise, Castle Nezamir's own **Baron Halas Araska** is a major hold-out, though his reasons are enigmatic.

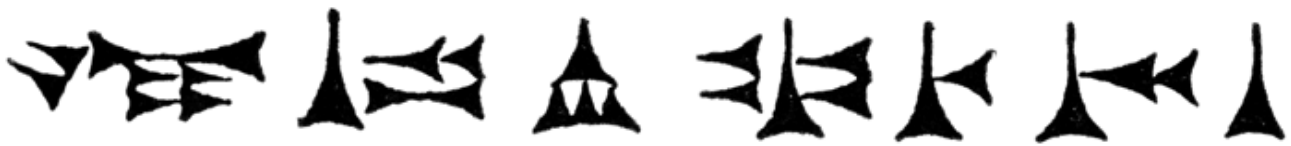
In fact, Baron Araska seeks not to anger the lords of Vanholm for one reason: his daughter, **Kinita Araska**, is in thrall to **King Dhagaram** himself, who courts her and may even have turned her to vampirism. For this reason Araska refuses to act against Vanholm, knowing any attack against the vampires could be an attack against his daughter.

Presently, almost 80% of the necessary arms and armaments have been stockpiled to assault Vanholm. Sappers have been hired to bring down the southern wall, its key weak point, and recent negotiations have gotten four clans of Dalevar dwarves from the north valleys to sign on as mercenaries. There are rumors that forces from distant Omnios are crossing the border to join up the military forces amassing against Vanholm. It all seems quite perfect, and that the capitol of the damned kingdoms is about to fall...

### **Vanholm's Rulers**

King Vykos Dhagaram is no idiot, and the short-sighted memories of men have insured that few realize he has ruled for eleven centuries upon Pelegar's throne, after laying his predecessor who had ruled for eight centuries before him. He is the most powerful vampiric entity in the world, and has no intention of relenting his power.

Dhagaram is supported by more than four hundred



vampires who operate within and throughout Vanholm... some of whom have infiltrated the insurgents discreetly. The dark lord has also allied himself closely with two factions is Ithiri elves: **house Kylath** and **house Arudane**. Lord Enerith Dartonis is the spokesman for both elvish houses, an outcast from distant Eltavar, where the Queen of Ice rules. Enerith and his kin have become obsessed with the embrace of undeath, as a result of Enerith's own untimely demise not too many decades ago, followed by his rising as an Undying.

Dhagaram has one more trick up his sleeve no one knows of: he is a dragon, born of the ancient Eshadai dragon clans of the Everdread deserts long ago. His ascension to masquerading human vampire began with his exile three thousand years ago. Dhagaram lost all motive for revenge against his kind after the collapse of the old Ruby Empire when the Everdread desert and the endless lava flows of the south engulfed the remnants of old Eshadai.

Dhagaram is also on first-named speaking terms with two other very important entities in the land: he is allied with Gloom, which rules Valen with fear to the east. Gloom, Dhagaram, Molabal and Memneres the fallen Elohim have long held a pact that the gods would never again interfere in the realm of Pelegar, and their alliance on this matter stands firm. Suspicions are mounting that indeed the Avatars of Pornyphiros may be trying to influence the land...tales of small towns visited by an enigmatic red knight or a crazy old man with a hand full of illusions are circulating, and so the agents of all four of these dark beings are now seeking evidence that avatars do not walk the lands...mysteriously, however, though evidence the lamias are active is being found, none have actually felt or discovered that Lamashtu, whom they all slew at the end of the Last War, has awakened once more...

## **Other Plots and Locations in Pelegar**

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### **The Escort of Elder Caddeus Thorne**

**Hook:** This elder of the Order of Molabal needs an escort to see him safely to the fabled Pillar of Night in the region of Dashvaron. All seems innocent enough, and he promises 50 silvers apiece at the start plus food and lodging covered, and 500 SP each on a safe return. If anyone is of initiate rank in the temple, he promises to put a word in to elevate them to acolyte status (or to offer indoctrination to any who do not presently belong).

**Catch #1:** Caddeus is not without enemies. A former rival

and lover from long ago, the Sabiri woman Eata Sindalain has returned for vengeance. Caddeus has not left his monastery in four decades, not since he slew her in a bid for power. He has found an ancient tome which he believes contains a ritual that, if read at the Pillar of Night, will purge him of her hauntings.

Eata is a wraith, and she has spent a great deal of time planning her vengeance. She will rely on a cadre of raised dead to assault the party and see to their failure.

**Catch #2:** Caddeus has one more enemy, the elder priest Arathane, who sees this quest as a chance to get rid of an ancient rival. Arathane is located in the Dreaming Monastery of Maladros, and he will hire a gang of mercenaries to seek out his rival and slay him. This gang includes: Ekarda, the Bloody One (orcish swordswoman), 4 orc warriors, Grustus the Ogre (lesser giant), and Erethane Var (Ithirian elf sorcerer).

### **Galtan Fel's Caravan**

**Hook:** Galtan Fel needs a group of mercs to escort a caravan across Pelegar to the city of Tulos. He'll pay 100 silver down and 1,000 SP on arrival, with food and provisions provided for along the way. Their main job is to see to the safety of his daughter, Lady Serra.

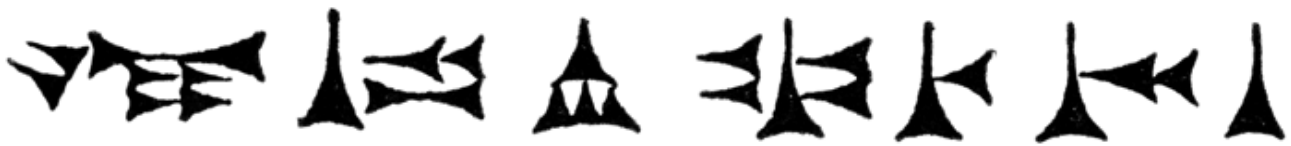
**Catch #1:** The Lady Serra will be accompanying the caravan. The bandit lord Turn Daskos has heard of this and is going to try to kidnap her for ransom with his band of not-so-merry men.

**Catch #2:** The Troll King Goth Goram of the western mountains seeks a new mate, and he is obsessed with the beauty of Lady Serra, to be wed to Duke Chorimdan of Tulos. He plans to steal her, as well!

### **Sword Master Drunis**

**Hook:** The legendary swordmaster of Valen has gone missing while visiting the city. Rumors abound he was slain by enemies, but his military order has placed a hefty reward up for information leading to his (safe) return: 10,000 silvers!

**Catch #1:** Drunis has, in his old age, decided to disappear. He met a younger woman, the countess Sedara Eleante. Together with a handful of loyalist apprentices the two are going to steal out of the city of Druzaram and flee eastward. Their plan is to make it to the independent city of Fartheren, where they can settle on their accumulated wealth as expatriates together. To insure that they make the escape without detection, they have bypassed Valen Pass and taken the mountain



route, through the graveyards of the Kossarits. Some who know of the plan may divulge such information... especially the angry ditched husband of Lady Eleante, **Lord Craitos Eleante** after he learns of it from the servants.

**Catch #2:** Drunis really does have enemies, and some see this as a major opportunity. Chief among these is Gaston Dremaine, a vampire count of Vanholm who was nearly slain years ago by the swordmaster.

### The Ruins of Khazador

**Hook:** Beyond the Nimwood where the lost Necromancer dwells lies the ancient ruin of Khazador. Said to have been an ancient fortress turned city in the early years after the Apocalypse, Khazador is rumored to contain the remains of the legendary warlord **Aragos Magdastram**, a half-demon who was the last of the old generals of Ga'thon's army to survive the purge that transpired after his god fell in battle. The very mountains of the region are active volcanoes and in the myths it is said he called upon the magma of the earth to erupt and engulf the vast armies that swarmed to destroy him. Afterward, it is said he fell in to a deep slumber brought about by the exhausting magic he had used, and that Aragos handed over the city-fortress to his lieutenants and descended in to the deep abyssal caverns below, never to be seen again.

The city-fortress thrived for two centuries, but over time its people seemed to suffer a strange madness, brought about many suspected by the corruption they dwelt over and the residual effects of coming from chaos-worshipping stock. It is said that fifteen hundred years ago the legendary hero Ascallius traveled to the city only to find it vacant but for haunting ghosts and twisted monsters.

Now, a lone rogue with madness in his eyes named **Thelim Durane** is seeking to recruit a new company of men to journey to Khazador. He has a map, acquired he says from a Dalevar dwarf who led an expedition two years ago to investigate the ruins, and he claims the dwarves found the tomb of Aragos Magdastram, deep in the bowels of the fortress, and set about to looting the coffers before a horde of monstrous beings descended upon and slew them all, save for the one who escaped. The dwarf, named **Ogeris**, alleges that what saved him was his amulet and dedication to Akquinarios, and the creatures seemed repelled by it. Naturally, Thelim wants anyone in on the expedition to join the **Cult of the Sacrificer** before making their way to the ruins to finish

the job the dwarves started...

**Catch #1:** The dwarf Ogeris has told his story to more than one, but Thelim stole the map, instead of buying it. Ogeris is deathly afraid of what his kin almost awakened, and he will form his own party of dwarves to seek out and stop Thelim and co. from opening the tomb once more.

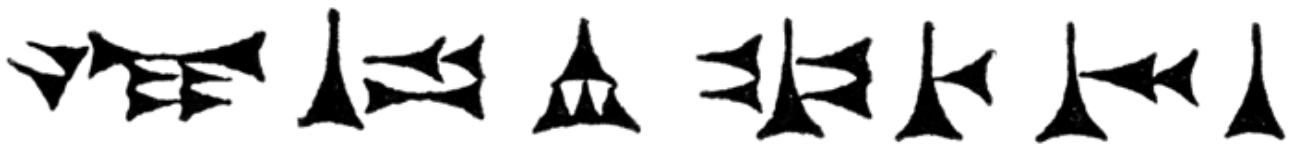
**Catch #2:** The tomb guardians are the mutated monstrous descendants of the original inhabitants. They will do all they can to slay any interlopers, not because they seek to protect Aragos, but because they fear his reawakening! They are powerless against the power of a true servant of the Sacrificer or his Avatar, however, and will not act against such cultists.

**Catch #3:** Aragos descended in to the catacombs beneath his city, but the old myth misses one important element of what happened: his lieutenants slew him, each of the four servants piercing him with one of their swords. Each of the swords are powerful artifacts, which have been used to transfix the ancient demon lord all this time now. If even one is removed, the spell will weaken and allow Aragos to awaken. The lieutenants sought to destroy him long ago to repent for their ways, but the creeping chaos that mutated their descendants in years to come was caused by the dreaming mind of Aragos, which reached out to the nightmare planes of Molabal and allowed him to exert influence on those within the walls of the city. As such, all beings in Aragos suffer nightmares and strange phenomenon, caused by the nightmares of Aragos as well as the very real ghosts that lurk within its walls.

### The Barrow Tomb of Warlord Garm Blacktooth

Garm was the greatest of the ancient wolvern warlords. He was slain in battle when he and his other generals turned on the dark queen Lamashtu to claim the wrecked lands of Pelegar for their own. Though his heart was ripped from his chest by the demoness, Garm's will was honored by his allies and his people were allowed to roam the lands freely. It has been twenty six hundred years since Garm's sacrifice to his people.

Nestled deep in the nameless woodlands lurks an ancient stone monument under which his barrow can be located. It is here that Garm fell, and here that his twin blades rest, hungry for the blood of the reawakening Lamashtu. His spirit will seek out one worthy to obtain the sacred blades of the claw, to once again act as champion against Lamashtu and the lamias...



## Plot Point: Vengeance of the Necromancer

*This scenario seed was originally written for use with Runequest II but is presented here tailored for 4<sup>th</sup> edition. The scenario assumes a party of levels 5-7 but can be tailored according to need. Monsters as described are left as-is for the DM to tailor to the needs of the scenario. Note that the vampire as described is meant to be an overwhelming threat to the PCs, defeatable primarily by use of the necromancer's gift.*

### Background

Castle Nezamir is a small frontier city along the eastern edge of the Drujam Hills. It is the home of Baron **Halas Araska**, who is one of the nobles that answers to the rule of the Three (and Cartus Vindaros) in Vanholm.

Recently the town of Melkarth along the eastern hills has been besieged by monsters. The castle prefers not to send aid, for it is believed that the town may have angered **Galrond**, the Necromancer of Nimwood, and there are none in the region who would dare oppose this entity. Nonetheless, two men from Melkarth have arrived, pleading for aid. Lord Araska turns them down formally, but in private he seeks out a handful of willing souls who will go to Melkarth and investigate. The idea is to see if they can find out why the attacks are happening, and to right whatever wrong has incurred the necromancer's wrath. Araska will offer the adventurers 1000 gold each for this task. He'll equip them with leather armor if they don't have it, and swords and bows from his armory.

The two men from the village are the **merchant Lozan** and the **woodsman Tenidor**. They are largely clueless as to why the town is being attacked, though they have their suspicions. Lozan thinks that someone in town did not participate in the annual Hallow's Offering ceremony, which happened a month ago (and after which the attacks began). Tenidor thinks something else happened. He knows of a blighted grove which was not there six months ago, and he can take the PCs to see it. He doesn't know why a blighted grove of death would anger the necromancer, but his instincts tell him it's important. Both men will offer to take the PCs back to the town as guides and show them the blighted grove along the way.

### Travel through the Drujam Hills

The Drujam Hills are actively mined for precious and useful metals, but they are also a hostile territory, as several beastmen and troll tribes lurk in the region.

Travel through the hills (about 100 miles) will take 2-3 days depending upon the savvy of the travelers.

For each day roll once for the day and once for the evening for encounters:

### D20 Encounter (add 5 to roll if at night)

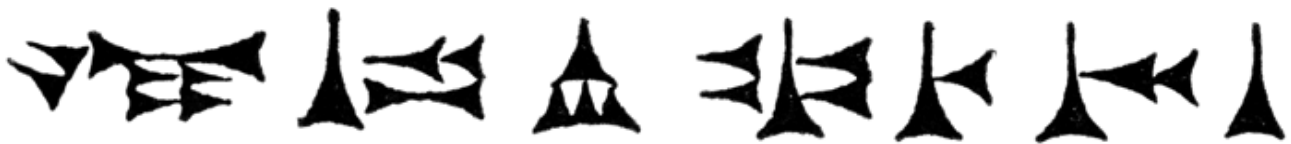
- 1-10** no event
- 11-12** A mining camp (well armed). The PCs are welcome to stay for the night
- 13-14** A hunting party of trolls (1D8) are in the region and observing the party
- 15** A griffon is roosting nearby and gets defensive of its nesting grounds
- 16-17** A brown bear is in the region; 1-3 it is protecting cubs and dangerous or 4-6 a hunting male
- 18-19** A raiding party of mongrelmen (1D4+4) spot the party and converge
- 20-22** A small war band of Ithirian elves (4) surprise the party and seek to investigate their intent here
- 23-24** A pack of wolves (2D6) begin stalking the party
- 25** A red dragon is out hunting in the night

### The Blighted Grove

About three miles from the town is this region of death. The woodsman Tenidor explains that he often came here to hunt and just six months ago it was a living, vibrant spot. Now it is a dead region about two hundred yards across, in which all foliage has died and all trees have warped and twisted with what seems like necrotic energy. Throughout the region are occasional blocks of worked stone jutting from the earth; there is evidence that ruins once stood here, long ago.

Searching the grove carefully will reveal that near the center of the grove is some evidence of a conflict or struggle; careful observation will reveal a tattered bit of a dress on a nearby branch, and there is a broken silver dagger rusting in the earth near that. A cairn has been built up in the center of the grove, and a single basalt stone has been engraved with a powerful Death Rune upon it. The death rune can be attuned to if someone desires to do so; the rune will manifest as a mark upon his skin if done.

The cairn contains the body of a woman, unnaturally intact though quite deathly in appearance; she has been dismembered (head, arms and legs severed) and is wearing the remains of a tattered dress. She is preserved enough that she can be identified as a village girl named **Krissa**, who disappeared about three months ago, and for whom two vagrant nomads were hung in accusation



of having slain her.

Evidence on the body includes:

- She is unnaturally well-kept; her flesh is pale but not rotting, though it should be.
- The tip of the broken silver dagger is lodged under her ribs in her heart.
- A holy symbol of the lost gods (Akquinaros in this case) has been placed on her torso.
- A very thorough examination of her body will reveal that she was given a cesarean section.

If PCs remove the metal bit and the holy symbol and then rebury her, she will rise the following night as a vampire.

Any attempt to remove the rune, her body or otherwise take anything from the grave out of the blighted grove will result in the trees attacking as if with clubs.

## What Happened

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The girl Krissa was having an affair with the necromancer Galrond, whom she had fallen in love with. Though she had not yet become one of the undead, she was well on her way toward such. Galrond has many enemies, however, and the nobleman **Akartos Dinsur of Vanholm** was one of them. This crude vampire had long hated Galrond for an old rivalry that led to the necromancer's expulsion from the city decades ago, and when he learned that the necromancer was having a secret affair (information provided to him by the girl's own father, a man named **Umash** who had long been paid to keep an eye on the necromancer's dealings) he decided to act.

Akartos had the girl kidnapped by his two henchmen (the same two who were hung later for her murder) and brought to an abandoned keep in the hills called **Benediction Keep**, which once belonged to an order of militant templars who were slaughtered by the vampires of Vanholm two centuries ago. There he set about in his mad scheme, first removing her child prematurely, after which he bit her, and converted her to a vampire. Once she was his, he then slew her as only a vampire can die, and left her body to be found in the dungeon of the keep by the necromancer, after sending his agents to give Galrond the message. Akartos in his endless amusement kept the child alive, with the aid of one of his minions, a witch-ghoul nursemaid named **Gasha**, knowing that over time exposure to the cannibal ghouls would change the child in to one of them.

When the girl was kidnapped the town searched for her at length, and the two nomads under the vampire

lord's employ were found. They were suspicious acting, and under compulsion by the town **wizard Arathos** they admitted to being involved in her death, for his visions showed them hacking her apart. His vision also suggested a darker presence nearby, but the wizard neglected to mention this part.

The two nomads were quickly tried and hung. The vampire lord, satisfied that the necromancer had been given word, waited patiently to see if his trap would lure the man out. It did, though zombie minions and skeletons overran the castle in the process and the girl's body was extracted forthright. Evidence that had been planted seemed to implicate the villagers, as the vampire lord desired it.

Galrond then took the girl's remains to the site of an ancient temple, of which stood long ago to the ancient death god Malib in the time before the Apocalypse. He committed her remains to the ground, and beseeched the death god to restore her. Though Galrond wished for her love, he could not bear her to become another corrupted being of death, let alone a vampire spawn of his rival. The necromancer then left her remains there, under the impression he had failed. He does not yet know that the ground has become saturated with necrotic energy.

Throughout this time, the errant nobleman Akartos has remained within the ruined keep to see how events would play out; he has used several wards to insure the necromancer does not detect him.

## The Township of Melkarth

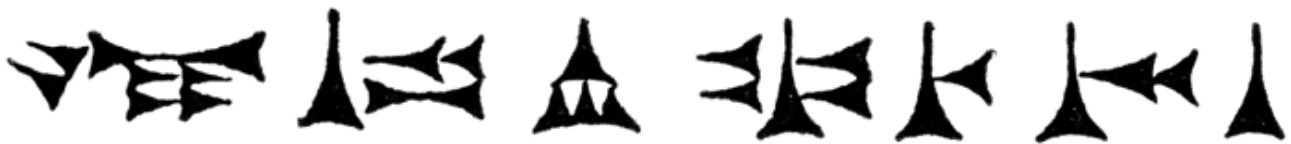
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On arriving in Melkarth, the PCs must first deal with a raid of undead, after which they can investigate several avenues of inquiry.

**The Raid:** On first arrival, two dozen zombies and skeletons are marauding through town, driven by the psychic sense of grief from their creator to lash out and destroy. The citizens are mostly hiding while the undead prowl about, or have fled. Some of the locals will have even journeyed up to the old ruined keep to take refuge, but will return with a story of terror about ghouls and wolves attacking them.

The PCs will have to deal with the undead, or wait out the siege, during which time 1D4 homes will be torched by the undead before they wander back to the Nimwood. There are 14 skeletons and 10 zombies total.

**The Wizard Arathos:** This is the local hedge wizard who divined that the two criminals who slew the girl had



dismembered her. Sufficient warning or interrogation may get him to admit that he sensed a darker presence lurking behind her death. He can also describe that the event seemed to occur within old castle walls, though exactly where he does not know; he remembers rose-colored stained glass, though. This reference would tip off the woodsman Tenidor, who knows of the old Benediction keep.

Arathos can also tell the PCs a bit about the necromancer, including where to find him (a cave located deep in the uninhabited region of the Nimwood). He knows the necromancer was exiled from Vanholm almost fifty years ago, and that he is very powerful. The townsfolk have offered him tribute every year, which his zombie minions haul away. In exchange, the town has benefited indirectly; no bandits or monsters have ever threatened the town, for the Nimwood is patrolled by the necromancer's undead minions.

**Umash, Krissa's Father:** Umash is stubborn and vile, and seems unmoved by his daughter's death, explaining that she was a whore and a tramp. Interrogation could get him to reveal that he knew she was sneaking off to visit the necromancer, and that about seven months ago she had confided to the local priest that she was now pregnant. Threat of death may get him to admit that he was feeding information to the vampire lord; a locked coffer with 150 gold pieces suggests strongly that he was being well-paid for such.

If Umash is left to his own devices, he will head up to the keep at night to tell the vampire lord of any interrogation (leaving out any admissions of his own). Clever PCs could follow him up to see where he goes.

**Priest Hamaran:** A priest of the Fallen Gods, Hamaran maintains a temple to the Apocalyptic gods as well as a shrine to the Dreaming Lord Molabal. Hamaran is a classic zealot and more than a little mad. He does not like the necromancer, but says that he is a favored servant of the Dreaming One so he must not be harmed.

Hamaran knows a few interesting bits, and will talk freely if anyone tithes even a couple coins. He knows that the area of the Blighted Grove rests on top of a much older ruined temple, though to what god he knows not. He knows the necromancer, though ancient, is quite alive and his power over the undead (and abuse of such) was what got him exiled. He also knows Krissa was pregnant, with the necromancer's child, and that she was about seven months pregnant and having trouble hiding it; only her slender frame and bulky

dresses, as well as the seeming disinterest of her father prevented it from being commonly known.

**Constable Thorne:** Thorne tried and convicted the men who were hung. He can tell the PCs they were not from around here, and were probably highlanders by accent and attitude, although unlike the highlanders they did speak the local dialect. They were unrepentant right up to the end. The two bodies were cut down a day after hanging and buried in graves marked "woman killers" in the commons cemetery. He'll offer to show them where the two were buried.

If the PCs check out the cemetery, or try to exhume the bodies, they will find the two missing! Both men were ghouls in the service of the vampire lord.

Thorne is also a reliable guide to reach the cave of the necromancer. If they talk him in to doing such, then the chance of undead encounters on the way there is reduced to 10% per hour (see later).

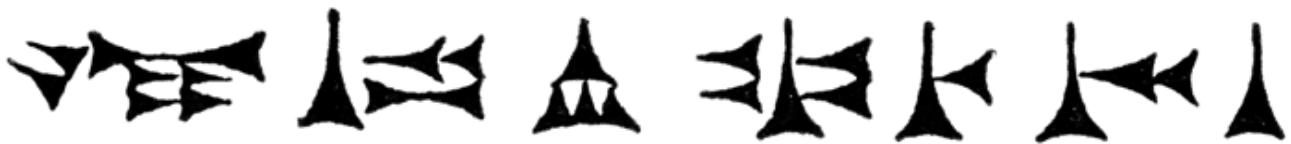
**Earl Ran Darikos:** The Earl of Melkarth is a reasonable man and a good protector. He manages three mines locally and is obedient to the rule of Baron Araska in Nezamir. His keep is modest, but it has a strong defensive foundation and several levels of catacombs beneath. It was once also used by the Benediction Templars.

Darikos will be gracious to the PCs in private and if informed of the subtle nature of their mission he will avoid publically acknowledging them. He knows little about the matter, save that he personally went to speak with the necromancer after the first wave of undead attacked and was rebuffed, then attacked by undead. He assumes the necromancer has gone mad at last.

#### **Investigating the Necromancer's Cave**

The Necromancer Galrond is a sad soul, but also hardened to the ways of Pelegar. He is of indeterminate age, appearing to be in his forties and in very good health. He learned the Masirian secret of long life many years ago in his youth, and after a tryst with a Masirian princess managed to steal the secret elixir and take it for himself.

Galrond returned to his homeland, where he continued his fascination with the sorcery behind life and death. Within his native city of Vanholm he began probing these arts despite the edicts against such study and soon grew to understand why necromancy was banned. As the hidden undead elite of the city became evident to him, he grew even more determined to master the dark arts, and eventually learned much of its



dark secrets after he uncovered the **Codex Immortus** of the dead god Malib. Among other things he learned how to create wards and artifacts that could allow him dominion over or the power to destroy the vampires of Vanholm. This ultimately led to his expulsion from the city, for he was considered too dangerous to the real hidden powers of the city, but it was also too dangerous to those same vampires to seek to destroy him directly.

Galrond found his new home in the deeps of the Nimwood, where he found plenty of ancient remains to play with, as many ancient battles had happened in the wood, and the trees of the land were suffused with the exsanguinated fluids of eras past. He also discovered a cavern that connected to the deep realms of the Lower Dark beneath Pelegar, and eventually even a passage to the true depths of the subterranean temple of Malib.

Approaching the necromancer is no easy task. PCs entering the Nimwood have a 50% chance per hour of being accosted by 1D8 skeletons or 1D6 zombies, with a 30% chance per minute that 1D2 of each will rise up as reinforcements. Moving stealthily and possibly with wards against the undead (or attunement to a death rune) will avoid such confrontations, reducing them to 10% chance per hour.

The cave entrance is twenty miles from town, and there are no safe paths. Assuming the PCs make it without being assaulted (or surviving the assaults), the cave will seem oddly inviting and unprotected. In fact, the most dangerous portion of the journey is only just to begin.

Shadowy entities of the netherworld are waiting inside the main cavern. Each spirit will attempt to attack the PCs and take possession of them (+15 vs. Will; target is dominated (save ends). These shadow spirits will induce temporary madness, speaking in old Inadasir and can use the powers and spells of a dominated target against the PCs. Any PC that makes a POW check is able to permanently evict the spirit, and they can keep doing so even when possessed.

After the spirits attack, 8 skeletons will rise from the ground to attack. If the PCs still survive this, or if they offer up some evidence of their friendly intentions (possibilities include: a vampire's head, displaying a death rune mark, or calling out a relevant fact about Krissa) then the fighting will cease and the rear of the cave will open to reveal a worked stone stair passage winding downward.

The necromancer will greet the PCs in his private domain, which was hewn from the rock of the caves by his zombie laborers many years ago. Depending upon what the PCs present to him, he will react differently:

#### **The PCs Have learned of the Vampire Lord and Informed Him:**

He will realize he has been played by an old rival, and will offer them a sword with an enchantment fatal to vampires to seek him out and slay Akartos.

The sword is **Bloodbane** (A Longsword +3 Vampire's Bane; Properties: +1D8 per bonus on crits; +1D12 per point on a crit against undead; Daily: instant reaction; Trigger: you hit a vampire; Effect: the vampire is reduced to zero hit points; the wielder of the sword immediately loses 2 healing surges and takes damage equal to his blooded level; works only once at GM's discretion.)

#### **The PCs Do not Know Who or What Killed Krissa:**

The necromancer will tell them that they must find the true perpetrators of her death...for he knows she was rendered undead....and bring that person(s) to justice before he will stop sieging the town. He feels that there is someone, a vampire perhaps, lurking within its walls and he wants it flushed out; he has not figured out that it is a vampire from the city.

#### **The PCs Return Triumphant with the Infant:**

The necromancer will be overjoyed to know that his son lived, and will proceed to perform rituals to purge the ghoulish taint from him due to his premature exposure and removal from the womb before his time.

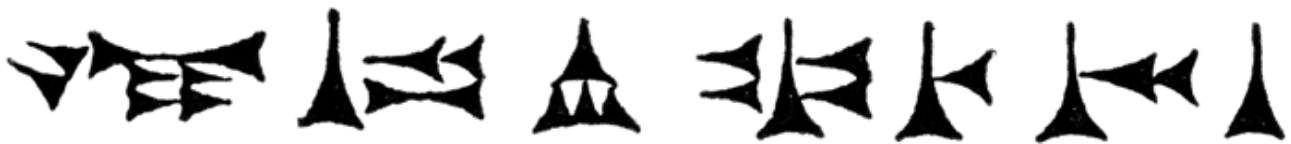
**Rewards:** If the PCs save the day, so to speak, by revealing Akartos and possibly slaying him, as well as possibly saving the infant child of the necromancer, then they should each gain one magic item as rewards from Galrond. Further, if the vampire is killed and the son is also returned they should receive 25,000 gold pieces (total).

#### **Benediction Keep**

For this encounter, treat the 12 wolves and 6 ghouls as henchmen, but Akartos and Gasha as full NPCs.

Akartos lurks here with a dozen wolves and six loyal ghouls as well as Gasha the ghoul witch. Penetrating the keep and living maybe a difficult task, but it is possible. PCs who face Akartos without the use of the sword Bloodbane may be in for some bitter defeat, but if the PCs are on the losing end and Akartos is about to wipe the floor with them a curious thing happens: the tower is filled with what seems to be sunlight, which causes Akartos to flee in to the catacombs beneath. The source of this timely light will come from an Ithirian elf woman





named Ysiri. She has been watching the PCs for sometime now since the Ithirian elves in the hills first spotted them and she knows of the darkness within the keep. Ysiri can also help the PCs out at other times, if desired, and they may have spotted her following them on occasion.

Killing Akartos will generate enmity among his kin back in Vanholm, though the PCs may not immediately know it. A regional lore check will suggest as much, for though Vanholm is officially ruled by mortal men it is an ill-kept secret that there is a hidden aristocracy of immortal undead behind the rule of the Three.

The child is kept in the hands of Gasha. The ghoul woman has taken a liking to the child, and if the PCs try to steal him away she will flee to the catacombs to try and make it to an entrance to the lower dark. PCs will

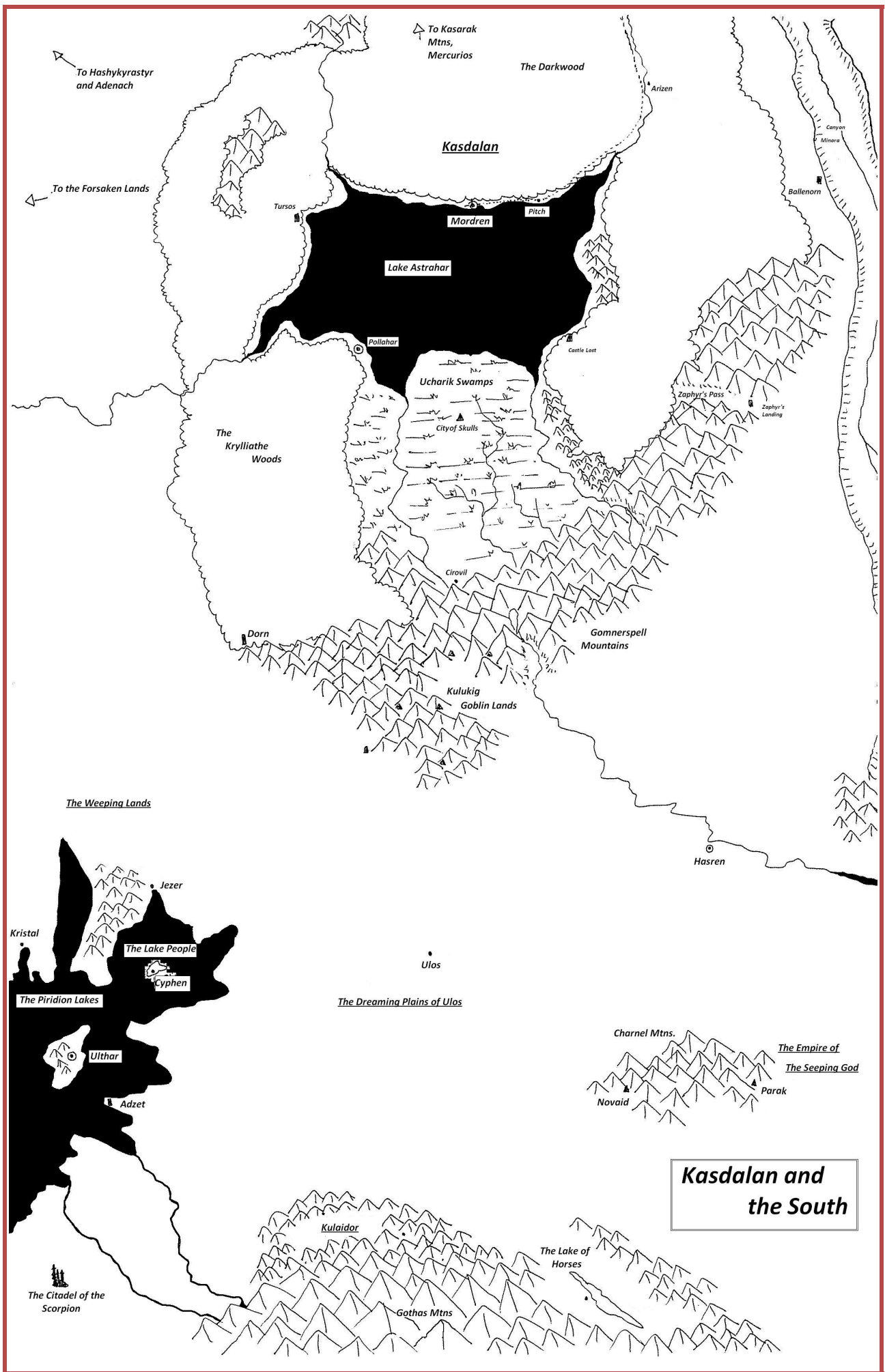
have to be quick on their feet to catch her before she is gone. If she does escape, a delve in to the caverns beneath the realm will be required to recover the child. Gasha can be found dwelling among a tribe of beastkin who lurk in the darkness warring against the Death Gouger clan of orcs.

## Conclusion

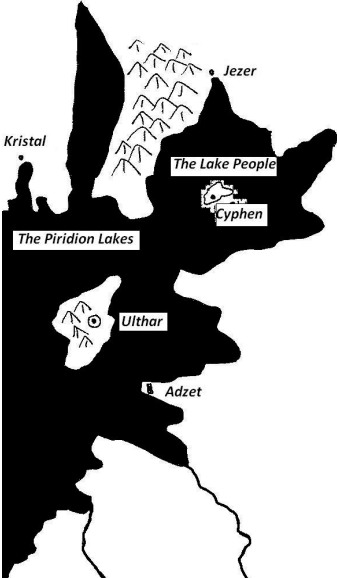
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Ideally after returning to the necromancer the PCs journey back to Nezamir with a tale of success. Baron Araska will pay them, plus a 250 GP bonus for a job well done if they rescued the child as well. He will indicate that he liked their approach and ability to operate covertly. He will offer them the opportunity for more such work in the future...





The Weeping Lands



The Dreaming Plains of Ulos

Ulos



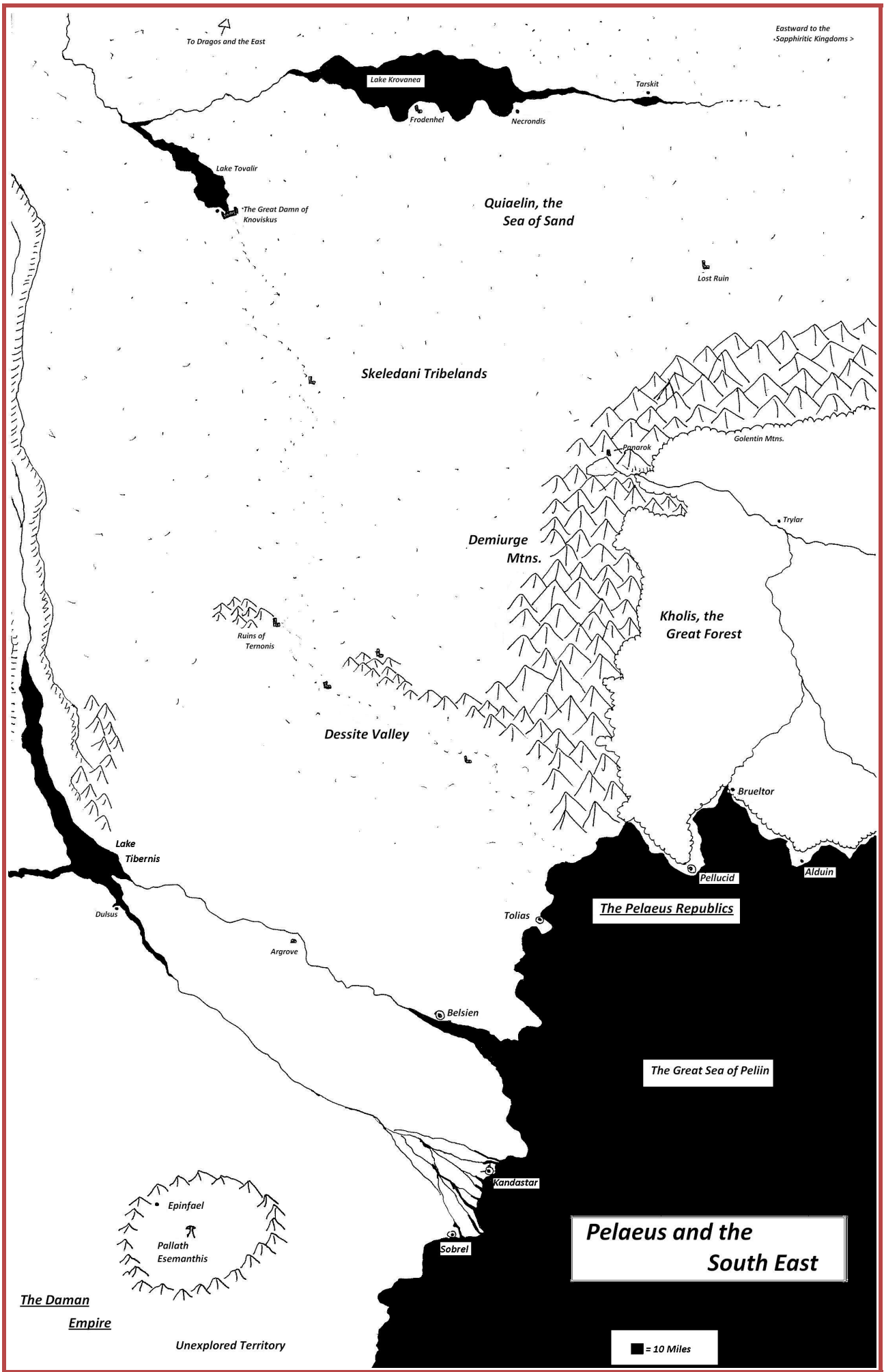
**Kasdalan and the South**

The Citadel of the Scorpion

Kulaidor

Gothas Mtns

The Lake of Horses



To Dragos and the East

Eastward to the Sapphiric Kingdoms >

Lake Krovanaea

Tarskit

Frodnehel

Necrondis

Lake Tovalir

The Great Damn of Khoviskus

Quiaelin, the Sea of Sand

Lost Ruin

Skeledani Tribelands

Golentin Mtns.

Paparok

Demiurge Mtns.

Trylar

Kholis, the Great Forest

Ruins of Ternonis

Dessite Valley

Brueltor

Lake Tibernis

Pelucid

Alduin

The Pelaeus Republics

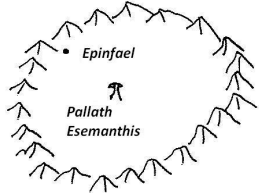
Dulsus

Tolias

Argrove

Belsien

The Great Sea of Peliin



The Daman Empire

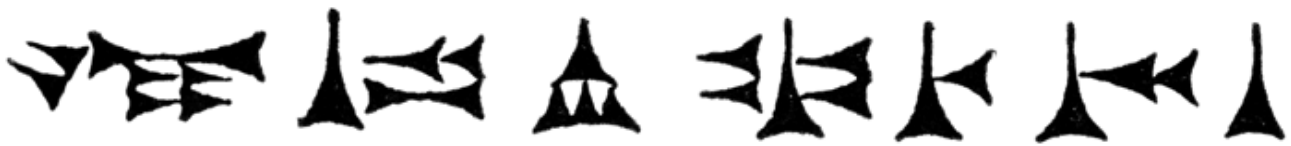
Unexplored Territory

Kandastar

Sobrel

Pelaeus and the South East

■ = 10 Miles



## Pelaeus

### Distant seafaring republic in the Southeast

**Cultural Level:** steel age

**Population:** approximately 800,000 **Government:** a republic of states dominated by regional governors

**Ruler:** The Appointed Regent Garos Dromin

**Religions:** The Pelaeus are a practical people, but reverence for the Wanderer and Gathas, as well as Kalie'yana amongst sailors. Apocalypticists of Ga'thon are hidden throughout the land.

**Social Titles:** commoners, land owners, merchant princes, councilmen, soldiers, and generals.

**Language:** Pelaeic.

**Allies:** Pelaeus trades with several nations across the Sea of Peliin, including the Sappharitic Kingdoms, Kholisar, and the Yegdivar Empire in the utter east..

**Enemies:** Kasdalan is a great threat, as is the distant kingdom of Shedhar.

The Pelaeian Republics grew out of a need for unity among the scattered city-states along the Sea of Peliin. The Seafaring cities of the land engaged in a great deal of trade and warfare amongst one another, but within the last four centuries, neighboring kingdoms grew threatening and powerful, such as Kasdalan, and eventually, a concord amongst the Pelaeus cities was reached, in which the first draft of the new republic was agreed upon. Since then, the republic has prospered and advanced, as the city states could now offer their services, both in goods and mercenaries, to foreign lands.

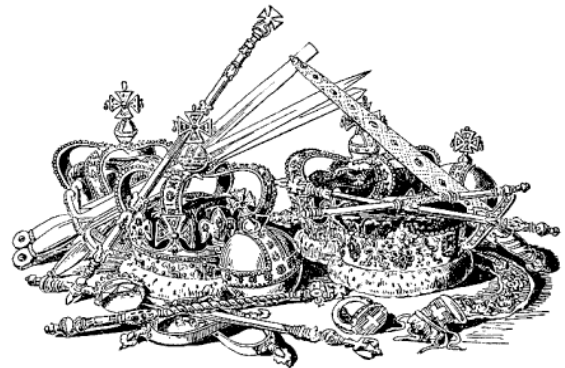
Most of the standing army of Pelaeus is in the form of mercenary companies. To keep the land protected, the rights of any city to maintain a standing army were limited. Instead, the status of professional warriors as soldiers for hire was established, and over time, a culture of mercenaries became normal. Now, Pelaeus hires its soldiers as needed, and many of the old houses of the kingdom are dedicated to the training and maintenance of these companies. All remain fiercely loyal to their homeland, but they ply their trade across the Realms, both in the region of the Sea of Peliin, the Sea of Chirak, and the Yellow Kingdoms, as well as the Sappharitic Kingdoms.

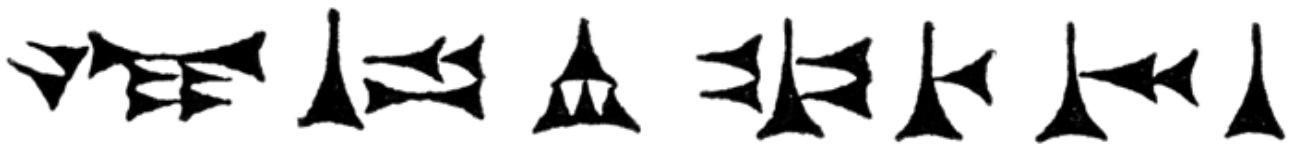
### Daman

South along the coastal region of Pelaeus is a militant city-state that is widely regarded as a rogue province of the Pelaeian Republics. The people of Daman claim that

their heritage extends back to the time of Zam Redar, when he ruled with an iron fist in Kasdalan, and that when civil war broke out and Zam Redar's troops were pushed back and crushed after the great sorcerer was betrayed by his wife, Lady Poe, his most loyal generals fled to the remote southern regions of Pelaeus and entrenched themselves.

Other stories abound, such as how the soldiers of the land were ordered to stand guard over the Pallath Esamanthis, the great Tower of the Sun, which they did until recently, when an army of Pelaeans led by Maximus Rheams in the service of the avatar of Pallath, Maretz laid siege to the great structure and freed it from Daman control. Since then the Pelaeans and Daman have been engaged in war, as the Pelaeans seek to force the dissident city state back in to reunification.





## The Pellucid Kingdom of Mercurios

Young medieval steel age kingdom founded on the ruins of a fallen empire

**Cultural Level:** steel age

**Population:** approximately 3.5 million

**Government:** Hereditary monarchy

**Rulers:** King Iron Dukat

**Religions:** Some preservationist belief, mixed with worship of Laddaskar.

**Social Titles:** commoner, land owner, journeyman, merchantman, baron, count, duke, king

**Coinage:** copper pieces, silver pieces, gold pieces, gold crowns, platinum pieces

**Allies:** Mercurios has a trade agreement with Espanea, Nubiria and Legora.

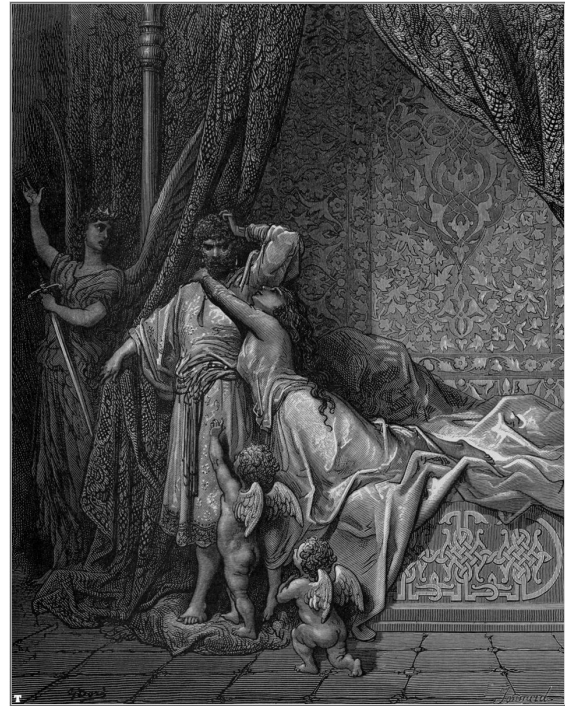
**Enemies:** Mercurios is beset by enemies, including Correnstal, Dragos, the Kraggit orcs, Kasdalan, Hashikarystyr, and sometimes Nithiad.

The Pellucid Kingdoms are best defined as a broad region of collective kingdoms, independent city-states, and other polities which share a common heritage. Once, five centuries ago, the Pellucid Empire was a strong, uniting force across these realms. Internal strife, warfare, and corruption brought the old empire down, however, and over the centuries, its people fragmented, and divided into the varied realms of the present.

The most prominent kingdom is Mercurios, ruled from Eddernine. Surrounding the gentle plains and hill lands centered on the Lake of Brennan, Mercurios is certainly the closest to its ancient Pellucid heritage. The prominent city Grand Mercurios is, in fact, the ancient capitol of the old empire.

Other lands of Pellucid descent include Kasdalan to the south (where it is said the end of the old empire began), Dragos, Correnstal, Varkal, and some even more distant realms that share some descent with the Sapphire Lands in the far east. All of these lands have their own unique cultures and politics, now, but they still share their lost heritage.

What follows is a brief gazetteer of the region of Mercurios, which holds itself as the only remaining kingdom that is true to its Pellucid heritage. Other entries will discuss Kasdalan, Correnstal, Dragos, and so forth accordingly.

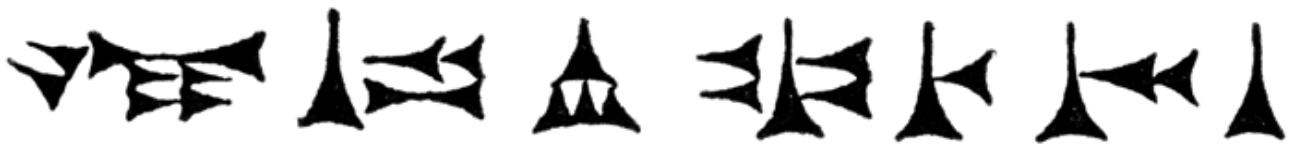


*"Iron Dukas' wife begs him not to leave"*

### Eddernine

Ruled by Iron Dukas, King of Mercurios, inheritor of the Pellucid lands, Eddernine has been Capitol of the realm for two and a half centuries. The Dukas family has maintained control ever since it successfully conquered the Mercurian lands and united them two hundred and fifty years ago. Iron Dukas' father was responsible for driving out the menace of the Nithadians in their quest to expand beyond the Tedroy province. Iron himself has managed the delicate trade alliance Mercurios now has with the Nithadians.

The Iron family has a secret history, too, which says that when the last true blood ruler of Grand Mercurios (Shyvoltz XI) fell to the blade of the first Iron Dukas, he cursed them. The curse comes in the form of madness and a form of corrupting lycanthropy in which the man becomes beast, and eventually, after death, a horrible undead monstrosity. The first Iron Dukas was interred in a great Tower of Rust in the Dreamwood. After that, other children of clan Dukas were given over to a secret order when they displayed the curse. Only one son in a generation of Dukas's will manifest, and it is never known which son. To compensate, the Dukas family has always been prolific. Iron (the fifth) currently has four sisters and five brothers, for example.



The Old Gray Wren is an upscale tavern near the tidal flats which caters to the foreign merchant crowd and the wealthy local businessmen and nobles. It is a two story affair with a pavilion overlooking the cliffs which jut out over the flats. Less than a quarter mile away is the docks and the shipping district.

South of Eddernine about twelve miles is the Lighthouse Keep. Held by Count Arnos Vaskar, the old sea dog noble was once a great lord in the navy, but with age and time, he has retired to his coastal properties. The keep holds one of the many lighthouses that serve to warn incoming ships of the Pellucid Gulf against the ship-shattering cliffs. Vaskar is an honest man who hates the Nithiadians and despises the delicate peace kept with them. He lost two sons in sea skirmishes against the Nithidians. He has a daughter who pursues the military way in conflict in the Scalewood, as well.

## Manarak

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The ruler of Manarak is Highlord Arturos Normanal. He is a friend to the Tower of Kaledon, a close ally to Iron Dukas, and a strong protector of his river lands. His wife is Lady Alithia Dukas, oldest sister to Iron Dukas. He has two sons and a daughter.

Inside Manarak are some particular places of interest. The Fabled Tower of Kaledon draws practitioners of magic from across the world. It is the first of the great towers, and it is said it rivals the Masirian Tower in size and splendor, though its look is decidedly antique. The Lord of the Tower and current Chancellor presiding of the Order of the Tower is Darnao Karvos. Darnao is a stern and diligent man who believes in the preservation of lost magical arts and the idealism of Kaledon, the tower's ancient founder. Said to be an ancient man of Mythros, Kaledon aspired to insure that mankind never forgot that magic was a tool to serve and teach. So it remains at the Tower.

The Monastery of Laddaskar in Manarak is of the Order of the Frail Samaritan, founded on the grave site of an ancient half-elf man who devoted his life to teaching the lost children of Manarak the ways of survival, farming, and fishing. The story says that when the marauders of the south broke through the gates of the old Pellucid cities, Manarak was razed to the ground, and nothing was left to stand. All men and women were killed or taken away, but the barbarian general who did this instructed that the children would remain. The mysterious samaritan was allowed to live, because he was considered as feeble as an infant.

With the aid of the samaritan, Manarak lived on in its children, and years later, when new occupiers arrived to claim the land, they were amazed to discover that the children had lived on to recreate the city anew. When he died, they founded the monastery in his honor.

The monastery is kept by the high father, **Padre Pyrnaen**. He is a wise and dedicated monk of the order, and fulfills Laddaskar's benevolence in all ways. The Keeper of the Peace is Vusor, a man who honors the dead and seeks to save the damned. Vusor is required to be in attendance at all high courts held in Manarak. Finally, the unusual and unique **Padre Kryvysk**, the exiled Hashikarystyr noble who as a young lizard-child found refuge with the monastery, can often be found here when not wandering.

A popular riverside spot along the docks is the Riverside Tavern. Owned and operated by Gumich, a man who once warred for Mercurios against the Dragos during the trade wars, This is the prime spot of rest and relaxation for travelers, adventurers, and river men alike.

The northlands from Manarak are part of the North County, Kesrick County. There, Lord Aesrick Krenshaw rules obediently. He is an old questing Paladin dedicated to Laddaskar, one of the rare soldiers to take up the priesthood and sword in hand to defend the innocent and protect the land for duty and deity. He has a son, Dale, who is 16 and learning affairs of state. His wife, Villariz, is the primary keeper of the household and local affairs when her husband quests. His master-at-arms is Goris, a rough soldier who is descended from southern blood.

## Neighboring Lands in the Pellucid Region:

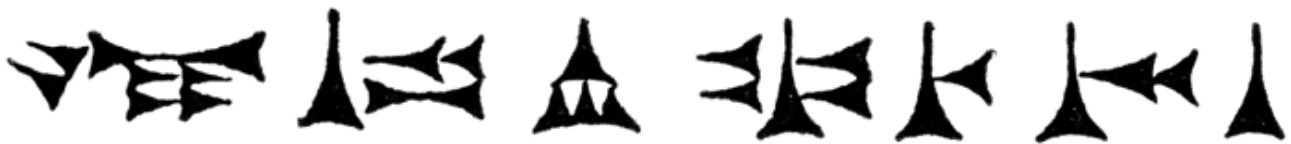
There are several locations in or near the region of Mercurios proper that bear mentioning.

### Varkal

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Located in the northern-most lands of the old Pellucid empire, this city once belonged to the ancient empire, and was even founded by its greatest ancient general, **Alvenadras**. It is a cross mixing of Pellucids and Nubirions.

The current city-state is independent, and very powerful in the region, seeking tribute from many local tribes and polities. It is ruled by **King Trabalas Garuh**, the True born King (said to be a direct descendant of Alvenadras). His wife is the half-Varkalite **Skimian Trianay**, step mother to his true born daughter **Cyria Nystor** (a blood mage), and **Prince Sabalen Shiantal-**



**Nystor** (also of the former true queen, Alia). He has a second wife, concubine **Alsia Nariamal**, and a third, **Cyriana**, a true Nubiri woman. He has 13 daughters and 11 sons to these wives and his dead wife, but none are considered true born.

The **Chancellor of the State** is **Kurdon Osho**, a Nubiri blood mage and taciturn economist. He is very shrewd in dealing with foreign interests. The city's **master at arms** is **Luranges**, a great warrior of true Varkal descent, dedicated to the ancient martial arts of the Nubiri. The **wizened advisor to the king** is **Krios the Bald**, a Correnstalian who has been exiled from his own realm but impressed the king in his youth with skill and tenacity. The **General of the Armies** is **Pur Gan**, a Nubiri of the eastern tribes who was conquered in warfare years ago by the King and swore undying fealty to him. He has fought many skirmishes to keep the peace of the Varkal lands.

A popular hangout in the city is the **Wry Spriggan**, owned and operated by a Varkal native named **Tulboso**, who caters to the wealthy foreign merchants. The spriggan is named after a specific fey creature, which Tulboso allegedly bartered with for his wealth and fame, all in exchange for his first born daughter!

## The Dreamwood and the Dryssyrian Mountains

A mystical woodland, running amidst the great mountainous ranges of the **Dryssyrian Mountains**, the Dreamwood and mountains contain many interesting things, including:

The **Stonebiter tribes**, a loose association of ogres and ettins who are ruled by the giant **lord Gaganor**, father of Lady Poe's only bastard son, **Grigos**, who dwells in the mountains with his father. They are sworn to allegiance with Poe.

The elvish tribes of the **Xernethian elves**. Ancient elfin kin, far removed from fey lands over time and memory, they dwell as simple nomadic hunters and gatherers, but skilled with what they know. They are good at defense, and war with the Stonebiters, Kraggits, and other foes of the mountains.

Somewhere in the woods is **Castle Halyk**, the cursed domain of Lord Sytos Halyk, who is lady Poe's cursed ex-husband, trapped in undeath by her magic. He dwells forever more in shadowy limbo, and only on the nights of the new moon do he and his entourage of shadow minions arise to mock life.



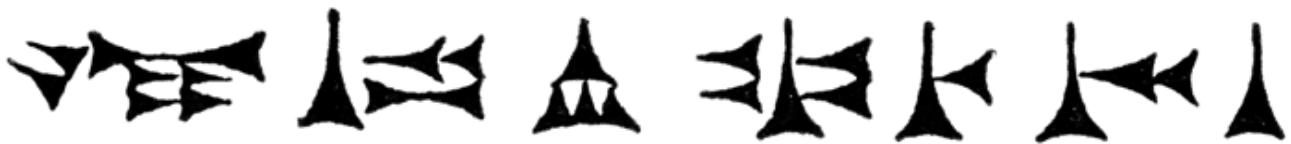
*"A Paladin of Laddaskar stands firm against the Dragosians"*

Near Halyk's castle is said to be a great lake, and along its waters the ancient **elvish barrow lands**. Long before the elves entered into the portal of the lake to another Fey realm, they buried their mortally killed here, in the ancient haunted barrows. The last avatar of the Aquarius stone was buried here.

Somewhere north of all that is the **tomb of Iron Madragor**, the first of the Iron Kings of Mercurios. It is a haunted, dangerous domain, said to be braved only by the ogres and the foolhardy.

### Kraggit Orcs as Characters

Kraggit orcs are the strongest overall force in the mountain lands, but are incapable of uniting to become a force of power. The Kraggits will raid and make small wars with all neighbors, however, and so are despised and hunted in most lands. Nonetheless, many Kraggits are known to raid human lands in Mercurios and the Yellow Kingdoms, as well as Kasdalan, and half orc children in this region tend to come from the product of



such deeds. Kasdalanians value half orc children; they are often brought in to the elite legions of Lady Poe's armies. In Mercurios, they are usually slain or raised in orphanages managed by the priests of Laddaskar, then forced to join the king's armies when they come of age.

Use the template for player character orcs in the MM for Kraggit orcs.

**Brutish:** Kraggit orcs and half orcs suffer serious Diplomacy and bluff penalties (-2) when dealing with people in the Pellucid kingdoms and the Yellow Kingdoms (unless they are intimidating someone.)

**Languages:** Kraggit Orcs start with the Kraggit tongue, and may also learn one more of: Masirian, OGREISH, Tradespeak, Dragosian, Correnstallian, Goblinoid, OGREISH, or Minotaur.

**Half Orcs:** Rare Xernethian Half Orcs (half elf, half orc) are possible; Xernethian women who are raped by orcs will give birth and then abandon the half orc child at the doorstep of a human settlement, or accept exile from her clan and raise it herself. Such orcs may replace one orcish trait with one elvish trait.

**Weak Magic:** Kraggit orcs lean strongly toward the Warlord, Fighter, Ranger or Rogue classes. Precious few Kraggits ever learn magic.



### The Mystery of the Thirteen Tribes

Orcs can be found throughout the Realms of Chirak, and come in many types and varieties. The Kraggit orcs

are one of the more well-known cultural groups, known for strong male leaders and deceptive female politicians, but other orcish groups exist, including the many northern orc kingdoms in the region of Syrgia, the Madigar orc tribes in the west and the terrifyingly powerful orcish warlords of Pelegar. Orcs are most numerous in Xoxtocharit, where they are nearly 40% of the overall population, and having orcish blood (as a half orc) is a sign of prosperity and a blessing of the goddess Shaligon.

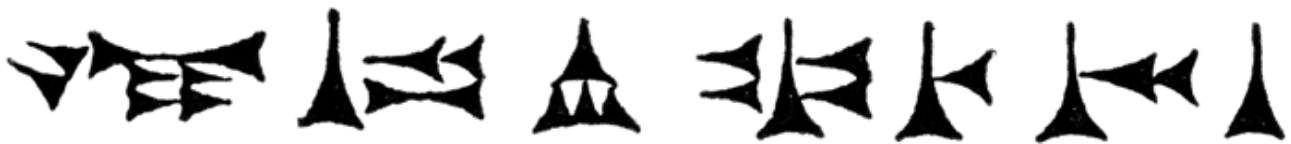
One thing all orc groups have in common, though, is a tendency to internecine warfare and treachery. Orcish groups have segregated themselves across the world, and it has been noted by the infamous arcanist Khurzod the Immortal that orcs seem to have thirteen great "tribes" or cultures, though none are entirely able to distinguish them all, one for each profane aspect of lady Shaligon. These thirteen tribes all seem to have an inherent desire to dominate other race and conquer one another; no one knows (or even wishes to speculate) what would happen if one tribe rose to conquer the others, what such a terrible unity would bring. It is a given, most believe, that the inherently chaotic nature of the species insures this will never happen.

It is generally believed by the scholars of orcs themselves (yes, they do indeed have scholars) as well as those rare non-orcs such as Khurzod who have dared to study this species that the thirteen tribes or branches, each one representing one of the thirteen aspects of villainy that their patron goddess embodies, are defined by various charnel or sanguine practices. The thirteen tribes are believed to be, in no particular order, derived from the following "key names" which can vary from territory to territory, but all harbor similar connotations:

- Blood Drinkers (sanguinity)
- Skull Smashers (mind stealers)
- Throat Cutters (breath takers)
- Gut Slashers (famine spreaders)
- Blackened Skulls (fire makers)
- Eye Gougers (sight takers)
- Heart Takers (life stealers)
- Bone Breakers (siegemasters)
- Arrow Cutters (master archers)
- Flesh Renders (devourers of enemies)
- Soul Eaters (sorcerers)
- Widow Makers (slavers)
- Shadow Slayers (assassins)

According to those scholars who have spent too much time on the study of orcs, all tribal names ultimately prove to be a variation on the above themes, and all can





ultimately trace their ancestry to one of the thirteen tribes. Although any given tribe of orcs is likely to have members who participate in one or more of the above “themes” during battle, most tribes pride themselves on the efforts of their most renowned members. Thus, Tarkasa Ingan of the Shadow Slayers is a notorious assassin, while Tharg Han of the Bone Breakers is a siege master famous for his ability to crack any fortification presented.

There are some very old records from the era of the Final War that actually suggest that Shaligon's armies were aligned in to thirteen divisions, and each division was devoted to the service of Shaligon in a special capacity. This may be the source of the tribal order represented above.

## The Sabiri Lands Gateway to the West

**Stoic nomadic plains culture which has been impervious to outside influence**

**Cultural Level:** iron age

**Population:** approximately 2-3 million

**Government:** loose clan-based tribal princes

**Rulers:** Zamad-Ruus in the north at Zen Hettar; various chieftains

**Religions:** ancestral worship, mixed with worship of Kobal and Amorgas.

**Social Titles:** few, usually a man is known for his deeds; merchant princes, warlords, heroes

**Coinage:** plenty of trade, no common coinage

**Allies:** The Sabiri trade with Pelegar, Madalios, Grelmaine, and Espanea

**Enemies:** The Sabiri regard everyone with suspicion, but especially Crystite and Helios.

The Sabiri people are nomadic pastoralists and traders. They are the primary people to bridge the gap between west and east for trade. The Sabiri are ruled by merchant princes who move in semi mobile communities of up to several thousand, and move in steady five to six year territorial circuits. They are reminiscent of the Hoagarit, but without the emphasis on warfare. The Sabiri worship Kobal, a spirit of the land which some believe is a demiurge with a shard of the Sagittarius stone. Kobal is known to roam the lands, looking much like a great, shaggy humanoid bison, somewhat like the bison that are herded and used for survival by the Sabiri. Besides Kobal, there is Amorgas, a quiet goddess of the Sabiri

women, said to be the avatar of a woman who survived her sacrifice to Kobal when he became enamored with her.

The Sabiri people are a dusky, gray-skinned kin, human but with a nearly gray-white pallor to their skin tone, as if they are perpetually caked in a light dust or whitish clay. While both men and women enjoy piercing and tattoos for decoration, the women are prone to some extreme piercing with rings along their neck, ears, and other extremities.

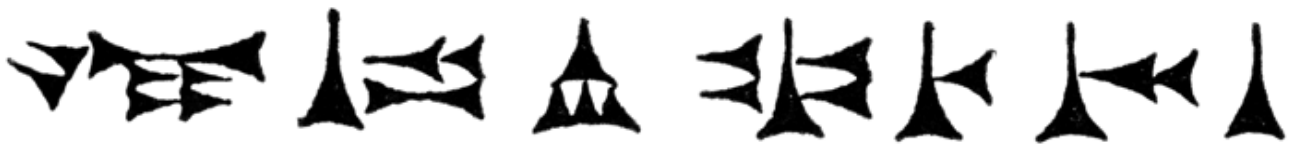


*Servant of the Shroud Templar*

Tattoos are a little more complicated, for a man with tattoos likely has magic. All native Sabiri sorcerers have a tattoo for each spell they have learned, and therefore a very heavily tattooed man can likely be considered a powerful sorcerer. Other tattoos of Sabiri society have powerful sorcery woven in to them, creating spell like effects that the wearer can invoke. A popular example is the Cult of the Asp, a society of assassins and mercenaries which are known for their serpent tattoos that can come to life on a command.

### Westgate

The city of Westgate is a free port, loosely managed and governed by Espanea, which offers some protection for trade routes to and from the city. The governor of the city is an Espanean-appointed noble named Estobar Revan, and his garrison of troops is enough to ensure he is not unseated. The local authority is a coalition of merchant princes, mostly of Sabiri descent from local clans in the western reaches of the Seas of Chirak.



Westgate is cosmopolitan, and is the sole city to benefit from direct west-east trade routes. The local communities of Sabiri are the only permanent, non-nomadic people in the land.

Because Westgate is principally a trade port, Sabiri influence is actually somewhat subdued. The Sabiri are not a seagoing culture, and do not understand such things. The architecture of Westgate is a mix of Espanean and Masirian. The history of the city suggests it was originally founded seven centuries ago by Masirian merchants, then abandoned and repopulated by the Espaneans two centuries ago. It is the only city facing the West where you are still likely to meet Nithiadians trading with Espaneans and others; all traders are welcome here, and all trade is considered fair, regardless of politics.

### Fartheren

Westernmost city once founded by the Sabiri as a center of trade and burial with a year-round population, Fartheren was conquered and made one of the Espanean colonies about two centuries ago. About a century ago, the Sabiri warlord Zvakattas struck out and destroyed most of the Espanean forts and colonies, but he met his end through betrayal at Fartheren and was entombed within the famous Necropolis of Fartheren, a vast city of the dead for the many ancient princes, kings, and warlords of the Sabiri people. This Necropolis is a famous locale throughout the region, well guarded and a very pricey location for prominent Sabiri princes to be interred. No monumental architecture (the famed ziggurats, which stand sometimes 100 feet or higher) has been built in about a century, however. Still, there are easily over two hundred such monuments in the vast city of the dead.

Other locations in Fartheren include the great markets, where the seasonal nomadic convergences gather, as well as the Tower of the Eternal Flame, a society of respected fire mages who worship the demon god Vargre. Near the center of town is the Governor's Palace of Espanea, where **Governor Josen Salvos Grellacas** still rules (although his position is secure mostly due to the support of the local Sabiri merchants). The chief justicar of the Espanean governor is the knight **Arturo Palandro**, A paladin of the Espanean crown.

Not far away, the immense octagonal, smoke filled temple of Kobal is built, a mysterious place of worship with feverishly dedicated priests who are as quick to strike out with punishment as to commit self flagellation.

The leader of Kobal's sect in the city is a swarthy man called **Vogol**.

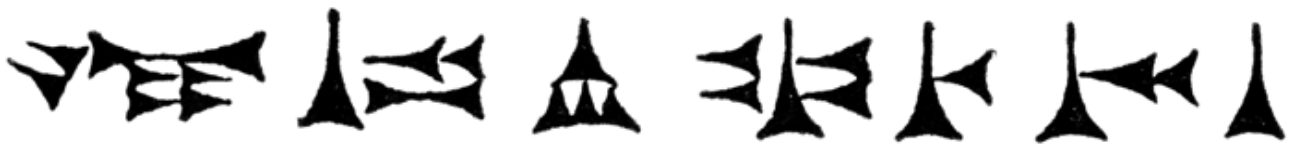
Still operating within Fartheren is the cult dedicated to the demon-spirit Boolion, called the **Servants of the Shroud**. Their numbers are small, but they pervade all walks of Fartheren society. Their secret leader is **Zthomas the Irredeemable**, who masquerades as a simple alchemist in the merchant quarter, but is in fact the cult leader and mastermind. His enforcers include **Kuzraol** the incubus, **Gaerille the Merciless** (a captain of the guard), and **Lord Krevin'nar**, of the Vitti tribe, an ally to both the Servants of the Shroud and the Arcanists.



*"Sabiri warlock laden with tattoos"*

### Kadela

The ruined city of Kadela is avoided by most Sabiri, save those who trade with its dangerous inhabitants. The city was founded centuries ago by Masirian colonists who were driven out by the Sabiri warlords four centuries ago. It was later re-colonized by the Espaneans, who held it until it was sacked and destroyed by the forces of Zvakattas a century past. Since then, Kadela has become an enclave of hidden knowledge for the Arcanists, who discovered that the ancient library of the Masirians was still intact within the bowels of the city, and contained a great deal of forbidden magical knowledge. Now, the city is a refuge of teaching for the Arcanists, who are ruled by a dark woman of unknown descent called **Middara Aegysaria**. She is known to have summoned and bound at least three demons to her service, and is feared and respected by all Arcanists.



## Uvalin

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The City of the South is one of the few sacred gathering points of the Sabiri to be kept year round. This exclusively Sabiri city has a small continuous population which lives there and maintains its existence on the offerings of the visiting tribes which pass through. At any given time, two or three tribes will tend to be in the city, and as many as ten to fifteen thousand nomads may be in the area. Often, in the Summer these tribes gather for great war games, incredibly bloody sports of challenge in which different tribal warlords spar for the right to be called supreme warlord. No true warlord of the might of Zvakattas has come forth in a century, however.

As a true Sabiri city, Uvalin contains a great temple to Kobal, as well as a House of Judgment, where great crimes or concerns can be addressed before a selection of Ancestral Idols, each one a massive head carved of sacred stone and imbued with the spirits of great ancestors for divination. These heads are linked to the alignment charged planes, and can open portals to such planes, sometimes to engulf those who are presented before them and sweep them away to their fates in the planar realms. The heads are used to judge the truthfulness or character of the men who are presented before them, but the heads always require offerings. When activated without guidance, the heads will always seek to influence the soul of the man before them to become closer to the alignment of the judging idol, or to destroy that person if he or she is too dangerous to the ethos of the idol.

## Zen Hettar

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The northern Sabiri city of Zen Hettar is not unlike Uvalin in the south, but it is also a cultural interchange for the northern people of Madalios, who are ethnically related to the Sabiri, but have given up their nomadic ways. Zen Hettar is also currently ruled by the most prominent warlord of the nomads in the present, and man called **Zamad'Ruus**. Said by some to be the next great warlord, Zamad'Ruus seeks to conquer Madalios and destroy their infidel ways.

## Madalios

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Many smaller communities and two major cities comprise the more fertile, riverine lands of the Madalios people. Once Sabiri, the Madalios traded and interacted with the people to the north, in the Crystite lands of Knos as well as the Zamedian elves of the mountains, and learned the ways of settled agriculture and

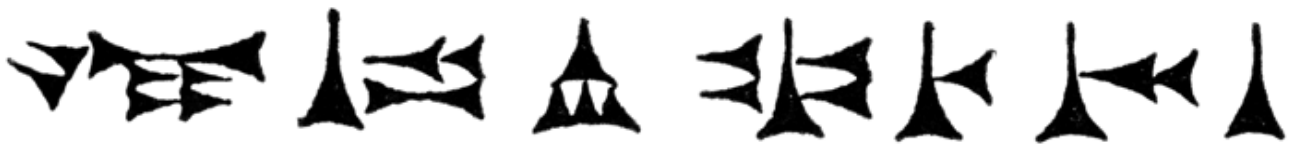
civilization so elusive to the nomadic Sabiri. Over the last few centuries, they Madalios have settled in and given up the nomadic ways of their southern cousins, and accepted a regional rule of democracy by the men, who vote their leaders in to power, and then choose their warlords to run the armies which protect their lands from the Sabiri warlords to the south and the Crystite forces of the north. The current regent of Madalios is **Ariman Daer**, a strong young soldier who has displayed amazing tactical skill in repelling recent Sabiri incursions.

The Madalios people are peaceful, however, and seek only to defend themselves, preferring instead to dwell on their own means in their lush river valleys. Their two major cities, **Diabaros** and **Kolmek**, are heavily fortified and built atop the ruins of much older cities which date back to a culture which was forgotten and exterminated by the Crystite armies a thousand years ago.

The Madalians have also forsaken all religious faith for a peaceful coexistence with natural beliefs, and follow druidic beliefs to the exclusion of all others. They refuse to follow any other gods, and the reverence of the druids centers on the life-giving nature of their many rivers.



*Sabiri Blade Dancer*



### Sabiri Tattoo Magic Feat

**Prerequisites:** Sabiri, Ritual Magic Feat, Dexterity 13+

**Effect:** The Sabiri have learned the unique art of inscribing ritual spells on their bodies. Through the use of this feat, along with 100 GPs worth of tools and a special ink which comes from the blood of an enchanted creature (usually a gorgon), the Sabiri artist can spend one day (12 hours) placing the inscription for any ritual spell in question upon the body of a person. All features of the ritual spell must already be in place; the recipient of the tattoo must already have learned the ritual spell, for example.

Once it is placed upon the character's skin, then he can never lose or forget the spell; he knows it innately. Characters can have eight imbued ritual tattoo on each of the following areas: head, arms, legs, neck, chest and back. A Disenchant spell will remove a tattoo to make room for another one.

If the tattooed character dies, it is possible to take the ritual spell from his flesh. The character must make an Arcana check at a DC of 15+the spell's level to grasp the weave of the spell tattoo. It is also possible to imbue it on one's own kin through the process described above.

Tattoo artists among the Sabiri often charge enormous sums to foreigners for the privilege of an integrated tattoo rune. The base price is usually 200 GPs, plus maybe some task.

## The Sabradan Empire

**Powerful Steam Age Empire Torn by Civil War and Invasion**

**Cultural Level:** steam age

**Population:** approximately 12 million

**Government:** hereditary monarchy

**Rulers:** Queen Menethiel Millikias

**Religions:** The four demiurges of Pornyphiros

**Social Titles:** commoner, land owner, journeyman, merchantman, baron, count, duke, king

**Coinage:** copper pieces, silver pieces, gold pieces, platinum pieces

**Allies:** The Sabradan trade with the city states of Abraheil, with Helios and with some northern kingdoms not yet charted by the Cartographical Society of Barcen.

**Enemies:** Always at war with the Pelegar, Dalevar, and the Kossarit Orcs.

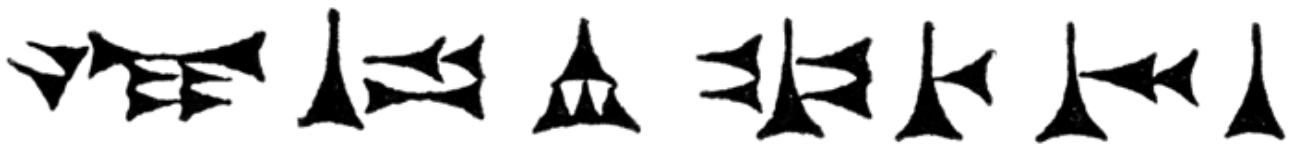
Once you are west of the Cossarit ranges, the craggy valleys and hills stretch out in a great arboreal range called the Fondarit Woods, and it is this land which is

known collectively as the Sabradan Empires. Chief among the powers of this land is **Shirin-Dur**. The great city of that name is a city-state of old and well established power, Sabradan's metropolis of trade and culture, from which eastern traders arrive and barter the mysterious wares of the Seas of Chirak, and western traders of Abraheil bring even stranger and more remote goods.

Six duchies with a hundred baronies are spread throughout the **Fondarit Woods** and beyond, and all pay homage to Shirin-Dur, the Palace of the Ancient Sabradan Lords. Here, a hereditary monarchy lasting a thousand years holds sway, ruled by current **Queen Menethiel Millikias**. Her family has been in power since the founding of the kingdom, and has held it for all these centuries, against any number of great wars.

Millennia ago, the ruling family's founder made a pact with Phylos the demiurge, and in exchange for an endless rule, his family was granted immortality. The price was steep; however, with each passing year, the members of the family change, and become horrific beings in appearance, of metal, fibrous tissue, chitin, bone, and other terrible features. Over time, it became clear that the immortality was a curse, and so the family had to marry within itself, for no mortals dared to join with the cursed nobility, for fear of the faint. By age 100, no family member would go unscathed. Over the centuries, those taken by the taint have been dealt with in many ways. Gorman the Dark was the first of the tainted to seize power and not be exiled, imprisoned, or killed before his full change. His rule of beastliness lasted for three centuries, and ended about one hundred and fifty years ago. Since then, all that are swept away by the taint are killed or imprisoned. It is said that the dungeons beneath the Palace are filled with the most horrific beasts imaginable.

Sabradan is also a Mecca of forbidden technology, and those few preservationists who have traveled here are awed by some of what the Sabradani have harvested. In the city of **Suspir**, the Artificers of the Empire learned long ago how to manipulate the mechanical birthing machines of a forgotten animate enclave. Long ago, this knowledge was made a privileged lore of the arcanists, who cemented their importance in the empire by making their ability to create animates exclusive knowledge. Now, the **Animator's Guild** is one of the single most powerful factions of the empire, and on more than one occasion, their power backing the Emperor or Empress has been key in shattering internal warfare.



Because of this knowledge, many constructs are used as labor and soldiers in the Sabradan Empire. Though expensive, a construct can operate for decades or even centuries before breaking down, and the rich nobles are willing to pay for the ownership of such magical mechanized beings. Unlike true animates, however, the constructs of Sabradan are rarely gifted with intelligence, and only the artificers who have mastered the knowledge of the original birthing chambers of Suspír understand the mechanism to imbue their construct creations with souls and make them true animates.

Animates from an unknown region in the north have apparently become aware of the degenerate creations of the Sabradan Empire, and about eighty years ago a great offensive was mounted to exterminate the abominations and all knowledge of their creation. The war lasted two decades and wreaked havoc upon the land, but the animate army was eventually driven off, and many were captured for study or enslavement. Today, there is a minority community of such enslaved animates within Sabradan, who struggle to seek freedom and escape.

Other threats to the Sabradan Empire include the Pelegar, who are seen as a relic of evil from the apocalypse, and more than one emperor has declared that the only answer to the Pelegar curse is genocide. The last invasion attempt happened two decades ago, but was repelled due to the malevolent and demonic allies of that kingdom.

In the north, the loose kingdoms of Tinendael are sometimes allies, sometimes enemies of Sabradan, as are the desert kingdoms of Helios in the south. The Sabradan also wage regular war against the Crystites and the many dark forces of the Cossarit ranges, although they are currently allied with the Dalevar dwarves.

## The Sapphiritic Kingdoms

### Distant Cultures of the Northeast

**Cultural Level:** renaissance mariner cultures

**Population:** unknown

**Government:** various monarchies

**Rulers:** Pe'jin and Wu'shandar

**Religions:** unknown

**Social Titles:** commoner, land owner, journeyman, merchantman, baron, count, duke, king

**Coinage:** rumors abound of paper money

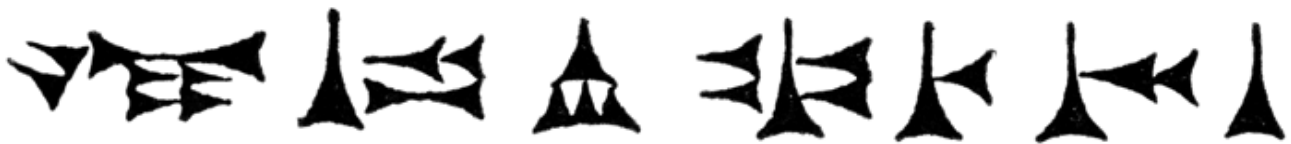
**Allies:** Pelaeus, possibly others.

**Enemies:** Known to war with the Yellow Kingdoms.

The Sapphire Lands are spoken of by some cartographers who see it on very old maps. The Preservationists have mounted several expeditions over the ages to see if the Sapphire Lands still exist, and what may lie therein. It is said that these lands may lie a thousand miles north and east beyond the mountain kingdoms of the Xoxtocharit, and that they may even be remote to the Yellow Kingdoms. Very little is known about them, but some ancient traveler's tales say that the land was said to have been coastal, along a great eastern ocean, and that some of the people dwell in a great chain of islands stretching out in to the oceans. They are said by one account to worship great stone idols, and have forgotten or given up on all of the old gods, instead venerating spirits and planar beings. They are supposedly divided in to at least five great kingdoms, and one account from about nine centuries ago by the near legendary explorer **Perudus Ventinius** of the region of Old Castonia (now lost to time, but once a thriving kingdom in the lands now occupied by the Hoagarit) claimed he witnessed a battle unlike any seen since the apocalypse, in which a million troops were committed to battle by both sides, warring emperors of two lands called **Pe'jin and Wu'shandar**.

But no one in the region of the Sea of Chirak has been able to verify the existence of these lands or their current state in recent memory, alas, and only distant rumors from the Far East continue to suggest that the Sapphire Kingdoms may still exist.

In the southeastern lands of Pelaeus, a small but hardy republic of stalwart seafarers claims to trade with numerous kingdoms along the coast, as well as a couple across the Sea of Peliin. One of the regions that they trade with is called the Sapphiritic Kingdoms, and it is suspected that this land may be the more recent incarnation of the Sapphire Lands in the east. Unfortunately, very little contact has been made between Pelaeus and the region of the Sea of Chirak, due largely to the kingdoms of Dragos and Kasdalan which lie between, and those hardy Pelaeus mercenaries which travel to offer their skills in the Sea of Chirak region are rarely gifted scholars able to draw comparisons between the Sapphiritic Kingdoms and the old tales of the Sapphire Lands. Still, what little is known suggests that these lands, located on the far eastern coast of the great continent, might well be the same lands.



## Sontaniardes

### Island culture of pirates, privateers, and seafarers of all types

**Cultural Level:** steel age-renaissance

**Population:** approximately 300,000

**Government:** loose alliance of city states

**Rulers:** the Sea Kings, especially Ollharum Dahone

**Religions:** Some preservationist belief, mixed with worship of Kalie'yana, Piscalael, and others.

**Social Titles:** commoner, land owner, journeyman, merchantman, baron, count, duke, king

**Coinage:** copper pieces, silver pieces, gold pieces, gold crowns, platinum pieces

**Allies:** various and dependent upon circumstances.

**Enemies:** Most Sontaniardes vessels flee or fight against Espanean ships.

Completing the mix of seafaring kingdoms, Sontaniardes is centered on the smallest Isle of the Eastern Sea, and while it's old Sea Kings go back many generations, they are forever bickering and disagreeing on any real sense of rule. More a location than a kingdom, Sontaniardes is a rough region to travel to, and politics are best avoided.

Rogues of all sorts are common here, and could arguably be said to have the most influence of all, for smugglers, pirates, privateers and mutineers of all sorts seem to find a home in the islands of Sontaniardes. Oddly, the **Templar Eternals of the Sea King**, a group of dedicated puissant knights who claim to revere an esoteric philosophy brought to spiritual life, are one of the most powerful military forces uniting the loose realm. The Templars back whomever they see as the rightful heir to the throne, which is presently king **Ollarum Dahone of Port Graven**.

Ollarum is a fair-minded sea king, and regarded right now as a passive threat to the other kings and lords of the region, for he seeks only to impose taxes on those goods coming from the nations of Espanea and Nithiad, both of which are enemies of the Sontaniardes region. Open trade is conducted with Legoras, Masiria, Mercurios, Nubiria, and in spite of its Nithiadian ties, even the Hoagarit port of Khulinon is considered fair game. Likewise, the rogues of Sontaniardes even have a loose sort of embassy in the distant city of Westgate.

Like most of the island cultures of the Sea of Chirak, the Sontaniardes value the magical steam tech of the Pardainse dwarves, but the dwarves are openly hostile to anyone with a Sontaniardes flag, and fire upon such

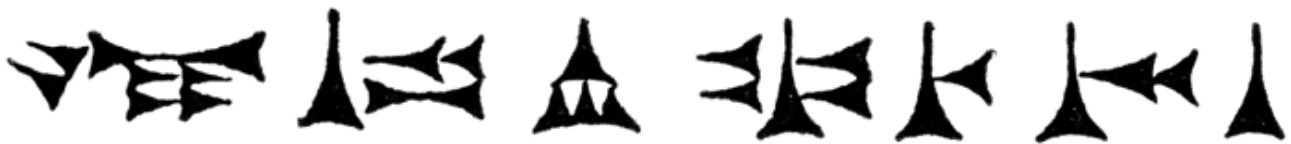
ships at will. As such, it has become a traditional sport for pirates and privateers friendly to Sontaniardes to target Pardainse vessels when possible, though the easier mark is Espanean vessels which have been outfitted with the Pardainse magic.

### The Lessi

Throughout the islands of Sontaniardes, a local human people called the Lessi dwell in a quiet peace and harmony with their rougher neighbors. The Lessi are very Philippine in appearance, a friendly culture of islanders who were moving between the islands of the chain long ago, and indeed, there are some large colonies of many thousands of Lessi to be found on some of the smaller islands that remain untouched by the Sontaniardes or Espaneans. The Lessi revere nature, and worship the spirits of the elements, as well as the worship of Kalie'yana. They are not warlike, but have learned to defend themselves, especially from attacks by troglodytes and other beings which dwell in the mountains on the islands of Halabar, Gundar, Temas, and Runald. The largest Lessi community, where their greatest chieftain dwells, is on the isle known as Ancient's Cove.



*"Business as usual in Sontaniardes"*



## Port Graven

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The capitol from which King Ollarum Dahone rules, Graven is an old city, once of Espanean origin, and liberated in civil revolt about two centuries ago. Since then, Port Graven has steadily grown, and maintains a strong local navy, but it has continued to operate as a freeport for all ships which are not flying official Espanean colors. This makes it a very popular location to visit, and even the rough acceptance of Ollarum as the chief of the sea kings has not daunted some of the most despicable of sailors from stopping by for trade or refitting.

## Muscadaro

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The island of Muscadaro is old, and the ruins upon the island are testament to its connection with the ancient past. Preservationists led by the antiquarian Johan Mezesor have recently began excavating a fabulous, ancient temple buried in Muscadaro's jungles which seems to have been a major temple to Akquinarios.

Port Muscadaro is a lawless land rules by the sea king Marko Poridos, an old and bitter soul who love only food and women, and care little for what else goes on in his largely lawless city. The Muscadaro navy is a ramshackle affair, but enough independent lord sand ladies have made themselves home here that their private naval militias are more than sufficient, if unified, to protect the port. Indeed, it is not uncommon for merchant lords of other nations to one day decide to settle down and retire in this little tropical paradise, free of government intervention, trade tariffs, or taxation.

## Gundar

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Small by the standard of other ports, but settled on a lengthy mountainous island, Gundar doesn't even claim to have a sea king, though it is an accepted fact that the pirate captain Van Dark rules the island with no mercy, and only welcomes those whom he likes or trusts....which are few.

Gundar also has a local population of troglodytes which dwell in the mountains and make occasional raid into the human villages and port for slaves or sacrifices to the demon god they call **Erebane**.

## Halabar

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The port of Halabar is small, but a very popular stop for it is known to have some of the finest shipyards of any freeport. Ruled by the sea king **Mandro Delegatos**, Halabar is a close ally to Port Graven, and lends its

meager navy to that city's aid. When trouble brews for Halabar, everyone simply picks up and moves inland or sets sail and stays away for a time, leaving invaders with nothing to fight or enslave.

## Port Oltiers

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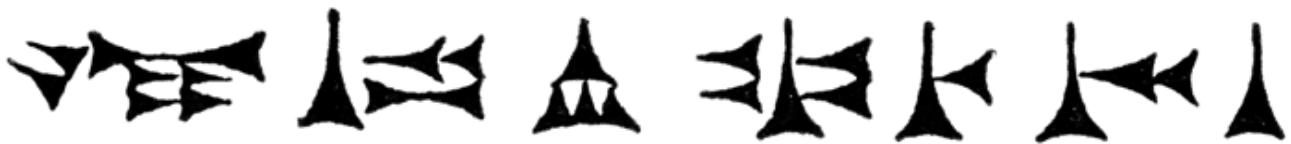
Oltiers is the site of a very old colony founded originally by Legoran explorers many centuries ago who became shipwrecked and mingled with the native people, the Lessi, to create a curious mixture of men with northern and islander descent. Since that day, Sontaniardes colonization efforts have founded the small but vibrant Port Oltiers, which prospers from mining on the island, as well, due to rich mineral and metal deposits accidentally discovered within the last century by the explore Tomas Oltiers, who became rich and founded the port and mining company after his own name. His grandson, **Demalus Oltiers**, is the current lord of the city, and manager of the mining company.

## Ancient's Cove

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The greatest village of the Lessi is found on this small island, known for its expansive ancient ruins, which may or may not date to the pre-apocalyptic civilizations, but which show that sometime in the last two thousand years, a very impressive culture built great stone monuments and a vast city upon the land. Now, inhabiting the largest wing of the ruins, a community of thousands of Lessi under the **chieftain No'Hobbas** dwells in relative peace, providing unique artifacts and art for trade, as well as more exotic offerings to lascivious sailors who travel by.

Some preservationists travel here, for the ruins are riddled with ancient subterranean dwellings, said to be both haunted and guarded by ancient beings, in an effort to determine the secrets of the lost civilization of Ancient's Cove and whether it was a part of the Mythric Empire of old, or another civilization lost to memory.



## Adventure Location: Isla Muscadaro

**Population:** 42,000

**Indigenes:** Lessi natives across the island

**Militia:** Standing forces of 800 men, and 40 members of the Templars Eternal

### **Sea King Marco Poridos (human rogue 12 Unaligned)**

--a callous and wayward drunkard who is as popular for his antics and parties as he is for his lack of rulership. King Poridos is tolerated by Muscadaro's merchants and laughed at by all others.

### **Queen Tanarita Sindrinyr-Poridos (tiefling rogue 14 Evil)**

--the secret power behind Muscadaro. Tanarita is a vicious cut-throat, and takes advantage of her old drunkard husband. She controls the thieves' guild and has close ties to the **Order of Gozul**.

### **Major Personalities:**

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#### **Johan Mezesor (human invoker 12 Good)**

--Loremaster of the Preservationists of Barcen, leader of his kin who are excavating the ancient Temple of Akquinarios.

#### **Sir Johan Eridash (human paladin 10 lawful good)**

--a knight of the **Templars Eternal**, and an exiled prince of Esterehabau, this dashing soldier serves as the closest thing to a legitimate agent of law in the city. His small branch of the order nominally serves Poridos, but claims direct allegiance to Ollarum Dahome of Port Graven.

#### **Thrane (shifter longtooth warden 13 evil)**

--Thrane is a vile beast and a former pirate of no small repute. He lost his ship the war galleon *Burning Claw* in an incident involving the transport of an unholy relic to the cult of Malib not two years ago, and he believes he was cursed for bringing the relic to Muscadaro, such that any ship he sets foot on will now sink. As a result, he has taken up residence as a land-lubber, and become the vicious guild master of the Red Hand thieves' guild, and right hand man to Queen Tanarita, with whom he has an affair.

### **Lunitarius (Human Nithadian Arcanist Sorcerer 18 Chaotic Evil)**

--Lunitarius likes King Poridos, and helps him out a lot. He does not like Tanarita, but they are currently holding a truce. Lunitarius is an arcanist, but one so vile he was expelled from his own society, and so he carries out his studies and his pursuit of lost relics in Sontaniardes from this port. He believes that there is more than one temple on the island, as well, and also believes that there may be a secret portal that leads to the prison where Malib's dead god flesh can be found. This is his prize goal!

### **Powers and Organizations:**

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#### **Templars Eternal**

Led by Sir Eridash, this small garrison of forty dedicated knights in the service of king Dahome is here at their liege's request, and tolerated only barely by the resident sea king Poridos. They are the only law in the city, and the only men one can be certain are not bribed in to silence. Unfortunately, in as lawless a community as Muscadaro, they have their work cut out for them.

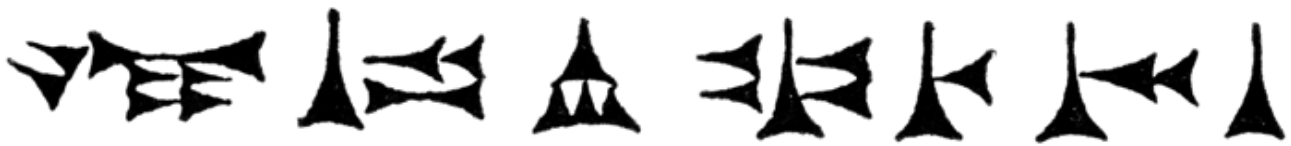
The Templars will consider hiring any individual of good caliber to aid them in work around town, especially with regards to closing down the Red Hand or putting a stop to the worship of Piscalael or the Drowned One.

#### **Order of Gozul**

The Order of Gozul is known only by the learned and overly curious, a secret society on the island that has prospered for generations. It was founded by the first settlers, who learned early on that they must make offerings to the mysterious entity Gozul in his ancient temple at the peak of **Mount Asperus**, in the heart of the island's mountain chain. Exactly who or what Gozul is only the highest level members of this society know, and only those directly descended from the original founding families of old are allowed to join the ancient order.

Gozul is, in fact, much, much older than anything anyone could ever imagine. To his oldest followers he is now believed to be a Titan, one of the Primordial Gods, the first to hold a Zodiac Stone at the dawn of time. His corporeal essence is located deep beneath the island, and the ancient temple atop Mt. Asperus is a passage that leads to his tomb. There, is ancient spirit has been disturbed, and through the use of hallucinogenic plants, his followers enter a dream-like state, passing in to the dreamlands, where they can coax his dreaming undead spirit in to a semblance of wakefulness. There, his ancient hunger for sacrifice can awaken him for brief





moments, during which he grants boons to his dedictees.

The Cult of Gozul is extremely secretive, and will slay anyone who learns too much. They have a problem, however, and that is that recently two other cults have moved in to town, one for the Drowned One (Malib) and the other for Piscrael, his son. The conflict between these two cults is of great concern to the Order of Gozul, for the spiritual resonance of these competing faiths is causing their own slumbering undead god to send out fitful nightmares, nightmares which are so terrifyingly powerful that they can cause sleeping mortals to transform in to terrifying monsters, die of fright, or even worse!

### **The Cult of the Drowned One**

The Cult of the Drowned One was started by a benevolent wise man named **Taricos**, who appears for all purposes to be a kind and gentle man who says that Malib, the drowned betrayer god, speaks to him in visions and that he now reaches out from his prison beneath the sea to offer forgiveness to those who seek it. Naturally, Taricos and his followers preach in one of the most notoriously despicable dens of thieves in the land, where many are eager for redemption.

While the cult operates on the surface as a benevolent church, in secret Taricos is a demon, a particularly nasty general of old who seeks the god flesh of Malib that he might ingest it and achieve a portion of the dead god's immortality and power. He has been following a lead for years now, and believes that an ancient Reliquary of the Drowned One has been brought to the island, and recently, though his followers as yet have not figured out where it has been taken.

### **Marcus Hohn and Netherkeep**

This reliquary is what caused Thrane's ship to perish while bringing it in to port. It was given to a mysterious man, who paid Thrane handsomely for it, and then disappeared. This man has not been seen since then, although he is, in fact, **Marcus Hohn**, the occupant of Netherkeep on the far side of the island. Marcus Hohn is a powerful rogue chronomancer, who is scheming to attain not just immortality, but godhood! He is using the god flesh to lure Piscrael himself to the island, so that he can slay the demiurge and take his Pisces Stone for his self!

This plan would have succeeded, but for one problem: The Reliquary of the Drowned One was stolen by an unknown individual, and now Hohn himself must also seek the relic. He is certain he knows who the thief is, believing that his half-sister **Marda Hohn** who visited

two months ago took it from him in sibling spite. She did not, as it turns out (she is now on Mordente, safe and sound but for his pursuers on the way). In fact, it was stolen by a child, a boy named **Timaeus** by his mother, who was a cook's apprentice in the keep. He took the relic when his mother, who was Marcus Hohn's mistress, was killed one night during a ceremony in which Hohn needed a convenient sacrifice to commune with his dark planar allies. Timaeus fled to Muscadaro, where he keeps the reliquary around his neck, while trying to shake the terrible feeling that dark, nightmarish shadow creatures follow him everywhere...

### **The Order of Piscrael**

The Order of Piscrael is operating in secret, as they are prone to do. The leader of the cult is a Skerradi woman named Shynadra, who aspires to greatness herself. She and her Skerradi minions (as well as a collection of hired mercenaries) are now scouring the island as well, to seek out the missing reliquary.

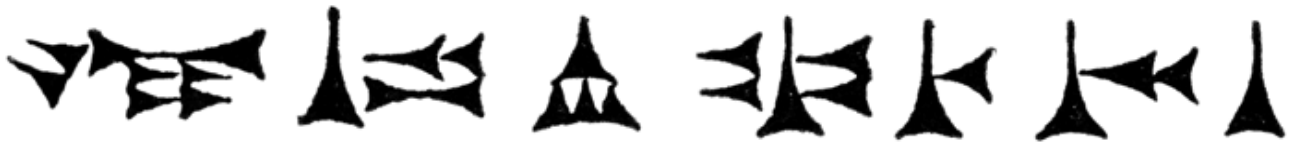
### **The Aquarians**

The Aquarians are a loose collection of new young cultists to what some describe as a cult of the lost gods. They claim that the spirit of Akquinarios has been revived, and that his new avatar walks the earth. They clamor in droves on new ships to take pilgrimage inland to see the temple that is being unearthed by the preservationists, one of three such temples discovered in the Kaldinian Isles over the last five years.

### **The Preservationists on Muscadaro**

Led by Johan Mezesor, an older dedicate to the scholarly order, there are perhaps twenty such members of the order and five times as many servants working around the clock to unearth, excavate and exhume the discoveries of the newly uncovered temple of Akquinarios. This temple, like two others, was mysteriously discovered on the eve of the Day of Freedom in Barcen.

The temple has a problem, though: recently, a number of workers and two preservationists were found dead. It is suspected that local rival cults caused the massacre, and so mercenaries are needed to protect the site. However, there is another problem: inside the temple, a passage to the Lower Dark has been uncovered, and the clerics of the crew sense a great and ancient presence of evil deep beneath the land. Worse yet, some of the first successful transcriptions of the murals and recordings of the temple suggest that this was not necessarily a church in worship of Akquinarios, but a Temple of War, where his armies were trained, and a newly uncovered



transcription suggests it was also a prison, and a mortuary for fallen enemies...

### The Red Hand

Thrane the pirate shifter rules this organization with an iron fist. He is, while a fairly important political figure in the city, not otherwise that important to the secret schemes of occult power on the island save for one factor: he has the boy Timaeus in his employ. The boy, seeking a place of refuge, has been taken in by Thrane, who feels some uncomfortable feelings of fatherly protection for the boy, though he is unsure why. He is letting his right-hand man, the halfling girl **Bam Bam Stormwilder** teach the boy the basics of begging and thievery!

### The Cortadario Mercantile Company

This is one of the two most prominent sea companies on the island. **Lord Gom Tarnish** is the merchant who presides over island operations, answering to his backers in Espanea and Mercurios, where he has several investors. The company has several active gold mines, and is successful enough to hire the Company of the White Raven, an independent company of hired blades run by the ruthless sword captain named **Armasan Rodanar**, a Goliath fighter. The mercenaries are hiring, as they have had several skirmishes with skerradi, pirates and even the ever-present troglodytes of the island.

### The Kaldinian Trade Society

This is the other trade group of importance in town, a regional affair run by a company of investing nobles. The local operation is managed by **Lady Milina Hevendir**, who hates this city and wants off the island as soon as she can stop making a profit on the local rum trade and mining operations. She is secretly funding the subterranean troglodytes and local skerradi and sahuagin to attack her rivals.

## Shaddizhar

### Iron age desert kingdoms struggling under Nithiadian oppression

**Cultural Level:** steel age

**Population:** approximately 1-2 million

**Government:** desert chiefdoms

**Rulers:** various sheiks, especially Azmahur Jhayan

**Religions:** animism, worship of Gathas and the Lost One.

**Social Titles:** commoner, warrior, lord, sheik

**Coinage:** copper dinari, silver dinari, gold dinari

**Allies:** Huron, Adenach

**Enemies:** Nithiad

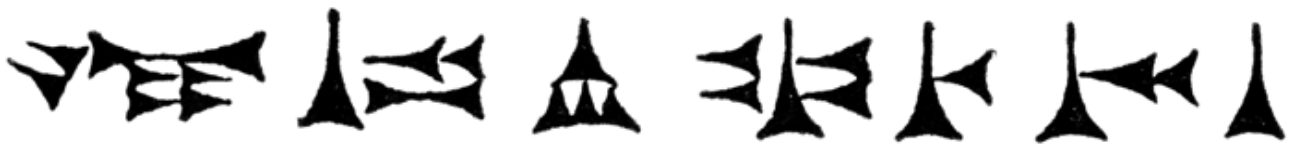
The Shaddizhari are a nomadic culture of desert tribesmen who resent the Nithiadians' incursions, and like the Huron minotaurs are treated by the Nithiadians as a source of slaves. Though culturally limited, the Shaddizhari have storytellers who recall tales of their ancient greatness, and they respect learned men. The lands of these people are harsh, however, and they have little time to do more than struggle day to day against the elements and beasts of the land.

The region of Shaddizhar is laden with ruins of ancient glory. Few of the ruins in this region are more than 1,500 years old, but it is clear that sometime in the past the people of the land were united and strong. No one has yet solved the mystery of what the tale of the Shaddizhar empire was, or why it crumbled.

Besides the Shaddizhari, there are large and well-organized hordes of centaurs that dwell in the region, mostly peaceful but on occasion prone to violence, especially against Nithiadians and slave hunters. Other nonhuman factions in the region include the Riverblood Dragonborn, the Ulingar orcs, western Kulaidoriin elves, Redfoot halfling tribes, Spindlefire Gnomes and Gromoshti goblins, the Nomarakki Tiedlings of the eastern Everdread Desert, and the Masharanza shifters. Indeed, humans are in a minority in this region of the world.

While there are a great many nonhuman groups in the region, the Shaddizhari nomads and city folk still make do. They regularly war with Nithiadian incursionists and slavers, while tentatively trading with mysterious southern traders from various strange lands as well as Adenite traders.

Among those Shaddizhari who have settled down and no longer roam as nomads there can be found two distinct cultural groups, including the Zettaram culture



and the Krytian subculture of the west, which is also heavily influenced by Nithiadian beliefs and ways.

The remaining Shaddizhari who live as nomads divide themselves in to five distinct tribes. The five tribes are called the Khulinar, Rezhaman, Jhayani, Aradesh and Nethromal. Each of the five tribes lives simple but determined lives, and try to use diplomacy and tact before resorting to violence whenever possible, except against obvious threats.

Among the inland Zettaram culture are several cities along the Shimharan River, including Imhan, Arunjen and the rough trade center Bordertown. Bordertown is a place where most of the nomadic and nonhuman groups can gather to trade and interact with one another in safety.

The coastal cities of Shaddizhar are dominated by the Nithiadian-influenced Krytian subculture, and include Valdenar and the Freeport of Krytia, although many Arunjenians consider themselves Krytians as well. Due to the Nithiadian influence in these cities, many Shaddizhari-born natives are accorded a measure of respect by their peninsular rivals and sometime allies. This makes the Krytians less trusted in the eyes of their nomadic and inland kin.

The Firemane Lands of the Centaur Plains are one of the more dangerous regions to travel to, and only the diehard centaurs enjoy ruling the region, which is pocked with old volcanic spills from the Apocalypse. Elsewhere, Zettaram and the Southern Passage are a major center of human activity and trade, as well as a center for many other local nonhuman communities. The Southern Passage is the safest trade route to the mysterious River folk of the south.

There are many monsters in Shaddizhar: Including an infamous Thousandspawn known as Echidnae, the Mother of all Monsters, said to dwell somewhere beneath the flood plains of the river, birthing new monsters every year when the river overflows. Indeed, many hideous beasts rise up from the muck during this time, and brave warriors are tasked with the job of putting them down while protecting those who farm the region.

## **Arenjun: an Overview**

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**Ruler:** Caliph Aman Zarad

**Government:** benevolent monarchy

**Religion:** numerous, including the Temple of Laddaskar, Cult of the Lost Gods, Kalie'yana, Piscalael, the Desert Cult of Onoar, and more.

## **Key Organizations:**

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### **The Magi of Ranadas**

This is the most venerable order of sorcerers in the desert lands of the south. The Magi are a neutral faction that eschews the dogma of both the Preservationists and the Arcanists. They have several members (including Para'kathain) who belong to the Tower of Kaledon and/or the Chronomancers. The Magi still prefer to consider themselves independent (and superior) to the other orders of magic in the world, and regard the mystical history of the Indastrei as the source of their own power.

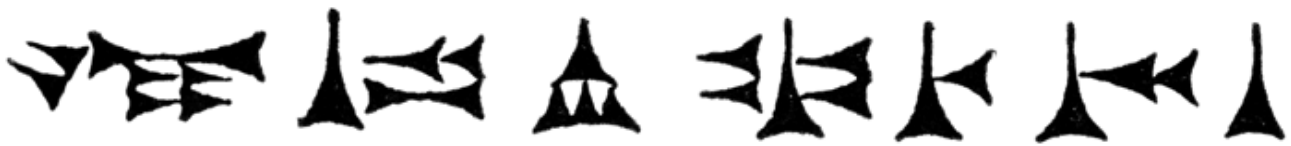
### **The White Brotherhood**

This order of assassins is dedicated to an enigmatic higher cause, sponsored by the legendary White prophet, a half-elven man of venerable years whose name is unknown to the public. His legend is such that the White Brotherhood is regarded with fear and respect by most citizens of Arenjun and the greater expanse of Shaddizhar. The order is dedicated to preserving the peace in the land, and while some nominally believe them to be a secret police force of the Caliph, they are in fact totally independent and would act against the caliph if he enacted policies or actions that jeopardized the safety of Shaddizhar. The White Brotherhood tracks foreigners of note carefully in their land. They are strongly opposed to Nithiadian influence in the desert kingdom, and are especially discontent with the recent civil strife from the neighbor kingdoms that have spilled over.

### **The Desert Cult of Onoar**

This cult began as a nomadic belief that spread rapidly. In the last century the Cult of Onoar has become popular in civilized regions of Shaddizhar such as Arenjun, and temples have sprung up, built and funded by dedicates of the mysterious Onoar.

Onoar is self-described as a "Lord of Wisdom," but does not portend to godhood. He is believed to be unnaturally long-lived, being over two and a half centuries old. His followers believe that he teaches the



way to perfection in harmony, and that following his teachings will lead to the complacency of the soul, and in turn to the final ascension of the soul to the heavens. Like the Cult of the Lost Gods, the desert cult believes that the mortal world is a shadow of the splendor to be found in “The Beyond,” and that it must be attained, the gods must be followed, to this mystical destination.

The problem with the Desert Cult, which is otherwise very passive, is that it is militantly aggressive against all other cults and religions. They will actively seek to destroy supporters of other faiths, burn the temples of the Forgotten Gods or the Lost Gods, and despise all such teachings. The prophet Onoar is surrounded by yes-men and a secret cabal of divine practitioners who feel that they are close to ascension, and that the closer to ascension they get the more powerful they become (they are usually invokers). The belief that all beings are entitled to, even required to believe as they do is part of this cult’s philosophy. Luckily only for the rest of the region their general surliness makes it difficult for them to grow and expand; the proselytizers of Onoar lack subtlety or guile, and often resort to the ancient tradition of “theologians with clubs” instead.

## **Locations in Arenjun:**

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### **The Grand Bazaar**

This open-air tent market runs all day and in to the night, weather permitting. Arenjun’s bazaar is regarded as the finest market on the Southern Coast, and rivals or exceeds it is open to all, and daily fee collectors move about collecting a nominal charge for use of the markets. Sales outside of the market are banned for foreigners. The fee will vary according to the perceived wealth of the merchant. Locals and long-time foreigners can pay a monthly cost if desired.

Currently, due to the strife and blockade from the Nithiadian city-state of Polides, the bazaar has been suffering somewhat, as the Caliph refuses to agree to cut off trade relations between Arenjun and Eterna in the north, one of the few Nithiadian allies with Arenjun. Still, traders and caravans from Eredor, Westgate, Grelmaine, Mercurios, Espanea and beyond regularly find their way here, despite the blockade attempt.

### **The Palace of the Caliphate**

The center of Shaddizhar’s power, the palace is a vast complex, larger than almost any other complex in the Sea of Chirak region, said to be home to more than 10,000 officials and twice as many slaves. It is a veritable

city unto itself, and is regarded by the scholar and explorer **Zemaxas of Masiria** as one of the Nine Wonders of the World.

### **The Temple District**

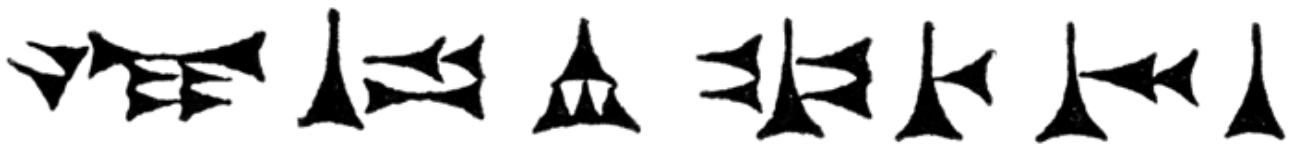
Like most cities, Arenjun has a temple district. Unlike most cities, this one is surprisingly expansive and liberal, with temples or monuments to many entities, including avatars, dead gods, both the cults of the Lost Gods and the Forgotten Gods, and temples, monasteries and institutes to more than two dozen philosophical cults and followings to various known prophets.

Some of the temples of note here include the vast **Temple of the Forgotten Gods**, in which the lost Twelve are presented in iconography and monuments for all to worship in memory and blessing. There are a dozen temples to avatars, including Kalie’yana, Phylos, Obohon, Mardieur Mardieux, Piscrael, Laddaskar, The Lost One, some entity called **Scorius**, Pallath Enarias, and more. Temples to “mystery gods” such as Hun’hunal can be found here, and a vast monument to the enigmatic Adeas Immortas caps the end of the Temple District, where the elite of the city travel to pay homage to a statue of the ancient “Thirteenth God.” His statue is said to have been here before the founding of the city, and to have been here since the time of the Indastrei, indestructible against all forces. More pragmatic antiquarians date the creation of the statue to the reign of the Caliph Hasrahad, who five centuries ago was said to have unearthed the statue with the aid of the adventurer Nosaj and his crew, and to have hauled it from the Zettaram Mountains to the hub of the city as a monument to the “first king” of Shaddizhar. The temple has but one keeper, a genasai named **Kalimas**, who is an authority on the lost cultures of the desert.

### **The Iron Keep of Nasaram Pakor**

This massive structure is located along the outskirts of the northern quarter, just north of the palace district. The keep overlooks the sea as well as the southern deserts from atop its plateau, and allows for first sighting of threats from any direction against the city. The keep itself is garrisoned by a battalion of soldiers, and serves as the principle military compound, protecting Arenjun against all threats.

In times of peace the Iron Keep is a fortress and a prison, where the most heinous of the criminals of the city are interred in the near-legendary deep dungeons beneath the fortress. The dungeons are said to descend ten levels below, and are considered impregnable by most, though rumors and secrets abound that the lowest



levels open up into the subterranean expanses of the Lower Dark, and that an especially brave and foolish soul can escape the prisons only to become a victim of the vile denizens of the underworld.

The Iron Keep is named for its builder, the caliph Pakor. Pakor founded the keep seven centuries ago, so the stories go, although the reasons for its construction are lost to memory. Ostensibly it was to defend the young city of Arenjun, but in truth there are hidden references to the keep that refer to it as a sort of “cap stone,” and that it was built atop a vast network of underground tunnels that were only later converted in to dungeons. This particular fable suggests that there was once a very ancient and evil entity, a Thousandspawn of unknown name, that lurked in the deepest levels of the Lower Dark beneath the keep, and that at one time this being’s hellish spawn threatened to erupt from the earth and engulf the land in destruction. The caliph and magi Nasaram Pakor held fast against the evil, fighting it back and ultimately constructing a great ward upon the earth of the plateau, then building the Iron Keep around it to protect the ward from erosion or destruction. This story is substantiated by the fact that the center hall of the keep is, in fact, a great chamber with a vast iron pentagram laid in to the stone floor; mages who visit this chamber sense a potent binding magic emanating from the pentagram, which encompasses the whole plateau and sinks deep in to the earth.

## Shokoztoni

**Older world stone-age cultures rooted in ancient moors and ways**

**Cultural Level:** stone age to bronze-age

**Population:** unknown, could be as high as one million

**Government:** a mix, from chiefdoms to egalitarian societies

**Rulers:** many chieftains and warlords

**Religions:** animistic and ancestral worship through shamanic blood magic

**Social Titles:** not many titles are used: shamans, high priests, warlords and chieftains

**Coinage:** while accepted, most Shokoztoni use trade goods only

**Allies:** Nubirians

**Enemies:** all outsiders

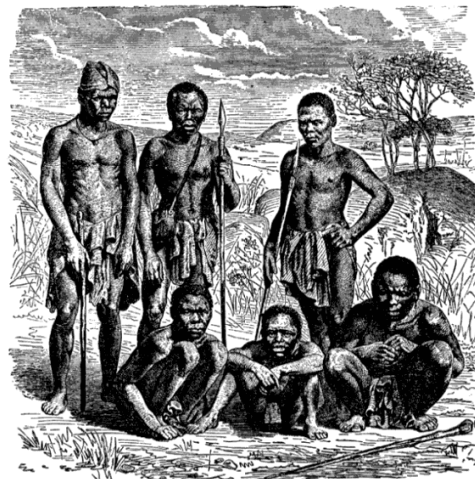
Little is known of these seemingly primitive people who hold some social connections to Adenach. The dialects of the Shokoztoni tribes are similar to the

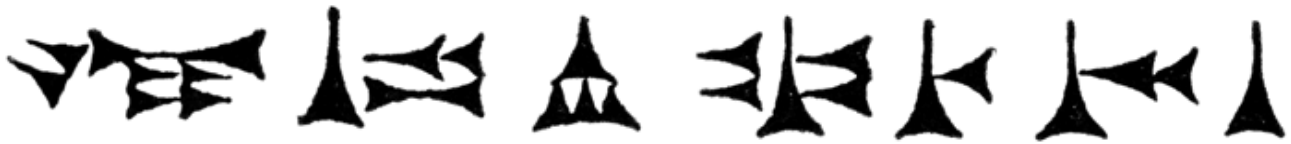
Adenite language, with a certain amount of Nubirian influence. The Shokoztoni are believed by certain scholars to be a mix of cultures, perhaps brought on by a migration from the Adenach region in to the remnants of the Nubirian empire not long after it collapsed. One truth is that the Shokoztoni are very protective of their simple way of life, and allow no foreign incursions to change their culture of beliefs.

Shokoztoni are found throughout the Nubirian region, but most especially in tribes dwelling in the coastal mountains, the inland jungles, and the northern central mountains and Varkal river. **The North River People** are perhaps the most friendly of the Shokoztoni, and most willing to trade with outsiders. Most all other such groups are very insular, trade amongst themselves and some trusted Nubirian merchants, and are either frightened of or hostile to outsiders.

The Shokoztoni are strong practitioners of Blood Magic, and their elder shamans of their tribes are known to have venerable huts willed with the decorated skulls of their ancestors. A curious side effect of this worship is that many undead found in the region are headless beings (headless skeletons, zombies, etc), corpses usually animated by lesser spirits conjured up by the blood mages.

Within the Shokoztoni territories, many surprises can be found to keen adventurers. Some Shokoztoni revere forgotten gods, mysterious demiurges, or ancient spirits and demons. In the uninhabited and dangerous regions of these tribes can be found lost ruins of the collapsed Nubirian empire of old, or even older ruins of Mythic of Inadasir times predating the apocalypse. All manner of beasts, from great elephants to dragons and hideous aberrations dwell in the same lands as the Shokoztoni.





## Syrgia

### The Frozen Kingdom of the North

**Cultural Level:** Steel Age

**Population:** 250,000

**Government:** collection of minor city states and chiefdoms under the nominal rule of the Northern Emperor Shae Razhadam

**Rulers:** Shae Razhadam, Emperor of the North

**Religions:** very little, although some worship of the Legoran gods is present

**Social Titles:** commoner, land owner, journeyman, merchantman, baron, count, duke, king

**Allies:** Syrgia is the jewel of the north, the only somewhat united kingdom to thrive in the hostile conditions it experiences for eight months out of the year. It chooses its allies carefully, although the Maegar and Legorans are among them.

**Enemies:** The Syrgians have warred with the Xoxtocharit for centuries and will not relent.

Syrgia is a northern wasteland dominated by a hearty folk so strong and stalwart that they not only stand unfazed by the harsh winter conditions that dominate their land, but they are almost loathe to leave their homeland, prone to a curious melancholy when not saddled with the burden of a blizzard or ice storm. Few other men of southern climes understand the Syrgians.

The Syrgian people are a collection of city states and tribal lands united by one strong figurehead, the Emperor of the North. The present emperor is a young man, only eighteen years of age, who was chosen in the Ritual of Seeing by which the emperor is picked from among the people. The Seers of Astrial move throughout the land when an emperor dies, until they find the one that was revealed to them in a vision. The boy is then spirited away to one of the various cities of the land, chosen seemingly at random, where a new capitol is formed and an army of volunteers rises up to defend the new emperor. Such is the way that the rulers of this land have been chosen for nearly a thousand years.

The Syrgians are not very religious. They worship the spirits and ancestors, and their revered seers are as close to an organized clergy as they have ever gotten. Save for the spirit demiurges of the Legorans, the Syrgians revere no gods and see the dead gods as well and truly gone. The typical Syrgian feels he is master of his own destiny. As such, they despise theocracies such as the Xoxtocharit have, as well as the northern culture of Pale. The Syrgians have made unrelenting war against the

Xoxtocharit now for centuries, since the emperor Shilnadros proclaimed them all heretics four centuries ago.

### Syrgian Adventure Location: The Island Port of Zul'Varith

A free port formerly of the Syrgian Alliance, but annexed in a civil war about forty years back by House Theldanar, in protest against the Syrgian's election of Voskamar as king regent. Zul'Varith has remained an independent city state ever since, engaging in free trade with all ships, including offering safe harbor to Xoxtocharit and Shaddenzor merchants.

Zul'Varith is ruled by a council of elected merchants, who in turn elect one High Captain to lord the city. The current High Captain is **Kelnaris Vom**, a rough but respected former sea captain who purchased much of the land on the island, and is a famous explorer, having traveled as far west as Abraheil, and as far east as the Yellow Kingdoms.

Zul'Varith is divided in to four major districts:

#### The Syrgian District

Here the bulk of Syrgian nobility and traders gather to conduct business. Most of the Syrgians here are expatriates or criminals and pirates, but loyalty to their land runs deep, and they still dislike intermingling with the Xoxtocharit.

#### The Xoxtocharit District

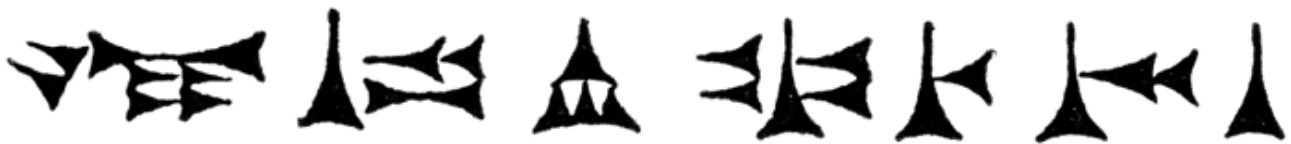
The Xoxtocharit have a surprisingly strong presence in the city, and a large district full of commercial activity. This is a major port for the Xoxtocharit, as they can freely trade with many independent and third parties who might not otherwise step in to a Xoxtocharit controlled city. The chief governor of this district is the warlock Tusiltin.

#### The Freeport District

Here are the lesser barrios and open markets, the major port of entry and the center of general activity. Traders from as far away as Pelaeus have been known to stay here, sometimes even settle down, despite the normally chilly seasons of the North. The Sheriff's Post is located here, as well, along with the Temple District, where the cult of the Lost Gods is strong.

#### The Merchant's District

The regent's castle is here, as are the estates of the senior councilmen and the wealthy citizens of the city. Many expatriates have come to reside here as well, from both Syrgia and Xoxtocharit, to seek political asylum.



### The Tombs of Arathor

Inland five miles from the city is a necropolis of diverse burial grounds, from ancient dolmens to ziggurats of the Xoxtocharit. Buried here is said to be the most famously evil Xoxtocharit exile ever, the dreaded Arathor. Prowling the graveyard is a ghoul named Shennengath who seeks to awaken Arathor and his minions.

Encounters in the graveyard include **Shennengath and his minions**: one Ghoul (armed with a Wand of Witchfire +1) and 12 decrepit skeletons.

### Plot Ideas for Zul'Varith:

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#### The Missing Princess (Levels 2-4)

**Setup:** A tiefling warrior named **Rhozan Kalidarn of Shaddenzor** is in town, looking for help to locate a woman he is pursuing. The woman is a young orcish princess from the Dimedar region named **Shantress**. Rhozan is an appointed bodyguard; he was supposed to escort her safely to an arranged marriage with the orc warlord **Chamsadan of the Zappun Lowlands** region, but she was kidnapped by pirates hired by a rival warlord named **Mulandor**. Rhozan got as far as Zul'Varith, where he found the pirate ship in the docks.

**Complications:** The orcs and the pirates had a dispute; investigation of the pirate ship reveals the crew slaughtered, although a few orc bodies are present. Investigation in the Freeport District can lead to the discovery that the Cartographer's Association hired one of their more stalwart overland guides to a group of orcs led by a rather ferocious female orc named Durnigari. They are worried he bit off more than he could chew.

**Durnigari** is the orcess daughter of Mulandar, and she killed the half-troll pirate captain of the ship after he attempted to force himself on to her. Her plan now is to cross the rugged isle to the far coast, where she seeks the cove of a known orcish pirate named Render. She will have Render take her to Enzenador, and then Ragat where her father is located.

Unbeknownst to Durnigari or anyone else, a **Red Hand** assassin of Miralanthar has been sent to kill the princess. This assassin, called Kovari, is tasked with insuring the Zappun and Dimadar orcs do not forge an alliance.

NPCs:

**Rhozan Kalidarn** (Fighter-Warlock 6 tiefling unaligned)

**Shantress** (Orcish princess – rogue 4, unaligned, uses a quarterstaff)

**Durnigari** (orcish warrior priest – level 6 warrior, dual classed cleric, evil, called a Daughter of Shaligon)

**Miralanthar** (Red Hand Assassin – dwarven female –

unaligned, rogue 6)

**Render** (orcish pirate – Level 6 Ranger, evil)

#### Rewards:

Rhozan can offer the PCs 1,000 GPs up front and the promise of another 5,000 GPs plus some gratitude from the warlord-husband-to-be if they help him find and retrieve Shantress. He had a crew of a dozen men before, but all were killed in the pirate attack.

### Areas of the Adventure:

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#### The Pirate Vessel: Zanthor's Folly

Durnigari expected to be followed. She placed a Totem of Shaligon on board after slaughtering the crew. The totem has raised the ship's crew as zombies. Moreover, investigating the captain's quarters reveals that the captain's loot (1,000 GPs) has been stolen. Rothengos is the only member of the crew not to rise; his half-troll body was incinerated in his quarters, but clutched in one charred hand is a piece of Shantress's wedding gown.

The rune totem of Shaligon is a magical device: a +1 Rune Totem with a Raise Zombie Ritual Spell. It can be recovered, but would be considered an evil artifact by dedicating to the cause of good.

Zombie Rotters X10, Zombie X2

What does a raise zombie ritual spell do, you ask? The short answer is: anything the DM needs it to do...

### Trekking Across the Island

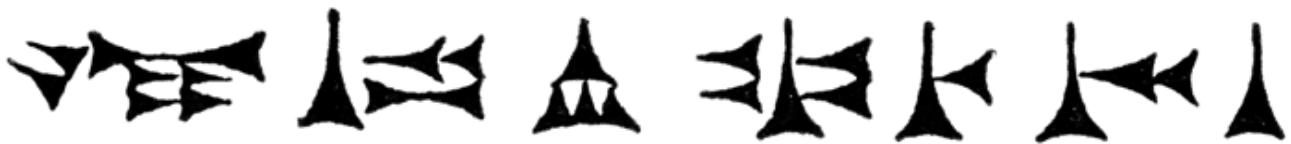
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The island of Zul'Varith is a rough place. The following encounters are likely:

- 1-2 Orcish Patrol:**  
6 orc drudges and one orc raider
- 3-6 Flight of Spiretop Drakes:**  
5 spiretop drakes
- 7 Lair of a Young White Dragon**  
1 Young White Dragon
- 8-9 Bandits and refugees in the woods**  
10 human rabble and 1 bandit
- 10 Gray Wolf Pack**  
5 gray wolves

#### The Pirate Cove of Render

The pirate cove is a warren of tunnels carved in to and through an ancient grotto. Encounters in this area will include orcish guards, Captain Render and his crew, and various local vermin (some kept as pets).



**Locations in the pirate cove include:**

#### **The Warrens**

These old smugglers tunnels lead from the lower grotto up to the main grotto, and are filled with side rooms used as rum and booty storage, barracks, and living quarters by the orcs. Orcish guards and rabble most likely to be encountered here.

#### **The Lower Grotto**

Here reside the pirate ships. There are two in dock: **The Northern Blue** (a captured vessel, a galleon formerly of Syrgian ownership) and the **Red Rum** (orcish war galley, needs 80 slave-soldiers to row). Guard patrols are here, as are slaves working on upkeep. A third ship (the Star of Shaligon), a war galley, left port the day before the PCs arrive, with Durnigari and Shantress aboard.

#### **The Captain's Private Chambers**

Render is resting here, enjoying the recent bounty of 1,000 GPs he was paid by Durnigari to use one of his war galleys. He sent her off with his trusted first mate **Colibiri**, his orcish right hand and consort. It is possible to negotiate with Render: if he is told about how Durnigari betrayed the last pirate crew, and is shown some proof, he will gladly join up with the PCs to chase her down, for the half-troll captain Rothengos was his friend.

#### **The Arena**

A favored pet of Render's is kept here, called Nibbles, a rage drake found in the northern glaciers. If the PCs stumble in the arena by accident or are cast here, they will have to fight him.

#### **The Pits**

This is where the old tombs of the pirates can be found, a deep burial pit infested with monstrous scorpions. Some treasure is to be had by those daring enough to descend in. Surprisingly, no visible undead except for a ghoul named Furgath, who knows a secret way out of the pits, but requires payment.

#### **Shrine of Shaligon**

This eerie shrine has a sacrificial altar upon which a recent sacrifice, what appears to be a gnome, has been placed. Holes dot the walls of this cave. Any attempt to desecrate the shrine provokes monstrous spiders to attack. The shrine itself has a solid gold statue of Shaligon worth 1,500 GPs.

#### **Pursuing the Ship**

If PCs pursue the ship across the water, they may have the following sea encounter:

**Syrgian Privateer galleon Winter's Respite** (captained by Taernagos Rusod, Syrgian human fighter 6)

Captain Rusod knows Render and his ships on sight; he

will not hesitate to try and engage.

#### **Concluding the Adventure**

The characters could catch up to the orcish ship at the port of Enzenador. They could engage in conflict with them at this time, if the DM wants to conclude the adventure here, or it can be extended by saying that the PCs arrive after the orcs have docked and left the city, heading north to deliver the princess.

Enzenador is a rough barbarian city, ruled by the **Maulginaric warlord Grolldunag**. The Maulginari people are another strange branch of Chirak's human population, a northern folk related to the Syrgians who find warmth disagreeable and seem most at home in the frozen north. More adventures yet await, as the PCs muster pursue the orcs through this hostile region of the world...



## **Adventure Location: Valstarak Island**

### **The Free Port of Kaernos (former polity of Pale in the North)**

**Ruler:** Captain **Druginzir Thradhom** (wife is Lady **Tiestra Thradhom**, also in town)

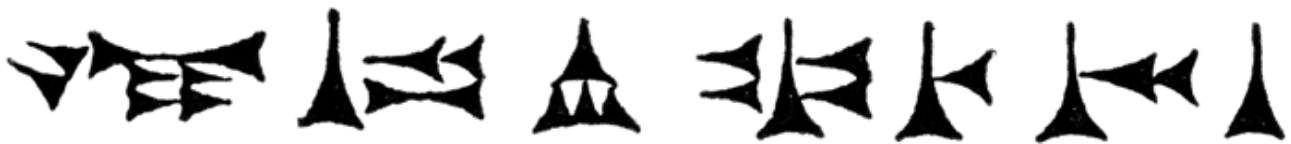
**Government:** loose independent governorship, otherwise lawless free port

#### **Key Figures in City:**

**Lord Aladan Trunaros** (Syrgian human merchant noble) exiled for his backing of an attempted coup against the Syrgian King eleven years ago

**Sidasha Tharn** (Abraheelite human sorcerer priestess of





the *Cult of Shar*, exiled for her exotic and unorthodox beliefs that the gods were not truly the creators of the world and that divine magic is a heresy)

**Captain Skul Drok** (Goliath fighter, employed as the chief form of local law and protection; manages a small but dedicated militia of 200 men)

**Mistria Threniir** (tiefling female wizard, dwells in Threniir Tower overlooking the bay, and acts as chief consultant on magical affairs. She has a secret affair with Captain Thradhom)

### City by District:

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#### The Bay

--includes the docks, the warehouses, shipyards and the open trade area

#### The Lower District

--A region of slums and shanties that stretch up along the walls of the cliffs leading down to the bays, where most of the commoners dwell. Slavery is not illegal or regulated in Kaernos, but it is frowned upon by some. Nonetheless, all slave trade happens in this region. Many escaped slaves also dwell here, and by law any slave who can kill his owner is considered free.

#### The Rural District

--The region stretching out for approximately two miles around Kaernos covers this region. On the periphery of the city are a few interesting locations, including:

##### --The Library of Aquinos

This library is maintained by the mysterious Aquinos, an elderly Masirian man who belonged long ago to the Preservationists before being accused of unethical relations with the Arcanists. He dwells here now, exiled to the edge of the world, engrossed in his studies and his vast personal collection of lore. His crime, for the record, was having relations with the tiefling Lady Eskadda Threniir; his daughter is the current Lady of the Tower Threniir, and the reason he chose to move to Kaernos, to watch over her discreetly.

##### --The Reliquary

This mysterious structure looks from a distance like a vast, collapsing dome structure. Up close it appears more geodesic, and indeed is a moldering ruin from a forgotten era. Inside its curious expanses are fabulous, ancient images and untranslatable languages, including a script that was dead countless thousands of years past. In the center of the dome is an immense sitting figure,

gargantuan in size, that appears to be a petrified animate of some sort. There is a small complex adjacent to the dome in which a team of professional researchers all live, led by **Count Tel Arnis**, a Syrgian nobleman and member of the Preservationists, who seeks to unravel the mystery of the Reliquary.

#### The Upper District

--Stretching along the tops of the cliffs and overlooking the island proper, the opulent mansions and villas of the elite rest along this stretch of chilly coast. Here lies:

--**The palace of the governor**

--**Threniir Tower**

--**Villa Trunaros**

--**The Temple of Shar**

--**Shrine of the Lost Gods**

### Other Locations on the island

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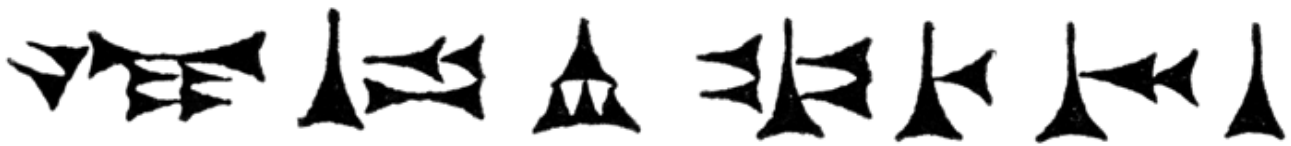
#### Castle Nabanir

The only nobleman of Paleic descent, Baron Stygos Nabanir is a dour man of few words, who entered in to an agreement with the governor of Khaernos three decades ago to allow for the construction of his fortress retreat on the island. Nabanir kept the fortress afloat until it was constructed, then maintained it for mysterious purposes, although it was felt that he held it as a place of retreat should civil war or worse erupt in Pale.

Seven years ago, Nabanir, his family and attendants along with a small but dedicated force of men arrived and occupied the mostly derelict castle. They have been there ever since, and only on occasion do members of the baron's family approach Kaernos for trade and resupply. Little more is known of them, although rumors abound that Nabanir's men will come to the governor's aid if his reign is threatened.

#### Lake Asyrthis

This lake is nestled deep in the caldera at the heart of the Undrakit Mountains. The caldera simultaneously provides the warmth that keeps the volcanically active island more hospitable than most in the north, but it also belches deadly sulfurous gasses that are known to kill, and suffers from frequent earthquakes in the region. Worse yet, this region is filled with deadly monsters that seem to grow or crawl up from the depths of the earth, which is riddled with ancient passages and caverns. Resting in the center of the caldera, with portions of ancient alabaster towers poking up from the bubbling



waters are ancient spires and towers, part of a massive, submerged ruin beneath, which has been engulfed in both lava and water over time. Legends hold that it is the fabled city of **Tors**, said to have been an Occultic Capitol of an old kingdom called **Ul-mirod**, ruled by a society of “transcendents” who had eschewed their physical forms in favor of ghostly astral soul-projections, tethered tenuously to reality by crystalline artifacts. Remnants of those ghostly artifacts with maddened spirits trapped within can still be found scattered around the caldera.

### **Undrakit Mountains**

The legends behind these mountains are numerous, but the most popular one is that the legendary adventurer after which the island is named, **Kal Vastarak**, came to this island five hundred years ago, on a journey of discovery for the White City. He met natives who claimed to be a people called the Midrusi, descended from the slaves of this ancient Occultic kingdom. They were being harried by a terrible dragon they called Undrakit, a survivor from the “Great Fall” as they called it, and Kal’s legend speaks of how he slew the dragon and named the mountains after where it fell.

Today, the Undrakit mountains are as haunted with monstrous specters, predatory dragons and other beasts as ever, but they seem to maintain a strange ecosystem.

### **Midrusi Villages**

These curious northern halflings have a unique language and refuse to learn the language of foreigners. They are friendly pacifists who take up arms only in time of danger. They are believed by the preservationist scholars on the island to be descended from an ancient slave stock, possibly slaves used by the mysterious transcendents of Ul-Mirod long ago to care for the mundane niceties of their city. The Midrusi are curious and friendly despite their linguistic limitations (their language resembles a variant Occultic dialect at best) and a strong sense of ancestor worship; their villages each contain a large wicker shrine in which they inter their dead in mummified circular columns, stacked high like pyramids, and their chief shamans carry certain powerful ancestors about on palanquins, for divinatory purposes.

### **Ulgotten**

This lone island on the south-eastern coast of Valstarak is a place of haunted mystery. An ancient temple exists on the island, forgotten to all save for the local fishermen who claim they still see mysterious black ships

visit the isle on occasion. No one knows who or what the temple is for, or even if it truly is a temple, although the mysterious processions of shrouded figures seen disembarking on shore, carrying palanquins of offerings that look like bodies are believed by all to be mysterious priests of some Xoxtocharit demon god. There is one old madman down by the docks named **Mathas Crow** who babbles incessantly about the Raven Queen and says that he was once a knight errant of hers, laid low by a perpetual malady in his questing of the Shadow Realms to destroy a great evil. He says that evil is a dark demon god called **Skhol**, and that it’s dreaded followers come from very far to pay tribute to it.

Skhol is in fact a Thousandspawn, an amorphous and vile one at that, which currently rests in dark slumber beneath the temple erected in its honor. It was once imprisoned by The Twelve shortly after the formation of that dedicated order, and it was imprisoned with a powerful lance, the Lance of Chalador, through its dark heart. The beast has remained in torpor ever since, though offers fed to it bring forth lucid moments of dark visions projected from the creature’s dreadful mind. These visions penetrate the minds of the warlocks and priests who serve it, granting them formidable insight and powers. Xoxtocharit and Paleic cults alike come to the temple to seek this curious and dangerous enlightenment.

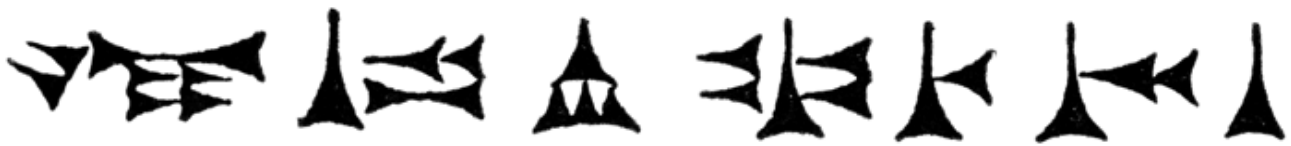
### **The Lost Laboratory of the mad Wizard**

The mad wizard who constructed this laboratory long ago sought to divine the secrets of magical transcendence from the ruins of the lost Occultic city. He was intent on achieving immortality, and was inspired by his studies at the Coliseum of Light in the Kaz’Dul Mountains, where he stole the single (and most important) artifact to empower his own studies in transcendence: the Divine Wind.

The Divine Wind, locked within elemental prisms that insure it cannot escape, and tapped by Occultic Machines to pull its saturating energies away, can indeed transform a mortal into an immortal spirit, although not a true god. It is coveted by several for different reasons. Note that the mad wizard achieved his desired goal of immortality, but is locked within the prison of his own labs, as the Divine Wind sustains him, for his crystal latticework construction failed him, such that he has no vessel of habitation for his immortal spirit.

*Kraeytor Zahn, of the Coliseum of Light:* Needs this construct in order to power his Coliseum of Light’s God Maker.

*Zam Redar of Andos:* Wants the seemingly infinite



power of the Divine Wind to regenerate himself as a true God, by absorbing the essence of all other Thousandspawn.

*Ezruache of Usamanitza:* Seeks to use the power of the Divine Wind to open a permanent gateway to the Abyss, where he may call upon his ancient army, trapped in the Fields of Amber.

*Hun'hunal's Servants:* Need the Divine Wind to empower their god to take divine form, or so they believe.

### Encounters in the Prison-Labyrinth of the Divine Wind

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The Prison captures not only the Divine Wind, but primordials and interlopers, as well. Most eventually die or kill one another, and only a few survive or even prosper.

Those who enter must take proper precautions. These precautions can be gleaned from the Midrusi Shaman named **Winterfane (Indrunar)**. Each PC must be granted a spirit boon, in a sacred ritual that requires the "ghost crystals" of the Occultic ancients. So they'll need to travel to find their spirit crystals. Once they have found them, then enacted the ritual, the ancient Ul-Mirod spirits will protect them from the maddening planar prison that contains the Divine Wind.

Entering the prison is simple, but the PCs must be ready to bribe the guardian, an immense animate larger than a stone giant called **Kroethis**. Kroethis is a relic War Guardian, who long ago could spew arcane fire, engulfing miles of battlefield in a single sweep with eldritch death. After the fall of the city of **Tors** and the destruction of the old world, he went a little mad. He now requires a gift from those he meets, and there is always a slight chance he might recognize someone....although they know he has never met them before, he will insist he does (in fact Kroethis still has a functioning Spectral Identifier, and he can recognize old souls that have been reincarnated.) He will talk to these individuals as if they were the ones he knew long ago. A handful may be recognized as enemies (and tieflings will always be identified as such). The people of Ul-Mirod took no side in the Apocalypse, as they were so wrapped up in their own pursuit of transcendence, so he sees a thousandspawn or other immortal spirit no differently than any other being. Moreover, any who worship Akquinarios will be reacted to aggressively; it was Akquinarios's wrath before his time of grief that caused the Earth to boil and swallow Ul-Mirod, Kroethis believes.

Kroethis needs something unique from each player. Strictly speaking they need to regale him with tales of adventure to satisfy his wandering mind. Each PC must make a Skill Test, using 3 of 5 tests to impress him with either Bluff (DC 22), Insight (DC 22), Diplomacy (DC 25), History (DC 24) or Nature (DC 26). If 3 or more PCs win, he will then open the massive metallic capstone lid that leads to the labyrinthine prison below.

### Denizen Encounters within the Labyrinth:

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**Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,000)**—*denizens who have made their home here:* 3 hook horrors and 1 balhannot

**Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,000)**—*traders with a crashed skiff caught by a planar vortex that have not escaped;* called *Ungin, Saldir and Praess:* 3 Umber Hulks and 3 Neogi Slavers

**Level 13 Encounter (XP 3800)**—*Denizens (arcanists) who perished while in the prison*

6 Vortex Wraiths and 2 Wailing Banshees

**Level 13 Encounter (XP 4,300)**—*A horde of risen dead from the past victims of the prison, led by Gorgosol, a long dead prince-son of Agathor (battle wight).*

1 battle wight commander, 2 skeletal tomb guardians, 2 spirit vampires, 4 vampire spawn bloodhunters, 1 viscera devourer

**Level 14 Encounter (XP 5,100)** – *The Lich is called Tythia, and she was Zam Redar's mistress, the one who so offended Lady Poe loooooong ago that Poe interred Zam Redar in the gullet of a purple worm and then went after the mistress. Tythia fled to the distant north to escape, knowing Lady Poe hates the cold so much, but Poe's assassin minion hunted her down and tossed her in to the Prison of the Divine Wind for Lady Poe...*

5 horde ghouls, 3 stirge swarms and 1 human lich Tythia

### Acadias the Mad

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There is a solitary madman left in the enclave, the spirit of the Labyrinth's creator, named **Acadias** long ago, though he goes by other names. When he meets the PCs, he will appear normal, until touched (revealing he is a spirit). He will tell them some of the lore of the place, and of his misguided attempt to use the Divine Wind to power the lost Occultic transcendent magic. He explains that they never completed their transcendence, and that the Divine Wind could, if released properly, free them from their crystalline prisons to at last travel the astral sea, though so many have gone mad or dissipated that he could not say if it is worth it.

If they tell him why they are there, he will laugh at such madness, and explain that there is no way to remove the Divine Wind, it is impossible. He will tell



**Dimedar**

Damistor's Rest

The Mendreth Ice Shelf

Shaddenzor

Susperia

Bay of Chaggath

Hargath

Walvaran

Nurendine

The Plains of Tikarad

**Murzada**

**Cannesh Tribelands**

Sulendar Marshes

Hedrast

**The Blackened Lands**

Lake Provon

Belharos

Childuar Isle of the Dead

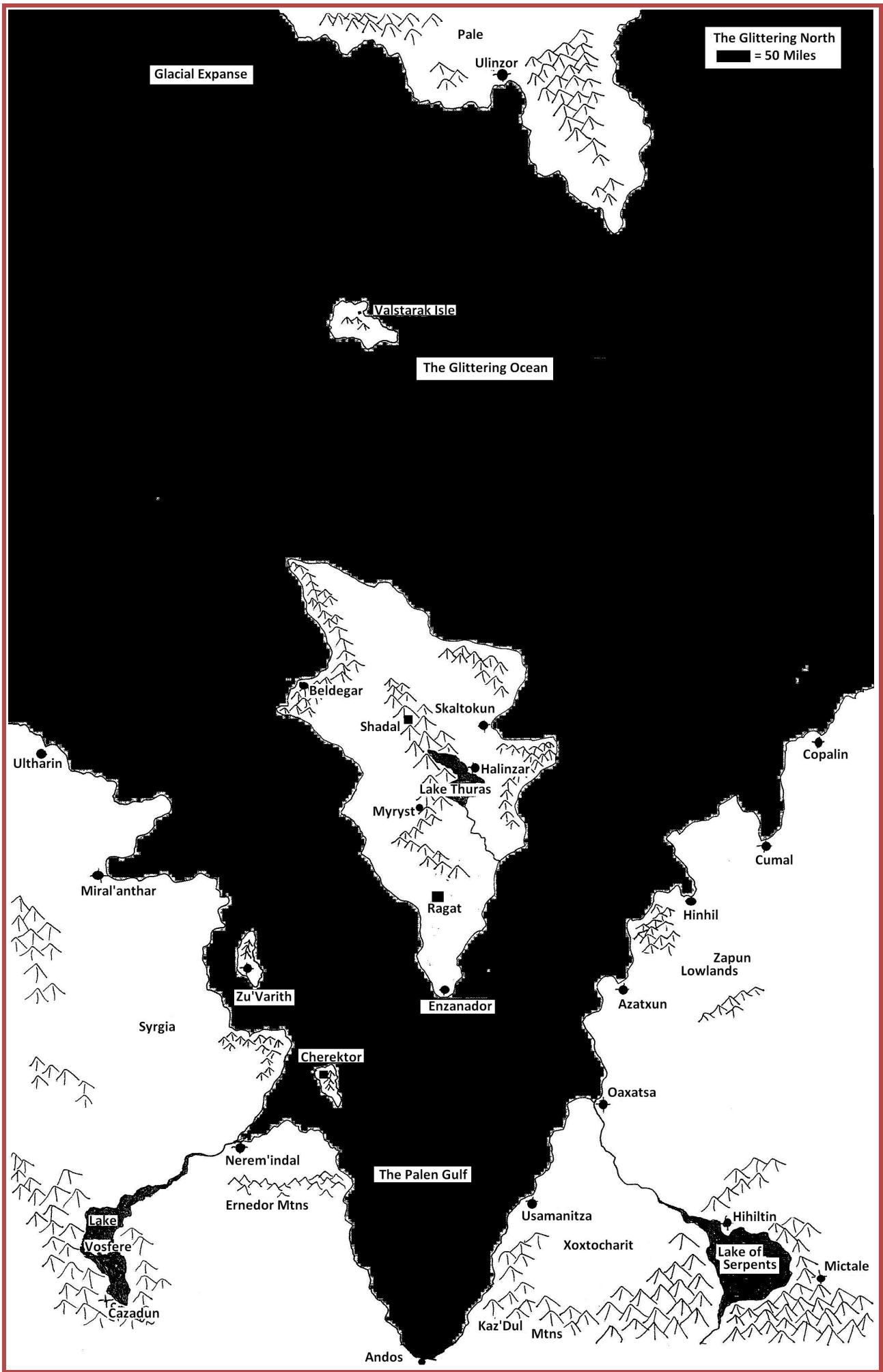
**Rughit Tribelands**

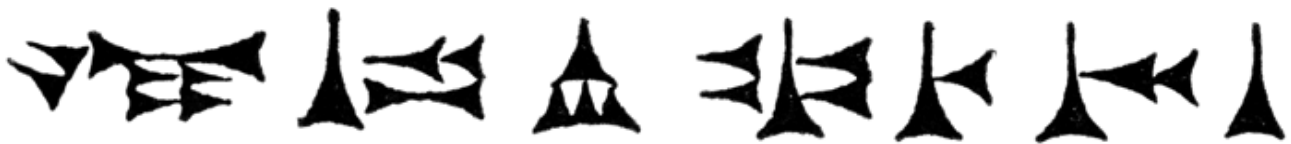
**The White Desert**

Almarind

Canyon

**Grathenor**





them of one stalwart adventurer, a minotaur named Hun'hunal who came to the island two centuries ago and braved the labyrinth to take the Divine Wind, and how he failed. However, Hun'hunal was wise, he explains, and says that he was protected, and so was able to leave the complex. This will be a revelation to the priest of Hun'hunal.

If the players are all allowed to investigate the Divine Wind's prison chamber, they learn that it is an ephemeral, literal substance, controlled and harnessed only by an ancient artifact called the Mirror of Time. The Divine Wind can be channeled and used, but it must be summoned in to a sacred vessel of flesh. That vessel is a living being, which must offer itself up to the essence of the divine wind, upon an ancient throne. This vessel must be an innocent, such as a young child or one who has been little exposed to the hardships of the world....

## Plot Seed: The Apophis Gambit

**Premise:** Apophis, a soulless Thousandspawn child created by Zam Redar, has journeyed to the prison of Acadias, where he not only became host to the Divine Wind, but also absorbed the Mirror of Time in to his own flesh. Doing this allowed him access to the Divine Wind, the creation force of the mirror-universe Chirak that was destroyed long ago. He now seeks to use the Mirror as a time-portal to the exact moment in time when it was used by the wizard Acadias to capture and harness the Divine Wind, allowing him to enter Chirak's past some four hundred and fifty years earlier. There, he will cross the world to find his creator and merge with him, granting Zam Redar godlike powers, centuries of prescience, and an ability to remake or destroy the world as their divine sire, Ga'thon, wished.

**Setup:** The PCs either just finished their journey to the Tower of Acadias, have witnessed Apophis' awakening, or are normal adventurers of renown in the world of Chirak who are unexpectedly approached by a chronomancer who touches them, granting an immunity to the chaos that ensues. Around them all, the world changes, for the worse, as the primordial elements begin once more to erode the edges of the world, and civilization as all know it is slowly, methodically exterminated. Cities are laid to waste in the blink of an eye, and reality fluctuates wildly, showing the normal existence of creation one moment, then the horrifying reality of six hundred years of destruction at the hands of Ga'Thon's awakened Thousandspawn avatars in the

next instant.

Kal Vossos and other chronomancers, dwelling on the Island Outside of Time, sense the disturbance, and act to stop it. They determine immediately where the disruption is coming from: their former member, Acadias, who long ago stole and hid the Mirror of Time, has been returned to the mortal plane, his mirror now an object of devastation in the hands of Thousandspawn. The chronomancers seek out all heroes that they can; they cannot choose from those who bear zodiac stones, for the zodiac stones are continuous effects in time, and cannot shift backwards or forwards in the time stream without creating time-loop wormholes of destruction (there can only ever be one such stone in existence; to do otherwise is to cause reality to collapse in on itself.)

Since avatars and demiurges cannot stop the destruction of Apophis's meddling, other heroes of note are chosen, including the PCs most responsible. A couple other famous heroes that might be chosen:

*Amysteri, the paladin Elohim*

*Caratea, the half-elf ranger*

*Erishma, the paladin Elohim avenger*

*Asheldin Darkblade, captain of the Cannadad Dei*

*Marlonius Kord, warrior and tradesman*

*Svenn Rass, the Khaasta lizard man warlord*

**First Encounter:** PCs arrive in the ruins of the coastal town on the island of Valstarak, which clearly has been devastated in attacks. The island is now a frozen wasteland, and only a handful of people fight on against the terrifying demons that ride the crest of destruction. The edge of the known world is visible in the distance, where the ice fields ends in a disintegrating rim of destruction, as pieces of the world spin off in to a chaos of primordial elements.

**Moving through the ruins looking for survivors:**

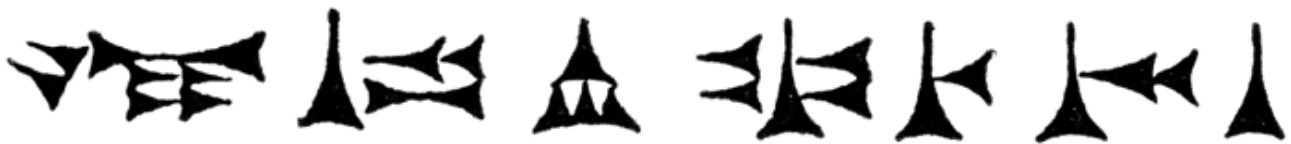
**Level 13 Encounter (3,400 XP)**

1 Blaspheme Knight

2 Blaspheme Unholy Slayers

1 Chillfire Destroyer

The PCs will have deal with these foes. On the last round before defeat, the knight (or a slayer) will smash a totem to summon forth a Fiendish White Wyrm (level 30) which will look quite terrifying, until Kal Vossos arrives at that moment, freezing the wyrm in a time bubble; he arrives with allies, and word of doom! He beseeches the PCs to aid him, but he must send them back in time, to stop Apophis at the moment he appears and changes history; Apophis must not be allowed to



merge with Zam Redar.

When the PCs are ready, he will send them back in time. He cannot go with them, but does give them each a medallion that can be used to invoke a Ritual of Return when they have completed their task. He promises to find other heroes to aid them, if he can. He is not 100% sure of when the merge occurs, and so he intends to send different groups to different periods in time, when it was most likely the meeting occurred; Apophis has apparently worked hard to erase the exact moment when the bonding with father and child transpires, to confuse the Chronomancers, his only threat.

Kal leaves them with an important reminder that they must not disrupt the timeline themselves, for even greater consequences could result if they do. He grants them his Wand of Displacement, a unique artifact that has a Daily power to place a target or region of up to burst 10 in a time bubble, displaced from the rest of existence for one day. Anyone or anything entering/affecting the bubble is also displaced accordingly. No saves. He suggests using it wisely.

**Second Encounter:** The PCs are displaced in time and space, and appear slightly ahead of Apophis, on the fields of war in the eastern lands, not far past the region that will one day be Correnstal. Zam Redar's armies are on the march, and Zam himself rides his draconic horse, surrounded by loyal dragons and a vast force of both the living and dead. He marches eastward, to conquer the Saphhiritic Kingdoms beyond. He is a day away from his unexpected encounter with Lady Poe and her planned ambush (see back story), which is what Apophis intends; Apophis, instilled with a deep hatred of his godmother Lady Poe, who so wronged his father Zam, intends to bond once again with his father in time for him to

destroy her before her revenge is fulfilled.

The PCs must figure out how to steal in to camp, be it through subterfuge (presenting themselves as new allies), fighting (very bad idea with an army) or subterfuge (perhaps at night). They can also follow at a distance and try to ambush Apophis when he appears, a difficult task indeed.

**Zam Redar's Personal Guard/Main Command Camp:**

Zam Redar (95,000 XP)

2 Blaspheme Knight attendants (2,000 XP)

1 Adult Blue Dragon (polymorphed to horse mount) (4,000 XP)

4 Ascendant Hellsword bodyguards (1,400 XP each)

12 Eladrin Twilight Enforcer Personal Guards (700 XP each)

1 Behir War Mount (5,000 XP)

Tythia in her youth (Human Blademaster, 1600 XP)

**Third Encounter-Apophis:** The young godling arrives by himself, with his transformed agents; he has Tythia, transmogrified, as well as the Vampire Lord Carthas and necromancer Ekman, also transformed:

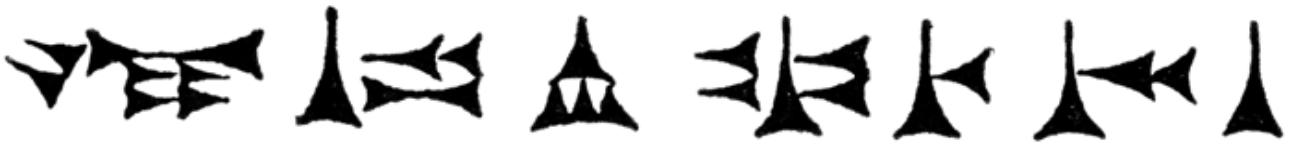
**Apophis Level 17 encounter (7,600 XP)**

Apophis (Human Mystagogue, XP 2,800)

Tythia the Elder Transformed (Lich, Human Wizard 2,000 XP)

Carthas and Ekman Transformed (Vampire Lord, 1,200 XP)

**Conclusion:** PCs should win the day, but if they somehow botch this, then the time-appropriate arrival of additional heroes or perhaps even an avatar from the period will help them out!



## Theliad

### Steel age kingdoms at the world's edge

**Cultural Level:** Steel Age

**Population:** five hundred thousand or more

**Government:** collection of minor city states, chiefdoms and kingdoms

**Rulers:** many regional kings

**Religions:** several including the so-called Ascended Immortals and the Cult of the Eleven

**Social Titles:** varied

**Allies:** Theliad has many alliances internally. Most Theliadian city states along the coast welcome trade from Syrgia.

**Enemies:** Most enmity in the region is reserved for internal squabbles, though by and large they are in opposition to Sabradani and the Crystite Kingdom.

Northwestern Chirak is a remote location, isolated from much of the central civilizations of the Sea of Chirak region, and only tenuously connected by trade and warfare with certain regions of the West and the North. Syrgian traders have been journeying to the eastern regions of Theliad for two centuries now, and on certain occasions the Madigar and Abraheilites have engaged in trade by way of the difficult sea and land routes to Theliad. Still, it is not as isolated as Far Therias, and its people know something of the wider world, though their insular cultural groups are not receptive to outside influence.

Theliad is described by some as a land that has moved on. While the rest of the world still mourns the loss of old gods or eagerly awaits the rise of new avatars and demiurges, Theliad has dispensed with the old pantheon in disgust and created its own new ways. Chiefly, the earliest arbiters of civilization were several clans who claimed trueborn blood of the old Inadasir, and that this was divine blood, which asserted their ultimate destiny as ascended beings. The first true civilizations to rise in Theliad after the Apocalypse were driven by these early god-kings, and the concept prevailed. The notion of a leader being directly equivalent to a god is commonly accepted among the people of this land, and their belief that mortals can ascend to divinity is very strong.

Theliad's history has not been without conflict. The earliest god kings arose in three primary cultural groups, including the **Atarthic kingdoms**, the **Shellas**, and the **Adenar**. These three groups rose from the ashes of the Apocalypse within three or four centuries, and it was around seven centuries that the first self-proclaimed god

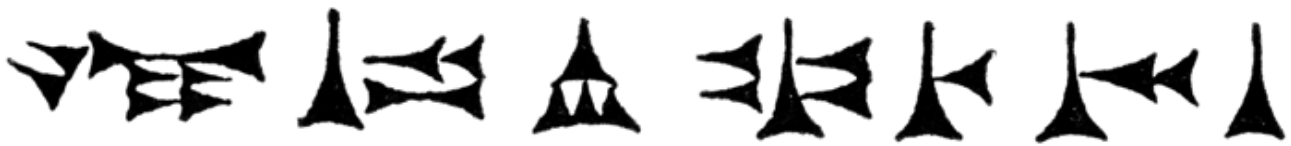
kings manifested. The first such was the enigmatic being called **Hakarthis**. This man ruled Atarthis as a benevolent ruler, who claimed to have visited a cavern in the **Agardash Mountains**, where he was spoken to by a divine spirit some claim to be Pallath and others claim was Pornyphiros. This divine spirit passed on the essence of the divine to Hakarthis, who then went on to rule, as an immortal, for nine centuries before his fall during the **Keterash Uprising**.

Two other divine beings manifested during this early period, including **Nimrasa**, the divine queen of Shellas, and **Sulturian** of Adenar, an amorphous being who, though starting as a man, eventually transformed into a terrible entity. Like Hakarthis, Sulturian was eventually deposed, though his followers found they could not slay him, and instead entombed the terrifying being in the deepest levels of the catacombs of his great city, and then abandoned it. This city is known today as Afar, and it is said that the poison of the entombed god poisoned the land all around, turning Adenar into a dead land.

Nimrasa is the only one of these ancient ascended beings to remain alive to this day. Though her kingdom collapsed long ago, her loyal priesthood spirited her away to a place of safety during the time of the Keterash Uprisings and kept her safely hidden. A century after the collapse of the old empires she was revealed anew, though Nimrasa swore she would never again demand servitude of mortals. The goddess dwells to this day in her venerable mountain temple just south of the lake city of **Typhonis**.

It was approximately eleven hundred years ago that the second pantheon arose. This time, the first ascended mortal was a man known only as **Agarthis**, a warlord of the Ekarthask clans, he was a powerful figure, and in this era he conquered a great deal of territory. On one occasion, near the edge of the White Desert, he was visited by a seductive spirit, a woman who claimed to carry the blood of the god Ga'thon in her veins named **Ierati**. As the tale goes, she seduced Agarthis, and gave him a taste of divine god flesh from her father's own body. Agarthis was transformed, and rode forth to declare his status as risen god. He conquered much of the known world in that time, and his own troops were now prepared to venture across the burning sands of the White Desert to sack the fabled city of Eristantopolis, when he was confronted by a man named **Pallath Eridanos**, a chosen avatar of the sun god, who allegedly united the surviving foes of the risen god with the troops of Eristantopolis to at last stop the mad immortal. Agarthis was imprisoned, again found to be unkillable, beneath a massive stone monument, usually called a





tomb, but known also as a temple by his followers to this day. Even imprisoned, his voice can be heard in the dreams of men of great desire and power, and it a common term to speak of one who has fallen to madness as having “received the dreams of Agarthis” as an explanation for his insane behavior.

The mysterious Pallath Eridanos is still revered by the people of Theliad today, though little is known of this man. He is said to have studied for a time in Eristantopolis after saving his people, and then to have traveled to the western islands, where he founded the modern city and kingdom of Theliad before passing on in to time. His whereabouts to this day are unknown.

The Demon Kings of old were feared and reviled by all, and Theliad, much like the rest of the world, was not spared their rampaging shortly after the Apocalypse ended with the death of the gods. In this region it is known that many such ancient demon kings settled, as they tired from their ceaseless rampaging or were at last captured, imprisoned, or sometimes even destroyed. Scholarly records suggest that eleven demon kings were left alive or imprisoned in the land, and to this day there are **Cults of the Eleven** in the region, which revere and seek dark power from these entities.

The last thousand years of history in Theliad have revealed two more “ascended immortals.” One is a man named **Krytias**, a scholar and student of lore who discovered, some say, the very cavern in which Hakarthos gained his divinity. Krytias manifested his divinity two centuries ago, and has been a peaceful ascetic ever since, teaching others how to achieve spiritual unity based on his visions prompted by the visits he makes to the sacred caves. His temple is located in the Isles of Nelindiros.

The other immortal is a man of mixed infernal heritage, whose mother may have been taken by one of the Eleven, specifically the infernal king **Naramaeos**. This son, named **Tyrios**, rose to power by virtue of his wiles and charms in the city of Masar, where he has ruled with an iron fist now for four centuries. Masar is a decadent kingdom of dark delights and opiates, reveling in the slave trade and the exploitation of others. It serves as an unpleasant bridge between the westerlands of Abraheil and the rest of Theliad.

Of the many lands in the region, **Theliad** and **Ekarthask** are unique in that they eschew all faith in magical

teachings, and disdains sorcery in all forms. These people only nominally tolerate divine practitioners, and seek instead the guidance of men who are enlightened through conventional wisdom.

In contrast to these two lands, **Nuliria** and **Nelindiros** venerate their divine practitioners, and keep a watchful eye out for others who might claim potential immortality. These lands believe that the old age of gods is gone, and the essence of the gods has been imbued in mortal flesh, to be revealed at a time of their choosing. As a result, there are perhaps two dozen cults to various “living gods” in these lands, as well as certifiable ones such as Krytias and Nimrasa. A short list of these more popular living gods include:

*Katharios the Wise*

*Chelisana the Divine Mistress of Light*

*Traidoros the Living Spirit of Strength*

*Macharadan the Healer*

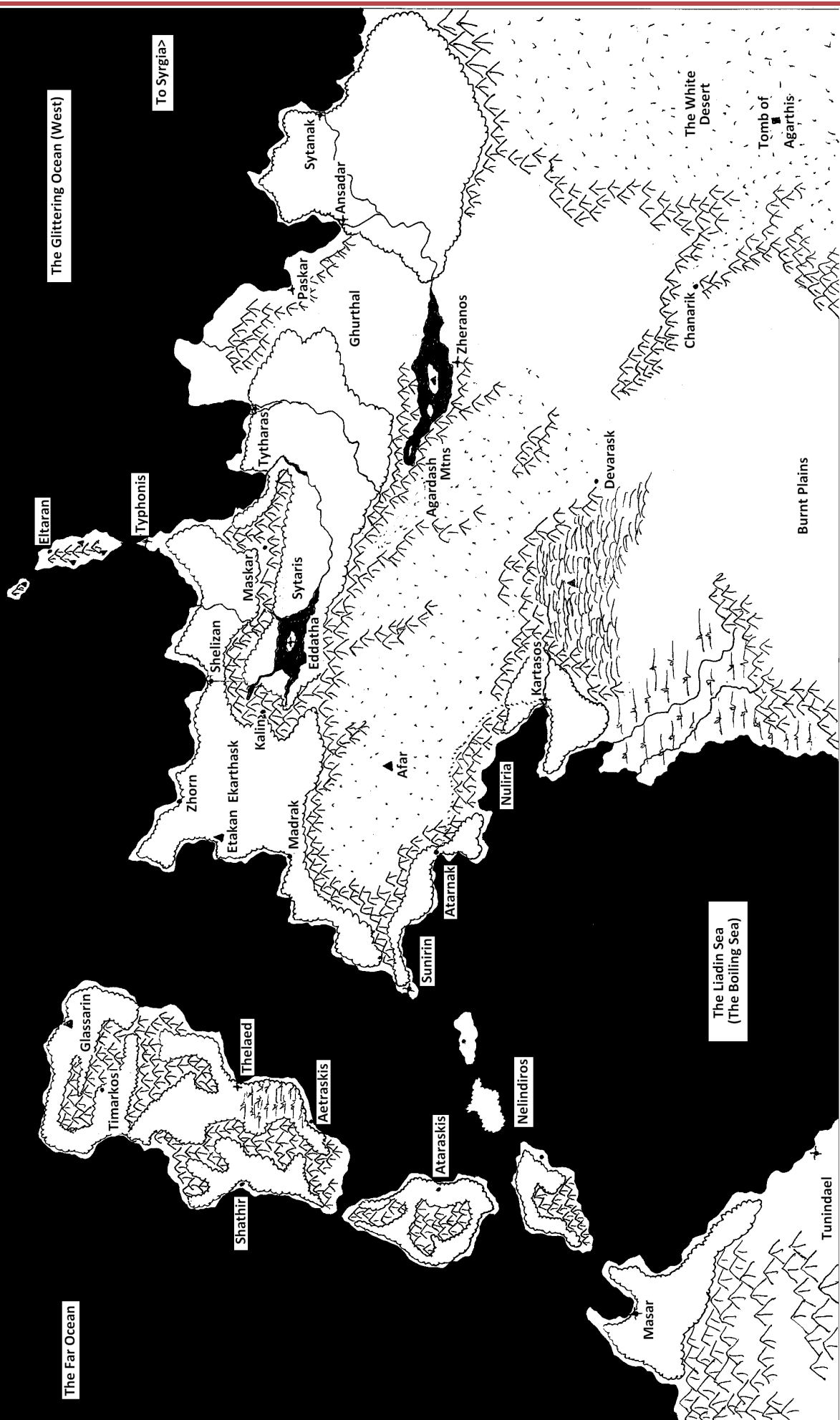
*Setrinara the Oracle*

*The twins Tython and Ulistrana, divine sparks of Pornyphiros.*

Further east, in **Sytaris**, the people are less prone to worshipping living gods, though it does happen, and they instead venerate the ancestral dead, where they believe that the immortal spirits of their kings are all descended from the first true god, Hakarthos. They believe that Hakarthos was a unifying god-spirit, and that all of his descendants carry his spark. This ancestral cult is not unlike those of Nubirion, although with the added belief that each reincarnation brings an ancestral spirit closer to divinity.

In the distant east, the city states of **Ghurthal** tend toward the worship of their resident goddess, the ancient Nimrasa, but there are cults and factions to many other gods as well. In an alarming trend, there are those who worship the entombed gods, Sulturian and Agarthis, and feel that they must follow the “children of Ga'thon.” Where such teachings begin is a mystery, though rumors of Ierata’s hand in the matter are troubling. This mysterious entity, branded a Thousandspawn by the Preservationists of Eristantopolis, is believed to have secret designs on Theliad at large, and that she is partly to blame for the enigma of the so called ascended immortals and living gods in the land.

# The Lands of Theliad



The Glittering Ocean (West)

To Syrgia>

The White Desert

Tomb of Agarthis

Eitaran

Typhonis

Sytanak

Ansadar

Paskar

Ghurthal

Zheranos

Chanarik

Tytharas

Agardash Mtns

Devarask

Burnt Plains

453

Maskar

Sytaris

Eddathia

Shelizan

Kalim

Afar

Kartasos

Zhorn

Etakan Ekarthask

Madrak

Nuliria

Atarnak

Sunirin

The Liadin Sea (The Boiling Sea)

The Far Ocean

Glassarin

Timarkos

Thelae

Aetraskis

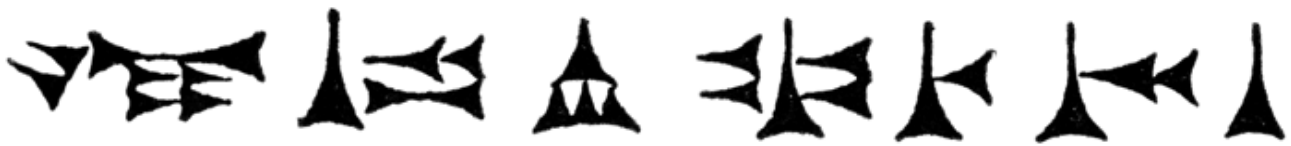
Shathir

Ataraskis

Nelindiros

Masar

Tunindael



## Summary of Divine Powers in Theliad

| Name  | Details  |
|---|--|
| <b>Ascended Immortals:</b>  |  |
| Hakarthos   | Ancestral God-King   |
| Sultirian   | Imprisoned, amorphous God-King                                 |
| Nimrasa   | Spiritualist living God-Queen                                  |
| Ierata  | Enigmatic daughter of Ga'thon                                  |
| Agarthis  | Chaos-Changed second generation God-King                       |
| Krytias   | Scholarly living Immortal                                      |
| Tyrios  | Sorcerer and god king of Masar                                 |
| <b>Avatars of the Zodiac:</b>   |  |
| Pallath Eridanos  | revered avatar of Pallath, but missing for many generations    |
| Obohon  | Southern avatar of Pornyphiros, appears in Theliad on occasion |
| <b>Known Demon Kings of the Elven (with seven more known only to the cultists):</b> |  |
| Naramaeos   | Vile infernal lord of the eleven, dweller in the Wastes        |
| Neth  | Dark demon goddess of the Under Lands of Yaitanish             |
| Syridal   | Mysterious demon lord of murderers and assassins               |
| Koth'sharak   | The murderous demon lord of the burning sands                  |
| <b>"Living Gods:"</b>   |  |
| Katharios   | living god of wisdom and enlightenment                         |
| Chelisana   | Self-proclaimed Divine Mistress of Light                       |
| Traidoros   | The Living Spirit of Strength                                  |
| Macharadan  | The Healer, who walks the lands with the curing touch          |
| Setrinara   | Goddess of truth, the sacred Oracle                            |
| Tython and Ulistrana  | Twins, divine sparks of Pornyphiros who speak with his voice   |

### Racial Groups of Theliad

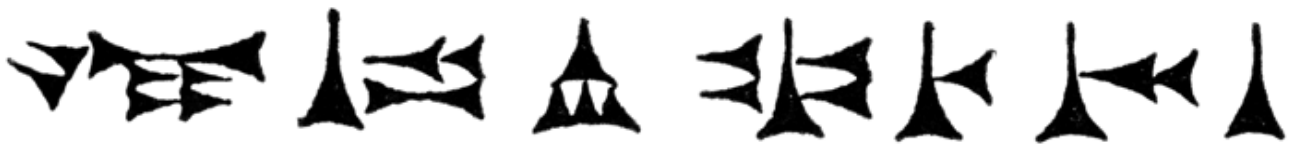
Theliad is dominated by humans, but there are a handful of minor races that also predominate in the region. Notably absent from the land are dwarves, of whom the closest culture of such is southward in the Kossarit Mountains (of Galadur and Dalevar), and elves, of whom the closest such kin are in the region of Zamedia, south of the Crystite lands. The common nonhuman groups are as follows:

**Shifters:** The people of Ekarthask weathered a time when beast and man were on equal footing, and the desire to obtain the blood and power of the beast was a great desire among the early Ekarthask barbarians. Such was this desire that those who were born of mixed blood, called shifters, became great warriors, and eventually a species in their own right. Lycanthropy, in which a man takes the shape of a beast, is still a

common phenomenon in this land, and such shape shifters are highly prized, often establishing themselves as great warriors and kings. Shifters, who cannot change fully to beast form, are a diluted by-product of this heritage.

**Lizard folk:** The lizard folk of Theliad go by many titles, though as a species they call themselves the **Hinursk**. The hinursk have no common ground in unity or leadership, preferring small tribal relations spread throughout the land. They are friendly to trade and interaction with humans, but two thousand years of close experience have left the hinursk wary of what men are capable of. The hinursk themselves are not always trusted, for it is suspected that many of their kind are dedicated to the Cult of the Eleven.

**Goliaths:** The lesser giants of the land are a strong force,



albeit too few in number to unite as a strong threat to any human land. The goliaths make their trade in mountain towns and coastal villages, living amongst humans in small communities and relying on their fearsome appearance and reputation to keep trouble away. Goliaths who become mercenaries are much prized.

**Dragonborn:** The dragonborn of Theliad are actually quite rare, but their appearance and reputation make them stand out when they do walk among men. Most of the dragonborn come from the island of Ataraskis, where it is said that they have a city deep inland.

**Tieflings:** Although persecuted and often killed as demon spawn in Theliad and Akarthask, tieflings are nonetheless quite common, often coming from otherwise completely normal births of human parents. They are considered a sign of good luck in Nuliria, but are treated very strangely in Sytaris, where tieflings are believed to be evidence of some great wrong-doing in a person's soul that must be undone through good living. This leads to harsh expectations of redemption for past lives for tieflings of Sytaris. In Ghurthal, where demonic worship is increasingly common, tieflings are viewed by some as infernal gifts, and some cultists will pay a couple handsomely to purchase their half-infernal children.

**Halflings and Gnomes:** as with everywhere else, these half-folk are found in proximity to human lands, dwelling in and enjoying the fruits of such. Halflings are most common in Nuliria and in the Islands of Nelindaros, while there are a few known colonies of gnomes along the northern coast in Ghurthal. Plenty of both can be found in the White City, Eristantopolis.

**Half-Orcs and Orcs:** The orcs are a true underworld denizen in this region, as the constant and vociferous warfare over the ages between their kind and men have driven them deep beneath the surface. Half orcs are very, very rare, and in the last century few of this species have been seen, save for occasional surface raids. Some wary adventurers have warned of the increasingly large forces of orcs and other underworld denizens that grow underground, worshipping Sultirios and the Eleven, but most men take such warnings with a grain of salt.

**Doppelgangers:** These mysterious shape shifters are believed to have thrived at one time in Ekarthask, but long ago lost power and have been dwelling in secret among men ever since.

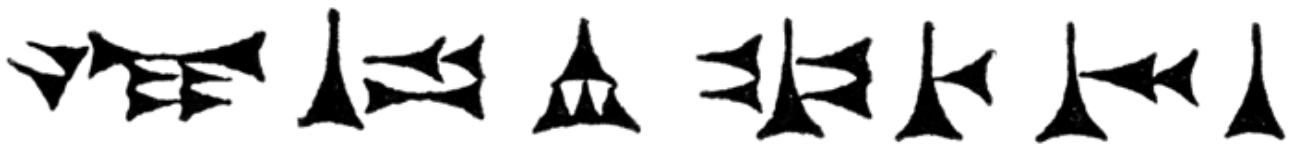
## Magic in Theliad

Among much of Theliad magic is a relatively uncommon practice, and divine magic only slightly more so. In Theliad and Ekarthask arcane magic is reviled and feared, and such profane practitioners are usually hunted down and destroyed, although primal magic is regarded somewhat more as a sacred touch of the divine by the Ekarthaskans. Elsewhere, magic of any kind is uncommon at best, and so when it is witnessed, people often tend to make much of it, and so places like Suliria have their self-proclaimed living gods, people of special magical talent that gain special prominence for their powers among the common folk.

Among Ekarthask and in the wilds primal magic is more common. Unfortunately, shamans, wardens and even barbarians are sometimes mistaken for practicing sorcery in those lands that fear and oppose such powers (though not Akarthask, notably). Druids are unique, in that they are spirit worshipers, and revere the primal gods, who are very similar to the spirit lords of Legoras in the southeastern lands.

The divine casters are regarded with a certain measure of awe in places like Suliria, and with dread in places like godless Theliad. Clerics and paladins always adhere to the worship of a certain deity or cult, even a living god, and tend to be fiercely devout. Avengers are extremely uncommon and usually are dedicated to the demon king Syridal or similar foul entities. Invokers are the most interesting of the lot, for they are individuals who feel that they are intended to ascend to the status of living god, and usually seek the secret to the success of the few known ascended immortals.

There is a strong residual backlash to the arcane magic of old that lingers in the culture of the region. Theliad and Ekarthask prosecute and slay known practitioners of arcane magic (and sometimes divine magic). Elsewhere, exposing your talents for such can lead to fear and suspicion, although of all the lands arcane magic is most tolerated in Ghurthal. Outlying regions such as Eristantopolis embrace sorcery, although expeditions from the White City to regions of Theliad are tempered by careful warnings about not exposing ones' self to scrutiny for practicing such forbidden talents. Unfortunately, the people of Eristantopolis have long been viewed suspiciously by locals for their known embrace of arcane magic. Finally, Masar in the southwest is a society driven by arcane desires made flesh, and a general abuse of arcane talent. It is a common superstition that arcane skill comes from being born of or given power by demons.



## The City State Thelaed, City of the Sun

**Rulership:** The Council of the Sun, presided by official elect Adaeus; appointed regent: General Tiraeus, with High Priestess Aetra

**Patron Deity:** Pallath Eridanos

**Government:** Democracy (councils elected by city state; one general to act in the defense of the Isle)

**Population of Thelaed:** 37,000. Approximately 95% human, 5% other (Halflings, shifters, goliaths and dragonborn)

**Average Population:** each city state averages 25,000 population in size

### A Brief History

Thelaed (the archaic form of Theliad) was founded about one thousand years ago, according to the legend, by the avatar Pallath Eridanos. Eridanos had studied for many years in the ancient libraries of Eristantopolis, and his own writings are said to have later influenced the philosophy of the Preservationists when they were formed in later centuries.

Eridanos was a simple man, who eschewed much wealth in favor of learning, and he led his followers to the site of Thelaed, where he established a community people far from the rest of civilization, to seek greater truths. In time, he was recognized by the natives of the island as a demiurge, and in his later years a great temple was constructed in his honor, despite Eridanos' protests to the contrary.

Eridanos taught a philosophy that showed great disdain for sorcery and magical teachings, for he believed that it was only by man's own hand that the world would one day be restored. He eventually left Thelaed, about six hundred years ago, to travel to "places beyond," he said, for he felt the calling of the Leo Stone, of which he held a shard, urging him to seek out the greater truths of the cosmic unknown. He has never been seen again, although his temple and following remains strong, and is the official state religion of the city of Thelaed.

Thelaed and the island at large came under attack about four hundred and fifty years ago during a Sabradani expansionist period, which led to assaults by that southern kingdom from across the Boiling Sea of Iliadin. The Sabradani of the time had been united under the banner of the warlord and master artificer Ghormas Zelar, and in their fever to conquer they took much of Nuliria and Nelindiros, but found the shape shifters of Ekarthask and the patriots of Theliad too much to handle. When Zelar was deposed by his own people in a coup, the forces of the "ten year war" withdrew, and left

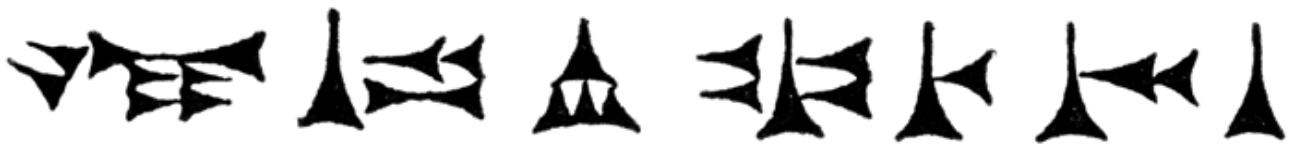
the region in peace.

The effect of this conflict had a lasting impact on Thelaed, which until now had maintained a proper militia only to defend against occasional raiders from Ekarthask or other lands. A position of regent general was appointed, to be filled by an elected man for ten years as chosen by the council, whose job was to keep Theliad safe, and to be aware of the plots and events of their neighbors across the sea. This gradually led to an obsession with militant fitness and a strong culture of professional warriors arose, to become a new class of knights, noblemen trained in war.

Today, Theliad is a respected and somewhat feared member of the region, an ally and trade partner to Nuliria and Nelindiros, as well as Sytaris. The embrace of sorcery in Ghurthal is repulsive to Theliadians and so they eschew relations with that land, but they do welcome the occasional Syrgian vessel from the east, finding the Syrgians to be not unlike themselves, except for their tolerance for sorcery. They remain in conflict with Ekarthask, but grudgingly respect their life-long foes and sometimes allies. The Theliadians hate the Masari, and would wipe out that city state if they could muster the support for such an action. They remain bitter enemies of the Sabradani in the south, having never forgiven that land for the incursion four centuries earlier, and will fire on site of any Abraheilite vessel they see, especially since most Abraheilite ships are powered by harnessed elementals and captained by mages. The Abraheilites are content to leave Theliad alone, as there are few from those lands who seek trade with the eastern kingdoms of the Glittering Ocean, preferring to give Theliad a wide berth.

### Religious Beliefs

Prior to the arrival of Eridanos and his followers, the island people (who called themselves the Kael, for "people" in the native language which was derived from old atarthic) had lived egalitarian lives, for they had once belonged to the now collapsed Atarthic empire of the old god-king Hakarthos, and after his passing and the collapse of that empire, they had gone back to their old tribal ways. With four centuries of enlightenment under the rule of Eridanos, the people grew cultured, and developed a complex democratic society, at the pinnacle of which was the city of Thelaed. To this day the city remains the center of culture for the island, with its outlying city states looking to the council of the sun for guidance (though they have their own regional councils as well). These outliers include Glassarin, Shathir Timarkos, Aetrashis and Ataraskis.



Thelaed is also the religious center of the many city-states. Theliad in general is remarkably non-religious, with a modest priesthood dedicated to Pallath Eridanos and virtually no recognition for any other gods in the region or beyond. This prudence and monotheism leads to a disdain for the followers of other gods, and in some of the cities it is forbidden to even speak of the other gods, punishable by imprisonment or worse. Naturally, this has led to secret cults in some cases, in which dissident or rebellious elements of the Theliadian culture seek out such cults specifically to be oppositional, or to see if the teachings of these other beliefs are more significant or profound than those of Pallath Eridanos.

Theliad, despite a lack of religious tradition outside of the various ceremonies and holidays dedicated to Pallath Eridanos, has a wide variety of lesser beliefs and ritual practices, especially with regard to the spirits of the land, and engage in a form of minor ancestral worship, to appease the spirits of the dead. They do not believe in reincarnation, instead believing in an underworld afterlife, in which the spirits of the dead descend to be greeted by the old gods, who are (all being dead) waiting in this underworld of judgment. Death is regarded as a terminus, and it is believed that those who lived good and productive lives will be rewarded with some sort of ascension in the afterlife, while those who did not will be condemned to a dark and dreary underworld.

### **People and Culture**

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The city itself is of modest size, with a population of approximately 37,000. Most of the citizens are human, as Thelaed is fairly intolerant to nonhumans, a side effect of the island's relative isolation, although the culture at large has a curious fascination for dragonborn, who are welcome and regarded as fascinating curiosities. Likewise, goliaths are regarded as especially hearty demihumans, and are prized by many nobles of Thelaed for their strength as guards and agents. Halflings dwell in the city, but are regarded as second-class citizens, and most Halflings dwell in their own district. There are several inland and coastal townships consisting entirely of Halflings, who are called **Kinaes**, for "little folk," a diminutive term among Theliadians. Finally, there are a handful of shifters, most of who belong to three exiled tribes from Ekarthask that fled their homeland during the civil wars of two centuries back, and sought refuge with the islanders of Theliad. The shifters are regarded as inferior of intellect, but respected for their strength.

The Theliadian obsession with purity and strength has led to a focus on militant skill and ability in the last four centuries, such that most nobles are expected to be

strong and capable, as are all men required to join the militia at a young age, and to serve in the defense of their land for five years. In practicality warfare is uncommon, and so in later years most Theliadians "let it slip," but the overall obsession with beauty of form and strength of body is pervasive in the land, and anyone who "doesn't quite fit," can feel the disdain. This is especially hard on half-breeds such as half-elves and tieflings, who are regarded as anathema, and pure-bloods of other demihuman types are seen as freakish curiosities.

Slavery is acceptable in Thelaed. Slaves can work as indentured servants, eventually earning emancipation and becoming freedmen, though few slaves are able to earn enough to buy their own land and become voting citizens. Slaves that can't advance are criminals, prisoners of war and "lesser races" such as lizard folk, orcs and the like, who will never be seen as anything less than thralls.

### **A Typical Household**

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A typical household in Thelaed will consist of 2-4 acres of property, usually with several acres of farmable ground given to dates, pears, olives or grapes. The landed gentry (voting citizen) will have his wife (Theliadians are monogamous) and several kids, and often an extended family, usually of one or more kin and aging parents if they are alive. Any men in the family between the age of 15 and 20 will be living off-site in the barracks of the standing militia. The property will have somewhere between one and sometimes several dozen landless commoners and slaves, usually 1-2 commoners supervising 4-8 slaves. A landed gentry's stables will usually have several good horses, and if he is not in to farming he will have a lively stock of cattle or goats.

About one in five households will have a commons area used for community activities and learning. Priests of Pallath Eridanos will attend these community halls and teach classes daily to children (though not children of landless commoners, who are usually working in the fields). Some of these priests will teach classes to the children of the commoners after hours, or on rest days (every sixth day of the ten month calendar is a day of rest, according to the temple).

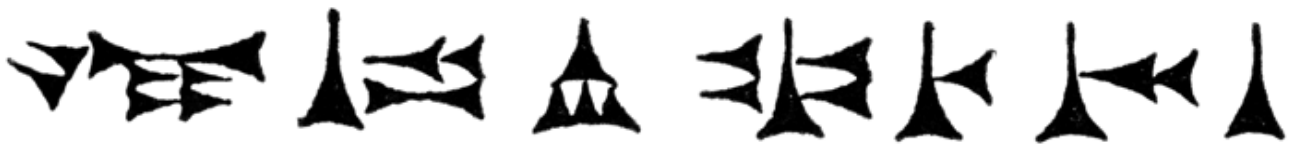
### **The Layout of Thelaed**

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Thelaed is a large city by the standards of the region, and has several districts of note:

#### **The Theliopolis**

Here the council elect meets and discusses matters of commerce and politics. The Theliopolis was constructed about five centuries ago and has been the center of



politics for the land ever since. It is also where judgments and executions are held (which are very rare, as most condemned criminals are enslaved).

#### **Temple of Pallath Eridanos**

This large pyramidal temple with a great acropolis atop it is plated with gold and marble, and decorated with vibrant white, red and silver designs. It rests along the northern hills of the city, and overlooks the entire region, a reminder of the power of the city's divine benefactor.

#### **The College of War**

Here lies the quarters and grounds of the standing city militia, which doubles as the forces for its navy, as well as the small palace of the appointed general.

#### **The Open Markets**

Located along the waterfront, these markets allow for trade with many cities and nations abroad, and is where demihumans and other races are most likely to be encountered.

#### **The Merchant and Trade Quarter**

It is here that local merchants ply their wares and various trades have their respective districts. Thelaed is famed for its distinct steel arms and armament, considered superior to the arms and armor of all other kingdoms in the region. All good Theliadian arms and armor are masterwork in quality.

#### **The Commons**

Here lies the housing and businesses of the commoners, all considered good emancipated citizens of Thelaed. In Thelaed, any freeman born as an owner of land is given right of vote to the call of the council. Women, demihumans, slaves and landless commoners have no voting rights.

#### **The Demihuman and Foreign Districts**

There are three distinct demihuman districts, including the Kinaesaed, or city of the half-folk for halflings, as well as the foreign quarter in which dragonborn and shifters native to the city dwell. The third district is adjacent to the open markets, and is where housing for foreigners who own property in the region are allowed to live. Such foreigners must have the blessing of the council, which usually means at least two sponsors and some bribe money.

#### **The Shipyards**

Thelaed makes galleys, of all types, and some of the largest and finest muscle-powered rowers in the region. The largest galleys ever invented come from Thelaed. They also build wind-powered coastal schooners, which are unsuited to long-term voyages over the ocean, but are excellent for coastal traders.

#### **Geography Around Thelaed**

Thelaed rests at the southern tip of the foothills leading up to the **Ismadin Mountains** to the north, a major chain where several active mines operate. The mountains are also inhabited by various underworld denizens, and it is a common superstitious belief that these caverns eventually descend deep enough to penetrate the underworld of the afterlife.

Southward, along the low-lying saturated basin adjacent to the bay is the **Ethelar Swamps**, where it is said that one can find the scattered, half-sunken remains of an ancient, pre-cataclysmic city from old, possibly a ruin of one of the old cities of the Atarthic Empire. The swamps are infested with foul, fast-breeding creatures such as frogmen and lizard folk, and many militia patrols spend their time sparring with these beasts.

The thick forestlands west and north of the city are deep, arboreal forests, somehow still strong despite regular deforestation for the wood used in the construction of their great vessels and houses. The forest, not given any particular name, is believed to be inhabited by many strange monsters and spirits.

### **Personalities of Thelaed**

#### **Captain Aerinos - Human male Fighter Level 5 lawful good**

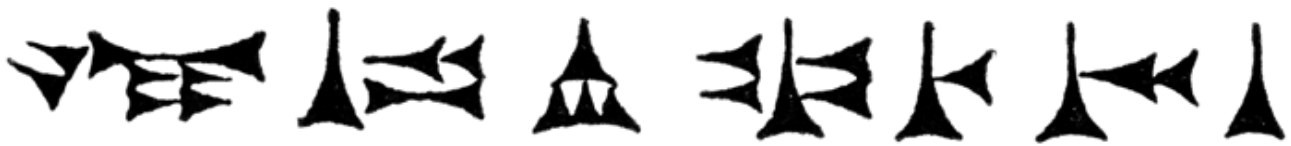
Aerinos is captain of the guard for the city watch, the distinct militia company assigned to the protection and oversight of Thelaed. His men also serve as first-watch against pirates, and man two small war galleys for the protection of trade lanes. He is a stressed man, but believes in his job, and is not above recruiting foreigners to investigate or handle issues involving other foreigners or demihumans.

#### **Talia Ezistaer, alias "The Witch of the Black Woods" - Human female warlock Level 8 unaligned**

Talia is a practicing witch, who dwells in the woods west of the city in an undisclosed location. She is regarded with suspicion by most, although she hides her reputation as the "Witch of the Black Woods" from all; certain people who are desperate will seek her out for help, if they feel sorcery will aid them, but she is very careful about those who approach her. She is protected by a large cylops named **Edaeos**.

#### **Morigon Dranae - Werewolf male Warden Level 9 unaligned**

Morigon is a tall, gruff man who is of the Dranae tribe, exiled from his homeland of Ekarthask. He now manages a vineyard and winery and exports a great deal of wine on his three trading vessels to regions all along the eastern coastlands. He is good natured and friendly to



foreigners, being one himself.

**Alden the Sly - Halfling male Rogue Level 10 evil**

Alden the Sly is the leader of a local guild of thieves called the Shanksters, who are fond of casing wealthy houses, managing a union of beggars, and running all sorts of illicit operations along the waterfront. He works with (though does not believe in) cultists of the Eleven, getting them and their vile goods in and out of the city. He has a shantytown of sorts south along the coast in the swamps called Shankstertown.

**Silas Kaer - Human male Cleric 6 good**

Silas Kaer is a priest of Pallath Eridanos who also has an obsession with the mysterious Preservationists of the White Desert, and he will pay handsomely for any books or lore from their order, though such is forbidden in the city proper, due to their advocacy of sorcery. Silas is well-intended, and believes that the Preservationists reflect another extension of the truth and mystery of his own god.

**Sheligan and Nemari Araes - Human commoners level 1 good**

Sheligan and his wife Nemari are two local land owners and community members who are respected by all. Lately, their fields and livestock have been raided by unknown forces from the mountains, and they are looking for help in stopping this. Evidence so far suggests a mixture of goblins and cyclopes.

**Tenithos - Human male bard level 6 good**

Tenithos is a traveling bard and good-natured fellow. He has an innate skill for lyrical magic, which he hides, relying on theatrics instead to disguise any potential revelation of his talent. Tenithos has an ear to the ground for interesting events and keeps an eye on people around Thelaed. He makes an annual pilgrimage to several other cities, and even to Nuliria, so he is rather worldly.

**Chaspar Comedea - Human male wizard Level 12 unaligned**

Chaspar is officially a member of the council, and privately a respected tradesman. In secret he is a wizard, and has practiced his art for decades, since he was indoctrinated in to the Order of Ahael, founded centuries ago by a dissident priest of the temple of Eridanos who felt that the suppression and rejection of sorcery was the wrong way to go. This secretive order has about two dozen members locally. Chaspar is its most respected member, and uses his council influence to work toward better rights for those with natural and inspired talents for sorcery.

**Karida Taene - Human female rogue level 13 unaligned**

Karida began her life as a slave, and gradually clawed

her way to freedom and then eventually got lucky and married a wealthy businessman, who subsequently gave her a small fortune in wealth and property. She now manages one of the more prestigious bath houses and brothels in the city, and is a central socialite in the ongoing charades that the young members of the gentry engage in. At thirty Karida is believed to be the second most powerful woman in Thelaed after the general's wife, the high priestess Aetra.

**High Priestess Laeon Aetra - Human female invoker Level 14 good**

Laeon Aetra has a political marriage to general Tiraeus, and is herself a powerful influence on the community. She is publically the voice and oracle of Pallath Eridanos, which means she is supposedly visited by him in her dreams and considered his spiritual wife. Privately, she is suspected by all to be his heir apparent, and the priesthood feel she is manifesting traits characteristic of the living gods in Nuliria, which worries some, for there is a strong disdain for those so-called false cults in foreign lands. The high priestess herself seems unconcerned with these beliefs, and embraced whatever her powers offer her as she continues to expand her divine talents.

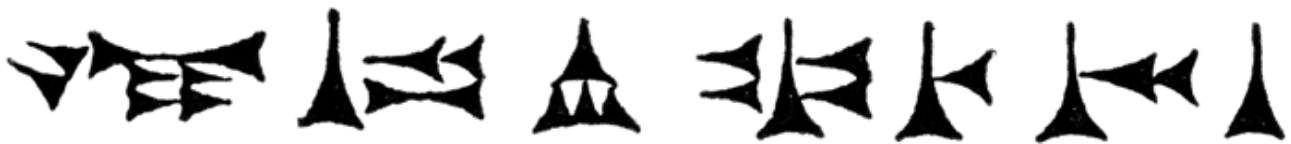
**General Anton Tiraeus - Human male warlord level 15 lawful good**

Anton Tiraeus is the appointed general-regent, selected by vote two years ago to act as Theliad's political and military defender against outside influences. He has so far proven to be a charismatic figure and reliable; he has personally led a raid against the Akarthaskan warlord Geminus, destroying the enemy's fleet and setting fire to their harbor in retaliation for several raids by the warlord's troops.

**Darius Esaen - Human male ranger level 10 good**

Darius Esaen is a favored knight who has served for a decade as a champion of Thelaed. In his mid thirties, Darius has traveled across the region and gone as far as the White City itself and back. His tales are legendary, his stories of slaying sorcerers and slaughtering demons quite spectacular. Some think he boasts, but others know the truth of it. Secretly, Darius is obsessed with Talia Ezistaer, the witch of the black woods.





## Sinister Plots in Theliad

### The Cult of Yaegaros and the Awakening of the Fallen Seraph

One of the Eleven, possibly, **Yaegaros** has a potent following in Theliad and his agents are slowly building up their strength to unleash the Demon King from his ancient prison, which is located on a piece of aerial rock floating in the upper atmosphere, guarded by ancient seraphim and animate war hulks. He was imprisoned literally weeks after the Apocalypse, and has been entombed ever since, though his dreams and nightmares reach far and wide.

His cult is led by **Princess Erasma of Nuliria**, who is convinced that Yaegaros is beauty in perfection, and that his destiny is to rule the world with her, and they will ascend to the ranks of immortal gods. She is using her two most faithful followers, the corrupted deva **Aritas Kahnstrul** (swordmage) and the rakshasa **Neparin Vorn** of the deep mountains to aid her in this venture, which requires finding a power source strong enough to shatter his prison in the sky.

There are three objects necessary to free Yaegaros:

**The Stone of Kaliak**, an ancient dolmen rock located along the north coast of Ataraskis Island. The stone is actually the weathered body of an ancient Seraph, an Angel of Battle called **Saerabas**, who served during the final stages of the war as a lieutenant in Pornyphiros's armies. He contains in his possession a terrible artifact called the Heart of Infinity, a unique, pulsing stone which if released could destroy all outsiders and magical bonds for a hundred miles; the stone could shatter the guardians and outer wards of the prison of Yaegaros.

**The Cannadad Dei, Ulien Faergon's flying dirigible** or a similar flying craft; locating a vessel that can survive the journey in to the sky to the prison is a difficult part of this job, and the Cannadad Dei is a major option; the vessel is known to frequent the city of Eristantopolis on occasion. A second choice would be to harness a winged beast, such as a dragon. As it so happens, there is a mad inventor named **Ulien Faergon**, a tiefling sorcerer and inventor in Masar who has created a flying device, a dirigible, which he plans to test. This vessel could survive the journey to the upper atmosphere.

**The Shroud of Chaos**, an ancient, diaphanous cloth said to have been cut from the membranous flesh of the dead got Ga'Thon's own skull, capable of shielding whomever wears it and those around them from the

terrible wrath of the Sky Gaunts. The location of this mysterious artifact is unknown, though rumors run wild that it is currently being worn by a nobleman of Pelegar named Ordo Vastain, although some believe that it is in the possession of the mad elf witch **Ikartha**, who dwells in a remote hut in the Burnt Plains.

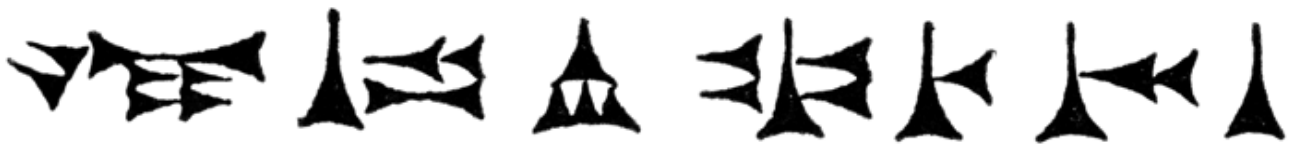
With these three items, Princess Erasma believes she can free Yaegaros and in so doing insure they will become immortals, ruling Nuliria together as benevolent god-kings. Yaegaros has done much to persuade her, and has cast himself in the light of a seraphim general of Pornyphiros, who needs to be freed from his infernal captors assigned by Minhauros long ago.

PCs could be hired by one of Erasma's agents, who themselves are less confused about who or what Yaegaros is, with the job of finding the three objects necessary to free him. They could also be approached by agents of the opposition, who seek to find the objects first to insure that Yaegaros is not freed. The likeliest patron for such would be **Yllien Kar, high priestess of Nimrasa**, who herself received the visions of Yaegaros, and now seeks to stop him from being freed. She also knows the truth: Yaegaros was, indeed, a seraph, who was horribly corrupted and joined the side of the betrayer gods, eventually becoming badly corrupted. He is now popularized as one of the Demon Kings, albeit only among the Cult of the Eleven, as proof that the only difference between the demons and the seraphs was a matter of who won and who lost.

### The Schemes of the Gaizen Trunar and the Mad God Sulturian

Sulturian was one of the first three of the ascended immortals, and though he was as powerful and immortal as Nimrasa and Hakarthos, he proved to be even more resilient, and his enemies at last entombed him deep beneath the city of Afar. The city was eventually abandoned, as the corruption of the mad god destroyed the land about it and left its demon-haunted streets a nightmare for the living.

Sulturian has, though entombed, been awake all these years. He conspires to free himself from his imprisonment, and uses visions and dreams to prompt his followers to move to action in his favor. Unfortunately even after nearly fifteen hundred years of imprisonment he has no idea what it would take to free him; the capstone used to seal him in his prison beneath the earth is made of a material that was siphoned of all magical force; it is effectively an inert, non-reactive substance that seems to soak the very magic from the



region around it, effectively inhibiting his own potent sorceries, reducing them to a pittance. The energy must go somewhere, unfortunately, and the original prison-makers failed to account for this; the stone saps the strength of the immortal trapped within, and disperses it to the land around, which has led to the utter destruction of the region over time, as well as its unfathomable haunting.

Sulturian recently gained a follower, the mystic and necromancer named Gaizen Trunar. Gaizen is a potent mage and dreams of great power, power he has realized he can gain by channeling the power of Sulturian's prison in to specially devised crystals, which he harnesses for his own use. Unbeknownst to him, Sulturian is aware of his actions, and is subconsciously prompting them, as Sulturian is channeling his own consciousness in to the energy being sapped by the Capstone, in the hopes that if Gaizen absorbs enough of the power, then the essence of Sulturian will begin to impinge upon his consciousness, allowing him to transmigrate his own consciousness in to the mage's body.

Until recently this plan seemed simple enough, and was being carried out in a manner both remote and unobtrusive, such that it could have been executed without ever drawing the suspicion of other agencies. That is, except for two problems:

**1. The Wardens of Afar** are an ages-old order of templars dedicated to overseeing the legacy of Afar and its prisoner. When Sulturian began his operations around the ancient city he hired agents, including many monsters to slay the Wardens of Afar and drive them away. The headquarters of this ancient order is located in Kartasos of Nuliria, and its leader, the Elder Templar Taerdan Amortus will need to recruit new agents to find out what has happened to its men who have not returned from their pilgrimage.

**2. A thief named Beven Stills** stole in to Afar with his small crew recently after word was out that the Wardens of Afar had gone missing. In their poking about they uncovered one of the **Sulturian Crystals**, as they have come to be called, and Reven stole it, feeling the inescapable call of Sulturian's consciousness locked within. This has thrown an unexpected monkey wrench on to the immortal's plans, for it means his consciousness might bond with a common thief of no magical talent! He is prompting his cultists in dreams to find the man, even as Gaizen Trunar enacts his own efforts, for the loss of the stone also affects his own plans. Unbeknownst to all, the thief and stone are now in Tytharas, where he is seeking the aid of the sorceress

Ithara Bheraine in unlocking the power it holds, and she has determined it contains some sort of budding consciousness, which she plans to imbue within a homunculi...

## Therias

### Bronze age realm at the edge of the world

**Cultural Level:** Bronze Age

**Population:** half million

**Government:** collection of minor city states, chiefdoms and kingships

**Rulers:** many regional kings

**Religions:** the Spirit Lords

**Social Titles:** commoner, land owner, journeyman, merchantman, baron, count, duke, king

**Allies:** The Therians are too remote to interact with the rest of the world, although they engage in limited trade with Helios and Sabraheil

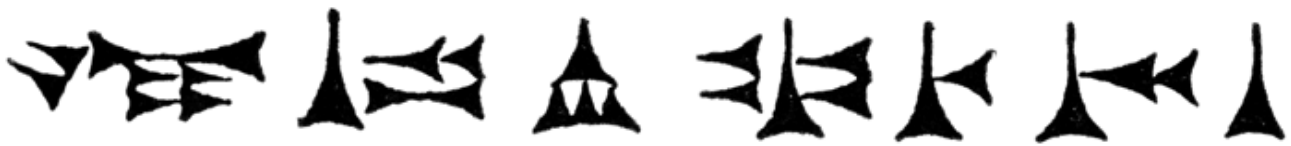
**Enemies:** The Therians are their own worst enemies, with warfare between nations, especially Carnassus, Sheddaham, Ermanica and Tuat being frequent.

### Therias: the Myth and Reality

Little can be said of this distant southwestern land, well beyond the Everdread Deserts, Beltraine, and the Huron lands. Therias is largely an unknown to most adventurers in the Seas of Chirak, and only the people of the West engage in trade with any regularity. Among the Therians, they are largely unfamiliar with the nature of their remote neighbors, being so isolated.

Therias is known for a few unique traits, however, that are unlike any other land in Chirak. First, it is rumored that they worship twenty four deities, who are called the Spirit Lords. It is said that these demiurges are actually powerful spirits who achieved quasi immortality through something called the divine aether, which existed in pools around the land, and acted as portals to a demiplane called the Outworld.

These spirit lords are believed to have been old generals and lords of the Apocalypse armies that survived and fled to this land, where they set themselves up as a new pseudo-pantheon, to seek the worship of humanity and replace the fallen gods. It is said that they eventually discovered they could never attain true divinity, due to the fact that they partook of the divine aether, and thereafter sought to manipulate the mortals



of their cults to seek out special individuals who might possibly be worthy of the path to godhood, instead.

Other tales of Therias suggest that the land is where the god Gerigos died, and that these divine aether pools are the areas where the land was suffused with his blood in his passing. The fact that the mysterious Lost One, the true avatar of Gerigos, is thought to dwell in the region lends credence to this fact.

Therias as a region is said to be Bronze Age in its technology, and behind the times in its recovery from the time of the ancients. The land is said to be scarred with obvious evidence of the old wars, and littered with the ruins and remains of the ancient tragedy. It's people are said to have been blown back to the stone age, and take much time to recover even as much as they have to a meaningful level of civilization.

The Therians are divided in to several distinct cultures, the most centralized and uniting of which is Ermanica. Others include the Sheddaham, Khaelinar, Carnassos, Cythrians, Xorians, and other smaller groups that are nonetheless important. Few Therians realize that they are part of a bigger world anymore, knowing only of the region to their north, and the burning deserts on the continent to the northeast. Southward, it is said, the world eventually ends in the miasma of primordial elements that marks the edge of the world where the destruction of all was stopped by Akquinarios's sacrifice. But even the Therians barely remember the old gods, or how or why the ancient battles happened.

Therias is an ancient, prehistoric land, in which the phenomenon of culture and metallurgy has been in existence for less than a thousand years. Most of the cultures of Therias are bronze-age, but iron has been discovered and is slowly altering the ways of war. The people of this land are young as civilizations go.

The word Therias means "Creation" in the Ermanican tongue. Ermanica is the largest and most prosperous kingdom along the Sea of Antidane, composed of a spirited people who are as comfortable on land as at sea. Other kingdoms along the Sea of Antidane include Tuat, where the most ancient of cultures struggles in a period of decline, Carnassus, a kingdom of fierce dark warriors and sorcerers, and Ildrethar, where a dozen small barbarian kingdoms wage war against one another constantly. Nestled amidst a volcanic island chain in the Antidane is the mysterious and decadent empire of Sheddaham. To the east are the Cythrian lands, ruled by wild nomads and filled with the ruins of ancient civilizations that show there was once a great period before the rise the current kingdoms. Along the east

coast can be found the Xorian kingdoms, filled with demons and shadowy menace as well as the Magditharians, a surprisingly erudite culture that is still remarkably simple.

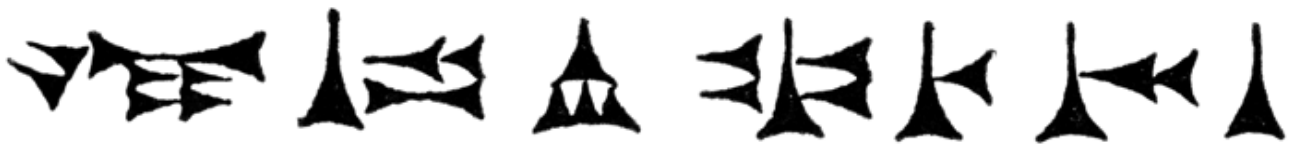
The world of Therias is dominated by a vibrant pantheon of demiurges and spirits who are very real. Because of this, while the names of various spirits may change from one culture to the next, the essence of that demiurge or spirit remains the same. A quick overview of the Therian pantheon follows, followed by some of the known (or believed) mythology.

The spirits of Therias all maintain an alignment with a specific element, and a celebration to that entity is usually held when that element is considered strongest. Likewise, each spirit has an animal aspect through which it manifests in visions and dreams. Finally, each spirit presides over specific aspects and professions of creation. A religious Therian usually pays homage to several demiurges, one of his favored element, animal, aspect and patronage. It is rare to find dedications to single entities, though it does happen. Throughout Therias are several prominent temples and secretive shrines dedicated to the spirits. The strongest temple is at Thyladion, one of the greatest of the Ermanican city states. There, it is said that over a thousand priests of the many spirits congregate to teach and study the ways of the netherworld. The Temple of Thyladion is said to have been built over a hidden cavern in which a vast ether pool is located, by means of which the priests commune with the spirits.

## Mythological and Cosmological History of Therias

Although Therias is part of the World of Chirak, the people of this land seem to have forgotten about almost their entire ancient pre-cataclysmic heritage. A handful of learned scholars from Abraheil and other lands have visited Therias, and concluded that the people of this land are very young, and the survivors had to crawl from the wreckage of their ruins with no memory of the great civilizations of old. As such, some of the Therian mythology is unique to this land, as follows.

- The world was created in ancient times by a cataclysmic conflict between the Old Gods and the New Gods. Therians do not know when this happened (approximately 2,500 years ago, in fact).
- The current pantheon of spirits is fairly universal. Some powerful spirits are usually



seen as demiurges or demons, and sometimes are fragments or relics of the Old Gods, pieces of the divine that survived the great cataclysm.

- The ancient people were the men of the time when this cataclysm happened. The world was ruptured and destroyed the old civilization because of it. Their civilization was very advanced, technologically, compared to the present world.
- When the cataclysm ended, the spirits united as a pantheon, and each entity took on certain elements and aspects, nurturing those elements of the world back to health in the wake of the death of the Old Gods. They decided that man must fend for himself. Few men see the spirits as anything more than distant and enigmatic. They do not manifest often, appear in person, or directly intervene in anything. Mankind must offer sacrifice and prove worth to achieve any divine beneficence from any of the spirits. Dedicated priests and followers must spend a great deal of time seeking to gain the council of a god through dreams and visions.
- The pantheon of spirits presides over creation as a whole. There are three realms of existence in the Thерian mind set (the underworld, the Thерian plane and the Outworld.) The spirits of darkness, earth fire and death dwell in the Underworld while the others dwell in the Outworld. Between the spaces of reality exist other, stranger dimensions and demiplanes as well.

### Secret Lore

Although the spirits are worshiped like gods and demiurges, they are not in fact divine beings, although their imbibing of the divine Ether, from the sacred essence of the Ether Pools, is said to have given them godlike qualities. Most of the spirits are in fact descended from the ancient servants, generals, and loyalists of the lost armies of the Apocalypse. Their numbers are mixed with mortals who have received the gift of immortality, thousandspawn who seek to reclaim the lost glory of their father god, and demons and angels who became enraptured with the mortal plane and chose not to leave, among others.

The spirits who now dominate the sacred faiths of Thерias are part of a secret accord, a group of beings who agreed to set aside their differences (for the most

part) until such time as they could learn the secrets of the gods and eventually replace them. They learned, alas, that only true mortals could ever hope to achieve the ancient power of the Zodiac Stones, and spirits were forever barred from such might. As such, it was decided that the Thерian spirits would challenge their mortal charges to a great game, one in which they would devote thousands of years, possibly, to testing their people, to see who grew strong enough to rise to the challenge of becoming a new avatar, and eventually even god.

There is believed to one true source of godhood in the Thерian lands: The Libra Stone, the power of the lost god Zephyrys. The spirit lords are convinced the stone exists, and it is either whole or in shards, somewhere in the lands of Thерias, waiting for humans to find the pieces. The spirits work hard to push and cajole their favored humans in the direction necessary to finding these stones. At this time, it is known that a shard is held by one person, who somehow remains anonymous: The Lost One is his name, and the spirit lords work furiously to discover this mysterious avatar and how much of the stone he has gathered.

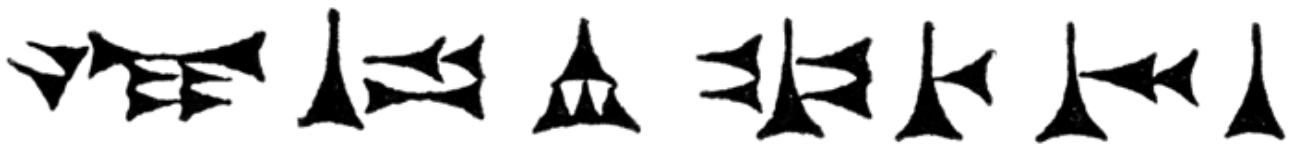
### The Divine Essence and Ether Pools

Considered one and the same, the substance which creates the ether pools allows passage to other dimensional planes of existence. Simultaneously, such pools, when immersed in, can heal the dying and sometimes even grant immortality. It is said that all twenty two spirit lords of Thерias became immortal in this manner.

Exactly how these Ether Pools were created remains a mystery. Some think it was a byproduct of the divine might being thrown about in the Apocalypse, and others think it was in fact a product of the planes which seeped through and was changed by the godly might it was exposed to. A few contend it is the blood of Zephyrys, who some claim was slain in Thерias by Minhauros, and not Beltraine.

In any case, there are a number of such pools throughout the realm of Thерias. Each pool is known to heal the sick magically, and some can even become immortal. Those who perform the right incantations can enter the pool and swim through it literally in to the planar demirealm of the Outworld, where the Spirit Lords have made their extraplanar domains.

The divine essence does have at least one known property that is feared by all save those who have already imbibed it: madness. Any mortal who partakes



of the essence is inevitably driven mad. Even the good ones, the benign souls who sought nothing more than to protect and aid their brethren after the Apocalypse, were eventually reduced to a curious sort of insanity. This can prove to be disastrous, as it did for Morrigan, to take an example, or it can seem to have had nominal effect, such as with the ancient Inadasir Uldragor, who maintains a strict appeal to the rule of law, at the expense sometimes of practicality. But nonetheless, any who deal directly with the Spirit Lords would do well to remember this fact.

## Technology

Current technology is on the borderline of the Bronze and Iron Ages. Iron has only recently become common and available, and it is revolutionizing warfare. Therias is a land of very low technology, and noticeable exceptions are usually recovered from the ruins of the Apocalypse. The most significant inventions in this universe are comparable to Europe around 12-1500 BC, such that few sailing craft are in use, long ships are common, most cultures use bronze for weapons and equipment, and the smelting and creation of weapons and goods with iron is something only discovered within the last one hundred years, by Ermanica and Sheddaham primarily.

Ships are muscle and wind-powered, primarily long ships and small coastal vessels. No vessel to date has crossed the great ocean, although occasional voyagers from distant lands have come to Therias. These people call themselves Abraheilites and Helians, and claim to come from a great ancient continent north across the ocean.

Most cultures are civilized and well within agrarian or pastoral townships and cities along the cultural center point of the world around the great Sea. Beyond that, the rules break down, and many cultures are still in a stage of earlier development, and some remote and vast regions harbor only Stone Age cultures.

Some ancient technology still exists, though it is rare to find. These rare and wondrous devices are sometimes in working order, made of incomprehensible metals and powered by unknown energies. The mekanicals are examples of this lost technology.

## The Ancients

The current Bronze to Iron Age renaissance is a new phenomenon, but not the first of its kind. The land is dotted with the ruins of older civilizations proving that man once rose up and created many great works. All knowledge of these forgotten eras is completely gone.

Whatever happened to the men of old was so catastrophic that not even legends seemed to have survived. Most modern people call their ancestors of these ruins the Old Ones, or sometimes the Giants, for many of the surviving ruins seemed to have been made for immense beings.

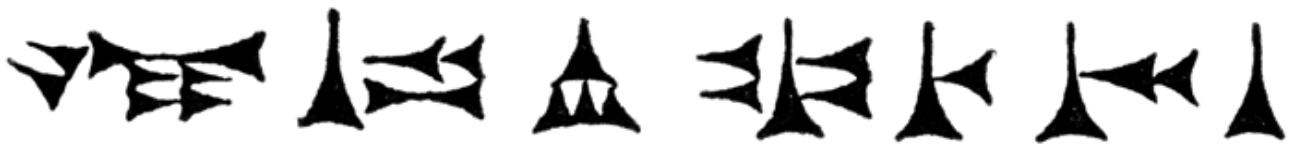
The ancients had technology suffused with magic. Although no living human of Therias realizes it, these people may, in fact, of have descended from the boundaries of the ancient Inadasir and Antidalian cultures which dominated the western and southern realms of the pre-apocalyptic world. Many believe that the Antidaliens were the true giants, from which all modern giants descend, and that the bulk of their ancient civilization lies southward, beyond Carnassus.

The great Hammerfall Sea found at the eastern end of the Sea of Antidane is in fact the remnant of a colossal crater, which was the Hammer of the Gods, the wrath by which the Old Gods sought to purge the world of their enemies once and for all. The story, as it is told, is that a fabulously powerful old god known now only as the Horned One drew down the very sky upon the world to slay his greatest rival, known now only as the Old Father. Some say the Uldragor, the demiurge of kings, is the spiritual descendant of this ancient Old Father god.

Although they annihilated all traces of the ancients from this time, humanity itself, along with many other sentient species, survived and lived on, thanks to the young gods. It took a thousand years before mankind recovered and regained civilization.

The world of Therias is riddled with hidden pools of a substance called the *ether*. It is said that beings which become suffused with this substance over a long period of time, and who learn to harness it for magic, can eventually become gods. Very little true ether remains, as most of it has been used by the current spirits and demons to become what they are. The remaining pools of ether are diluted, and do not seem able to create gods, but they can serve as gateways in to Outworld and the Underworld, as well as the Dreamlands. They can also be used to forge magical devices, and are a favorite tool for scrying and oracular divination.

In game play, the Ether Pools are a unique element in the region of Therias, whirlpools of creation that serve as planar gateways and suffuse the region around which they form with magic. An interesting side effect of the Ether Pools is that they open up into many demiplanes and other realms of existence. The Eladrin of Therias escaped, long ago, in to the Ether Pools to forge a new realm called the Feywild, as a means of escaping the annihilation of their birth home, the original fey realms.



## Races of Therias

There are many, many nonhuman species throughout Therias. Although all species feel that they were created by the old gods (even man thinks so,) the truth is that no one knows how or where most of the many sapient beings of the land originated from. Some species are native to the coterminous dimensions, the planes of the Outworld and Underworld, such as demons and angels.

Besides humans, the most common demihuman races include elves, Eladrin, Halflings, shattithari tieflings, draconians, dwarves, orcs, ogres, giants and lizard men.

## Dragons and Dragonborn

**Dragons** are another dimensional race that willfully traveled here, long ago before the apocalypse. The dragons came to exist in Chirak on the Therian continent thousands of years before man arrived, and at some distant time in the past a terrible war transpired between the various dragon subspecies, eliminating much of their population and leading to long-standing enmity between survivors. When humanity migrated to the Therian continent in prehistoric ages past, the dragons were fascinated with the new arrivals. As a result, draconians called **dragonborn** were created, out of a union between the two species creating the new hybrids. Despite their human side, draconians are largely shunned or disrespected by humans due to the inherent fear of draconian, who treat humans like slaves and playthings. Draconians have often grouped in small but strong communities, and few choose to live among humans willingly. The largest draconians city is the fortress of Veldaskar, where the old draconians Glythaus Spiderbane rules.

Today, dragonborn know little of the heritage of their kin, believing that most dragons migrated off of the continent and in to other realms of existence during the time of the Apocalypse. A small cult of dragonborn priests maintain a secret codex, however, which speaks of the true fate of the dragons, and how their numbers were torn asunder in the great war of the gods, as factions both for and against the reincarnation of the draconian creator goddess Tiamat took sides. The dragonborn consider this a shameful secret, and so it is kept carefully hidden from most other beings, especially no dragonborn.

## The Shattithari Tieflings

**Shattithari** as a species of tiefling are believed to have come about when the Outworld was introduced to the young explorers and magicians who first passed through

the Ether Portals to this mysterious sister world of gods and spirits. There, shattithari tieflings are more plentiful, as demons took humans as playthings to breed with. Shattithari eventually became a new species, and many who chose not to dwell in Outworld have settled in their own cities in Therias. The largest shattithari-ruled domain is the city-state of Kaelinar.

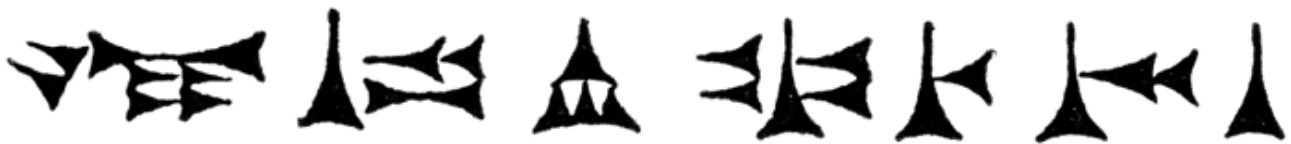
Some tieflings have struggled for a long time to understand how their species came about. Very old texts recovered from ruins near the Hammerfall Sea suggest that at one time the tieflings were native to another world, one of the five Wanderers in the sky of night, sometimes called Purgatory. This secret order of tieflings called the Dedicates of the Fifth World have been working for decades now to find or unlock the secret to their potential mysterious home world, and the true secret origins of their race.

## The Eladrin and Elves

**Elves** have existed for as long as orcs, and although few in number, their venerable age makes them unusual. Unlike their cousins, the eladrin, elves did not escape the apocalypse unscathed. Their numbers were wracked with agony as the sundering of the old fey realm left it destroyed and forced in to the mortal plane. The elves, with a sophisticated oral history, tell of how the monument of their ancestors exists somewhere across the fabled northern ocean. They know little more than this, however.

Elves of Therias come in three breeds and three cultures. The Sky elves, also sometimes called the wood elves are known in their native tongue as the **Xythramani**. They have struggled for centuries now to rebuild what they see as a lost and ancient culture, around which proof of such can be found in fabulous elven ruins that clearly predate mankind, or even the time of the ancients. Despite the evidence of these ancient cities, the elves are strong in their desire to maintain harmony and balance within the universes. As such, elves have no kingdoms, dwelling instead in secluded villages and hidden enclaves throughout the wilds.

The second of the elvish breeds are the **Eladrin**, known also as the **Aelyntari**, elves that had suffused more deeply with the Ether Pools in the past, and achieved greater wisdom and magic for it. These elves dwell in cities coterminous with the kingdoms of Therias, but existing apart, in slightly different realities or demiplanes. The eladrin are strong in their desire to maintain harmony and balance within the universes. The Eladrin sidhe in particular seek out ancient ruins to



restore and tend, and from which they gather Ether Pools to allow their demiplanes to bridge the cosmic gap between one world and the next.

The third elvish race of Therias are the dark elves. Called the **Zhokari** in Tuat and the **Sindari** in Ermanica, the dark elves appear to have been elves who survived the Apocalypse and by descending in to the depths of the earth. Some claim that they may even have been elves who sided with the destructive gods in the Apocalypse, and sought great and evil power in doing so. Little is known to surface dwellers of the true nature and intention of the Zhokari, but surface elves and eladrin do not trust them, if only on instinct.

### Halflings

**Halflings** are a younger race which appeared through a dimension rift not long after the cataclysm. They seek to avoid conflict, but took well to working with humans and elves. They are some of the most peaceful and least prone to violence of the Therian races. Halflings, unlike men, do not seek large kingdoms, dwelling in small but prosperous chiefdoms in remote regions.

### Dwarves and Races of the Lower Dark

Races which are said to have risen from the underworld include **dark elves, Ibixians, ogres and goblin kin**. The **dwarves** are the most benevolent of the deep races, and regularly work with humans and Halflings, although their strong desire to build and shape the earth puts their philosophy at odds with the naturalism of the elves. Dwarves are known to take root, and have founded several long-standing city states throughout the world. The most prominent of these city states is Hyramatikos. In the histories, it is believed that dwarves migrated here at about the same time as modern men, around 1,500 years ago.

### Orcs

**Orcs** have displayed a long-standing, almost inherited hatred for other races, and have a culture which demands that that they enslave and subjugate other species. Orcs claim to have been the direct descendents of the old Giants, although no one believes it. The orcs have founded subterranean city states as well, for they shun the light, and are fierce enemies for control of the Lower Dark. The largest orcish capitol is Nalmador, where the war king Draemos Ironscar rules.

Of all the species of Therias, orcs are one of the few to still hold distant memories and old histories of the Apocalypse. They have learned better than almost any other race how to repair and reanimate the remains of

ancient mekanicals, and use them in war. In fact, it is this familiarity of ancient history that prompts the orcs to ally so often with giants, for they believe that the giants were the dominant race prior to the apocalypse.

### Giants

**Giants** are an old race, and while few, they seek to claim all corners of the world for their own. Giants often seek out smaller races like orcs to further their mysterious and dark ends, and many famous warlord nonhumans have been giants. Giants are far too rare as a species to found communities larger than small towns and keeps, but they are also long-lived, and as Therias has more untracked wilderness than civilization, it makes living easy for the giants. As to whether the giants know of or believe they are descended from the ancient Antidalian people who created the ancient cities subsequently destroyed in the Apocalypse, none can truly say. Indeed, most giants seem not to care, preferring to live in the moment, rather than the past.

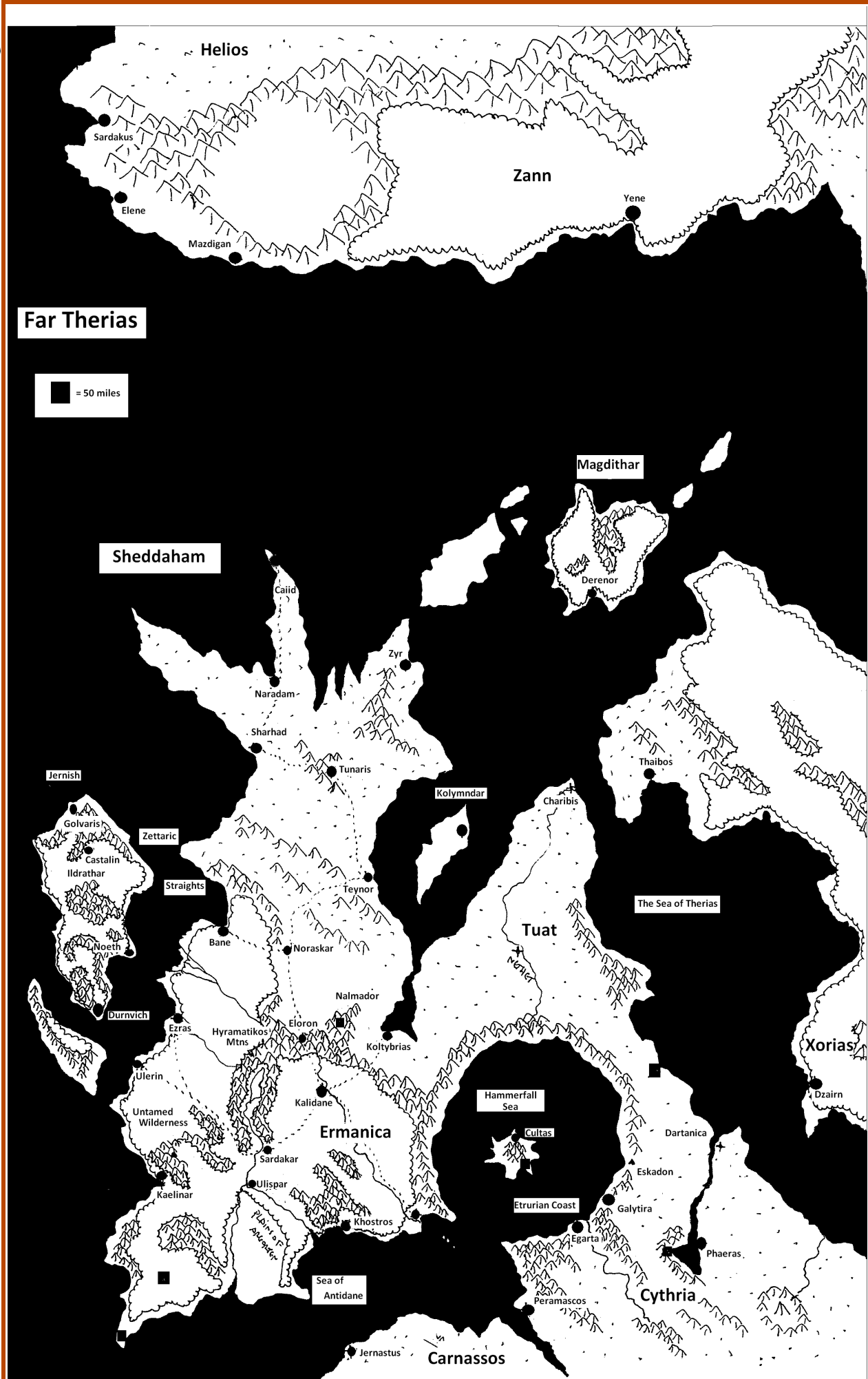
### Lizard Men

**Lizard men** are another ancient race, and there are several varieties. Unrelated to dragonkin, the lizard men appear to come from the same origin as the many dinosaurs which roam the world, and may in fact be evolved from those same saurians. Dinosaurs are very common in Therias, actually, more so even than in the rest of Chirak, such that more agreeable species are even domesticated (like ceratopsians and therapods of various types.) Lizard men often found incredibly large communities, but few such gatherings only last more than one or two generations due to in-fighting.

### Mekanicals

There are other mysterious races in Therias. For example, the **mekanicals** are a long-lost relic from the pre-Apocalyptic times, when the Inadasir and Antidalian civilization flourished and created potent artifacts such as the sentient golems. The mekanicals are very rare, but on occasion an intact one is found and reanimated through elemental suffusion. A few mekanicals are ancient, having functioned from the time of the Antidaliens all the way to the present, but they are usually mad, and none encountered seem able to remember much of their early years, as if they were geased to forget.

Mekanicals which are built for battle are called war golems. Many of these war golems are recreated from a hodge-podge of parts and pieces found in ancient ruins by artificer wizards on behalf of their rich patrons. It is



**Far Therias**

■ = 50 miles

Helios

Zann

Sheddaham

Magdithar

Jernish

Zettaric

Kolymdar

Tuat

The Sea of Therias

Ermanica

Xorias

Hammerfall Sea

Sea of Antidane

Etrurian Coast

Cythria

Carnassos

Sardakus

Elene

Mazdigan

Yene

Caid

Zyr

Naradam

Sharhad

Tunaris

Charibis

Golvaris

Castalin

Idrathar

Noeth

Straights

Bane

Noraskar

Nalmador

Kolybrias

Eloron

Kalidane

Sardakar

Ulijspar

Khostros

Ulerin

Untamed Wilderness

Kaelinar

Cultas

Dartanica

Eskadon

Galytira

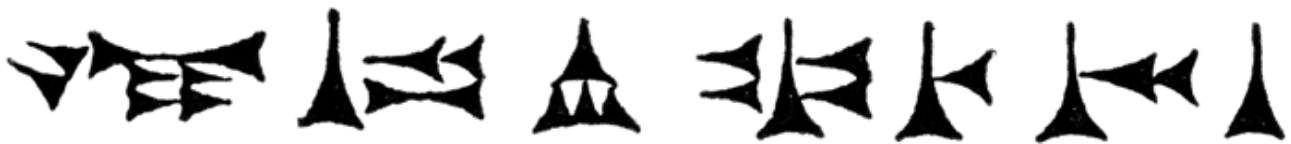
Phaeras

Dzairn

Jernastus

Peramascos





very prestigious for a nobleman of Sheddaham, say, to have commissioned the repair and reactivation of a war golem mekanical, however, and so there are quite a few of these beings running around.

## Ruins of Therias

There are four layers of ruins to be found in most sites of Therias:

### Recent Ruins

(500 y.a.--years ago-- to the present)

There are many ruins of older human kingdoms from the modern era which collapsed and fell, or did not survive a period of war, draught or famine. Such ruins reflect the growth of history that has led to the modern kingdoms of Ermanica, Sheddahar, Tuat and Carnassus.

### Ruins of Forgotten Kingdoms

(501 y.a.-1,500 y.a.)

These are the ruins of forgotten ancient kingdoms, sometime before the modern era, but long after the collapse, representing a period when humanity and other demihumans attempted to rise up from the ashes and succeeded, for a time, before a new descent in to barbarism. This includes three ancient cultures known by their time periods:

- **Selidantian period** 1,050-600 y.a.
- **Astravarimos Period** 1,200-950 y.a.
- **Meruvian period** 1,500-1,100 y.a.

Of these three ancient cultures, the Selidantian was most successful, forging steel weapons and developing advanced sciences (such as mathematics) before collapsing for unknown reasons. The Meruvian was peculiar, for it relied heavily on salvaged ancient tech and magic, but seemed to collapse as the technology it used gradually fell in to disrepair. The Astravarimos period is thought by some to have been started by a mysterious tribe of humans who seemed to be very advanced and came out of nowhere (some suggest dissident political refugees from Abraheil or possibly Helios) but collapsed after only a couple centuries when orcish hordes destroyed them. Some scholars speculate that the spirit lords will not let man rise to a certain level of technology anymore, and these old cultures seem to bear witness to such.

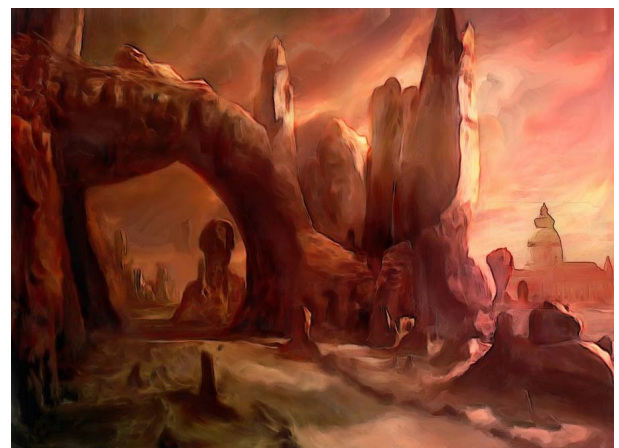
### Cataclysmic Ruins

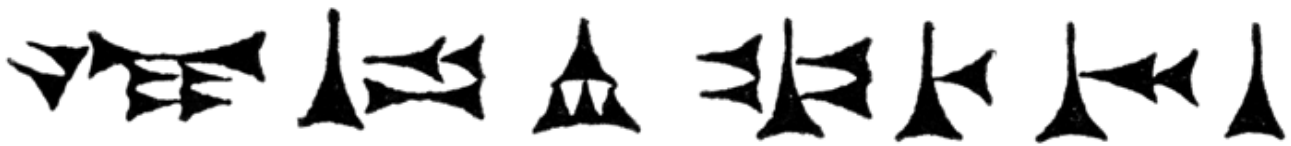
The ruins of the ancients during the cataclysm can be found throughout Therias. Unlike the Realms of Chirak, where most of the ancient ruins were submerged in a great deluge that created the fabled Sea of Chirak, the apocalyptic effects were slightly less prominent in the region of Therias. Here in Therias the destruction was massive, wiping out all of the old civilizations but more ruins were left intact. The men of the land today are a mixture of immigrants, pilgrims who came across the sea 1,500 years ago from unknown lands seeking escape from whatever derelict and wasted realm they hailed from, and a handful of survivors who had been blasted back to the Stone Age after the Apocalypse.

Before the Apocalypse there were said to be two great cultures, one of the Inadasir, its southwestern most extremity ruled by humanity, and the other being the Antidalian, who were giants. Some of these fabulous ruins still stand, constructed of incredibly sturdy and unworkable materials. These ruins contain almost no writing or pictures of any kind, nothing decipherable by modern men, and it is said by modern scholars that the ancients wrote their words in magical letters upon the air, thus explaining why no written records of the period exist anymore.

### Prehuman Ruins

Prehuman ruins abound in remote corners of the world, suggesting an epoch before humanity when elves ruled, as well as the period when dragons warred and giants came to Therias. These ruins are terribly ancient and all but forgotten in history save among the races who built them.





## Modern Kingdoms of Therias

### Carnassus

**Type:** Bronze-Age human kingdom

**Cultures:** civilized settlements on the coast and barbarians and nomads inland

**Traits:** monarchy, strong defensive military, strong aggressive trade

**Languages:** Several local dialects. Carnassi is the most common language

**Ruler:** King Navomaradas Varmuth

Located along the southern coastlands of the Sea of Antidane and stretching deep inland, the region of Carnassus is essentially a wilderland of barbarian chiefdoms united by a coastal civilization under one great king called Navomaradas. Some foreign visitors who have seen the king claim he is not human, or perhaps half-giant, for he stands at almost eight feet in height, although most Carnassi are at least six feet high on average. King Varmuth is an imposing figure, and he has ruled his coastal kingdom with an iron fist, using his vast and loyal army as leverage to force the inland chieftains to pay umbrage to him.

Physically, the average Carnassi is six to six and a half feet tall, of ebony skin and typically with little or no body hair. The inlanders vary considerably in appearance, and there are many tribes of elves, Halflings, goblins and other demihuman folk in the region, as well. Coastal Carnassi adorn their bodies with tattoos and piercings as a sign of prestige and power. They are also fond of talismans, amulets and wards to protect themselves from evil spirits and bring blessings to their ventures, both in commerce and war.

Carnassi society revolves around trade and warfare, and they engage in both with relish. Battles between rival lords and provinces are common. The rules of the land dictate complicated rules by which the conflicts must be properly resolved, and breaking those rules can lead to the utter annihilation of the lawbreaker by angry neighbors. Through all this, commerce is very important to the Carnassi, who also seek to befriend their coastal trade partners and learn their ways and customs to best gain a foothold in foreign lands. So far, the king of Carnassus has only sought trade partnerships overseas, but many other Therians worry that when he passes on, one of his sons may decide to expand the territories of Carnassus through empire building warfare.

### Cythria

**Type:** Bronze human kingdoms and chiefdoms

**Traits:** loose collection of monarchies and chiefdoms, strong but not unified militaries, loose trade

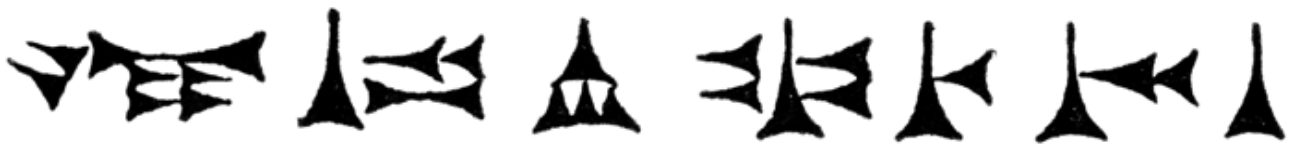
**Ruler:** A dozen known kings and chiefs rule throughout Cythria. The strongest known king is Palomides of Dartanica.

Cythria is situated along the southwestern expanses of the great Hammerfall Sea, where it is said that the gods devastated the ancient Giants. The region is largely a lawless collection of smaller kingdoms that all hail under the cultural banner of the Cythrians. The Cythrians are primarily a nomadic culture, and their chief cities act as hubs of cultural activity and trade for the region. This includes Dartanica, where the prophet-king Palomides rules, as well as Egarta, one of the main trade ports for the region, with a strong garrison of Ermanican and Carnassi both present. Egarta has effectively become a sort of neutral zone for the three major cultures of the Seas of Antidane and Hammerfall.

Independent cities in the region also include Galytira and Peramassos, founded and ruled by the somewhat more civilized Cythrians called the Etrurians, a folk who abandoned the nomadic horse culture of their kin and took up seafaring. Egarta is also strongly dominated by an Etrurian governance. The Cythrians don't seem to mind; they intensely dislike the civilized life, and see cities as nothing but a convenient gathering point for annual festivities and trade.

Cythrians are a horse culture. They are masters of the Cythrian horse breeds, and roam the lands in migratory patterns that run thousands of miles south, on years-long journeys that seem convoluted and unnecessary to foreigners. The Cythrians do not care; they are very set in their ways.

Cythrians are matriarchal in their societies. The role of men and women is seen as equal, and it is often possible to encounter a Cythrian tribe where the women are all dominant and the men fulfill secondary roles. Although men are generally respected for their proficiency at warfare, women as the shamans of the tribes seem to hold the real power. Some Amazonian tribes reverse this role, however.



## Ermanica

**Type:** Early Iron-Age human empire

**Traits:** republic, collection of united city-states, mixed individual militaries, very strong land and sea trade

**Ruler:** The current regent is Paracus of Thyladion

Ermanica is the largest and most prosperous kingdom along the Sea of Antidane, composed of a spirited people who are as comfortable on land as at sea. The chief city states of the realm include Tragan, Thyladion, Manoskas, Khostros, Kalidane, Ulispar, Sardakor and Koltybrias. Each city state has a dominant governor, a ruling body of councilmen chosen by the voting citizens (land owners). The regent of Ermanica is a man elected to serve for ten years as the protector of Ermanica and the principle negotiator with foreign powers. Presently that man is Paracus, the regent-governor of Thyladion.

Ermanica has loose borders, but it is generally accepted that Koltybrias is the north-western most city along the trade routes that lead to distant Tuat and Shaddaham. The westernmost border cities include Sardakor and Ulispar, which both rest against the Matykar River, the principle divide between the Untamed Wilderness and the settled kingdoms of Ermanica. Beyond this border lies the independent city of Ezras, which has maintained its independence from Ermanica for over a century now, since the region was conquered by Ildrathari barbarian raiders.

The heart of overland trade can be found in Kalidane, the chief city and hub for most roads leading to the many kingdoms. While Thyladion and other port cities benefit from trade with overseas neighbors such as Carnassus, Kalidane is where they will go to disseminate their goods to other city states of Ermanica and even further abroad to neighboring kingdoms.

## Hyramatikos

**Type:** Iron-age dwarven kingdom with steelwork

**Traits:** old monarchy, strong military, weak trade

**Ruler:** King Buldagir of the Mountainfolk

The dwarven mountain stronghold of Hyramatikos is the central hub of trade and activity between the dwarven surface dwellers and the dwarven cities of the Lower Dark. Hyramatikos is the seat of power for the ancient dwarven king Buldagir, who is both a political and spiritual leader for his people. So respected is Buldagir's rule amongst even non dwarves that the city has sometimes served as a site for diplomatic negotiations between other dwellers in the lower Dark, including orcs, trolls, and even the Sindiri dark elves.

## Ildrathar

**Type:** Early Iron-Age human kingdom

**Traits:** monarchy, strong defensive military, strong aggressive trade

**Ruler:** King Navomaradas

The Ildrathari are related distantly to the mainlander Aightes of the Untamed Wilderness. The island-kingdom of Ildrathar, while not large, is filled with warring tribes of the Ildrathari barbarians, who have remained dominant on the island, uncontested by all save the monsters of the Lower Dark now for centuries. There are five major chiefdoms among the Ildrathar, centered around the cities of Durnvich, Castalin, Noeth, Colvaris, and Jarnish. Each city is more like a fortress, as the constant warfare amongst the islanders has led to some keen defensive architecture.

Ildrathar is located across the Zettaric Straights, the channel which must be crossed by vessels to reach their lands. The journey is perilous, and most long ships do not make it due to the choppy waters laden with sea monsters and terrible storms. On those occasions when an Ildrathari sea force sets out to raid the coastlands, it is almost inevitable that they lose a portion of their force to the Zettaric Straights. This is considered a just sacrifice to the dreaded god of the deeps, Zolmogg.

## Kaelinar

**Type:** Early Iron-age Shattithar city-state

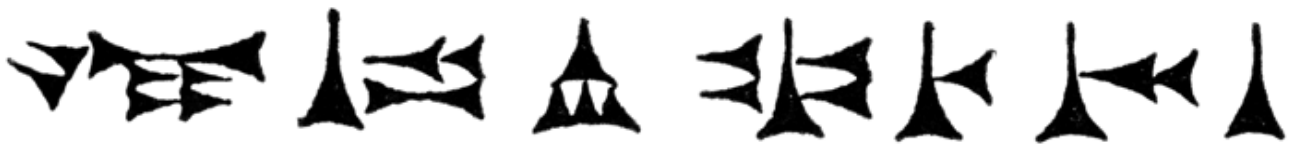
**Traits:** oligarchy of elders chosen by the people; weak military (rely on mercenaries) but strong trade

**Ruler:** The council of seven rules, but is presided over by the High Speaker Kalibande.

Kaelinar is a thousand-year-old city state ruled by an ancient society of shattithari, the tiefling outsiders who migrated to the mortal plane long ago. The city is a splendid example of ancient architecture, and built atop the ruins of some of an ancient city from the pre-cataclysmic days. The shattithari of Kaelinar are an advanced, enlightened society in terms of magic, philosophy and the arts, but few shattithari enjoy taking up arms, preferring instead to hire mercenaries from other lands to act as enforcers and protection.

The bulk of the city's population is not comprised of tieflings, however. While perhaps forty percent of the city is dominated by the tiefling aristocracy, the remainder of the city's populace is derived from other humanoids who have been enslaved, outsiders visiting the realm, or monstrous humanoids that have negotiated a tentative peace treaty.

Kaelinar's dominion over the surface lands and Lower



Dark in its territory does not go without challenge. A strong force of Sindiri dark elves dwell in the Lower Dark and seek to overthrow the city to claim it for their own. These dark elves, of the subterranean city **Shalimdron**, are worshipers of Eshkigal, the queen of the underworld, whom they feel they owe their very existence to, as it is in their mythology that the dark spirit queen saved them from destruction during the Apocalypse, which they remember very well as nearly immortal elves.

### Magdithar

**Type:** Bronze-age culture of egalitarian erudites

**Traits:** egalitarian culture of mixed races, weak military and strong trade

**Ruler:** The Magdithar elect leaders, who serve as community heads for seven years before being sacrificed. The current leader is a man named Thalind.

The Magdithar are a simple, almost egalitarian culture of several races, humans and Eladrin sidhe especially, who are also a surprisingly erudite society, with advanced personal rights, social development, and artistic skill, but lacking almost entirely in advanced technology. The largest city of the Magditharian culture is called Deremor, a mud-brick city where the hub of trade and commerce for the region is centered, and the elected High Leader Thalind helps to steer the course of the unusually enlightened people.

Magdithar is not a vulnerable land, despite its simple ways and shunning of organized rulership and militaries. All Magdithari of appropriate age see it as their duty to take up arms to protect their lands, and train in weapon arts, learning complicated martial styles. All Magditharians see it as their duty not only to protect their own homeland but all other Magditharian towns and villages, as well. This unity of the land by virtue of social responsibility makes the region singularly unique in Therias.

### Nalmador

**Type:** Early Iron-Age orcish kingdom of the Lower Dark

**Traits:** City-state, rule by strength, strong local military, strong Lower Dark trade center

**Ruler:** Draemos Ironscar, chief of the orcs

Nalmador is both the city-state and the surrounding region of a subterranean complex which extends for hundreds of miles, and unites by way of cavernous passages both the northern and southern coasts of the Sea of Antidane. Nalmador has always been a center of trade, but only within the last fifty years, since the house

of Ironscar began its rule, as the region also had been united under one strong king. Draemos is the third Ironscar to rule, and the orcs flock to him in droves, as he strikes victory after relentless victory against their subterranean enemies, conquering all of the Lower Dark races under the banner of Nalmador.

The dwarves of Hyramatikos occupy the western end of the great Coldspire Mountains, and are fierce rivals with the orcs of Nalmador. The two Lower Dark kingdoms often clash in many conflicts, as both cities fulfill the roles of peacekeepers and neutral points for most other species in the Lower Dark, and neither the Nalmador orcs nor the Hyramatikos dwarves like their rivals.

### Sheddaham

**Type:** Old Iron-Age human kingdom

**Traits:** Imperial monarchy, isolated, modest military and almost no trade

**Ruler:** The Empress Taminalia.

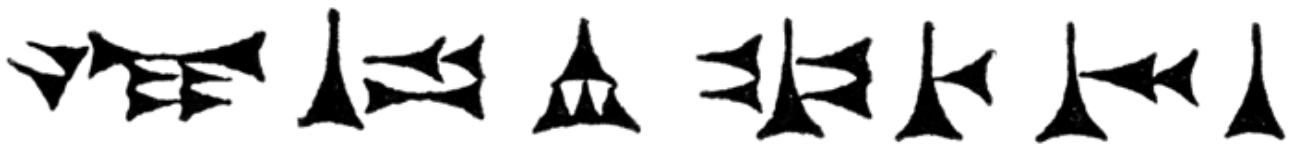
Sheddaham is possibly the oldest (or second oldest, according to the Tuat) kingdom in Therias. The decadent civilization of Sheddaham has some splendid cities nearly two thousand years old, and occupies a lush, tropical region of the world where the temperature seems to be consistently hot year-round. The ancient people of Sheddaham see themselves superior to all others, and the old stories tell of how the Sheddahamites were once a single tribe among many who grew to such power that they conquered and enslaved all the others, then built their empire on the backs of those thralls. Indeed, Sheddaham has a strongly enforced and very rigid caste system, and most people find themselves in the lower castes, or enslaved.

The cities of Sheddaham reek of decadence. The nobility seeks constant pleasure and sport, and magic has become a popular pastime to pursue, as the nobility is untroubled by the regular affairs of state, handled by a lower-caste bureaucracy which serves the Empress directly. In turn, the empress insures that that the status quo remains in effect, quashing rebellions, battling with dissident provinces, and periodically going to war with distant neighbors such as Tuat, Ermanica, and sometimes even the Ildrathari barbarians.

### Tuat

**Type:** Late Bronze-Age human kingdom

**Traits:** Old dynastic empire, now collapsed in to warring city-states, moderate military and trade



**Ruler:** The Tuat are divided and currently three separate individuals claim the throne and title of ruler: Kaven Dramat, of the city-state Thaibos, Queen Honetpha of Charibis, and the southern warlord Moldran Kor of the Nethet desert city.

Tuat claims (perhaps rightfully) to be the most ancient of the modern kingdoms, and many of its older cities and ruins appear to date back to two thousand years or more, which would suggest the Tuat are directly descended from the Inadasir. Tuat is a desert land, made arid and hot by its situation along the equatorial center of Therias, and this has led to a very tough sort of people, who dwell along the coastlands and subsist primarily on sea trade and fishing.

The current politics of Tuat have the region divided in to three provinces, each ruled by a regent who believes him or herself to be the true ruler of the land. This conflict has lasted for a decade now, and some fear it may lead to Tuat permanently splitting in to three kingdoms.

### Untamed Wilderness

**Type:** Vast region of unclaimed land settled by wild barbarian tribes and monsters

**Traits:** Lawless, untracked land, no unity, but rife with potential threats, very mixed trade, lots of ruins

**Rulers:** No single ruler stands out, but Chamados of Ezras is most well-known.

The Untamed Wilderness is a vast region encompassing the western expanse of the Therian continent, and abutting the civilized regions of Ermanica. At its northernmost end the city of Dane serves as a port of entry for Shaddahamite traders to barter with local tribesmen of the region.

The barbarian tribes of the Untamed Wilderness (who call themselves the **Aightes**) are not nearly as populous or organized as some would seem to think, but there are probably somewhere between fifty and one hundred known tribes, most of which settle for at least part of the year in the same location, but many remain consistently nomadic. The average community in the region is usually a few hundred strong, including men, women and children. The nomadic lifestyle of the local folk appears to be steeped in tradition, and beliefs that if they remain in one location too long they will be subject to ill omens and bad luck. The origins of these beliefs are unknown.

The region is also home to many tribes of orcs, ogres, gnolls and other demihumans, who seek out constant warfare between the local barbarians and each other. On top of this the region is rife with ancient ruins, especially

from the era of the Giants. The Lower Dark of the Untamed Wilderness is said to be a vast network of natural caverns and artificial tunnels stemming from this ancient sites.

### Veldaskar

**Type:** Old Iron-Age Kingdom of draconians

**Traits:** dynastic monarchy, strong defensive military, very weak trade

**Ruler:** King Glythaus Spiderbane rules.

A city-state founded by draconians and dedicated exclusively to the mysterious half-breed race, Veldaskar is secluded in a very defensible position high in the Namorak Mountains. The city is selective in who it trades with, and careful about who it allows within its small borders. The region around Veldaskar is dominated by draconians communities, and few other demihumans are allowed to live in the same region.

### Xorian

**Type:** Bronze-Age realm of humans and other beings

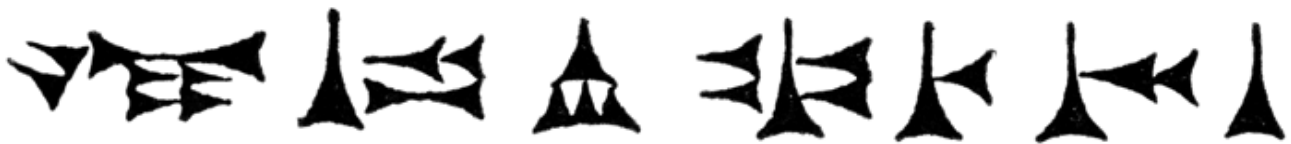
**Traits:** Mixed chiefdoms and warlords, no unity but a dangerous land, some minor trade

**Ruler:** The many rulers of the various Xorian factions are too numerous to list, but key notables include the lizard-king Qarat, the cult lord Andem Sadrahan of the city Shumarik, and Lord Vol Telas of the free city of Dzairn.

The Xorian Realms are less of a kingdom so much as a large region to be avoided. Xorian is a dangerous land, riddled with evil powers, dark magic and corrupted cults which venerate dark gods such as Hadrathor, Zolmogg, Khalos and Talon. There are vast, roaming tribes of lizard men, hordes of dinosaurs, and untold hidden malicious entities in Xorian.

Despite its hostile nature, whole cities, usually started from cult movements, have sprung up in the region, where it is believed many hidden pools of ether remain yet to be found. As such, cities such as Shumarik, ruled by the Priest Lord Andem Sadrahan have sprung in to existence, surrounding a vast temple dedicated to Hadrathor, the perverse god of madness. There are few sane Therians who seek out such mad domains.

Along Xorian's frontier is the independent port of Dzairn, ruled by the house of Telas, where Lord Vol oversees expeditions and trade with the few friendlies in the region, and supports and active effort for prospectors, explorers and adventurers to enter the region to seek out riches and fame. The fact that it is known that some of the oldest and most intact cities of the



ancients can be found in the heart of Xorian only makes this an even more lucrative prospect for adventurers.

Those who dare venture far enough northeast in to the wilderness of Xorian eventually reach a vast desert. If the intrepid soul survives this trek across the wastes, they eventually reach the end of what is known as the Everdread Desert, where the ruined city of Beltraine lies...

## Adventure Location: The City of Kalidane

Kalidane is the central hub of trade and activity in the region of Ermanica, where it garners much attention as a gateway to the many realms, known and unknown, of Therias. It is ruled by Governor Elispos, a man of middle years who had overseen the city for two decades now and also been provincial governor of the neighboring lands. He is respected by all. The local Council is twelve strong, and dominated by senior merchantmen in the region.

Kalidane's expanses are situated in a lush farmland region where water is channeled from the nearby river to keep crops healthy. In the center of this is a vast plateau, an ancient tell-mound some two thousand years old, atop which the most recent incarnation of the city is built.

### Notable Personalities of Kalidane:

#### High Priest Marinos (of Uldragor)

Benevolent high priest and friendly soul who will help in any way he can.

#### Marcus Dulgaron

An ambitious young politician who seeks to gain favor with the new regent

#### Joman Riverwild

Halfling adventurer and daredevil!

#### Moloron the Younger

Ambitious youngest son of his mother, who was daughter to Moloron the Elder

#### Marshal Amoranis

A keen and suspicious sheriff of the land who must rely on mercenaries to get his work done

#### Chief Narmak

Bugbear overlord of the united Sigdanares tribe of Cavloë

#### Priestess Thyaltira

The high priestess of the Cult of Malygdos, who is awakening the undead in the catacombs at the behest of her god, in search of an ancient artifact

### Notable Locations in Kalidane:

#### The dwarven district of Ironhome

The dwarves have lived in Kalidane for centuries now, and an embassy to Hynamakitos can be found here, as well. The dwarven council member is Urgan Dusor.

#### The Shattithari Embassy

The Shattithari tieflings have an embassy here, but only a small contingent (believed to be sent here as punishment) dwell in the city at any given time.

#### The Tower of the Marshal

The marshal of Kalidane is a man named Amoranis, charged by the governor with keeping the peace in the city and province. Since there is no standing army in Kalidane, the marshal relies heavily on mercenaries and a small force of constables to do the work he needs. Combating monstrous threats, foreign invaders and criminals of all sorts is a full time job.

#### The Temple District

Here can be found a temple or shrine to almost all of the Therian gods, although one of the most prominent temples is also that of the patron god of the city: Uldragor. The high priest of the temple is named Marinos, and he is a valued advisor to the governor.

#### The Palace of the Governor

The palace of the governor is a truly marvelous affair, ancient and splendid in its architecture and the site of many special events and celebrated occasions. The Grand Markets of the Wall

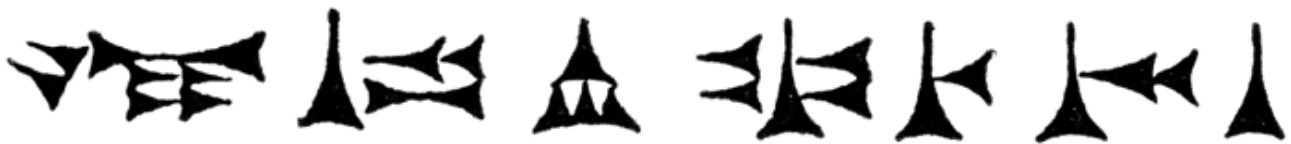
The entry to Kalidane is encompassed by two major walls, which border the passage up the steep plateau to the top where the walled city resides. This lengthy passage has long since become the center of trade and barter for caravans and merchants entering the city.

#### The Necropolis and the Catacombs

The necropolis is where the dead of many centuries have been buried. An extensive catacomb for less expensive funerals has long been a part of the architecture of this graveyard, as well. It is said that a Cult of Malygdos has taken up reign in the city, and that they have access to a powerful artifact called the Eye of Chatranash.

#### The Sewers

Kalidane is so ancient and riddled with hidden tunnels, passages, and catacombs that the wealthier quarter has successfully integrated these older remains beneath the tell-mound with a sewer project, which drains out in to



waste pools along the base of the plateau that are then sludged and treated for use as fertilizer in the farmlands surrounding the city. Unfortunately, the sewers connect to the older tunnels, which seem to stem deep in to the earth to link up with the Lower Dark, and many hideous monsters are known to have infested them. The marshal of the city hires regular crews of mercenaries to enter the sewers and protect maintenance crews from the monstrous vermin below.

### Interesting sites in the region:

#### The Burial Grounds of Kormandhor

The red dragon Kormandhor died a century ago after awakening and terrifying the region for over a year. Although no one is certain if he spawned any more of his kind before death, the region around his burial site has been plagued by lesser draconian kin and kobolds seeking to contact his spirit for guidance.

A recent excavation was mounted, funded by the nobleman Marcus Dulgaron, to dig up the remains of the dragon where it was buried and send the bones of the beast to the new regent of Ermanica in Thyladion.

#### The Warlock's Manor

Found at the entrance to the northern pass near the mountain town of Eldran, the Warlock's Manor was once the home of the tiefling Moloron the Elder, who performed many dire experiments and planar summonings in his time. Moloron was said to have fallen victim to his own experiments, and after his manor keep was gutted by eldritch fire it lay fallow for fifty years, as anyone who approached it was said to be accosted by spirits of evil and the undead.

Somewhere inside the ruins of the manor there is said to be a potent secret, the key to the mysterious powers that Moloron the Elder awoke in his time. Many have sought this object of mystery out, including his grandson, the tiefling Moloron the Younger.

#### Ruins of Cayloe

Cayloe is the site of a forgotten city, one which predates the Ermanican rulership of this land. The city is currently occupied by the bugbear tribe Sigdanares, ruled the chieftain Narmak, but many other threats lie within this expansive and ruinous region. Some claim that the city was really founded by plane-dwellers, and that they still appear in the ruins at certain times.

## Plot Idea: The Threat of the Thirteen

### History:

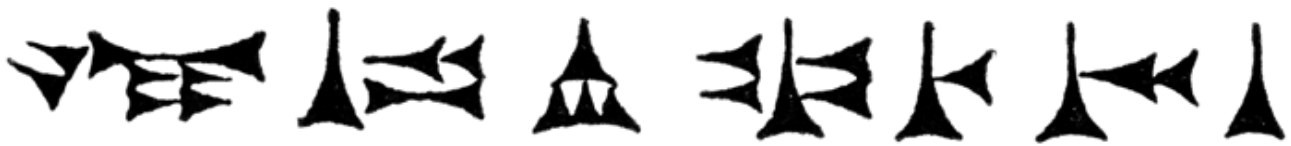
The Dungeon of the Thirteen was created long ago, during the reign of the Old Empire of Meruvia. It is said that during the reign of the old Emperor **Rhodathas** thirteen generals, advisors and nobles rose up against him to overthrow his tyrannical rule. They failed, and all thirteen were locked within the confines of an ancient tomb-prison, and returned to unlife so that they could suffer appropriately.

Over the centuries, the Thirteen have grown mad, but they have also grown in power. There is now a great concern that they will escape from the confines of the dungeon, and that they will seek revenge on the ancestors of the ancient emperor who incarcerated them. It is said that **Paracus**, the new, young regent of Ermanica is, in fact, a direct descendant of the mad Rhodathas. For this reason, they need daring adventurers willing to enter the Dungeon of the Thirteen Undead and end the threat to Ermanica's ruler!

Unbeknownst to Ermanica's heroes, there is a hidden additional threat. **The Order of the Scintillated Rose** is a secret society of powerful sorcerers who have decided to restore the lost empire of Therias and unite the dissident nations of their land under one rule: their own. This cabal of seven dark mages intend to steal the power of the remaining Essence Pools that they have unearthed, and to forge an army that will subjugate Tuat, Carnassos, Ermanica and any other realms that dare oppose them. Behind this secret cabal is the mastermind, **Lord Theran Denalos**, an aspiring megalomaniac and powerful warlock who has forged an alliance with the newly freed thousandspawn Khaelos. Denalos has decided that the Thirteen are the best choices to forge and lead his new army, as directed by Khaelos. He has sent a team led by his trusted mercenary commander, the orc captain **Baragon Knuckleduster** and his lieutenant **Erissa Daman**, a tiefling invoker who is the half-daughter of Khaelos. Together, these two and their team have uncovered and unlocked the prison, and are now seeking out the means to free and awaken the Thirteen...

### The Region around the Dungeon

The dungeon is nestled deep in the Untamed Wilderness to the west of Ermanica, in a region once held by the ancient empire of Meruvia. Throughout the region there are dozens of ancient ruins dating to this



time period as well as later kingdoms that grew in the wake of the old empire's collapse. It is a region rife for salvage and antiquarians, as relics of the ancient kingdoms can be found that are worth a great deal of money to noble collectors, and artificers have dug up dozens of mechanicals and managed to restore them to some semblance of working order (especially from ruins dating to the Meruvian period, as the ancient empire relied on much now lost technomancy from the old Inadasir and Antidalian empires).

#### **Enarakos**

There is one major settlement in the region which allows for local trade between the demihuman locals, the Aighte barbarians and Ermanican merchants:

**Enarakos.** Enarakos is a small borderlands town, with no more than two thousand local residents guarded by a frontier fortress. The only regional authority is a local town council of landowners and merchants, and the commander of the garrison, an old centurion named

**Titus Arborius.**

#### **Aightes**

The aightes are the local barbarians who dwell throughout the Untamed Wilderness. They have no unifying government, dwelling in clans and staking out their territory through ritual warfare and ancient family rules of ownership. The local aightes are dominated by three local clans, including the **Inughet**, the **Pictash**, and the **Sordes**. The closest clan to Enarakos (and friendliest to Ermanicans) are the Sordes. The Pictash are very hostile and attack Ermanicans (and most foreigners) on sight.

#### **The Skinsaw Gnolls, Terenektra and the Durnegathan Caverns**

Gnolls are very populace in the region and a constant threat to aightelander and Ermanican alike. The Skinsaws are the strongest tribe of gnolls dwelling in a network of caverns in the nearby Miller's Hills where recent ruins of the old Ermanican trade city **Terenektra** can be found. The city was over-run by the gnolls about seventy years ago and less than a hundred survivors made it to the Ermanican border to report the loss. Since then, no Ermanican border town has been without a strong local garrison for defense. The ruins are rumored to be haunted, as well as resting directly above the

#### **Durnegathan Caverns.**

Unfortunately for adventurers looking to look the Dungeons of the Thirteen Undead, the knowledge of where the dungeons can be found rest in the remains of a famous antiquarian's library, which is in turn inside the old keep of Terenektra. The PCs must brave this location to find the tower in which **Galam Deradas's Old Library**

is located, to find the tome and maps which were part of his research in to the mysteries of the Meruvian empire, including the location on which the dungeon was constructed.

Those who find and read through Deradas's notes will be able to tell that he is obsessed with the Meruvians and especially the discovery of the Dungeon of the Thirteen. He refers often to having been spoken to by a spirit in his dreams named Kiriatha, who helped him to uncover the dungeon proper. His maps show it is located at the base of a hill along the gully overlooked by the old fort at Rook's Roost.

#### **The Location of the Dungeon**

The dungeon is marked by rather nondescript stone hut along the hillside of an old gully in Miller's Hills. The hut itself was built by the late Galam Deradas, who lived here for months at a time while doing his research on the nearby ruins. He discovered and cleared out the entrance to the Dungeon, and managed to survey a meaningful portion of the complex before the gnoll attack that destroyed his city and his people. Before this, he and his research crew penetrated as deeply as the seemingly impenetrable bars at the base of the stairs descending to level 2. Had they been given enough time, then they may have been able to clear out the rubble blocking their only available path. As it is, the dungeon has remained largely untouched except for the gnolls and other denizens that have seen fit to inhabit the first level. The Skinsaw gnolls in the area are fearful of what lurks beyond the magical bars on the second level, and so have avoided going any deeper in to the complex.

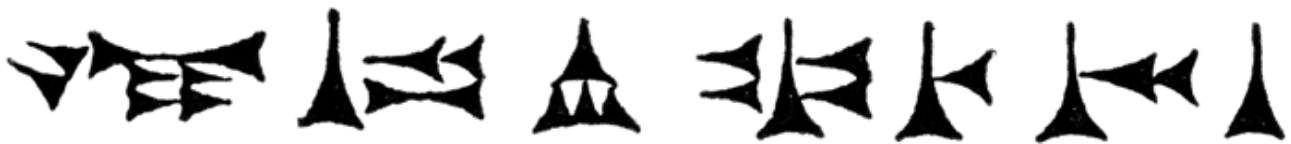
#### **The Old House of Galam Deradas**

Here is where the antiquarian mage dwelled during the spring and summer while carrying out his excavations. The house has curiously not been ransacked, and looks much as it did many years ago. In the middle of the main room is the body of an orc, who appears to have died of fright. Anyone entering the house will earn the ire of its ghostly inhabitant, the ghost of Galam himself!

#### **Ideas for the Dungeon Proper**

The Dungeon itself contains three levels, at the bottom of which lie the thirteen stasis-tombs in which the prisoners are located. The first level contains the chambers necessary to enact the wards that insure the Thirteen never escape, though this level has been plagued by break-ins from local monsters that have dug their way in from neighboring caverns, and renegade and outcast gnolls now live here as squatters. Baragon Knuckleduster and his crew are most likely to be found here, where they will be working on excavating to break in to the lower levels.





Finally, the second level contains the guardians and traps necessary to insure that no one gets in...or out...of the dungeon.

#### Who Were the Thirteen?

Deep within the complex, on the first level of the dungeon where the warding chambers can be found, is an ancient library. Here old tomes were collected on the lore of the Thirteen. Books detailing the history of the Thirteen can be found all written in Old Meruvian. Ritual books can be found as well that provide the Rituals of Binding to insure that the Thirteen never escape their tomb. It has been long since the rituals were renewed. There is also a book here which provides a means of learning Old Meruvian directly, if desired, although it is written in conjunction with the Inadasir, Abraheilite and Mythic languages, so one must know either of those dialects to translate this book.

The Thirteen and their books:

The following list provides a synopsis of each spirit lord of Therias and what their secret purpose, agendas, and alliances are. The spirit lords are a diverse lot, and have numerous origins and natures, as can be seen below. Almost all are proportionately powerful to true avatars, thanks to the mysterious divine essence of the Ether Pools which the usually situate their mortal habitats around, serving as both a gateway to their planar realms, and as a means by which they can energize their quasi-divine aspects.

Spirit Lords may all be assumed to have the following qualities:

- **Immortality** Each spirit lord will live for an eternity, so long as he or she continues to periodically bathe in the divine Ether Pools. Should a pool ever dry up, disappear, or lose its magic, then they are prone to rash acts of violence to acquire more. The immortality and sense of the divine are like potent drugs to the spirit lords.
- **Madness** No matter what their alignment, the spirit lords are never quite right in the head. They have been touched by an unfettered essence of the divine, and whether it is a property of the planar bleed caused by the near-fragmentation of reality in the Apocalypse of the blood of Zephyrs as some think, it has made all of the Spirit Lords mad.
- **Dual Existence** Each spirit lord has a domain or region of control in the mortal world that parallels their domain in the Spirit Realm, the

*The Life of Sidratha, the Marshall of Tourn  
Koaelon, lord of the Shadar tribe and the great  
movement*

*Scoellious, half breed of Shaligon*

*Therias, the Loremaster and his Misguided Life  
Surinia of Golom*

*Kaddras the mad Eladrin*

*Minutair the queen of Ebasa*

*Thaondren the friend no more*

*Katarnios, agent and daughter of Tiamat*

*Yusarak of the Seven Tribes*

*He Who Shall Not Be Named*

*Lornaeras, fallen cousin of the emperor*

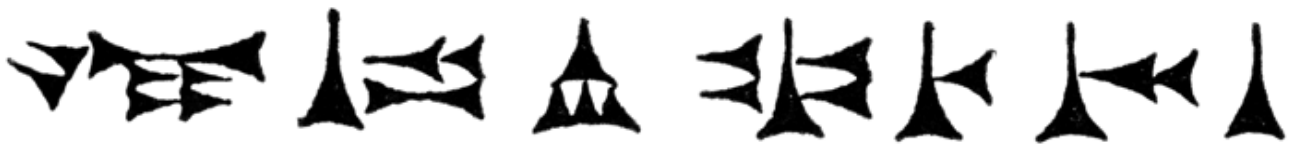
*Madrak the ogre lord and his betrayal*

To truly know the Thirteen, one must awaken them....

#### Profiles of the Spirit Lords of Therias

demi-realm they collectively created two thousand years ago. The Ether Pools are the only natural gates that can reach the Spirit Realm.

- **False Gods** Despite the fact that some portend to be gods, and indeed in madness some believe they truly are, the spirit lords are no more powerful than an avatar who has just begun his journey on the path of a Zodiac Stone. Nor can they ever achieve greater, truly godlike power for it turns out that the Divine Essence of which they have partaken to gain their semi divinity and immortality also is such that they can never gain or touch upon the power of a Zodiac Stone. Indeed, if a spirit lord were to touch such a stone, it would negate the essence which permeates their body, and render them shadowy, burnt out husks.
- **Strong Opponents** All spirit lords are potent foes against adventurers. When assigning levels, assume they are at least level 20-30 solo beings, with the youngest and weakest being lower level, and the strongest and oldest being of higher level. Only true demiurges should be higher than 20<sup>th</sup> level.
- **Physical Presence** The spirit lords have a hard time not meddling in the affairs of men, since they are really nothing more than pretend gods, although few mortals realize this. Thus, it is possible (and likely) that PCs will meet one or more of them while adventuring in Therias.



### Why Keep the Spirit Lords Separate from the rest of the Demiurges and Avatars of Chirak?

The spirit lords are a phenomenon unique to Therias, and they are rarely encountered outside of the region unless they have some ulterior motive at hand. Furthermore, they are worshiped nowhere else other than in Therias as god-like entities, and because Therias is so remote the people of the Sea of Chirak region and abroad tend to regard stories of the regional deities as nothing more than myth, superstition, or evidence of powerful entities trying to usurp control of the fallen gods...

## The Spirit Lords:

### Aspylion

**Aspects:** Eagles, Air, Sky, Weather, Death, Eladrin

**Alignment:** Good

**Race:** Winged Elf

Last of the ancient winged elves who all perished in the Apocalypse, Aspylion is a terribly lonely soul who dwells mostly in the Outworld, visiting the eladrin demiplane of the feywild and seeking to lay rest the wandering souls of fey kin. He has taken on an aspect of death in the eyes of the fey and elves, although the thought that they have a spirit to protect their souls from returning is welcome among the fey.

### Baelisko

**Aspects:** Manticore, Shadow, Deception, Evil, Demons, Assassins

**Alignment:** Evil

**Race:** Manticore Thousandspawn

Baelisko, more commonly simply called the Manticore, is a maddening beast and a ravenous destructor, as well as a patron of liars, assassins and skullduggery. He has no single home that is known, and appears randomly across the land, sewing mischief and destruction in both human and monster form.

### Chadrigar

**Aspects:** Owls, Magic, Wisdom, Intelligence, Scholars, wizards

**Alignment:** Good

**Race:** Eladrin

Chadrigar is one of the last and oldest Eladrin to remember the world as it was before the old fey realm was destroyed. He seeks to benefit the elves and other fey beings, and to put to rest the Undying who spawn

from their mortal passing.

### Draegul

**Aspects:** Dragon, Fire, Control, Greed, Evil, Dragons

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Race:** red dragon

Draegul is a terrifying red dragon driven completely mad by the Ether Pool and the Outworld. He stalks mindlessly, and periodically summons forth terrible spawn to wreak havoc upon both this plane and others.

### Eshkigal

**Aspects:** Spiders, death, the Lower Dark, necromancers

**Alignment:** Evil

**Race:** Dark Elf

Eshkigal was one of the vilest and most perverse assassins and necromancers working for Ga'Thon during the Apocalypse. Her minions slaughtered and then raised countless Inadasir and Antidalian citizens in their time, and she miraculously survived the war when it ended, deep in the Lower Dark with her elvish followers. They settled in the Lower Dark and founded the race of the dark elves upon the subterranean ruins of much older, lost civilizations. Eshkigal saved these dark elves from the taint of corruption that spread throughout the fey after the Apocalypse by offering them a different form of redemption, a way to reincarnate as infernal servants in her frozen army in the demiplane of the Winterfell.

### Feldrathon

**Aspects:** Bulls, Fall, Warfare, Victory, Men, Ogres

**Alignment:** unaligned

**Race:** stone giant

Feldrathon is an ancient stone giant who immersed himself in the divine essence after receiving a crippling wound, thus achieving immortality. He dwells in a remote region of the Sheddaham kingdoms, and has a personal army of giants and ogres at his beckoning. He mostly demands tribute of his worshipers, in exchange for healing beneficence, but once every hundred years or so he heads out with his armies in a random direction, to conquer and make warfare for a year or two before returning to his private retreat.

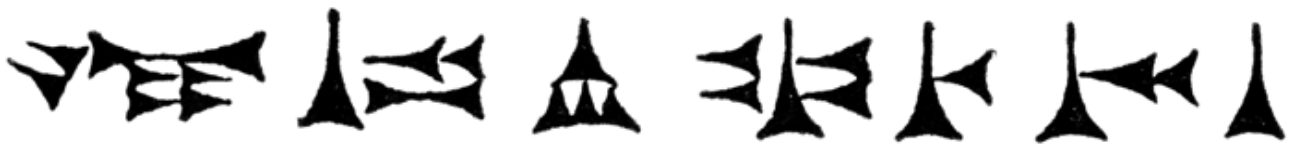
### Hadrathor

**Aspects:** The Unknown, Chaos, Perversion, Madmen

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Race:** Humanoid Thousandspawn

Hadrathor is another thousandspawn who found a



comforting home and a chilling delight in the madness of the divine ether. He takes on humanoid forms, many of them, and regularly engages in politics in the land, sewing discord and causing trouble. Some wizened priests of the Lost One believe he is behind the warfare and strife brewing in Tuat and Sheddahar, for example.

#### **Hanumar**

**Aspects:** Bear, Earth, Craftsmen, Dwarves, Farmers

**Alignment:** Lawful Good

**Race:** Dwarven

---

Hanumar is a dedicated spirit lord, who took up the patronage of craftsmen and dwarves in an effort to help unite his lost people. He has since become very reclusive, but his help is still sometimes felt. It is said his domain is in a deep forge near the heart of the earth.

#### **Khaelos**

**Aspects:** Chimera, Chaos, Destroyer, Chaos Beasts

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Race:** Chimerical Thousandspawn

---

One of the many Thousandspawn, Khaelos takes many hideous forms, although he also appears as a lean and tall elvish man at times for his own amusement. His aims and goals are enigmatic, and his sense of malice is never ending. Until recently, Khaelos was bound within magical stone by the Moloron the Elder, a warlock and planar mage of great power. He was unintentionally freed from this state, in which is vast magical power was used to power Moloron's underground complex, by Moloron the Younger and a band of intrepid adventurers.

#### **The Lost One**

**Aspects:** The Mysteries, Scholars and Explorers

**Alignment:** Good

**Race:** Uncertain, perhaps human

---

The Lost One's name is unknown. His exact appearance is unknown, though the few who claim to have met him have said he was alternatively a human, elf, halfling, satyr, and sometimes a man and other times a woman. The real mystery of the Lost One remains both his nature and his intent. The Lost One has a small but dedicated following that revere his secrecy and maintain hidden libraries of lore throughout Therias. They feel that the real job of the Lost One is to bear the burden of the Libra Stone, and to never let it fall in to the wrong hands. It is also believed by the cult of the lost One that his job is to insure that the stone never raises another god, one who will damage or even destroy the world again, as the old gods in their failed wisdom so attempted. There is a very

old tale about the Lost One, being one of four men who collectively slew the ancient god Gerigos, then divided the stone in to four parts, each one taking one of the parts and keeping it safe and away from the grasp of the Betrayer Gods and their followers. These four scattered to the winds, and have been kept by various alchemic practices as immortal keepers of the stones for over two and a half thousand years now. The Lost One is believed to be one of the four, and the only one so far as is known to dwell in Therias.

#### **Malygdos**

**Aspects:** Skeletons, Death, Undead

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Race:** Undead Demonic Entity

---

Exactly what Malygdos is remains unknown. He is a powerful demon, one who seems to have been barred from the Abyssal realms for unknown crimes so heinous even the demons could not tolerate him. He has forged a demiplane of undeath which is terrifying to mortals, and he periodically seeks to unleash the wrath of his necrotic energies by inspiring cults in the mortal plane around Therias.

#### **Mazdrigad**

**Aspects:** Hawk, Heavens, Creation, Sun, All Beings

**Alignment:** Good

**Race:** Elohim

---

An ancient Elohim servant and general of Pallath, Mazdrigad fell to earth when the sun god did, but he did not die. He joined the Spirit Lords and has struggled ever since to find remnants of Pallath's shard. He has not been made aware of the new Avatar that appeared in the distant north east.

#### **Mormo**

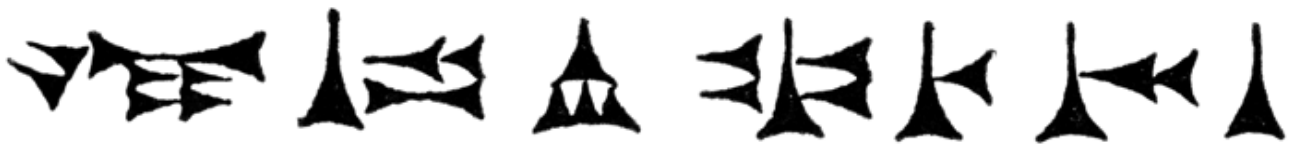
**Aspects:** Wolf, summer, battle, bloodlust, orcs, lycanthropes

**Alignment:** Chaotic Evil

**Race:** Orc, although possibly one of the first ever created. She is also lycanthropic, a werewolf, bitten during the wars she fought in.

---

Mormo is believed to have been one of the first generals created by the orcish creator god, Shaligon, and she was said to have served valiantly on the battlefield until the final conflict, when all of the gods fell and Shaligon was slain in the sky, her blood raining down upon the land to give birth to the orcs. Mormo, one of the orcs created by Shaligon for her armies, saw a special need to oversee and care for the orcs, and so settled in



the region of Therias, not far from the site of the battlefield where she was general. It is said that Mormo still resides there, in an ancient ruinous fortress in a bleak field of destruction in Cythria. Within, an ether pool leads to the Acheronic Rift, her domain in the Spirit World.

#### **Morrigan**

**Aspects:** Ravens, Ice, Fear, Dreams, Witches, dark Fey

**Alignment:** unaligned

---

**Race:** unknown, possibly a powerful fey queen transformed by the Apocalypse

Morrigan is the witch queen, the mistress of darkness and the mad benefactor of the fey who were driven mad during the Apocalypse, including plane-dwellers, dark elves, and others. She is a mystery to most humans, and a dire threat to the more benevolent elves who seek the protection and spiritual guidance of Thaldyron and Aspylon.

Morrigan is said to have the blood of ravens within her veins, and that she can see all and hear all that her flock of birds can throughout the world. She is considered to be strongest in Xoria, where many primitive tribes of human and demihumans worship her fearfully.

Morrigan herself is said to have a castle atop the highest peak of the greatest mountain range deep in the Xorian wilderness. It is guarded by an army of loyal servants in a subterranean city called Xosfar, where the king of the Lower Dark, always a consort of her choice, rules. In the Spirit World she is considered supreme in the Shadowfell, although Eshkigal and Malygdos, her enemies, always seek to invade.

#### **Pharzinned**

**Aspects:** Frogs, Water, Luck, Fortune, Rogues, Halflings, gnomes and goblins

**Alignment:** Unaligned

**Race:** gnome

---

Pharzinned is a short being, a gnome of illusion who is prone to practical pranks. He is known to wander the land, pretending to be a diminutive sort of creature of no particular import, poking his nose in to seemingly irrelevant affairs of others.

No one knows where Phrazinned lives, or if he has a home. If he does, it must be cleverly disguised, to hide the Ether Pool within.

#### **Sin**

**Aspects:** Bat, Night, Moon, Seasons, Nocturnal Beings

**Alignment:** Unaligned

#### **Race:** Tiefling

---

Sin is a mysterious being, apparently a tiefling, who revels in the darkness and night. Some believe Sin dwells on the moon itself. She is looked upon and offered sacrifices by any who work under cover of darkness.

#### **Talon**

**Aspects:** Razorclaw velociraptors, Primal energy, Beasts, Lizard Men

**Alignment:** Unaligned

**Race:** lizard man

---

Deep in the wastelands of Tuat, the beast lord Talon draws frenzied worship in his name by saurians and lizard men alike. He regularly strikes out to war with the Tuati neighbors, and revels in the primal lust and violence he inspires in his blood thirsty followers.

#### **Thaedra**

**Aspects:** Serpents, winter, diablerie, alchemy, tieflings, warlocks

**Alignment:** Evil

**Race:** Medusan

---

Thaedra is a medusan gorgon of amazing beauty and deadly magic who dwells in a high castle deep in a remote mountain range near Ermanica. She is perpetually questing for knowledge and lore to enhance her enchantress's abilities, and seeking to lure adventurers, especially handsome young male ones, to their doom. Her domain the Spirit World is a fabulous, ancient Romanesque city in the Glittering Isles.

#### **Thaldyron**

**Aspects:** Lion, Water, Nature, Water, Elves

**Alignment:** Good

**Race:** Nymph

---

One of two benevolent near-immortals to assume the role of protector of fey kind, Thaldyron is a gentle spirit, who seems immune to the madness otherwise common in others who partook of the divine essence. He cares for all elves and fey kin.

#### **Thalion**

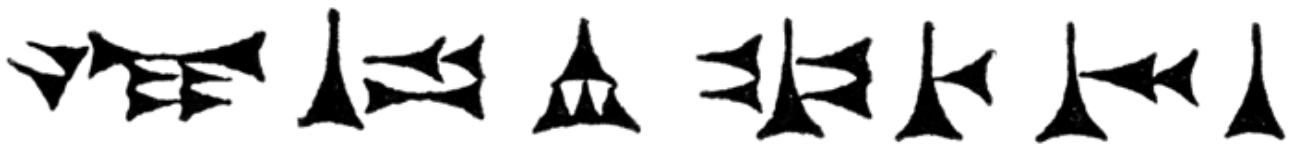
**Aspects:** Dragons, spring, divine truth, justice, good dragons, chivalry

**Alignment:** Good

**Race:** Silver Dragon

---

Thalion is an ancient dragon lord, and one that faithfully served Zephyrs in the pre-apocalyptic days, it is said. Thalion was driven mad during the war, but now mostly dreams in her domain in the realm of the Radiant



Spire while her servants carry out her mysterious bidding.

#### **Totamon**

**Aspects:** Secret Knowledge, Lost Lore

**Alignment:** Unaligned

**Race:** unknown

Totamon is not a true spirit lord, and he is thought to have been appointed an impartial curator of knowledge tens of thousands of years ago, by gods of old so far gone not even the ancients could remember them.

Totamon is a powerful entity, and while not worshiped as a spirit lord or demiurge, he is nonetheless often sought out by planar scholars and mages in his realm of the Grand Library, which is adjacent to the Outworld. Here, it is said, all secrets to all mysteries and questions of history both locally and the greater cosmos can be found.

#### **Uldragor**

**Aspects:** Rocs, birds, Earth, Civilization, Kings, civilized beings

**Alignment:** Lawful good

**Race:** Inadasir

Uldragor is a human Inadasir, though those who have met with him find he does not discuss the old times, and indeed seems to have blacked it out. Some suspect he was a great hero of old, a paladin of Zephyrs who could not handle the death of his goddess, and has sought ever after to atone for it. He is very strict in his desire that the kings of the land behave properly, and do not abuse their power, to the extent that he will send out one of his angelic followers to destroy them if necessary.

Uldragor dwells almost exclusively in the Outworld, and his Ether Pool is located in an ancient ruinous temple in the high mountains of Ermanica. This temple is guarded by ancient mekanicals, war golems who are fiercely dedicated to their master.

#### **Vaidros**

**Aspects:** Elephant, Heavens, Strength, Beasts

**Alignment:** Unaligned

**Race:** Elephant

An actual elephant which achieved immortality, the cunningly sentient yet still animalistic Vaidros rules like the king of all beasts in Carnassus, where he wanders the land and either brings destruction or riches to those who worship him, usually at a whim.

#### **Zolmogg**

**Aspects:** Kraken, Storms, Destruction, Aquatic Beasts

**Alignment:** Unaligned

**Race:** Aquatic Thousandspawn

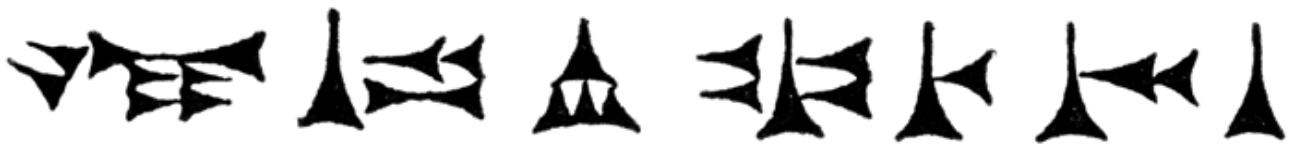
The terrifying Zolmogg is a thousandspawn who has taken to the ocean deeps, and preys upon ships. Some believe that Zolmogg is the reason that the sea trade of Therias is both dangerous and difficult, which is partially true; his ravenous appetite for vessels can never keep up properly, but his reputation does all the work. Zolmogg can be found in the Glittering Isles when he enters the Spirit World.



### **Geography of the Spirit Plane of Therias**

The Spirit Plane is, essentially, a vast network of about 30 demiplanes interconnected by a webwork of ether portals. These portals manifest as the pools of sanguine divinity which, in turn, link this network to the prime material plane of Chirak (but only in the region of Therias).

The Spirit Plane was effectively constructed out of the remnants of old planar realms that were damaged or nearly destroyed during the Apocalypse, and were usually domains in the ethereal plane used by gods and powerful beings of old as homes and safe spots. To date, no one has come close to mapping out the full extent and geography of the spirit plane (indeed, some "nodes" of the spirit plane may actually be physical localities on other planets in the solar system!) but the following details are reasonably well established among Therian planar scholars:



Humans are a rarity in the spirit plane, and it is believed that any humans who dwell in the planes for a generation will birth plane touched children (tieflings, devas, genasai and other hybrids).

Each distinct region of the spirit plane is referred to as a node. A node is a self contained region, although a couple nodes are said to be infinite. Since these are demiplanes, they usually have strangely defined borders: misty expanses leading in to the border ethereal, wrap-around regions that connect in strange, non-Euclidian ways to other areas of the node, seemingly infinite expanses, or sometimes even just a cliff that drops off in to the mists of creation. A few nodes abut other nodes, so one can travel by land (instead of ether pool).

Almost 75% of the population of the nodes is nonhuman and plane touched. The remaining 25% consists of spirits and strange outsiders who are neither native to Chirak or the Spirit Plane.

To travel from one node to the next one must usually use an ether pool with the proper activation ritual spell. Alternatively, planar gates can be activated using the correct gate key (a device or object attuned to the desired location). There are professional guides in the Spirit World who will offer their services to aid travelers who lack convenient mechanisms of node travel. All nodes can be used to return to the home domain of a given character by mere concentration, if so desired, although most visitors don't realize this. An Arcana check (DC 25) will reveal such insight. A Wisdom check (DC 20) will attune the node to the activator, forging a path to his home (Therias for most humans and visitors, or the home node for native denizens).

The nodes, as creations, are all tethered to (and contain planar rifts to) other true planes. Usually these are elemental planes or vast, unfathomable outer planes where ancient cosmic forces lie. These realms are inextricably tied to, and contain functional elements of these planes, as the very essence of these planes were extracted by various forces (such as the gods or the spirit lords) long ago to construct the nodes.

## Xoxtocharit

Iron-age city-states united by their religious fanaticism and blood magic

**Cultural Level:** bronze age

**Population:** approximately 15 million

**Government:** loose monarchies in city-states and magiocracies

**Rulers:** many regional kings

**Religions:** strong worship of the 113 demon lords of chaos, as well as apocalypticism.

**Social Titles:** commoner, land owner, journeyman, merchantman (the pochtecca), lesser noble, chieftain, high priest, grand priest

**Allies:** The Xoxtocharit are known to trade with the eastern kingdoms and the Hoagarit

**Enemies:** The Xoxtocharit have made many enemies over time, including the Legorans and Syrgians.

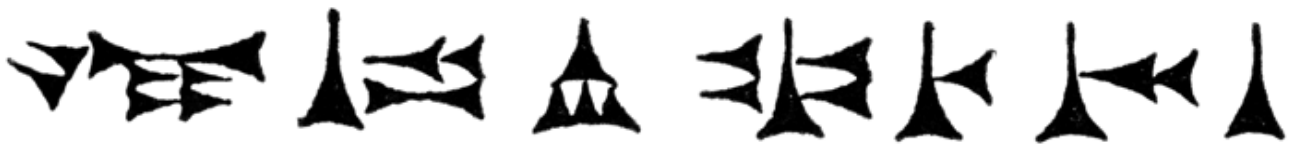
The war-like thaumaturgical lands of the Xoxtocharit are said to be ruled by a mixture of foul half demons, infernal priests, and blood drenched god kings. If one this is true, it is that the Xoxtocharit have perfected the art of diplomacy with a poisoned dagger, and that they do indeed seek out the chaotic spawn of Ga'Thon to do their bidding. Beware these people and this dark land!

Players interested in Xoxtocharit characters should try playing escaped slaves or perhaps warlocks who had a turn of heart and could no longer serve their demonic masters in good conscience. The very heart of Xoxtocharit society is corrupted with evil, and a dedicated native would have a hard time in the world trying to keep to his own ways.

The Order of the Ebon Ankh has a strong and visible presence in Xoxtocharit, where they are welcomed as agents of change and do not need to hide in secrecy.

Xoxtocharit have a strong notion of class-based living, and recognize foreigners of what are called "the distinguished outsider class," or the *nunactiin* in their native language. The elite society of the Xoxtocharit is itself divided in to two primary factions: the *ahau*, who are the ruling elite, and the merchant class, or the *pochtecca* (*singular pochtecatl*). The priest class, sometimes called the *nahual*, is unique, for it is elite, but its members are divinely chosen by blood advocacy, and can come from any class or race if the demon gods so decree.

The Xoxtocharit are also culturally divided. The primary, dominant cultural group after which the land is named is centered on the kingdoms nestled within the

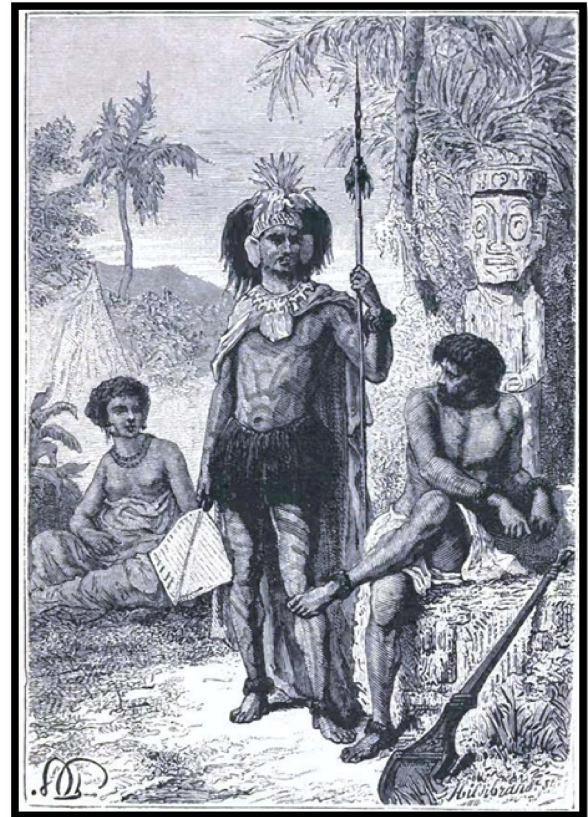


volcanically warm calderas buried in the heart of the mountains which dominate the region, deep in the heart of the kingdom. These same people are also the elite rulers throughout the rest of the regions dominated by the Xoxtocharit.

On the outskirts of the central mountains can be found the Kaz'Dul people, mountain dwellers who despise the Xoxtocharit and rebel against them at every opportunity. The Xoxtocharit in turn seek to enslave these people and favor them for sacrifices.

In the northern expanses and along the coast are the hearty Zappun lowlanders, a sturdy stock of people who are both excellent farmers and seafarers, and who have learned to adapt to the harsh northern climate which pervades their homelands. They too are considered inferior stock and enslaved by the Xoxtocharit.

Xoxtocharit are known to worship the so-called 113 divine lawgivers, or demon gods as they are known to outsiders. These entities are a mysterious collection of beings who appear to most foreigners to be demons, soldiers and generals of the old chaos armies from the time of the Apocalypse, thousandspawn, or worse. The Xoxtocharit see them as the only divine presence left worth worshipping. It is said that the opportunity for rebirth as a demonic entity is made available to the truly devout, and the chance at a return to life (usually a form of undeath) is an even greater reward. Indeed, the Xoxtocharit revere their own dead as much as the demon lords, and an elite member of the community who command enough wealth and followers will have himself mummified and cared for as if he were still alive, requiring his descendants to continue the worship of the demon god of his choice until such time as the demon god grants him a return to life. The haunted cities of the Xoxtocharit are said to be rife with undead because of this. Worst of all, such undead are considered sacred, and regular sacrifices are offered to these beasts in the homes and necropolis where they lurk, to keep them appeased. Most foreigners are appalled at this reverence for what are seen by most other cultures are pure abominations.



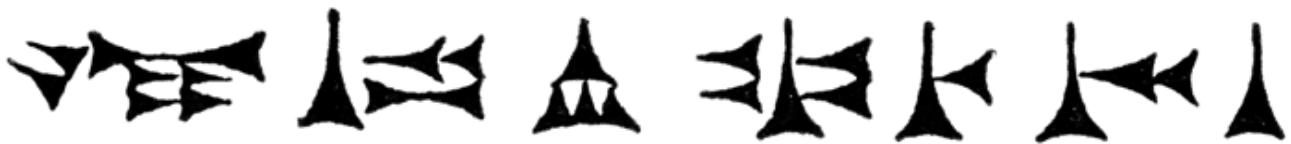
## Xoxtocharit Adventure Location: Usamanitza

### The City of Usamanitza

**Ruler:** Chamac'Nahal is the supreme holy overlord of the city, and has the blood advocacy of the demon-god Golmadra. He has many daughters, including the girl Niatha'Nahal, who was sent south to the city of Atzin, where she was to be wed to the boy-king Tlanac'Huitxal; unfortunately her caravan was waylaid by the ghouls of the Lighthouse of Nyzam.

**Data:** One of the chief western polities of the Xoxtocharit kingdoms, Usamanitza is a center of coastal strength and a major trade port. It is friendlier to non-Syrgian merchants, although heavy tariffs are set against some foreign nations, including merchants friendly to the Freeport of Andos. Usamanitza is a strong military presence on land as well, and can muster an army fifty thousand strong in short order if needed. It keeps the local indigenous tribes of the **Zappun** and their mountainous relatives, the **Kaz'Dul** mountain people.

Usamanitza also has a strong population of indigenous



orcs. Indeed, orcs, half orcs and orc blooded are very common in the region, one of the few areas in the world where men and orc intermingle freely. Orcs are seen as a blessed race, having been created from the blood of Shaligon, considered by many to be the father and mother of many demons.

The city itself is built, like all Xoxtocharit cities, on a unique floor plan with thirteen radiating streets/spokes from a central hub, where the great temples are all located, one to each of the *divine lawgivers* (the term used to refer to their medley of 113 demon gods). The patron god of the city is **Golmadra, called The Slithering One or The Lord of Zebdrakal**. This dark god is said to be the protector of the city, and the demon god who invokes through the sacred right of Blood Advocacy who will rule the city in a given twenty-six year period (such a period is called a *uxac, or Bloodlength*). Golmadra requires a lot of sacrifice, and because of this the ruling elite of the Xoxtocharit spend a lot of time enslaving and raiding their neighbors, such as the Zappun lowlanders and Syrgians.

The city has many unusual features, and foreign visitors are in for quite an experience when visiting. So long as one is regarded as a member of the elite, the risk of being enslaved, sacrificed, or sent off to the fields and quarries to work is limited at best.

There is a rebellious cult growing in the streets of Usamanitza, as well. The mystery cult of Hun'hunal has spread here, and has been worshiped underground now for about two decades. It is primarily revered by warriors of the military, for Hun'hunal is seen as a powerful war god who can invoke bestial fury that makes warriors unstoppable. Those warriors found channeling the power of this battlefield are put to death by the priesthood of the 113 demon gods, for they say that it was decreed that Hun'hunal is a false god, not one of the demon gods, and not one of the dead gods or their blasphemous demiurge descendants, either. It is the mandate of the Xoxtocharit priesthood that all other gods, demiurges, spirit lords, or other entities are heretical and must be destroyed. Only the 113 are to be revered.

There is some mystery as to the true nature of the 113 demon gods. Those few scholars of Chirak who have had opportunity to delve in to the Xoxtocharit religion believe these entities are a coalition of very old immortal beings, many true demons, who set about establishing their own pantheon in the wake of the Apocalypse. Some of these entities have been identified as Thousandspawn, and others appear to be simple immortals or near immortals that dwell in the Spirit

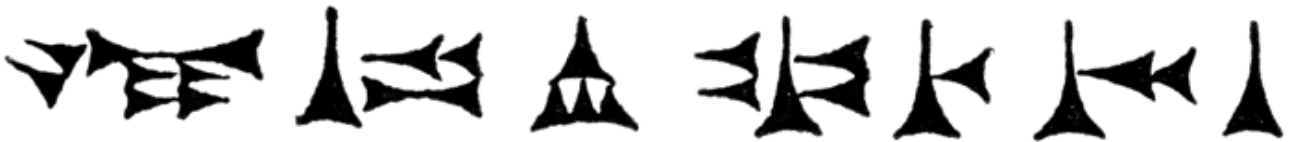
Plane. Many of them appear to exist only in the minds of the nahual priesthood. Those that don't (of which, curiously, only 13 are known to exist in fact) seem to be real nonetheless seem to attract a following of madmen and fevered pilgrims who claim that the 113 exist in a special gestalt realm within the minds of their followers. Mysteries on mysteries compound when studying the unfathomable madness of the Xoxtocharit belief system.

### Locations of Interest in Usamanitza:

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- *The Hidden Shrine of Hun'hunal* (located in a hidden cavern-turned-temple in the warren of caves beneath the city proper)
- *The Temple Center* (in the heart of the city, where the four major temples and the countless minor temples to the 113 can be found, along with the priest compounds. Most famous of all the temples, the *Blood Temple* is where the daily sacrifices to the sun and moon are held.)
- *The Blood Advocate's Compound* (The holy ruler of the city dwells in this compound guarded by sacred lions and the royal elite soldiers called the
- *The Slaver's Markets* (Here the slavers come to sell their foreign slaves, much desired amongst the city's elite)
- *The Elite Quarters* (A vast sprawl of immense well-protected villas and compounds, each like tiny fortresses in their own right)
- *The Workers Compounds* (here, the slaves of the blood lord and the temples dwell, waiting for sacrifice, or to be sent to the fields and quarries for the many building projects of the elite)
- *The Sacred Ball Court* (This is the most sacred game of the Xoxtocharit, and here warrior teams compete for the right to be sent to glorious sacrifice. Lesser games of slaves are also held here, as are games between competing city states)
- *The Necropolis* (A vast sprawl of immense pyramid tombs and subterranean catacombs where the elite are buried; usually guarded by undead and constructs. Located on the northern coastal tip of the Kaz'dul Mountains.





*"A Xoxtocharit ancestral skull"*

### Personalities of Usamanitza

#### **Xatac'Nahal (human male, cleric of Golmadra level 15, evil)**

The cousin to the blood lord, and chosen high priest. Xatac is a cold blooded man and a ruthless politician. He seeks to eliminate the Hun'hunal cult, and will execute any warrior who shows evidence of the divine madness.

#### **General Kullanac (human male, warlord level 16, unaligned)**

One of the secret advocates of the Hun'hunal cult, and a significant figure in the Usamanitza military, Kullanac is now convinced that the Hun'hunal entity may, in fact, be an ancestral spirit which has returned from the afterlife to restore greatness to its ancestors. He has sent a contingent of men, led by his eldest son Madrak, to investigate the Tomb of Agathor and see if there is any evidence to support this notion, which came to him in a vision in which Agathor himself bade him to find the scepter to further the ends of the cult. *See the Monstrous Appendix for statistics on the General.*

#### **Captain Madrak (human male, warlord level 8, unaligned)**

The son of the general, a dedicate to Hun'hunal and a fierce warrior. He is seeking the Tomb of Agathor to see

if a vision of his father regarding a connection between the ancestral spirit of Agathor and his followers and the Hun'hunal cult might be true. He also intends to retrieve the Scepter of Agathor, if possible.

### The Coliseum of Light

#### **Kraeytor Zann (tiefling male, wizard 21, unaligned)**

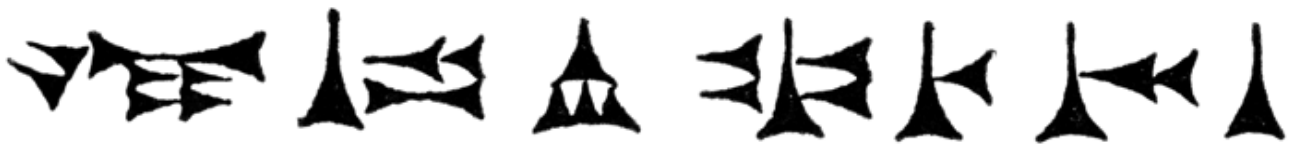
Kraeytor is a tiefling wizard of Xoxtocharit who is the bastard son of the Blood Emperor, a holy man named Natraxas of the city of Hihiltin. He has a keen interest in the ancient legacy of the Agathon Empire, for he has discovered some of the ancient empire's secrets, including a partially working dome called the Coliseum of Light, deep in the Kaz'dul Mountains, where he terrorizes the natives in to submission. The Coliseum of Light is partially submerged in lava flows from an ancient eruption, but is a rare artifact of the pre-Apocalyptic civilizations of old. Inside the depths of this construction he found the remnants of a working "library of light," a holographic projection with the crystal-imbedded lore of the ancient, some of it still in working order. From this he has discerned that there were a number of magical objects which would restore the coliseum if placed in their correct positions inside the structure. These objects were found and taken by the ancient Agathonians, and the Scepter of Agathor is one such device; the same magic which empowers its bearer to great deeds is the source of the ancient structure's power.

Kraeytor has tried, and failed, to locate the Scepter, but he has found almost all of the other lost objects, and once the scepter is found he will be able to restore its power and recover its lost knowledge. He had hired a professional tomb robber, the half orc named Bannash, to find the scepter, but Bannash decided he didn't pay enough and changed allegiance. Kraeytor now seeks to gain revenge on Bannash. He also has a problem with arcanists, who seek to acquire everything he has uncovered. Kraeytor protects his holdings with a handful of animates he has repaired and restored to his own service, also found in the ruins. These same animates are helping to clear the complex of lava and restore the coliseum to greatness, and he has sent a number of them out to find Bannash and (presumably) the scepter.

### The Tomb of Agathor

**Patron:** Kolvarod the Arcanist (Level 11 Warlock, human male, evil, of Andos)

Kolvarod is a warlock of Maegar descent, although his



mother is Xoxtocharit (a slave captured and sold to his father, who was the warlord Koshtak). Kolvarod sought entry in to the Tower of Kaledon to learn magic, but was rebuked, and instead turned to the tradition of his people's Hexeri, becoming a proficient warlock of the infernal pact. He eventually met Golan Drusar, a Masirian Arcanist who took residence in a remote keep in Maegar near Andos, and joined him as an apprentice. Kolvarod gradually began collecting ancient artifacts.

Kolvarod's most recent acquisition is the Scepter of Agathor, a potent magical rod said to have allowed the ancient warlord Agathor to conquer the bulk of the Northlander coast (from Syrgia to eastern Xoxtocharit) one thousand years ago. The warlord ruled for a century with the life-enhancing effects of his rod before he was overthrown by an uprising of the people that led to the collapse of his empire (which was called Agathon in his honor).

Kolvarod found an ancient document unearthed by a grave robber and peddler of artifacts named Bannash (an orc-blooded Xoxtocharit), documents which were ledgers that would have been interred with Emperor Agathor. He then sought out the peddler and purchased his services to take him to the place where the scroll was found: a remote rocky coast, near the **Lighthouse of Nyzam**, which may in fact have been built directly over the tomb. This lighthouse is deep in Xoxtocharit ruled territory.



## The Yellow Kingdoms

### Progressive steel age kingdoms in the Utter East

**Cultural Level:** steel age renaissance

**Population:** approximately 50 million

**Government:** an overarching empire uniting several regions with local rulership

**Rulers:** the Yellow Empress and many lesser kings and nobles

**Religions:** animistic spirit magic and a rejection of god worship

**Social Titles:** many titles, but the classes break down to slaves, serfs, commoners, merchants, knights, landed nobles, governors, regents, and the noble court of the empress

**Allies:** The Yellow Kingdoms have allies far and wide, but most directly in the west with trade partners Correnstal, Dragos, Xoxtacharit, and Skeledani

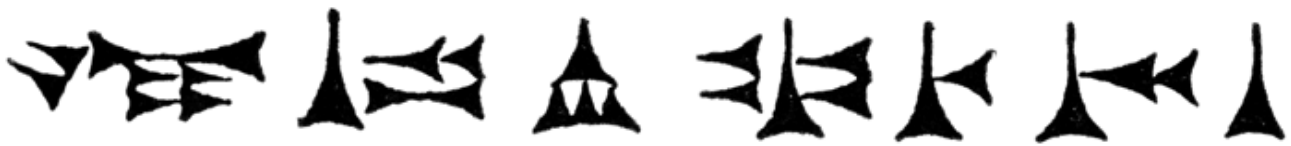
**Enemies:** The Yellow Kingdoms are always in a state of tension with the Sapphiritic Kingdoms

The mysteries of the Yellow Kingdoms are plentiful, and traveling there is one of the few ways to unlock them. Rumors of elvish kingdoms, empires of red plumed horse lords ruled by jade emperors, and tales of the Yellow Empress herself, dwelling on a cockleshell throne, abound. Only a few hearty caravaneers willing to travel east over the Dragon Mounts can say for sure and all agree the journey is dangerous.

There are three regions which border the domains of the Yellow Kingdoms. Dragos, Tael, and Pelaeus are all known to have direct trade routes in to this region. Even then, these routes are long and difficult, passing through territories which are hostile, filled with primitive barbarian tribes, and scarred by the apocalypse. Only truly daring travelers need apply!

**Characters:** Classes from Oriental Adventures reflect the eastern Yellow Kingdoms.

The Eastern Lands are dominated by five major powers: the Yellow Empire is a large realm in the northeastern region of the East, dominated by the Yellow Empress and her consort, the Emperor-Warlord of Yellow Kingdoms. The Empire is in fact a collection of provincial, independent kingdoms and city-states, but all pay at least some homage to or recognize the divine aspect of the Empress as the Vessel of Ancestors. The Yellow Kingdoms include Shu, Lai'Wan, Uria, Zinsham, Xiang and Mero. Each kingdom is part of the greater culture of the Yellow Kingdoms, but in turn maintains its



own regional culture. The home of the empress can be found at Shu. The home of the emperor is at Zinsham. As such, these two realms are favored over the others during the empress's reign.

The realms of the Yellow Kingdoms include the following cultural details:

## Shu

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The empress of the Yellow Empire dwells upon a cockleshell throne in Shu, it is said, the expansive and lush provincial kingdom which overlooks the great Fractured Ocean of the distant east. Shu itself is a region of stability, the last such region before the beginning of the end, the region where the elemental chaos absorbed much of the world during the Apocalypse. It is said that there are land masses which get closer to the great, all-encompassing rift of destruction, but Shu is the safest spot from which to observe it, and live.

The Yellow Empress, whose dynastic title is Min'Lian XVII, is the leader of an ancient tradition by which the Yellow Kingdoms must always venerate a chosen empress. This tradition is said to date to before the Apocalypse, in the era of the ancients, and the people of the Yellow Kingdoms believe that Shu's capitol was also the capitol of the ancient Laigandros Empire, from whom they believe they descend. In the traditions of the ancient ways, there is one woman who serves as a vessel for the immortal ancestral spirit of the One Empress, and she chooses one consort, to be her emperor and warlord from the neighboring kingdoms. The current warlord emperor is name Aos and he is from Zinsham.

The Empire is a cultural phenomenon, and the primary influence of the empress is to insure that trade routes between the far ends of the Yellow Kingdoms remain open. To that end, the Imperial Army patrols the vast trade routes and roads throughout the empire and its posts, keeping the flow of trade, commerce and information wide open.

The Yellow Empress is also expected to serve as an inspiration to the spiritual philosophies of the realm, which are dominated by ancestral worship, animism and spirit cults. The Yellow Empire abandoned the veneration of the Dead Gods or any foreign avatars and demiurges long ago, seeing such entities as aberrations and leftovers from a failed system of belief that expunged itself on one great and terrible war. The one certain belief of those within the Yellow Kingdoms is that the next great deity will be a human or mortal who has reached true enlightenment, and in so doing will ascend to the path of true godhood. It is the belief of the people

in this land that the spirits of the land are nurturing the spiritual folk of the world to achieve this new level of enlightenment.

Culturally, Shu is a center of philosophy, learning, reasoned men and contemplative monks and priests. It is well-defended by the imperial Army in the wealthiest region of the empire, and therefore is never lacking for resources. Art and architecture are blooming in Shu, and great public works are carried out by its indulgent nobility in honor of the empress and the great spirits. There is little in the way of poverty or visible crime in Shu, although such does happen, it is especially well hidden from its noble culture.

## Lai'Wan

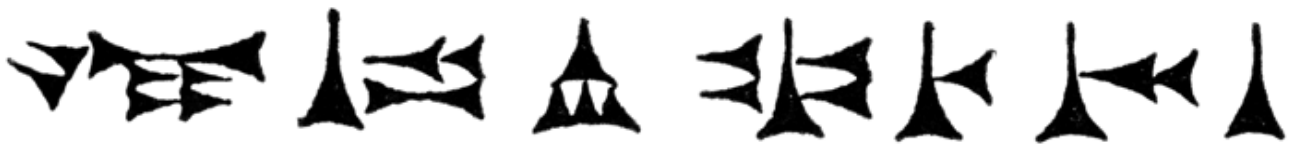
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The provincial kingdom of Lai'Wan is the westernmost end of the Yellow Kingdoms. It is a rugged, mountainous country that runs deep in to the Dragon Mounts. The people of Lai'Wan are a hardy lot who have long ago adapted well to their high-elevation environment, and are studier than normal men as a result. The entire kingdom is really more of a loose collection of city-states, dominated only by a common culture. Warfare between cities is common, as they work to assert power over one another as well as precious resources, for the highlands of Lai'Wan are very poor in arable soil and water that is not frozen in glaciers year-round.

The most prominent city-state of Lai'Wan is called Machindo and is located at the western end of the great Loch Shumira, a two-hundred and eighty mile long land-locked lake high in the Dragon Mounts. It is the western outpost of the vigorous lake-based trade route that runs the length of the immense mountains, and is the primary city encountered by Dragosian and Talaeli merchant caravans.

Lai'Wan is also a center point of trade between the Elohim people of Skymount and the highest of the Sky Islands of the Middabantar people. It contains carefully constructed sky towers along the high peaks overlooking the shore of the great lake and the city, to which the delicate sky vessels of the floating islands can descend and dock for trade.

Culturally, the people of Lai'Wan are sturdy, rugged and stocky with darker skin than most of those in the Yellow Kingdoms. They are deeply religious, venerating 88 ancient spirits who they say took over the duties of the primal world when the gods fell. They are extremely fearful of the Thousandspawn, and believe that 88 of these Thousandspawn united to oppose the protection of the guardian spirits, and to wreak havoc upon men.



When good things happen the guardian spirits are thanked. When bad things happen the 88 spirits of evil are blamed.

## Xiang

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Xiang is the north-western provincial kingdom of the most warlike subculture of the Yellow Kingdoms. This is good, because they share a border with the region called Nindragom, beyond which lies Xoxtacharit. The damned people of Nindragom are considered insane by Xiang standards, and regularly mount great armies for pointless warfare against the kingdom. The Xiang respond in turn, working hard to drive back the ravenous hordes of that damnable land. Worse yet, the manipulative demon worshippers of the Xoxtacharit do all they can to harass and keep the Nindragom in conflict with the Xiang.

The Xiang are dominantly patriarchal, and while equality is common in most other regions of the Yellow Kingdoms, it is not so here. The heritage of the war clans is patrilineal and the faith of the people revolves around the legendary warrior Kruzak, who is believed to have been a warrior who achieved such perfection in combat that he became the spirit of war, ascending to the status of a greater celestial spirit, if not a god or avatar. It is the desire of all good Xiang warriors to emulate Kruzak.

Because of Xiang's militant nature, it is often the case that much of the extended Imperial Army is recruited from willing volunteers from Xiang. Unlike the other kingdoms, Xiang is united, but it's many clans have divided their kingdom in to a swathe of lesser provinces which engage in perpetual war games and occasional warfare, usually sparked by emotional conflicts stemming from the complicated politics of the region. Behind the scenes, the women of Xiang have learned to manipulate the men, playing them carefully to achieve the enigmatic ends of this hidden layer of rulership.



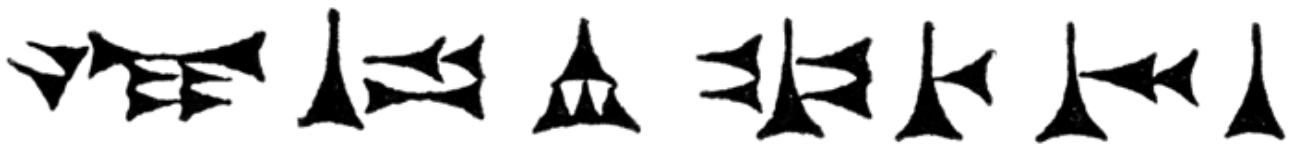
## Uria

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This southern kingdom of the Yellow Kingdoms stretches for a thousand or more miles along the north coast of the Serpentine Sea. Uria is a land of many different climates, ranging from lush coastal regions to an inland desert so forbidding that most caravans choose to bypass it and take the long way around. Uria's people are considerably more relaxed and less political than the other Yellow Kingdoms. It is dominated by a collection of city states and one provincial governor chosen once every eighteen years from among the city states. The current governor is Men Ho Wan, a man considered a benevolent scholar by most, but he is also a shrewd statesman with keen skills in commerce. Thanks to the governor, Uria's coastal cities are profitable ventures.

Uria is the provincial kingdom which engages in the most trade with other foreign empires. Across the Serpentine Sea are the many coastal kingdoms of the old Sappharitic Kingdoms, for example. The distant Pelaeon sea traders make their way across thousands of miles to trade directly with the cities of Uria. Uria is also known for its explorers, and the great adventurer and cartographer Min Ho Luu is said to have been the first man to travel to the edge of the Elemental Chaos and map out the safest route to the many floating islands. He brought back many strange animals and fabulous artifact with him, and the living descendants of these beasts as well as these artifacts remain on display in the capitol port of Un'Shang.

Uria maintains individual militias for its city states, but it engages in war as a means of conflict resolution far less often than its neighboring kingdoms. On occasion Uria's city-states have merged their armies to defend against some sleight or accusation made by a Xiang warlord, or some grab for resources by a desperate



Lai'Wan chieftain.

## Zinsham

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Zinsham is the central province of the Yellow Kingdoms, and has the most land of them all. Unfortunately, much of Zinsam is arid desert, and its people are a rough lot, who have learned to survive in hot regions where water and food is scant. Much of Zinsham is dominated by a culture of nomadic raiders and bandits. Despite this, the Imperial Garrisons maintain trade routes through the region and are often working at odds with one set of regional bandit lords while hiring another to work as mercenaries.

Zinsham is a wasteland for more than one region. It is here that the ancient apocalypse was most devastating, and the barren lands show it, with regions engulfed in ancient and vast basaltic lava flows, giant ranges of smoldering volcanoes, and regions wrapped in perpetual elemental flux, with devastating storm weather never relenting. The land is rife with ancient ruins and regions where the ancient malaise, the incurable magical sickness abounds.

Zinsham has a high concentration of chaotic beasts and monsters, as well. The hardy folk of the land regularly battle with demonic beings that swell up from portals to the Outer Darkness and the Abyss, seeking to gain a foothold in the world. There are dedicated cults of demon slayers in Zinsham called the Blades of Hazeda, after their founder. The Imperial Army grudgingly respects these independent men and women who have formed their own private army to fight the demons of the land.

Zinsham also has a dominant non-human species, a breed of tiefling known locally as The Ku'u. These people are descended from the humans of the ancient empire which were brutalized by the rampaging demons. The survivors have a permanent taint left by their ancestors and these demons, and have formed their own race and culture as a result. Many of the Ku'u join the ranks of the Blades of Hazeda.

Finally Zinsham is also the center of activity for an organization called the Society of Ancient Investigations, a curious collection of scholars, wizards and

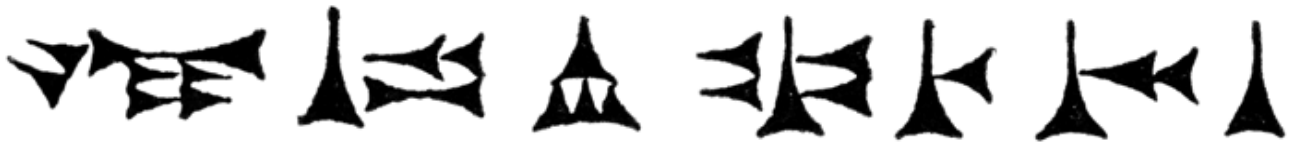
philosophers from the province of Shu who worked tirelessly to unearth ancient secrets from the ruins of the lost Laigrandos Empire in the region. Some of the scholars are also eager to learn how to master planar magic, that they can eventually shut down the ancient rifts and portals in to the planar realms from which so many demons arrive.

## Mero

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Mero is an island kingdom, nestled along the northeastern coast of the Serpentine Sea where it flows out in the greater ocean beyond. The people of Mero pay superficial respect to the Yellow Empress, but consider themselves otherwise independent, going so far as to elect their own rulers, called the Shogun, from their samurai nobles. The current shogun is Inagi, an older man who has spent the last two decades fighting his lesser rivals to unite the complicated kingdom together. Mero is rife with warfare and strife amongst its noble classes, and is heavily stratified between its haves and have-nots. The people of the island kingdom are also very insular, and not especially responsive to outsiders, who they see as a regular threat. Mero engages in trade with the mainland, but dislikes foreigners on its own soil. One more than one occasion the kingdom has risen up against the mainland and threatened to withdraw from tithing to the Yellow Empress, and the Imperial Army has had to engage in a protracted war to force Mero to re-open its trade lanes. This is especially troublesome when it happens, as the principle trade lanes for coastal sea trade are all dominated and in the firm control of the Mero navy.

Mero is the home of a number of additional nonhuman species, including the Hengeyokai spirit folk, half animals and half men, who are said to be true spirits taken in human form (some also believe them to be the same species as cannesh). The land is also rife with ancient planar rifts, and demons regularly spill in from the Beyond to attack the regions, which is often enough for opposing warlords to unite.



# Chapter VI - The Monstrous Appendix!

## Animates



Although most, if not all animates that are encountered by humans are of the “collector” variety, there are in fact a variety of unique animate makes and models in the world. Collectors are viable as player characters (see chapter II) but other, more dangerous varieties can be found below.

Unless a collector is accompanied by a guardian or similar model, the likeliest place in which to encounter these unusual animates are in their native lands, such as The Black Dome near Eristantopolis or Ruined Beltraine. Some of these encounters can be extremely hostile, depending on the intent of the animate in question, or its perception of threat on the part of the PCs.

### Animate Lore

**Arcana DC 15:** Animates are sentient golems who come from the dead wastes and ruins of the ancients.

**Arcana DC 20:** Some animates are called collectors, and seek to gather information on the Realms for mysterious purposes. Animates of Beltraine are friendly, but the animates of the Black Dome are inimical to biological beings.

**Arcana DC 25:** Artificers of sufficient talent and power can create animates, suffusing them with life via elemental energy.

### Animate Workers

Animate workers are usually found deep in the belly of animate cities such as Beltraine. These gangly, lean mechanicals are comprised mostly of clockwork mechanisms, rubbery joints, wooden slat carapaces and streams of flowing, radiant elemental energy. The type of energy is usually a giveaway as to the nature of their driving elemental force.

### Animate Worker Tactics

When confronted in combat, workers will try to gather as many of their kind to help as possible, and will retreat if they sense that they will soon be disabled or destroyed.

| Animate Worker   |   | Xp Val 250                     |
|--|---|--------------------------------|
| <b>Level 6 Skirmisher</b>  |   |                                |
| <b>Medium Humanoid Animate</b>   |   |                                |
| <b>Initiative</b> +8   | <b>Senses:</b> low light, Perception +3 |                                |
| <b>HP:</b> 76  | <b>Bloodied:</b>                        | 38                             |
| <b>AC:</b> 20  | <b>Fort:</b> 19                         | <b>Ref:</b> 18 <b>Will:</b> 15 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6 squares  |   |                                |
| <b>Immunity:</b> Poison, Disease and one elemental type of choice  |   |                                |
| <b>Fists (standard; at-will) Melee</b>   |   |                                |
| +12 vs. AC; Hit: 1D6+5 damage  |   |                                |
| <b>Hardened Skin (minor; encounter)</b>  |   |                                |
| On activation, the hardened skin of the worker absorbs 8 points of damage. Once the points are used, they are gone.          |   |                                |
| <b>Elemental Power (instant reaction; encounter)</b>   |   |                                |
| When hit by radiant energy, the animate worker may expend its healing surge and heal HP equal to the radiant damage instead. |   |                                |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned   |   |                                |
| <b>Languages</b> Old Mythic  |   |                                |
| <b>Skills</b> Endurance +13  |   |                                |
| <b>STR</b> 18 (+7)   | <b>DEX</b> 16 (+6)                      | <b>CON</b> 20 (+8)             |
| <b>INT</b> 16 (+6)   | <b>WIS</b> 10 (+3)                      | <b>CHA</b> 10 (+3)             |



### Animate Collectors

Animate collectors are the most human looking of the sentient golems, usually appearing as lavishly decorated humanoids with etched skin made of bronze, gold, wood and ceramic plates. Their bodies are composed of a curious mixture of clay, plastic-like substances, woolen material and these black strands of an unknown carbon-like substance that radiates elemental heat.

collectors are often found in league with the Arcanists, seeking out lost and forbidden secrets for exploitation.

### Animate Guardians

These immense golems stand ten to fifteen feet in height and tower over most other creatures. They are suffused with radiant elemental energy and are always composed of dense metal plates.

#### Animate Collector

Level 8 Controller

Xp Val 350

Medium Humanoid Animate

Initiative +7 Senses: low light, Perception +7

HP: 92 Bloodied: 46

AC: 22 Fort: 20 Ref: 20 Will: 20

Speed: 6 squares

Immunity: Poison, Disease

Fists (standard; at-will) Melee

+12 vs. AC; Hit: 1D8+5 damage

Hardened Skin (minor; encounter)

Animate gains 10 temporary hit points.

Fire Spray (standard; encounter) Arcane, Fire

The animate sprays a fine burning fluid in an arc from his fingertips. Close blast 3; Attack: +12 vs. Ref; Hit: 3D8+5 fire damage to each target, plus ongoing 5 fire (Save ends) Miss: half damage.

Change Self (minor; encounter) Arcane

Animate may employ the level 6 wizard utility spell of the same name.

Machine Logic (instant reaction; encounter) Arcane

The animate ignores one attack and all effects that contains the psychic property.

Alignment unaligned

Languages Old Mythic, Tradespeak, the common dialect (usually Espanean) and one other

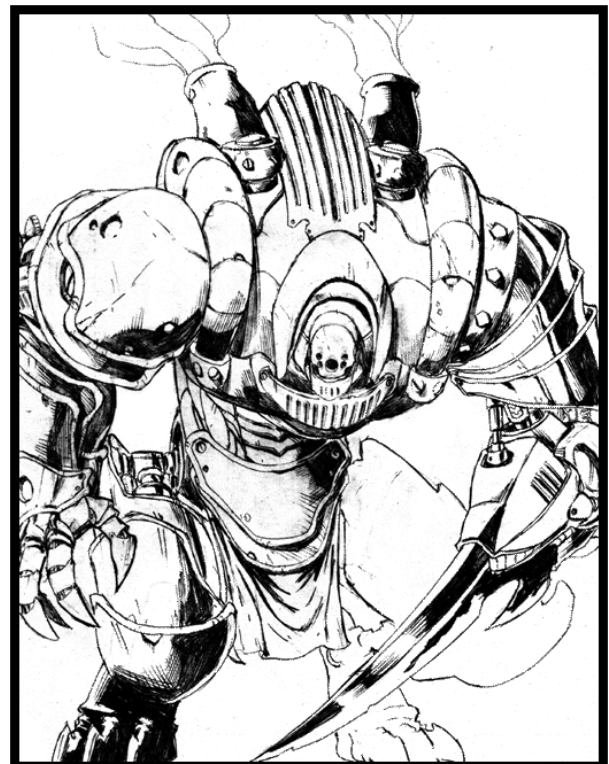
Skills Diplomacy +10, Endurance +13, History +14

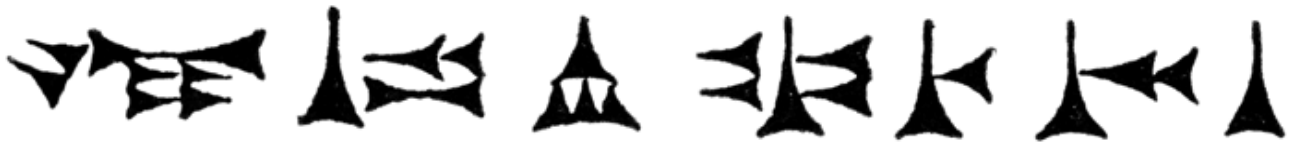
STR 17 (+7) DEX 16 (+7) CON 20 (+8)

INT 20 (+9) WIS 16 (+7) CHA 12 (+5)

### Animate Collector Tactics

Collectors really don't like to fight, although they are equipped for it if necessary. Their primary function is to observe, record, and learn about the many cultures of Chirak, and if forced to confrontation the animate will seek only to defend and avoid hurting others. Not all animates are like this, however. Some rogue collectors, or animates from the Black Dome seem to look down on organic biological beings as less than worthy, and show an utter disdain for the lives of others. Such





| Animate Guardian   |  |
|--|--|
| Level 12 Soldier   | Xp Val 700                                     |
| <b>Large Humanoid Animate</b>  |  |
| <b>Initiative</b> +12  | <b>Senses:</b> low light, Perception +13       |
| <b>HP:</b> 124   | <b>Bloodied:</b> 62                            |
| <b>AC:</b> 28  | <b>Fort:</b> 25 <b>Ref:</b> 24 <b>Will:</b> 24 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 8 squares  |  |
| <b>Immunity:</b> Poison, Disease   |  |
| <b>Maul-Equipped Arm</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>  |  |
| +20 vs. AC; Hit: 3D6+6 damage  |  |
| <b>Bolt Rifle Arm</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Ranged</b>  |  |
| Range 20; +19 vs. AC; Hit: 2D6+5 damage  |  |
| <b>Pig Iron</b> (minor; encounter; Recharge 6)   |  |
| On activation, the guardian pulls up and shields vulnerable areas of its body from attack. It gains resist 10 against all damage until the end of its next turn.   |  |
| <b>Fire Spray</b> (standard; encounter; Recharge 6) <b>Fire</b>  |  |
| The guardian sprays a fine burning fluid in an arc from his fingertips. Close blast 5; <i>Attack:</i> +17 vs. Ref; <i>Hit:</i> 4D8+5 fire damage to each target, plus ongoing 5 fire (Save ends) <i>Miss:</i> half damage.   |  |
| <b>Intervene</b> (instant reaction; encounter)   |  |
| <i>Trigger:</i> a collector unit or designated target for protection is attacked; <i>Effect:</i> the guardian can shift up to 6 and switch places with the collector unit. The guardian thus interposes itself between the collector unit and the attack; the guardian unit takes all damage intended for the collector. <i>Note:</i> a guardian unit may use this ability to protect any creature it is assigned to defend. |  |
| <b>Machine Logic</b> (instant reaction; encounter) <b>Arcane</b>   |  |
| The animate ignores one attack and all effects that contain the psychic property.  |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned   |  |
| <b>Languages</b> Old Mythic, Tradespeak  |  |
| <b>Skills</b> Endurance +16, Perception +13  |  |
| <b>STR</b> 24 (+13)  | <b>DEX</b> 19 (+10) <b>CON</b> 20 (+11)        |
| <b>INT</b> 12 (+7)   | <b>WIS</b> 14 (+8) <b>CHA</b> 18 (+10)         |



#### Animate Guardian Tactics

The first duty of the guardian model is to protect workers and collectors from harm. Some collectors journey out with a guardian unit to protect them. Sometimes, a guardian unit loses its way, fails to protect a collector, or simply suffers a sort of malfunction and finds itself seeking out others to protect, as it seems to have an overriding need to do so.

The primary job of the wandering animate guardian is to keep its charge safe. In doing so it will use fire spray for crowd control, while holding its intervention maneuver in wait should it need to take a hit for the one it protects. It will not hesitate to destroy anyone who threatens harm.

An even larger and more vicious looking version of the guardian, the battleform is usually modeled after dragons, manticores, and other four-legged monsters. They are much like guardians in that they are covered in thick metal plates, engraved with runic warnings in Old Mythic, and suffused with radiant elemental energy pouring from the cracks and seams of their armor.

Animate battleforms are (according to some artificers who study the animate culture) no longer being made, at least not in Beltraine (there is plenty of evidence that the Black Dome churns them out regularly). The battleforms which exist today are ancient relics from the time of the apocalypse, the last great war machines of old employed by the vast armies summoned to the defense of the twelve gods. Although their memories are faulty at best after only a few centuries of use, a handful of surviving battleforms claim to remember some brief





details of that ancient time period, and love to recount stories to those who they are certain are not foes. Most battleforms display a keen sense of wisdom, even if they lack the driving force of intellect found in the collector models.

| Animate Battleform  |  |                                |
|---|--|--------------------------------|
| Level 12 Elite Soldier  |  | Xp Val 1,400                   |
| <b>Large Monstrous Animate</b>  |  |                                |
| <b>Initiative</b> +12   | <b>Senses:</b> low light, Perception +13 |                                |
| <b>HP:</b> 288  | <b>Bloodied:</b> 144                     |                                |
| <b>AC:</b> 30   | <b>Fort:</b> 27                          | <b>Ref:</b> 26 <b>Will:</b> 24 |
| <b>Save Bonus:</b> +2   |  |                                |
| <b>Speed:</b> 8 squares   |  |                                |
| <b>Immunity:</b> Poison, Disease and one elemental type of DM's choice  |  |                                |
| <b>Action Points:</b> 1   |  |                                |
| <b>Maul-Equipped Arm</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>   |  |                                |
| +20 vs. AC; Hit: 3D6+6 damage   |  |                                |
| <b>Bolt Rifle Arm</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Ranged</b>   |  |                                |
| Range 20; +19 vs. AC; Hit: 2D6+5 damage   |  |                                |
| <b>Pig Iron</b> (minor; encounter; recharge 5,6)  |  |                                |
| On activation, the guardian pulls up and shields vulnerable areas of its body from attack. It gains resist 10 against all damage until the end of its next turn.  |  |                                |
| <b>Fire Spray</b> (standard; encounter; recharge 5, 6) <b>Fire</b>  |  |                                |
| The battleform sprays a fine burning fluid in an arc from his fingertips. Close blast 5; <i>Attack:</i> +17 vs. Ref; <i>Hit:</i> 5D8+5 fire damage to each target, plus 5 fire damage next round. (Save ends) <i>Miss:</i> half damage.   |  |                                |
| <b>Elemental Maelstrom</b> (standard; recharge 6)   |  |                                |
| The animate unleashes an elemental blast (choose one) which suffuses the region in a maelstrom of destruction. Burst 10; <i>Attack:</i> +17 vs. Ref; <i>Hit:</i> 4D10+5 damage to each target in area of chosen elemental type; All targets slide 3. <i>Miss:</i> half damage and |  |                                |
| <b>Reactor Leak</b> (Immediate Reaction; When Bloodied)   |  |                                |
| When bloodied, the battleform begins releasing waves of destructive energy. Close burst 5; +17 vs. Fort.; Hit: 3D8+5 radiant damage and all targets in range suffer weakness. (Save ends)   |  |                                |
| <b>Machine Logic</b> (free action; encounter) <b>Arcane</b>   |  |                                |
| The animate ignores one attack and all effects that contains the psychic property.  |  |                                |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned  |  |                                |
| <b>Languages</b> Old Mythic   |  |                                |
| <b>Skills</b> Endurance +16, Perception +13   |  |                                |
| <b>STR</b> 24 (+13)   | <b>DEX</b> 19 (+10)                      | <b>CON</b> 20 (+11)            |
| <b>INT</b> 12 (+7)  | <b>WIS</b> 14 (+8)                       | <b>CHA</b> 18 (+10)            |
| <b>INT</b> 20 (+9)  | <b>WIS</b> 16 (+7)                       | <b>CHA</b> 12 (+5)             |

### Animate Battleform Tactics

Usually only seen patrolling the perimeter of approach to an animate enclave, or deep in the bowels of a subterranean animate city, the battleforms are the ultimate defense of the land, vicious bruisers who will destroy anything that is not permitted within the limits of the city proper.

### Other Animates

You can use almost any construct-like creature as a form of animate, so long as it has no biological origin. Golems, some elemental constructs, and living mechanical gizmos are all likely to exist somewhere in an animate community.

### Animate Encounters

#### Level 8 Encounter

##### Travelling Entourage of Animates (1,700 XP)

- 1 Animate Collector (350 XP)
- 1 Animate Guardian (700 XP)
- Animate Workers (650 XP)

#### Level 11 Encounter:

##### Animate Patrol near the Black Dome (3,150 XP)

- 1 Animate Collector (350 XP)
- Animate Guardians (1,400 XP)
- 1 Animate Battleform (1,400 XP)

#### Level 15 Encounter:

##### Black Dome Death Squad (6,650 XP)

- 1 Animate Collector (350 XP)
- 1 Animate Guardian (700 XP)
- 4 Animate Battleforms (5,600 XP)



## Cannesh



Described more fully in Chapter II, the Cannesh are a race of shape shifters who always maintain an aspect of their beast form. They are related to the spirits of the spirit realm (see the Spirit chapter, later), and are said to have descended from animals that were suffused with the energy of spirits, being transformed in to half men, half beasts.

The following sample entries include details on cannesh of different tribes, including the Vollfluen (wolf folk), who are considered master hunters and keen trackers; the Bacgruit (bear folk) who are wild berserkers and fearsome foes in close combat; the Hidihirin (rabbit folk) who are excellent shamans and rogues with good stealth skills, and the Rastakats (raven folk) who are supreme spies in the sky.

### Cannesh Wolf Hunters

The wolf hunters belong to the Vollfluen tribe, and work amongst their own kind mostly, although packs of wolf hunters have been known to operate as mercenary companies in the service of Legoran or Syrgian nobles. The humanoid form of the wolf hunter is a hairy, bristle-bearded man with peppered black and grey hair, a snarling temperament, and a carnivorous appetite. Wolf hunters do not like to share. In wolf form they look very much like normal wolves, though perhaps slightly larger and obviously more intelligent.

### Cannesh Wolf Hunter Tactics

Cannesh wolf hunters favor group tactics, taking advantage of their pack instinct to gang up on foes whenever possible. They will often enter combat with a handful of their kind transformed in to wolves so as to hamstring foes, while the rest rush in with axes to collectively take down the wounded and hampered prey. Wolf hunters find ganging up on their foes to be perfectly natural and have no problem with what some consider dishonorable tactics.

### Cannesh Wolf Hunter

Level 6 Skirmisher

Xp Val 250

Medium Humanoid

Initiative +7 Senses: low light, Perception +11

HP: 75 Bloodied: 37

AC: 20 Fort: 18 Ref: 18 Will: 18

Speed: 6 squares (8 squares in wolf form)

Powers:

**Battleaxe** (standard; at-will) **Melee**

+11 vs. AC; Hit: 1D10+4 damage

**Pack Tactics**

Wolf Hunters gain a +1 bonus to attacks for each ally adjacent to their target.

**Wolf Form** (standard; encounter) **Primal**

The cannesh shifts form in to that of a wolf. The cannesh gains the following basic attack: **Bite**(at-will, standard; melee; +11 vs. AC; Hit: 1D6+4 damage). Once in cave bear form he may access **Hamstring**:

**Hamstring** (encounter; standard) **Melee**

The wolf-form hunter attempts to hamstring his foe: +11 vs. AC; Hit: 3D6+4 damage and foe is slowed (save ends).

*Special:* If the cannesh succeeds at a normal bite attack a second time before the opponent makes a successful save, then the target is immobilized (save ends).

**Knockdown** (Trigger: successful hit)

Any foe hit by a wolf hunter attack is knocked prone.

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** Wolf-Tongue, Legoran

**Skills** Stealth +12, Perception +11

**STR** 17 (+7) **DEX** 19 (+7) **CON** 19 (+7)

**INT** 14 (+5) **WIS** 16 (+6) **CHA** 16 (+6)

**Equipment** battleaxe, leather armor, tribal totem

### Cannesh Bear Warriors

The bear warriors of the Bacgruit tribe are prone to being loners, although one or two will often strike out to fight as soldiers or go adventuring. They are considered valuable warriors by Legoran chieftains who do not mind hiring the services of cannesh, but Syrgians look



distrustfully upon them as too wild and untamed to be reliable.

In human form the bear warriors are huge, hairy and burly men of an unusually hirsute nature, and often with noticeably larger teeth protruding from an unusually strong jaw. In bear form they look much like cave bears, albeit slightly smaller than the real thing.

### Cannesh Bear Warrior Tactics

The bear warriors are fierce people prone to combat and going berserk when the blood frenzy sets in. They can polymorph in to cave bears, and like to do so to gain surprise advantage whenever possible. The favored tactic of the bear warrior is to charge in to a group of foes, frenzy as a bear, then focus on the strongest opponent with overbearing attacks.

| Cannesh Bear Warrior  |  |
|---|--|
| Level 8 Brute   | Xp Val 350                                     |
| <b>Medium Humanoid</b>  |  |
| <b>Initiative</b> +7  | <b>Senses:</b> low light, Perception +4        |
| <b>HP:</b> 110  | <b>Bloodied:</b> 55                            |
| <b>AC:</b> 20   | <b>Fort:</b> 21 <b>Ref:</b> 20 <b>Will:</b> 20 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6 squares (8 squares in bear form)  |  |
| <b>Powers:</b>  |  |
| <b>Maul</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>  |  |
| +12 vs. AC; Hit: 2D6+6 damage   |  |
| <b>Overbearing Attack</b> (standard; encounter) <b>Melee</b>  |  |
| The bear warrior charges his opponent to bowl him over (can be in either form); Must be able to charge; +10 vs. Fort.; Hit: 3D8+6 damage and target slides 1 and is knocked prone.  |  |
| <b>Cave Bear Form</b> (standard; encounter) <b>Primal</b>   |  |
| The cannesh shifts form in to that of a cave bear. The cannesh gains the following basic attack: <b>Claws</b> (at-will, standard; melee; +10 vs. AC; Hit: 1D8+6 damage). Once in cave bear form he may access the Cave Bear Frenzy: |  |
| <b>Cave Bear Frenzy</b> (encounter; standard) <b>Melee</b>  |  |
| Close Burst 1; +10 vs. AC; Hit: 4D8+6 damage to all adjacent enemies.   |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned  |  |
| <b>Languages</b> Bear-Tongue, Legoran   |  |
| <b>Skills</b> Endurance +14, Nature +11   |  |
| <b>STR</b> 22 (+10)   | <b>DEX</b> 16 (+7) <b>CON</b> 20 (+9)          |
| <b>INT</b> 14 (+6)  | <b>WIS</b> 10 (+4) <b>CHA</b> 17 (+7)          |
| <b>Equipment</b> war maul, leather armor, tribal totem  |  |

### Cannesh Rabbit Shamans

The tribes of the Hidihrin produce all sorts of stealthy and insightful cannesh, but the rabbit folk are especially

well known for their magical proficiency and ability to call upon the spirits to aid them. The rabbit folk are also known for being stealthy thieves, and these two factors combine to make them sly opponents in battle.

Rabbit folk rarely seek out employment as mercenaries, but some do wander the land, usually with a flock of dedicated cannesh servants, offering up magical cures and remedies to villagers in small towns, or visiting the local chieftain of a Legoran, Syrgian, or local cannesh village to offer cures, entertainment, and prophetic wisdom in exchange for coin. Most rabbit folk shamans are known to have a rune totem or ancestral fetish in their possession, and this often is connected to a Spirit (see entry below) who will aid the shaman, as well.

| Cannesh Rabbit Shaman   |  |
|---|--|
| Level 11 Controller   | Xp Val 600   |
| <b>Small Humanoid</b>   |  |
| <b>Initiative</b> +7  | <b>Senses:</b> low light, Truesight, Perception +4 |
| <b>HP:</b> 110  | <b>Bloodied:</b> 55                                |
| <b>AC:</b> 25   | <b>Fort:</b> 21 <b>Ref:</b> 23 <b>Will:</b> 24     |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6 squares (8 squares in rabbit form), Forestwalk  |  |
| <b>Resistance:</b> Psychic 5  |  |
| <b>Powers:</b>  |  |
| <b>Soulwrack</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Arcane, Ranged</b>  |  |
| Range 10; one target; +15 vs. Will; Hit: 2D6+5 psychic damage   |  |
| <b>Spirit Assault</b> (standard; encounter) <b>Arcane, Ranged</b>   |  |
| The rabbit shaman calls upon the spirits to vanquish his enemies; a torrent of ghostly forms assault his foes: Close Blast 5; +15 vs. Will; Hit: 4D10+5 psychic damage against all opponents in area and each target is pushed 3. Continuing damage: 5 Psychic (save ends).             |  |
| <b>Rabbit Form</b> (standard; encounter) <b>Primal</b>  |  |
| The cannesh shifts form in to that of a large winter hare. The cannesh gains the following basic attack: <b>Kick</b> (Standard, at-will; +16 vs. AC; 1D8+5 damage). While in Rabbit Form the shaman gains +4 AC and Reflexes and +10 Stealth modifiers (AC 29, Reflex 27, Stealth +25). |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned  |  |
| <b>Languages</b> Rabbit-Tongue, Legoran   |  |
| <b>Skills</b> Endurance +14, Nature +11   |  |
| <b>STR</b> 12 (+6)  | <b>DEX</b> 21 (+10) <b>CON</b> 14 (+7)             |
| <b>INT</b> 18 (+9)  | <b>WIS</b> 22 (+11) <b>CHA</b> 20 (+10)            |
| <b>Equipment</b> war maul, leather armor, tribal totem  |  |



### Cannesh Rabbit Shaman Tactics

The rabbit folk of the cannesh are uniquely in tune with the mysterious spirits of the outer realms, and call upon them for aid in battle. More shamans are of the rabbit folk than any other group. They are usually found accompanying other cannesh as consultants, oracles, and spiritual artillery.

### Cannesh Raven Scout

**Level 8 Lurker** **Xp Val 350**

#### Small Humanoid

**Initiative** +10 **Senses:** low light, Perception +4

**HP:** 64 **Bloodied:** 32

**AC:** 22 **Fort:** 18 **Ref:** 22 **Will:** 19

**Speed:** 6 squares (8 squares in bear form)

#### Powers:

**Dagger Strike** (standard; at-will) **Melee**

+12 vs. AC; Hit: 1D4+6 damage

**Twin Strike** (standard; at-will) **Melee**

May make two dagger attacks against adjacent foes.

**Raven Form** (standard; encounter) **Primal**

The cannesh shifts form in to that of a large raven. The cannesh gains the following basic attack: **Claws** (at-will, standard; melee; +10 vs. AC; Hit: 1D8+6 damage). Once in raven form he may Dive Bomb:

**Dive Bomb** (encounter; move) **Melee**

Melee; range special; +10 vs. AC; Hit: 2D6+6 damage to each adjacent target during move; may shift up to 8 flying at any time before and after attack.

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** Raven-Tongue, Legoran

**Skills** Stealth +15, Thievery +15

**STR** 16 (+7) **DEX** 22 (+10) **CON** 16 (+7)

**INT** 18 (+8) **WIS** 10 (+4) **CHA** 17 (+7)

**Equipment** daggers, leather armor, tribal totem

### Raven Scout Tactics

The raven folk make excellent scouts and love to harry foes from the sky, swooping down for quick attacks, then flying back up out of melee range.



## Cylovites

Cylovite Overlords are a villainous species created out of the Apocalypse. Some appear humanoid but they can be grown in any number of shapes and sizes. Cylovite Overseers are rare, and take a century of gestation to grow to a small sized being, during which they are like curious infants. Another century will pass before they become medium sized, at which time their mature personality and inimical sense of evil reasoning against biological beings arises. Cylovite Overlords can breed but once in a two century period, creating two or three offspring when they do, through an asexual process. They can, however, create up to one hundred parasitic crystals a year to create hybrids. More about hybrids can be found in the New Races section as possible player characters.



### Cylovite Hybrid Thrall Tactics

Thralls form the parasitically dominated armies of the Cylovites. They commonly use group tactics to overwhelm foes, surrounding and beating them down



into submission so that the overlord can implant the new subject with a parasitic crystal.

Some individual thralls prove to be exceptional warriors and quickly rise in rank, being noticed by their overlords. Those special thralls are elevated in purpose and become hybrid commanders, who usually lead the lesser thralls in to battle.

| Cylovite Hybrid Thrall   |                                  |                                |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Level 8 Minion   | XP Val 88                        |                                |
| <b>Medium Aberration</b>   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Initiative +7</b>   | <b>Senses:</b> Perception +4     |                                |
| <b>HP:</b> 1   | <b>Bloodied:</b> special (below) |                                |
| <b>AC:</b> 20  | <b>Fort:</b> 16                  | <b>Ref:</b> 16 <b>Will:</b> 13 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6  |                                  |                                |
| <b>Resistant:</b> 5 radiant <b>Vulnerable:</b> 5 psychic   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Scimitar Attack</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>  |                                  |                                |
| +16 vs. AC; 10 damage (15 vs. bloodied foes)   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Feel no Pain</b> (immediate reaction when bloodied)   |                                  |                                |
| Thralls can shut out feelings of pain. When a thrall reaches a bloodied state, he continues to fight as if he were not bloodied, preventing any effects which might target him in such a state from working normally. This does not affect beneficial effects. |                                  |                                |
| <b>Subdual Strike</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>   |                                  |                                |
| +14 vs. Fort; Hit: 4 damage and foe is stunned one round; save ends.   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Net Attack</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>   |                                  |                                |
| +14 vs. Ref; Hit: target is slowed. Target must spend a move action to escape from the net.  |                                  |                                |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned <b>Languages</b> Tradespeak and one other language by original race   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Skills</b> Bluff +10, Intimidate +9   |                                  |                                |
| <b>STR</b> 20 (+4)   | <b>DEX</b> 17 (+3)               | <b>CON</b> 17 (+3)             |
| <b>INT</b> 12 (+1)   | <b>WIS</b> 10 (0)                | <b>CHA</b> 11 (+0)             |

#### Hybrid Thrall Commander Tactics

Thrall commanders are usually armed with magical weapons, mounted on a war horse, and have a keen sense of tactics in commanding their lesser troops.

Thrall commanders who use a war horse in combat are usually linked to the horse; a parasitic cylovite link with the horse, which is also a thrall, allows him to instantaneously communicate with the horse in such a manner that he and the beast seem to move unnaturally together.

| Hybrid Thrall Commander  |                                  |                                |
|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Level 10 Soldier   | XP Val 500                       |                                |
| <b>Medium Aberration</b>   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Initiative +9</b>   | <b>Senses:</b> Perception +5     |                                |
| <b>HP:</b> 106   | <b>Bloodied:</b> special (below) |                                |
| <b>AC:</b> 21  | <b>Fort:</b> 17                  | <b>Ref:</b> 17 <b>Will:</b> 14 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6  |                                  |                                |
| <b>Resistant:</b> 5 radiant <b>Vulnerable:</b> 5 psychic   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Fierce Scimitar Attack</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>   |                                  |                                |
| +19 vs. AC; 2D8+7 damage (15 vs. bloodied foes); this is a +2 magical weapon   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Feel no Pain</b> (immediate reaction when bloodied)   |                                  |                                |
| Thralls can shut out feelings of pain. When a thrall reaches a bloodied state, he continues to fight as if he were not bloodied, preventing effects foe effects that activate when an enemy is bloodied. |                                  |                                |
| <b>Mob Tactics</b>   |                                  |                                |
| When fighting as a group, the thrall commander grants +1 to attack for each thrall within sight and hearing range within 10 squares.   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Subdual Strike</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>   |                                  |                                |
| +15 vs. Fort; Hit: 7 damage and foe is stunned until the end of the commander's next turn.   |                                  |                                |
| <b>Net Attack</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>   |                                  |                                |
| +15 vs. Ref; Hit: target is slowed. Target must spend a move action to escape from the net.  |                                  |                                |
| <b>Telepathic Link to Mount</b>  |                                  |                                |
| By means of telepathic link the thrall commander may employ any available mounted combat actions if mounted on a horse or other creature.  |                                  |                                |
| <b>Alignment</b> evil <b>Languages</b> Tradespeak and one other language by original race  |                                  |                                |
| <b>Skills</b> Bluff +11, Intimidate +11, Nature +10  |                                  |                                |
| <b>STR</b> 21 (+5)   | <b>DEX</b> 18 (+4)               | <b>CON</b> 18 (+4)             |
| <b>INT</b> 13 (+1)   | <b>WIS</b> 11 (0)                | <b>CHA</b> 12 (+1)             |

#### Cylovite Overlord Tactics

Overlords like to use their thrall minions and commanders to overwhelm a series of targets. Once restrained, in injects its eggs in to those targets, to implant the seeds of a new thrall in to them. Overlords are driven by an obsessive need to acquire and protect territory and thralls. They rarely get along well with others of their kind, despite an understanding of their need to cooperate, and so the Cylovites have not become a dominant force in the world....yet!



## Cylovite Overlord Level 15 Controller

XP Val 1,200

### Medium Aberrant Animate (Construct)

**Initiative +8** Senses: Perception +16, darkvision

**HP:** 147 **Bloodied:** 73

**AC:** 29 **Fort:** 27 **Ref:** 27 **Will:** 27

**Speed:** 6, 8 flying

**Immune:** disease, poison **Resistant:** 10 radiant, 10 psychic **Vulnerable:** 10 fire

### Psychic Blast (standard; At-will) Psychic

Single target range 10; +19 vs. Will; Hit: 1D10+6 psychic damage and the target is stunned; save ends.

### Psychic Assault (standard; Encounter) Psychic

Close Burst 5; +19 vs. Will; Hit: 3D6+6 psychic damage and the target is stunned; save ends. Miss: 1D10+6 damage and target is stunned; save ends.

### Domination (standard; at-will) Psychic

Single target range 20; +13 vs. Will; Hit: target must act according to the overlord's will (domination); (save ends). Miss: target is stunned until the end of the overlord's next turn (save ends).

### Telepathic (free; at-will) Psychic

Overlords can communicate with any creature telepathically, and can understand and communicate regardless of language differences this way. Range is one mile, ten for communicating with hybrids.

### Delicate Crystalline Body

Overlords hit with melee weapons are prone to taking more damage with the right blow. Any physical weapon which causes critical damage against an overlord does an additional 10 damage.

### Parasite Crystals (standard; encounter) Psychic

Each overlord has 1D12 parasitic crystal eggs. The overlord may attempt to imbed one in a target over which it has combat advantage: +19 vs. Ref; Hit: target is infected with a parasitic egg. Must save twice or effect is permanent and the target becomes a thrall (see Hybrid entry under player races chapter for more).

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Tradespeak, Madagari

**Skills** Arcana +18, Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17

**STR** 17 (+3) **DEX** 12 (+1) **CON** 19 (+4)

**INT** 23 (+6) **WIS** 19 (+4) **CHA** 20 (+5)

## Demons of Xylom



The demons that survived the end of the Apocalypse are few in number compared to their ranks before the final battle of Perdition. Certain recorded ledgers and occasional diaries written by eye-witnesses of that fateful final day are said to exist, kept carefully in the great library of Eristantopolis, where but a handful have studied these documents to learn of the truth behind the terrible last days of the cosmic battle.

According to the oldest legends, so obscure and lost to time that no modern scholars know more than hints and fragments, the domain of Perdition, also called the Abyss, was once a thriving sister world to Chirak, and part of the great cosmic circle of the heavens. Indeed, it is claimed in very old, pre-apocalypse records that you can spot the circling planet in the sky, but that after Perdition, the world was rendered a blackened husk, seething with a burning heat which could not penetrate the perpetual, choking black clouds that engulfed the world.

According to the mysterious entity known as Valon, his species, the Xylom demons, were many, and they were as ethically and morally diverse as humankind:

*"Perdition was not always like this. We were a society of shape-changers, and amongst the shape-changers were many subspecies, which lived in a curious harmony. The demons were an enlightened culture, one that venerated the many elements of life, magic, and discovery. We were avid plane-travelers, and much of the greater culture of my people and world was spent in discovery and exploration in dimensions undreamed."*



*“Exactly when the corruption started, no one is entirely certain. As a companion species to the men of Chirak, we demons regularly visited and engaged in trade and commerce with humanity. We had no gods, and were fascinated with the Twelve, as they called the bearers of the Zodiac Stones. It was through this weakness to curiosity that the gods Ga’Thon, Malib, Yvartes, and Medgenon sought out new followers and began to exploit the naiveté of the demons to the ways of faith. We eagerly sought to learn and experience this new form of worship. Most gave in to it, as a culture, and over time the four great gods grew very strong. This lasted for an unknown period, until the Great Betrayers at last surfaced.”*

*“Two strong entities arose, who sought out a means of attaining the godly power of the Zodiac Stones. The first was named Minhauros, and the second was Shaligon. Minhauros was a minotaur of the southern tribes of Chirak, around Beltraîne, a shaman and visionary who sought great power. He had become a trusted understudy to the goddess Yvartes, and was her greatest servant and shamanic consort. Yvartes fell in love with Minhauros, who utilized her blindness in love to grow closer to her, until he was at last able to strike. He slew his goddess and lover, and carved the Taurus Stone from her body.”*

*“Not long after this, the god Medgenon, who had effectively moved to the world of the demons, was slain using the brutal magic of one of the greatest demonic shape-shifters, the multi-limbed and multi-gendered Shaligon. Shaligon was in league with Minhauros, and she/he had devised a clever means by which Medgenon would fall. When the god was slain, Shaligon, too, cut out his heart, and took the Scorpion Stone from his still flesh.”*

*“So it is that the tale of the Great Betrayal began. Most all demons were influenced by this corruption, devoted followers so subsumed in to the fanatical reverie of the religious experience that we willingly gave ourselves over to the dominion of Shaligon and Minhauros. Only later was it revealed that these two demiurges had, in fact, been manipulated by Ga’Thon, the Destroyer, who had seen fit to destroy all of his other divine brethren, for he had received a vision that it was his destiny to unify all of the Zodiac Stones in one form. It was this sublimation of the demons in to a fanatical force under the rulership of the betrayer gods that started the time of the Apocalypse.”*

Valon is one of a handful of elder demons, who claimed to have resisted the corruption, and who still dwell in hidden enclaves throughout the Planar Realms.

His people and their survivors serve as the wardens to ancient prisons established to restrain their corrupted brethren and the even more hideous Thousandspawn. Valon himself is trusted with the keeping of Kostchie the Deathless in the deep wilderness of Grelmaine. He is the first living contact in two thousand and more years to speak of the hidden truth behind the great fall of demon kind.

### Xylom Demon Guardian

Level 20 Lurker

XP Val 2,800

Medium Outsider Humanoid

Initiative +19 Senses: Perception +21, darkvision

Regeneration 5

HP: 149 Bloodied: 94

AC: 34 Fort: 32 Ref: 32 Will: 32

Speed: 6

Immune: disease, poison Resist: 10 necrotic Vulnerable: 10 Radiant

**Tentacles** (standard; at-will) **Necrotic**

+25 vs. AC; 3D8+7 necrotic damage (+10 damage vs. bloodied foes), target is stunned (save ends).

**Perdition’s Grasp** (standard; encounter) **fire**

Ranged burst 5; +23 vs. Ref; 3D8+7 fire damage to each foe hit and slide 3; 10 fire damage per round; save ends.

**Xylom Curse** (Encounter; instant reaction) **curse**

Trigger: Xylom Guardian is attacked. Effect: attacker is cursed and will suffer -2 to all attack and damage rolls (save ends)

**Infernal Flesh** (at-will reaction) **fire**

Touching the demon’s skin causes 5 fire damage.

**Teleport** (at-will move action) **Arcane**

The demon may teleport 8 squares.

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** Tradespeak, Old Mythic, Native

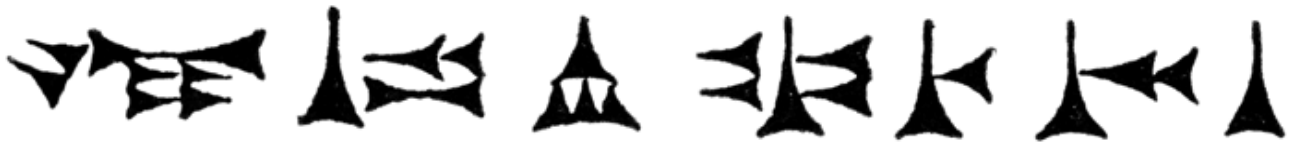
**Skills** Arcana +23, Diplomacy +20, Stealth +20

**STR** 16 (+3) **DEX** 20 (+5) **CON** 23 (+6)

**INT** 26 (+8) **WIS** 23 (+6) **CHA** 20 (+5)

### Xylom Demon Guardian Tactics

Xylom demon guardians favor tactics in which they teleport in, paralyze foes, then teleport back and blast them with Perdition’s Grasp. Luckily, Xylom Demons favor this tactic against other demonic kin corrupted by chaos and Thousandspawn, preferring not to harm individuals of a known good nature.



## Xylom Demons as Characters

DMs may wish to create NPC Xylom Demons, as the more potent members of this species are proficient warlocks. It is not recommended that players be allowed to use this as a character race, unless the DM is running a high level game.

**Average Height:** 6'-7' in height

**Average Weight:** 200-300 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Int, +2 Con

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 6 squares

**Vision:** Low Light

**Languages:** Abyssal, Xylom, and one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Arcana, +2 Perception

**Unique Xylom Powers:**

**Tentacles:** (standard; at-will) **Necrotic**

Dex vs. AC; Hit: 1D8+Dex necrotic damage, and target is dazed (save ends). At 21<sup>st</sup> level: 2D8+Dex necrotic damage and target is stunned (save ends).

**Xylom Curse:** (Encounter; instant reaction)

Curse; Trigger: Xylom Guardian is attacked. Effect: attacker suffers -2 to all attack and damage rolls. (save ends)

**Infernal Flesh:** (at-will reaction) **fire**

Touching the demon's skin causes 5 fire damage. Any attack with bare hands triggers this effect.

**Teleport:** (Encounter move action) **Arcane**

The demon may teleport 8 squares. At 20<sup>th</sup> level this becomes an at-will effect.

other demonic realms as well, although these tend to be smaller demiplanes and pocket dimensions which exist in the presence of more stable, normal dimensions, usually ruled by some reclusive demon lord who aspires to godhood or something close to it.

Xylom Demons, though few in number, are especially fond of targeting these pocked dimensions and demiplanes. They know that to destroy the creator of that realm is to destroy his creation, and in so doing they diminish the corruption of their kind as well as loosen the foothold of chaos, even if just a bit. Such Xylom Demons may in fact contact player characters as assistants on such matters, to use the power of these heroic personages to bring down their reviled kin.

As a side note, Xylom Demons have no issue with devils. They see the devils as having made a moral choice, but the fact that the devils crave power, and maintain a cunning, if evil sense of order sets them apart from the corrupted demons.



## Xylom Demons and other Abyssal Beings

There are many species of demons, but most all of them are corrupted by the taint and lure of chaos. The Xylom Demons are effectively the last of their world's many races that have resisted the taint. As such, Xylom demons are very defensive of their own and react strongly to the presence of any demons that have fallen to the seduction of chaos.

The demon worlds are many in the present era of the Realms. Perdition as an actual planet in distant orbit exists, though it is a blasted husk and a shadow of what it once was. The Abyss is a very real location as well, a cosmic rip in the universe which extends through many realities, all of which have been corrupted and blasted by the unrelenting hordes that follow chaos. There are





### Xylom Demon Encounters:

#### Level 22 Encounter:

##### Xylom Guardian Unit (20,850 XP)

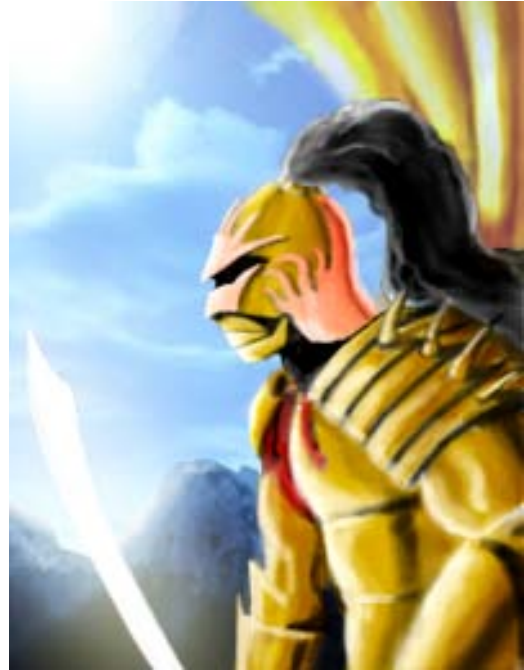
- Xylom Demon Guardians (8,400 XP)
- Hezrou Slaves (12,450 XP)

#### Level 27 Encounter:

##### Corrupted Xyloms and Thousandspawn (51,600 XP)

- 4 Xylom Demon Guardians (16,800 XP)
- 4 Death Knights (12,800 XP)
- 1 Balor Overlord of Ga'Thon (22,000 XP)

## Elohim



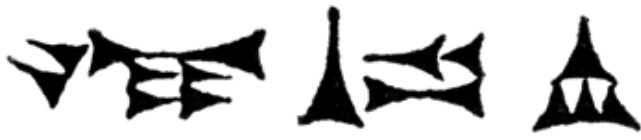
The mysterious sky guardians of the ether are little-known to the land dwellers of Chirak outside of strange stories, folk tales, and myths. Most people believe they are angels who served Pallath, the sun god and still do so, keeping the sacred flames of the Sun alive. Some think they dwell in floating cities and islands in the sky, and a few think they are natives to other planes of existence all together.

Physically elohim look very much like humans or elves with large feathered wings. They are very light, and somewhat weak, with bone structures closer to birds than humans, but they are extremely acrobatic.

Elohim are actually very sacred and reverent beings, but they are not quite the same as extraplanar angels. The elohim do indeed dwell in sky cities in the upper atmosphere of Chirak, and also in the great City of the Sun, where they are soldiers who defend the ancient city and its techno-magical secrets from the never-ending attacks of demons. They themselves claim to be native to the world of Leo, which passes through the solar constellation of the Zodiac, and that their homeland is a vast aerial mass of elements floating in a sea of air.

Elohim are actually very rare in Chirak, and the appearance of one is a fairly monumental event. Below is a sample elohim for an example of the kind of soldiers





they produce to defend the City of the Sun, and such an elohim might also be an agent who comes to the ground world for special purposes. Afterward, details on how to stat an elohim as an NPC or PC are provided to create more unique agents, since almost every elohim encountered is likely to be a rare and unique individual.

### Elohim Sky Guardian

Level 10 Artillery

Xp Val 500

**Medium Humanoid**

**Initiative** +10    **Senses:** low light, Perception +15

**HP:** 78    **Bloodied:** 39

**AC:** 22    **Fort:** 20    **Ref:** 23    **Will:** 22

**Speed:** 6 squares ground, 8 squares flying

**Long Bow** (standard; at-will) **Ranged**

One Target; Range 20; +17 vs. AC; *Hit:* 2D6+5 damage

**Dive Attack** (standard; at-will) **Melee**

The elohim can swoop down for a quick melee strike against up to 3 foes. +17 vs. AC; may shift up to 8 squares during and after the three attacks; *Hit:* 1D6+5 damage each.

**Disarming Swoop** (standard; encounter) **Melee**

The elohim dives to seize the weapon of their enemy. +15 vs. Ref; may move up to 8 squares during and after the attack, but will provoke an opportunity attack; *Hit:* foe is disarmed of any normal one weapon or implement in hand.

**Aerial Acrobat** (instant reaction; Encounter) **Dodge**

*Trigger:* The elohim is attacked while flying. *Effect:* The attack has no effect, being completely dodged.

**Volley of Arrows** (Standard; Daily) **Ranged**

The elohim can bombard opponents while flying with a volley of arrows: Range 20 Burst 1; +15 vs. Ref to all targets in burst. *Hit:* 3D6+5 damage to each target and elohim has combat advantage against each target hit until the end of his next turn. *Miss:* Half damage to each target.

**Alignment** good

**Languages** elohim, Celestial

**Skills** Arcana +14, Perception +15

**STR** 14 (+7)    **DEX** 22 (+11)    **CON** 13 (+6)

**INT** 18 (+9)    **WIS** 20 (+10)    **CHA** 21 (+10)

**Equipment** long bow, short sword, web harness for carrying goods in flight.

### Elohim Sky Guardian Tactics

Elohim prefer to remain in the air, staying in range for a persistent volley of aerial attacks. They will swoop down on specific targets if they see an opportunity.

## Elohim as Characters

DMs may wish to create NPC elohim, usually rare souls on specific missions to the world below. On rare occasion one might be an exile, wanderer, or on a very long and strange mission, and might be permitted as a PC.

**Average Height:** 5'5"-6'5" in height

**Average Weight:** 80-150 lbs.

**Ability Scores:** +2 Cha, +2 Dex

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 6 squares foot, 8 squares flying

**Vision:** Low Light

**Languages:** elohim, Celestial, and one other

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Arcana, +2 Perception

**Unique elohim Powers:**

**Calming Presence:** elohim radiate a calming presence felt by all beings around them. This grants a +2 bonus to any diplomacy rolls made within 10 squares of the elohim.

### Aerial Acrobat

"You're supremacy in the air pays off, as you juke and dive to avoid enemy fire with the greatest of ease."

**Encounter – Ranged or Melee**

**Instant Reaction**

**Trigger:** you are attacked while flying

**Effect:** The elohim dives and ducks in the air with a display of amazing acrobatic skill. The attack has no effect.

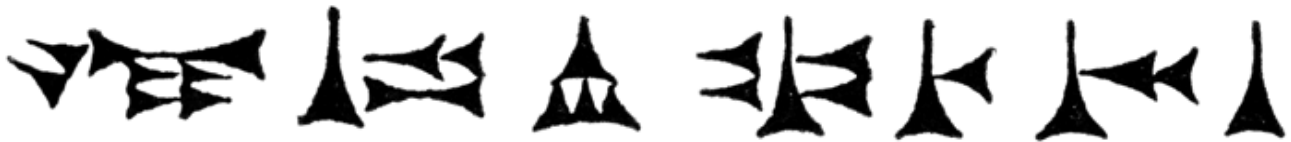
### Keen Eye

You size up a target and let loose with a ranged attack that strikes with the precision of an Eagle against a mouse.

**Encounter – Ranged**

**Minor – Personal**

**Effect:** You gain a +5 bonus to hit on your next ranged attack.



## Fir Bolg Giants



More about fir bolgs, including how to play them as characters can be found in Chapter II. Fir bolgs are the gentle lesser giants, least likely to be combative towards other demihuman and human societies, although they are terribly reclusive wilderness nomads, and very territorial against unwelcome intruders.

### Fir Bolg Lore

**Nature DC 15** Fir Bolg are among the smaller giants, and most numerous of their kind, who are generally quite rare. They are not very aggressive unless goaded in to action, and are open to trade with humans if they do not feel threatened.

**Nature DC 20** Fir Bolg dislike encroachment on their territory and will strike out against any who seek to invade their chosen plot of land in the wilderness.

**Arcana DC 20** Fir Bolg have shamans who commune with and master the power of the elemental chaos through spirits.

### Fir Bolg Hunter Tactics

Fir bolg prefer to ambush their foes whenever possible and strike from a distance with their mighty compound long bows. The fir bolg bow is so powerful that only a character with a strength of 18 or better or of large size can use one.

Once the ambush has been set, a handful of fir bolg will continue to harry their opponents at a distance while using the woods for cover as a smaller team will move in to finish off wounded foes with swift decapitating axe blows.

### Fir Bolg Hunter

Level 6 Skirmisher

Xp Val 250

#### Large Humanoid

**Initiative** +7      **Senses:** low light, Perception +5

**HP:** 74      **Bloodied:** 37

**AC:** 20    **Fort:** 18    **Ref:** 18    **Will:** 18

**Speed:** 6 squares

#### Massive Bow (standard; at-will) Ranged

+11 vs. AC; Hit: 1D10+5 damage

#### Great Axe (standard; at-will) Melee

+12 vs. AC; Hit: 2D8+5 damage

#### Hurling Boulders (standard; at-will) Ranged

Range 10; +11 vs. Ref; Hit: 1D8+5 damage and target is knocked prone.

#### Wild Swing (standard; encounter) Melee

Area Burst 1; +10 vs. AC; Hit: 1D10+5 damage to each target in burst area.

#### Natural Woodsman (encounter; minor) Special

The fir bolg takes advantage of natural cover to blend in. Foes targeting fir bolg are at a -2 penalty to hit until the fir bolg takes a move action.

**Alignment** unaligned

**Languages** giant, Tradespeak

**Skills** Nature +8, Stealth +10

**STR** 21 (+8)      **DEX** 15 (+5)      **CON** 18 (+7)

**INT** 10 (+3)      **WIS** 14 (+5)      **CHA** 16 (+6)

**Equipment** massive bow, great axe, giant-sized leather armor

### Fir Bolg Archer Tactics:

Archers like to keep to the trees and find good sniper points, harrying their targets while the skirmishers enter the fray with battle axes. Whenever possible the archers like to gain surprise, and will maneuver accordingly for the best possible position to do so if they can.

Usually, if the archer has found himself in a tight spot and must rely on his melee weapon, he will try to find an opportune moment to make a break for it. Their preferred tactic is to flee, then circle back around at a later date and find a new optimal sniping position against their foe.



| Fir Bolg Archer  |  |
|--|--|
| Level 7 Artillery  | Xp Val 300                                     |
| <b>Large Humanoid</b>  |  |
| <b>Initiative</b> +5   | <b>Senses:</b> low light, Perception +5        |
| <b>HP:</b> 66  | <b>Bloodied:</b> 33                            |
| <b>AC:</b> 19  | <b>Fort:</b> 19 <b>Ref:</b> 20 <b>Will:</b> 19 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6 squares  |  |
| <b>Massive Bow</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Ranged</b>   |  |
| +15 vs. AC; Hit: 2D6+6 damage  |  |
| <b>Long Dagger</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>  |  |
| +14 vs. AC; Hit: 1D8+5 damage  |  |
| <b>Hurling Boulders</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Ranged</b>  |  |
| Range 10; +15 vs. Ref; Hit: 1D8+5 damage and target is knocked prone.  |  |
| <b>Surprise Shot</b> (encounter; standard) <b>Ranged</b>   |  |
| Must have combat advantage against the target; range 20 one target; +15 vs. Ref; Hit: 2D8+6 damage and target is stunned. (save ends) Miss: half damage. |  |
| <b>Natural Woodsman</b> (encounter; minor) <b>Special</b>  |  |
| The fir bolg takes advantage of natural cover to blend in. Foes targeting fir bolg are at a -2 penalty to hit until the fir bolg takes a move action.    |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned   |  |
| <b>Languages</b> giant, Tradespeak   |  |
| <b>Skills</b> Nature +8, Stealth +12   |  |
| <b>STR</b> 18 (+7)   | <b>DEX</b> 20 (+8) <b>CON</b> 18 (+7)          |
| <b>INT</b> 11 (+3)   | <b>WIS</b> 14 (+5) <b>CHA</b> 16 (+6)          |
| <b>Equipment</b> massive bow, fir bolg long dagger (like a long sword), giant-sized leather armor  |  |

#### Fir Bolg Shaman Tactics

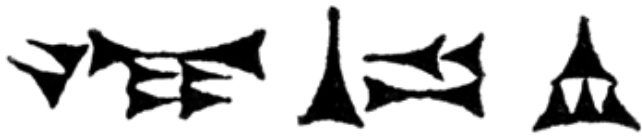
The shamans of a fir bolg tribe are attuned to the forces of nature, and call upon them in battle. Usually there is a single shaman accompanied by a handful of archers and hunters. While the warriors harry the foe with arrows and axes, the shaman will seek the best vantage point to immobilize opponents, then strike out at their very souls in spirit combat.

If the shaman is attacked in melee, he will quickly resort to his wooden skin ability for a quick defense while calling to the hunters and archers for aid.

| Fir Bolg Shaman  |  |
|--|--|
| Level 8 Controller   | Xp Val 350                                     |
| <b>Large Humanoid</b>  |  |
| <b>Initiative</b> +6   | <b>Senses:</b> low light, Perception +8        |
| <b>HP:</b> 86  | <b>Bloodied:</b> 43                            |
| <b>AC:</b> 22  | <b>Fort:</b> 20 <b>Ref:</b> 20 <b>Will:</b> 20 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6 squares  |  |
| <b>Long Dagger</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Melee</b>  |  |
| +13 vs. AC; Hit: 1D8+5 damage  |  |
| <b>Hurling Boulders</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Ranged</b>  |  |
| Range 10; +11 vs. Ref; Hit: 1D6+3 damage and target is knocked prone.  |  |
| <b>Strike of Nature</b> (standard; Recharge 5,6) <b>Primal</b>   |  |
| The shaman calls upon the wilderness to aid him. Tree limbs, vines, grass and weeds entangle his foe, seeking to squeeze the life from them. Ranged 10 Burst 2; +12 vs. Ref; Hit: 3D8+5 primal damage and each foe is immobilized. (Save ends) |  |
| <b>Spirit Strike</b> (encounter; standard) <b>Ranged, Primal</b>   |  |
| The shaman sends his spirit forth to strike at your psychic essence. +12 vs. Will; Hit: 3D10+5 psychic damage and target is stunned. (Save ends) Miss: target stunned. (Save ends)   |  |
| <b>Wooden Skin</b> (encounter; minor) <b>Primal</b>  |  |
| The shaman invokes his attunement to nature and is covered in wooden skin, granting him 20 temporary hit points.   |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> unaligned   |  |
| <b>Languages</b> giant, Tradespeak   |  |
| <b>Skills</b> Arcana +14, Nature +14   |  |
| <b>STR</b> 19 (+8)   | <b>DEX</b> 14 (+6) <b>CON</b> 14 (+6)          |
| <b>INT</b> 20 (+9)   | <b>WIS</b> 18 (+8) <b>CHA</b> 17 (+7)          |
| <b>Equipment</b> staff, fir bolg long dagger (like a long sword), cloak of hides and skins, totem bag. Some shamans have rune totems in their possession as well.  |  |

#### Fir Bolg Chieftain Tactics

Pissing off the chieftain is a bad way to start the day, but it happens. The fir bolg chieftain is believed by his fellow giants to be possessed by the animus, the primal spirit of the woods. When he channels this, he become a hellish berserker, cleaving and striking friend and foe alike. The chieftain's tactics are not subtle: he sneaks up on you, and then cuts you to ribbons!



**Fir Bolg Chieftain**  
**Level 10 Elite Soldier** **Xp Val 1,000**

**Large Humanoid**  
**Initiative** +10 **Senses:** low light, Perception +8  
**HP:** 216 **Bloodied:** 108  
**AC:** 28 **Fort:** 25 **Ref:** 24 **Will:** 24  
**Speed:** 6 squares  
**Save Bonus:** +2  
**Action Points:** 1

**Massive Bow** (standard; at-will) **Ranged**  
+17 vs. AC; Hit: 1D8+5 damage

**Great Axe** (standard; at-will) **Melee**  
+18 vs. AC; Hit: 2D8+5 damage

**Hurling Boulders** (standard; at-will) **Ranged**  
Range 10; +17 vs. Ref; Hit: 1D10+5 damage and target is knocked prone.

**Berserker's Frenzy** (standard; recharge 5,6) **Melee**  
The chieftain turns in to a madman, attacking all around him. Area Burst 1; +17 vs. AC; *Hit:* 4D8+5 damage to each target (friend or foe) in burst area, and chieftain must shift 1 then perform a second attack against one adjacent target. *Second Hit:* 3D8+5 damage.

**Decapitating Strike** (encounter; standard) **Melee**  
The chieftain aims for the kill! One target; +17 vs. AC; *Hit:* foe takes 4D10+5 damage; if foe is bloodied or becomes bloodied, chieftain deals an additional 3D8+5 damage, and foe is stunned. (Save ends) *Miss:* foe takes half damage from initial strike, but no extra damage if bloodied.

**Master Woodsman** (at-will; free) **Primal**  
The chieftain is the master of his woodland environment. He is considered obscured at any time he is in woodlands and takes a half move.

**Alignment** unaligned  
**Languages** giant, Tradespeak  
**Skills** Diplomacy +16, Stealth +13  
**STR** 22 (+11) **DEX** 17 (+8) **CON** 20 (+10)  
**INT** 16 (+8) **WIS** 16 (+8) **CHA** 22 (+11)  
**Equipment** massive bow, great axe, giant-sized leather armor

## Spirits



The spirit world overlaps with the mortal world on many levels. Although considered a planar realm unto itself, the spirit realm shares much in common with, and may even be coterminous with the border ethereal and the realm of the dead.

Although spirits are sometimes the remnants of living beings, most are unique entities formed from the ethereal plasma of their own domain, entities which have never known any other form. Some spirits can, and do, learn to possess mortals. They covet the physical flesh and seek it out whenever possible. Others appear to be actual remnants of living beings that passed away, a kind of ghost which exists in an ethereal state, and is not tethered to the mortal plane like more conventional ghosts.

The mysteries of death in Chirak are profound and unexplored. Spirits brought forth from their domain are usually the only source of information on the true nature of the afterlife. Nonetheless, spirits mostly appear to be mad, or at least become so when forced to dwell in the mortal realm for any period of time.

Below are a range of unusual spirits, from benevolent beings which seem to be willing to help mortals to



frightening native denizens of the spirit plane that seek to control mortals or use them for dark purposes.

Whenever a character acquires a rune totem or ancestral artifact (see the new items in the Way of Magic section) it is possible that the owner must confront a spirit. The chart in that section refers to the creatures listed below; DMs should always feel free to pick a spirit that will prove most interesting to the encounter and item!

#### About Spirits and Non-Magical Attacks:

Some DMs may want to just let the insubstantial trait of spirits stand as-is and not concern themselves with immunity to physical, non-magical attacks. This is fine, and probably the simplest way to handle the matter. However, if you are an old-school purist, the idea of an insubstantial being that cannot be harmed by weapons without enchantments or spells may just be too tempting to resist. I've included those specifics below. If your party is ill-equipped to handle such beings, I suggest you increase or even double the XP value of the spirit they fight and defeat with a dearth of magical effects.

#### Spirits vs. Ghosts

So, are spirits ghosts, outsiders, or something else? Strictly speaking, while many spirits may once have come from the souls of the departed, they have been changed and are now an entirely different breed. Likewise, although ghosts are very much like spirits, they are in fact entities who, on having passed away, found that they could not move on to the afterlife or transcend in to the form of a true spirit. So the answer is, spirits are neither, and will be treated instead as outsiders. That means that banishment effects which work against outsiders will also work against spirits, sending them back to the spirit plane or the border ethereal.

#### Weak Boundaries with the Spirit Plane

There are many regions in the post-apocalyptic, dimensionally stressed landscape of the world in which natural rifts have formed which open in to the spirit plane or the ethereal realm. These rift portals are rarely very large, and only insubstantial beings can pass through them, normally. A particularly nasty DM may decide to allow the PCs to investigate and accidentally find a portal large enough to accommodate fleshy beings like themselves, however...

### Benign Spirit

Level 5 Lurker

Xp Val 200

Medium Outsider

Initiative +9 Senses: dark vision, Perception +10

Aura: Benign Presence 2; Creatures in area of effect receive a +1 bonus to saving rolls

HP: 48 Bloodied: 24

AC: 19 Fort: 17 Ref: 17 Will: 17

Speed: 6 squares flying

Insubstantial; Resist: Necrotic 5

Immune: non-magical attacks, poison, disease

Radiance of Calm (standard; at-will) Psychic

Foes targeted by the benign spirit lose their will to fight. Range 10; +8 vs. Will; Hit: push foe 5 and foe is weakened. (save ends)

Sleep (standard; at-will) Psychic

Target is put to sleep. +8 vs. Will; Hit: foe is slowed. (Save ends) 2<sup>nd</sup> Round: foe is asleep. (Save ends)

Alignment good

Languages local dialect, spirit tongue and one other

Skills Perception +10, Stealth +10

STR 10 (+2) DEX 16 (+5) CON 12 (+3)

INT 17 (+5) WIS 16 (+5) CHA 19 (+7)

#### Benign Spirit Tactics

Benign spirits appear to be wispy, barely visible outlines of some vague humanoid form that can glide about freely, leaving a faint trail of mist.

Benign spirits are either special entities or remnants of ancestral dead who have nothing but fond memories and a sense of goodness about their prior experiences in the mortal world (if any). These beings are not interested in slaying their foes, possessing them, or committing any harm, and instead seek to drive their foes back or put them to sleep so that they can make good their escape. Like all spirits, they are immune to conventional weaponry; an item must have magical properties to damage the spirit. Spells will always work against spirits. Because of this, benign spirits tend to stay away from spell-casters.

Some lucky mages might find a benign spirit willing to negotiate with them and offer assistance. It might be tethered to a planar gate, landmark, or magical item such as a rune totem. They can prove to be valuable allies.



| Deathgaunt  |  |
|---|--|
| Level 10 Lurker   | Xp Val 500                                     |
| <b>Medium Outsider</b>  |  |
| <b>Initiative</b> +9  | <b>Senses:</b> dark vision, Perception +14     |
| <b>Aura: Vile Presence 2;</b> Creatures in area of effect receive a -1 penalty to saving rolls  |  |
| <b>HP:</b> 81   | <b>Bloodied:</b> 40                            |
| <b>AC:</b> 24   | <b>Fort:</b> 22 <b>Ref:</b> 22 <b>Will:</b> 22 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6 squares flying  |  |
| <b>Insubstantial; Resist:</b> Necrotic 5  |  |
| <b>Immune:</b> non-magical attacks, poison, disease   |  |
| <b>Radiance of Fear</b> (standard; at-will) Psychic   |  |
| Foes are overcome by gut-wrenching horror. Range 10; +8 vs. Will; Hit: push target 5 and foe is stunned. (save ends)  |  |
| <b>Soul Burn</b> (standard; at-will) Psychic  |  |
| The deathgaunt steals the soul of its target. +14 vs. Will; Hit: 1D8+5 psychic damage and target loses 1 healing surge.   |  |
| <b>Shadowy Presence</b> (minor; encounter) <b>Shadow</b>  |  |
| Deathgaunts can take on a shadow form and become invisible in darkness or poor light. Effect ends if direct light is applied to the area in which they are located, or they attack. |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> chaotic evil   |  |
| <b>Languages</b> local dialect, spirit tongue and one other   |  |
| <b>Skills</b> Perception +14, Stealth +14   |  |
| <b>STR</b> 13 (+6)  | <b>DEX</b> 19 (+9) <b>CON</b> 15 (+7)          |
| <b>INT</b> 20 (+10)   | <b>WIS</b> 19 (+9) <b>CHA</b> 22(+12)          |

### Deathgaunt Tactics

Deathgaunts look like spectral, black shadows of dark energy, with vaguely winged and horned features just barely discernable. The deathgaunt's eyes glow a deep red when they attack with their soul burn.

Deathgaunts are one of the malevolent spirits, and they despise mortal beings. They will lurk in the shadows and then strike, using their radiance of fear to drive away allies of their target while using soul burn to scathe them with vicious dark energy.

### Other Spirits

There are many more spirits in existence, netherine beings which walk the etheric realms. *Mercurial Wisps*, *Mindlighters*, *Plaguebringers*, and *Terrorgaunts* are but a few such creatures that will be addressed in future books.

| Gloomwarden   |  |
|---|--|
| Level 12 Controller   | Xp Val 700                                     |
| <b>Medium Outsider</b>  |  |
| <b>Initiative</b> +9  | <b>Senses:</b> dark vision, Perception +16     |
| <b>Aura: Dread Presence 2;</b> Creatures in area of effect receive a -2 penalty to Will defense   |  |
| <b>HP:</b> 116  | <b>Bloodied:</b> 58                            |
| <b>AC:</b> 26   | <b>Fort:</b> 24 <b>Ref:</b> 24 <b>Will:</b> 24 |
| <b>Speed:</b> 6 squares flying  |  |
| <b>Insubstantial; Resist:</b> Necrotic 10, Shadow 10  |  |
| <b>Immune:</b> non-magical attacks, poison, disease   |  |
| <b>Radiance of Doom</b> (standard; encounter) Psychic   |  |
| Foes are overwhelmed with feelings of impending doom and gloom. Close burst 5; +17 vs. Will; Hit: all targets in area affected take 4D8+5 psychic damage and are weakened. (Save ends)              |  |
| <b>Will Drain</b> (standard; at-will) Psychic   |  |
| The gloomwarden sucks the will of its target. +17 vs. Will; Hit: 1D8+5 psychic damage and target gains -2 Will. (Save ends)   |  |
| <b>Shadowy Strike</b> (minor; encounter) <b>Shadow</b>  |  |
| A Gloomwarden can cause shadows, even one's own shadow, to rise up and attack. Close blast 10; +17 vs. Ref; Hit: 4D10+5 shadow damage and foe immobilized by shadows (Save ends); Miss: half damage |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> chaotic evil   |  |
| <b>Languages</b> local dialect, spirit tongue and one other   |  |
| <b>Skills</b> Perception +16, Stealth +16   |  |
| <b>STR</b> 14 (+8)  | <b>DEX</b> 20 (+11) <b>CON</b> 16 (+9)         |
| <b>INT</b> 21 (+12)   | <b>WIS</b> 20 (+11) <b>CHA</b> 23(+13)         |

### Gloomwarden Tactics

The gloomwarden is a particularly vile spirit, which has tethers to the shadow realms and draws much of its sustenance from that dark place. They feed off of the will of other beings, and delight in the torment they can cause. They appear as long-limb shadowy beings with claws of black energy and a cloud of reeking darkness surrounding them.

The gloomwarden's favorite tactic is to strike quickly with its radiance of doom, and then target the weakest foe for will drain. It then hits everyone with shadowy strike while still weakened, and polishes them off one by one.



## Skerradi

Skerradi are tall, lean amphibious humanoids, men who were subjected to transformative magic long ago to give them an aspect of the shark. They have elongated mouths full of shark teeth, black eyes and lean, rubbery features. Their hands and feet are webbed, and small fins jut from their spine. They have long gills along their neck and down their chest.

### Luneri Tor, City of The Deep

The Skerradi dwell within the ruinous expanse of their lost city, located on the western rim of Isla Mordente in Sontaniardes territory. For three miles or more the deep waters of the western bay stretch outward to the sea rim, a vast network of ancient stone structures in the architectural style of the ancient Mythric Empire. The city was known as Luneri Tor in the old language, and was said to have been a bastion of mystical learning and sorcerous artistry, where students of magic went to achieve mastery over their abstract arcana.

After the Apocalypse, Luneri Tor was annihilated in the great flood, it's city along the slopes of the great Plateau of Tunaris engulfed in drowning waters. The lord of the city, the wizard Tithkarem, was said to have reached out to his drowning kin and bonded them with the fish of the sea waters that they might yet live. Thus were the Skerradi born in to the Sea of Chirak.

### Skerradi Warriors

Skerradi warriors are quick swimmers, and armed with long swords of banded coral laced with shark teeth. They protect themselves with shields made from giant clams, to which are strapped sharpened curved spears of whale bone, allowing them to thrust attack with their shields. Skerradi warriors decorate themselves with necklaces of carved bone effigies.

### Skerradi Warrior Lore

**DC 15 Nature** The Skerradi are a fierce and ancient race of men who changed their forms to reflect that of sharks. They have gradually descended to barbarism over the ages, and now dwell in the submerged ruins of their old empire. The warriors of the Skerradi are fierce berserkers who never retreat.

### Skerradi Warrior

Level 1 Brute

Medium Natural Humanoid

XP 100

**Initiative** +2 **Senses** Perception +1; low light

**HP** 32; **Bloodied** 16

**AC** 13; **Fortitude** 16, **Reflex** 14, **Will** 12

**Vulnerable** 5 fire

**Speed** 6 (Swim 8)

**Shark Tooth Long Sword (standard; at-will) melee**

+4 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage

On a critical strike, this weapon also causes ongoing 3 damage (save ends) as shark teeth snap off in the target's wound.

**Madu Shield (standard; at-will) melee**

+4 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage

The Skerradi brings its horned madu shield to bear. It gains +2 AC until the end of its next turn after the attack.

**Coral Javelin (standard; at-will) ranged**

Ranged 10/20; +4 vs. AC; 1d10 + 3 damage

**Ravaging Assault (standard; at-will) melee**

+4 vs. AC; 2d6 + 3 damage

The Skerradi shifts up to its move and attacks one foe with sword, shield and teeth with berserk rage over which it has combat advantage. The target suffers 5 ongoing bleeding (save ends). The Skerradi grants combat advantage to all foes until the end of its next turn. after the attack is over

**Alignment:** unaligned (some are evil)

**Languages:** Skerradi, Draconic

**Skills:** Athletics, Nature

**Str** 18 (+4) **Dex** 15 (+2) **Wis** 11 (0)

**Con** 12 (+1) **Int** 8 (-1) **Cha** 10 (0)

**Equipment:** javelin, shark tooth sword, madu shield

### Skerradi Warrior Tactics

Skerradi warriors are the brute soldiers of their people, throwing themselves in to combat with berserk ferocity. They seek to draw blood as quickly as possible, charging in with javelin attacks, then drawing their shark tooth sword and horned madu shield and closing for the kill.

### Skerradi Hydromancer

The Skerradi hydromancers are elite arcanists who rule their aquatic kingdom with webbed fists. They rely on their lesser kin to do brute labor while they scheme on how to steal the secrets of water magic from the primordial elementals of the sea.

### Skerradi Hydromancer Lore

**Nature DC 20** Skerradi hydromancers have mastered the arcane magic to manipulate their natural element. They





are fierce rulers of their people who dominate through their charisma and power over the seas.

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| <b>Skerradi Hydromancer</b>  | <b>Level 2 Controller</b> |
| <b>Medium Natural Humanoid</b>   | <b>XP 125</b>             |
| <b>Initiative</b> +2 <b>Senses</b> Perception +9; low light  |                           |
| <b>HP</b> 33; <b>Bloodied</b> 16   |                           |
| <b>AC</b> 16; <b>Fortitude</b> 14, <b>Reflex</b> 16, <b>Will</b> 14  |                           |
| <b>Resist</b> 5 Water, <b>Vulnerable</b> 5 Fire  |                           |
| <b>Speed</b> 6 (8 swim)  |                           |
| <b>Shark tooth short sword (standard; at-will) melee</b>   |                           |
| +7 vs. AC; 1d6 + 3 damage  |                           |
| <b>Darts (standard; at-will) ranged</b>  |                           |
| Ranged 10; +6 vs. Fortitude; 1d4 + 3 damage  |                           |
| <b>Drowning Grasp (standard; recharge 5, 6) water</b>  |                           |
| Ranged 10; +7 vs. AC; 3d6 + 3 damage   |                           |
| Target's lungs are filled with water and he begins to choke (effects or immunities that allow for water breathing will counter this effect). Target takes ongoing 5 drowning damage (save ends). |                           |
| <b>Clatter of a Thousand Maws (standard; encounter) shadow, water</b>  |                           |
| Ranged 5; +6 vs. ; 3d6 + 3 damage  |                           |
| Target is mauled by dozens of semi-corporeal shark jaws. Target takes 5 ongoing bleeding damage (save ends); one Skerradi ally in range of the caster gains 10 hit points.                       |                           |
| <b>Alignment:</b> evil   |                           |
| <b>Languages:</b> Skerradi, Draconic   |                           |
| <b>Skills:</b> Insight, Perception, Arcana   |                           |
| <b>Str</b> 14 (+3) <b>Dex</b> 13 (+2) <b>Wis</b> 14 (+3)   |                           |
| <b>Con</b> 9 (0) <b>Int</b> 19 (+5) <b>Cha</b> 13 (+2)   |                           |
| <b>Equipment:</b> medicine pouch, ritual spell book, shark tooth short sword   |                           |

### Skerradi Hydromancer Tactics

Skerradi hydromancers will lurk in the rear behind the warriors, using their water magic for long range support and control.

### Skerradi Characters

**Average Height:** 5' 4" - 5' 9"

**Average Weight:** 100 - 160

**Ability scores:** +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity

**Size:** Medium

**Speed:** 6 squares (8 squares swimming)

**Vision:** Low-light

**Languages:** Choice of one language, Common, and Skerradi

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Athletics, +2 Endurance.

**Amphibious:** Skerradi can breathe both air and water. They are natural swimmers and both swim faster and are unhindered by watery terrain (treat as normal terrain).

**Bite Attack:** Skerradi have wide, shark-like mouths full of ever-replenishing shark teeth. This makes an excellent natural weapon.

### Bite Attack Skerradi Racial Attack

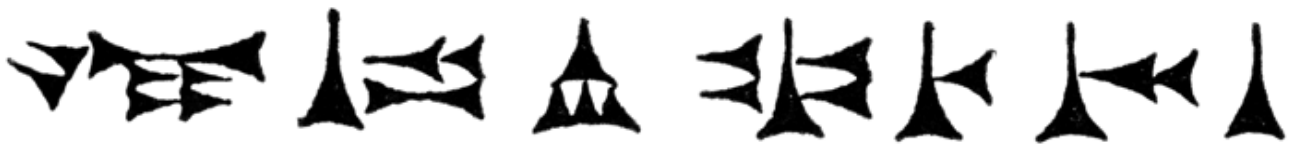
*Your mouth is filled with ever-replenishing rows of deadly shark teeth.*

**Standard, At-Will** \* Melee, Natural Weapon; One Target

**Attack:** Strength +2 vs. AC

**Hit:** 1d6 + Strength modifier damage.

*21<sup>st</sup> Level:* increase to 2D6+ Strength mod. damage.



## Thousandspawn



Among the many unique denizens of Chirak, the thousandspawn are both the most numerous and terrifying of denizens that can be encountered. Most of the cultures in the Sea of Chirak region and the West are familiar with these beings, and the myths and folklore promulgated around these entities is rife with truth and fiction.

In the final days of the Apocalypse, several tales revolve around how the terrifying god of chaos named Ga'Thon was slain by one of the more benevolent deities, usually Pallath. When Ga'Thon was slain, the old stories say, he had transformed in to a vast entity which stretched through the sky like an immense cloud of pulsating darkness and chaos. Indeed, Ga'Thon had begun his transformation in the fey realm, and as he completed his destruction of the Feywild, absorbing it in to his greater mass, the god burst forth from the plane of faerie and emerged in to Chirak to initiate its destruction as well. It was then, some say, that Pallath and other forces trying to stop the Betrayer attacked, and slew him.

As the god fell, his body settled upon the earth and transformed, as divine flesh is wont to do, in to the primal elements of creation. The western Kossarit

Mountains are said today to be the remnants of this great body.

Before the god died, however, it is said that the angry servants of Pallath grasped and tore at his immense form's flesh, and that these chunks and bits of the god rained upon the earth. Of these a thousand pieces fell and took on a strange life of their own. Over time, these pieces of god flesh manifested their own separate will and sentience, though tinged with the madness of their progenitor. Thus were the thousandspawn born.

The Thousandspawn are not actually believed to be only 1,000 strong. Indeed, some suspect there may be tens of thousands of such creatures, though most are only semi-sentient and animalistic in behavior. Some others do not consider the lesser progeny of Ga'Thon, such as the Sky Gaunts, to be true members of this group, and number the true thousandspawn at but a few hundred.

In point of fact, there are actually *exactly* one thousands such entities, and there is an occult origin to this number. Though no living creature today knows of this, it is Kraeytor Zahn, a tiefling researcher who is attempting to renovate the Coliseum of Light, a largely intact ruin from the old Mythric Empire which once served as an auditorium of debate amongst ancient scholars as well as the center for an ancient cult, which had plans to construct a device that would allow them to create a thirteenth Zodiac Stone. Here, he discovered that it takes exactly 1,000 souls sacrificed to an ancient device, according to his research, to power the fundamental spark of divinity in one of the sacred cosmic stones. In his research on this matter, Kraeytor Zahn discovered that there are twelve rods used to capture the souls of great men and women throughout the world, and that if found, he can emplace them in the device he has come to refer to as the Light Bringer or sometimes the God Maker to create a new, thirteenth Zodiac Stone, one which will become his vessel to godhood.

As a side effect of this research, Kraeytor Zahn has determined that the myths of the Thousandspawn hide a compelling truth: that the thousand entities which formed from the mass of Ga'Thon are, in fact, the original thousand souls which formed the deity. It also explains why no one to date has seen the Zodiac Stone of Ga'Thon, or why no new avatars have followed in the wake of the deity. If the stone was shattered in to one thousand equal pieces, and each immortal thousandspawn contains one piece, then in a manner of speaking, the dreaded deity of destruction still exists, merely fragmented beyond all recognition.



Thousandspawn come in all shapes, sizes and varieties. Some of the more noteworthy Thousandspawn to manifest in recent years include:

**Zam Redar** – The terrifying ancient overlord who once conquered much of the Kasdalani, Pelaeon, Damani and Pellucid lands is a thousandspawn. He recently returned, after a quartet of adventurers (including Nethander, Maretz, Erishma and Maximus Rheams) unearthed the coffin in which he had been imprisoned by his former wife Lady Poe. Although they believed him destroyed or at least marooned, rumors are surfacing that the villain has reappeared in the city of Andos in the North.

**Kostchie The Damned** – The vile warlock of Grelmaine has been locked away by an ancient cabal of twelve families dedicated to destroying or imprisoning the thousandspawn. Unfortunately, Kostchie is so powerful his consciousness frequently escapes in to the Dreamlands, where he causes problems in the nocturnal hours for the Grelmanic people. This is at least part of the reason for the constant civil war in that region.

**Sivringen the Sky Lord** – Unknown to many, this dreaded entity is an amorphous mass of chaos that dwells on a floating island called Sehegrathan, which rests about 50 miles over the blighted eastern lands near Skeledani. This entity is believed to maintain psychic control over the mindless Sky Gaunts.

**Croethys** – This mysterious entity, accompanied by an invisible giant that may also be a Thousandspawn, appears as a mysterious old man in the region of Correnstal. Rumors abound that he has a second identity as the vile wormlord known as Shaggathuul, and an even more disturbing rumor that his son was none other than Urso Vannas, the first king of Correnstal, and the legendary hero folktales speak of as the one man able to return from the dead to reunite the fractured Pellucid kingdoms.

## Sky Gaunts

Sky Gaunts hover; usually up in the higher regions of the atmosphere, proving to be a dangerous threat to airships, balloons, floating islands, and whatever lies in the darkness of space beyond. They seem singularly obsessed with destroying any vessel that seeks to leave or arrive at Chirak from the outer darkness.

If the body of the sky gaunt ever takes so much damage it reaches zero HPs, it will explode, then plummet to the earth in a flaming mass. As it does so, the creature will release spores, which over time will grow in to a new incarnation of the same sky gaunt.

When the spores mature, they will release back in to the sky and seek one another out to reform the original entity.

### Sky Gaunts Lore

**Religion DC 20** The Sky Gaunts are Thousandspawn, born from the flesh of the chaos god Ga'Thon.

**Arcana DC 25** Sky Gaunts are dwellers in the upper atmosphere, destroying sky ships and terrorizing the few hardy species that dwell on the mysterious sky islands that exist midway between Chirak, the moons and the Sun.

**Arcana DC 30** If you destroy a Sky Gaunt, it explodes violently and then seeds the earth with spores to regenerate its body.

### Sky Gaunt

**Level 20 Controller**

**Xp Val 2,800**

**Gargantuan Aberration (Thousandspawn)**

**Initiative +19 Senses:** Perception +30; dark vision

**Chaos Gas (necrotic) Aura 5;** each round a creature is in aura, it must save or suffer a mutation (see below)

**HP:** 188 **Bloodied:** 94

**AC:** 34 **Fort:** 36 **Ref:** 33 **Will:** 31

**Immune** Necrotic; **Resist** 10 cold, fire **Vulnerable** 10 radiant

**Speed** 4 ground, 8 flying

**Melee Basic Tentacle Attack** (standard; at-will)

Reach 3; +25 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage

**Extended Tentacle Attack** (standard; at-will)

Range 10; +25 vs. AC; 3d6 + 8 damage

**Mass Tentacle Attack** (standard; at-will)

Range 10 Burst 5; +25 vs. AC; 3d10 + 8 damage;

All targets in area that are hit are grappled until the end of the sky gaunt's next turn.

**Explosive Burst** (standard; Instant Reaction)

Close Burst 5; +23 vs. ; 5d10 + 7 necrotic damage

**Trigger:** Sky gaunt reaches 0 HPs; **Effect:** all targets in burst range take necrotic damage and are stunned (save ends)

**Alignment:** chaotic evil **Languages:** none

**Skills:** Endurance

**Str** 30 (+20) **Dex** 24 (+17) **Wis** 20 (+15)

**Con** 20 (+15) **Int** 8 (+9) **Cha** 20 (+15)

### Sky Gaunts Tactics

Sky gaunts descend upon their prey from the sky, hovering over them and attacking with their tentacles. They will pull shattered victims up to absorb them slowly in to its chaotic flesh.



### Sky Gaunt Tactics

The sky gaunts are unerring predators of the upper atmosphere, and if encountering a flyign vessel of some sort (be it ship, carpet or pegasus) they will pursue such entities unerringly and until one someone or something is destroyed.

Sky gaunts lack much subtelety beyond their predatory instincts. They pound away at their foes, grappling with tentacles until either their traget comes apart or they blow up, one or the other.

## Inzada Mountain Demons of Ga'Thon

The Inzada mountain demons are terrifying lesser Thousandspawn that lurk in the Kossarit Mountains, although some of their kind have spread throughout the lower dark. They look somewhat like demonic apes, but with six limbs and covered in chitinous, bony plates. Inzada are actually gestalt entities, collectively aware of what happens to one another. An Inzada within one mile of another of its kind is fully aware of what it's brethren sees, feels and hears and can communicate by telepathy. Inzada that travel further are still sensed by the others, though they lose the ability to see and hear what their kin experiences. There are believed to be several hundred of these creatures according to the arcanist Kurzhod the Sympathizer, although they are classified as a single entity due to their shared mind trait.

### Inzada Mountain Demon Lore

**Arcana DC 20** The Inzada are said to come from the Kossarit Mountains and are suspected to be Thousandspawn.

**Arcana DC 25** Inzada are cunning predators who seem to share a hive mind.

**Arcana DC 30** The Inzada are actually one very large entity, although no one knows if there is a bug for this gestalt mind entity.

### Inzada Mountain Demon Tactics

Inzada use their mutual shared awareness and telepathy to coordinate attacks, strategizing in terms of what they collectively know. They are smart and cunning, and will seek to flank and then surprise their prey, attacking with psychic bursts first before going in to slam their foes with brutal strikes.

### Inzada Mountain Demons

**Level 15 Lurker**

**XP 1200**

**Medium Aberrant Humanoid (Thousandspawn)**

**Initiative** +14 **Senses** Perception +24; dark vision

**HP** 113; **Bloodied** 56

**AC** 29; **Fortitude** 27, **Reflex** 29, **Will** 27

**Immune** necrotic; **resist** cold 10

**vulnerable** radiant 10

**Speed** 8

**Smashing attack** (standard; at-will)

+20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage and any target hit by the smashing attack is also knocked prone.

**Spitting Burst** (standard; at-will) \* necrotic, poison

Ranged 10/20; +20 vs. AC; 2d8 + 6 damage

Ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends).

**Mind Blast** (standard; encounter) \* psychic

Area burst 3 within 10; +16 vs. Will; 3d10 + 6 damage

All targets are stunned (save ends).

**Psychic Domination** (standard; encounter)

Range 10; +20 vs. AC; 4d8 + 6 damage and target is

dominated (save ends)

**Alignment:** chaotic evil **Languages:** abyssal, Tradespeak

**Skills:** Endurance, Athletics

**Str** 20 (+12) **Dex** 17 (+10) **Wis** 20 (+12)

**Con** 17 (+10) **Int** 24 (+14) **Cha** 17 (+10)





## Thousandspawn Mastermind

The mastermind template lets you take an otherwise normal creature and turn it in to a warped and twisted aberration of Ga'Thon. Many of the Thousandspawn appear as other creatures, either having adopted such a form or shape changing in to one, and are therefore not so easily detected. These masterminds are often the diabolical schemers behind vile plots and deeds.

This is a template which you may apply to any other creature. The base creature's stats are determined normally, and then modified with the following features:

### Thousandspawn Mastermind Template

**Prerequisite:** Level 12+, Intelligence 17+

**Senses** Darkvision

**Defenses** +2 AC; +2 Fortitude; +6 Will

**Immune** necrotic, shadow

**Resist** 5 + 1/2 level cold, fire

**Vulnerable** 10 radiant

**Saving Throws** +2

**Action Point** 2

**Hit Points** +10 per level

**Regeneration** 5. If the mastermind takes radiant damage, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn. They do not recover damage inflicted by zodiac stones of gods other than Ga'Thon, Minhauros or Shaligon.

#### POWERS

**Domination** (standard; recharge 4,5,6) psychic Range 10; Level+4 vs. Will; 2D6+6 psychic damage and the target is dominated (save ends).

#### Chaos Emission (Standard) Necrotic

Close Burst 1; Level+6 vs. Fortitude; Hit: 3D6+6 necrotic and chaos damage and targets are weakened (save ends). Any living creature that enters or starts its turn in the aura

takes 5 necrotic damage. The cloud moves with the mastermind and evaporates at the end of the encounter.



## Overlord of Ga'Thon

A few truly powerful entities have grown to become potent forces in the world of Chirak. Entities such as Zam Redar and Kostchie the damned are examples of such beings. Overlords are almost always unique entities in their own right, though they may look much like another, more familiar species. When designing an overlord, you should include unique traits which would surprise your players, or modify existing traits of the base creature in strange ways. The following template is a way to help you take a standard high level entity and make it a truly formidable foe.

Note that just about any creature will suffice for the base template, and a DM should feel free to enhance the creature's base Intelligence accordingly, if necessary. Many Thousandspawn take on a base form of an otherwise ordinary beast (such as a chimera or manticore) but exhibit much keener intelligence. This, coupled with their natural proclivity for shape shifting leads to an obfuscation of their true nature.

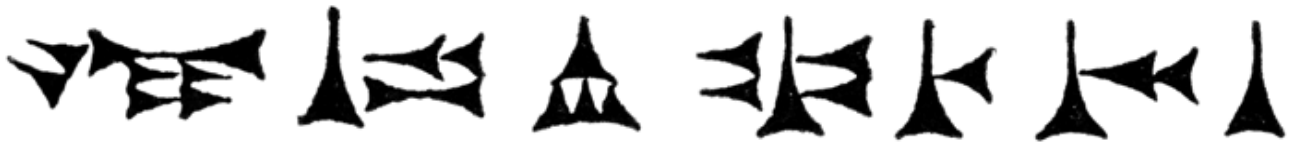
Overlords tend to be the secret masters behind diabolical activities. A DM looking to structure a lengthy campaign should work out a suitable overlord, a few underlings (rarely are the underlings masterminds, ironically; Thousandspawn hate to share power) and an army of lesser beings to carry out the evil plans of the overlord. Overlords are always concocting brilliantly evil and deranged schemes. They can't help it; it's in their blood.

#### Sample Evil Scheme Ideas for Overlords:

- Build a sky ship, conquer the Moons
- Reunite Lost Empire X by subjugating Kingdom Y
- Find Zodiac Stones and fuse them together
- Create new race of evil demons

**Other details:** Most overlords of Ga'Thon are noted for having ancient relics, zodiac shards, or other objects in their possession, even if they can't use them. Zam Redar, one of the more famous overlords, carried a scepter by which he dominated dragons, as well as a robe of sorcery that gave him near boundless power. Do not hesitate to dress your overlord up with powerful artifacts!

**Famous Overlords:** Some of the more well-known overlords include Zam Redar, Kostchie the Damned, Shmaga'thael, and Khaelos of Therias.



## Overlord of Ga'Thon Template

**Prerequisite:** Level 20+, Intelligence 21+

**Senses** Darkvision

**Aura** 10 (chaos, necrotic; all foes in aura grant combat advantage to the overlord).

**Defenses** +4 AC; +4 Fortitude; +6 Will

**Resist** 10 + 1/2 level cold, fire, necrotic

**Vulnerable** 20 radiant

**Saving Throws** +4

**Action Point** 2

**Hit Points** +20 per level

**Regeneration** 10. If the mastermind takes radiant damage, its regeneration doesn't function on its next turn. They do not recover damage inflicted by zodiac stones of gods other than Ga'Thon, Minhauros or Shaligon.

### POWERS

**Compulsion** (standard; recharge 4,5,6) psychic  
Range 10 burst 3; Level+4 vs. Will; 4D6+6 psychic damage and all targets are stunned (save ends).

### Call of Darkness (Standard; Encounter)

Five aberrant minions of the overlord's level or lower appear within 10 squares of the overlord and act immediately after his turn ends. They remain for the duration of the encounter.

### Chaos Touch (necrotic effect)

All damage the overlord does includes the necrotic trait and does 10 ongoing necrotic damage (save ends).

### Shapeshifter (minor; at-will) arcane

The overlord can appear as any other creature it desires of its same size or one size smaller or larger. This effect remains in effect until dismissed as a free action.

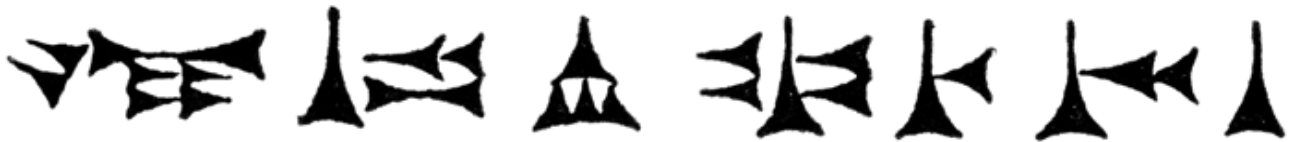
### Nigh Unkillable (unique trait) healing

Whenever the overlord reaches 0 hit points, it will begin to regenerate 5 hit points per round within one hour even if it was injured with radiant damage. If the overlord takes enough damage to kill it (the negative of its bloodied value) then it will disincorporate and reappear at a different location within 113 days.

Overlords are the kind of evil that never goes away, but likes to return for sequels. The disincorporated, blasted remains will begin to slowly pull together again...

No one knows how to stop this. All you can do is contain them, and hope they don't escape!





## Undying



The Undying are a special variant of undead elf, unique to the Realms of Chirak. In the ages of the Apocalypse, the realm of the Fey was unutterably shattered and rent open by the powerful chaos magic of Ga'Thon, and the vast majority of the fey population at that time was either destroyed or frozen forever in the Weeping Wall, in the highest passes of the Cossarit Mountains.

Undying appear to be gaunt, starved elves or fey, with a withered, parched look to their pallid skin. Undying often look oddly healthy after feeding, but will still look pale, with almost translucent skin exposing blue veins. They all have an aversion to sunlight.

The undying are formed from elves who were either evil in nature or suffered from horrible trauma. If an elf was evil in life, it has an easier time embracing its undead nature, and becomes more fully realized in its undead state. Other elves of different alignment seem to suffer from a curious amnesia about their death, and black out when they prepare to feed as the beast within takes over.

Men never understood elves and fey beings very well, but Preservationist scholars noticed in the centuries

after the Apocalypse that it seemed as if most fey and elves has either fled from the realm, or were simply no more. Beings which were thought to be fey, but which in fact were elementals, persisted. This forced many arcane scholars to reassess how they structured the planar universe and their understanding of extraplanar entities.

Nonetheless, some elves and other fey beings live on, trying vainly to recall their ancient days of glory. It was discovered by these beings that their ties to the old faerie realms were gone, or fleeting; as if a portion lived on, too far removed from the mortal realm for them to ever achieve once more. Elves were hit especially hard, for it is said that their souls on death would reincarnate as fey beings in the faerie realm. No longer did this happen, and in time, the first of the undying appeared.

Undying are haunted elves, who could not find peace in the afterlife, or who did not know that they had died, for the old ways and paths of the afterworld to their fey realm had been obliterated. Undying elves always share a curious lack of understanding for what they are; they do not believe that they are undead, and will not accept any efforts to convince them otherwise. They become creatures of habit, pursuing their goals in life with a single-minded obsession, and corrupted undying manage not to notice their insatiable hunger and the need to feed it; some become schizophrenic, driven mad by undeath and their inability to reconcile it.

Elves and fey subjected to any sort of undead creation spells have a 50% chance of become undying. Any fey creature has a 10% chance at death of automatically becoming an Undying. If the creature was an evil or chaotic being, it instead becomes a Corrupted Undying. If it died a terrible death, it must make a Will save (DC 15+ ½ the level of the dying creature) to avoid automatically returning as a Corrupted Undying.

Because of this phenomenon, elvish funerary customs lean towards cremation, as well as ritual decapitation. In fact, an elf will usually let his companions know that they should do such if he falls in battle, to avoid returning as an undying.

An elf who dies and returns as an undying will do so in 2d12 hours after dying. When he first appears, he will be ravenous and insane with hunger, lashing out at anyone around to seek sustenance. Afterward, the curious amnesia which Undying seem to be affected by will set in, although friends of the elf will be able to tell that something about him is no longer quite right.



### Undying Spawn Lore

**Arcana DC 20** The undying are a special kind of undead, created from fallen elves and fey kin. Little else is known about them. Elves fear this prospect, and ask their allies to behead them if they perish in battle, to insure they do not also return.

**Arcana DC 25** Most undying rise from death shortly after being slain. Elves are the most common sort of undying. It is said that most elves feel that this is their fate, since their restless souls cannot travel to the Fey Realm in death any longer.

**Arcana DC 30** Undying do not usually know, consciously, what they are and engage in elaborate self deceptions to keep it that way. They can be good allies, but will turn on you when you least expect it if you are not careful. The process of becoming undying drives the spirit of the elf mad.

### The Undying Charisma Drain Effect (Disease)

When a foe suffers a charisma drain effect from an undying, the target suffers increasing penalties to Charisma and all associated abilities (to hit, damage, and skill effects).

**Attack:** see the relevant undying stat block for details of the attack type that delivers the disease.

**Resistance:**

**Improvement:** Endurance DC 20+2/3<sup>rd</sup> undying's level

**Maintain:** Endurance DC 15+2/rds undying's level

**Worsen:** DC 10+2/rds undying's level

**Initial Effect:** target suffers a -2 penalty to all charisma based skill checks, attack rolls and damage effects.

**Worsen:** target can only recover half healing surges per day as well as suffering charisma penalty.

**Final State:** target loses 2 points of charisma permanently

### Undying Spawn Tactics

On occasion a number of elves will all be slain, and a necromancer or lesser undying may induce the lot of them to rise as undying spawn. This rabble is prone to turning in to a horde of hungry undying, moving from community to community, sucking the beauty and life from all they encounter.

Undying spawn are sometimes also the result of an undying going mad, when it cannot handle the transformation it has undergone. These insane undying sometimes still embrace their nature, becoming more cunning predators, but others simply go feral, turning in to wild-eyed lunatics feeding without regard for personal safety.

### Undying Spawn

Level 5 Minion

XP Val 50

Medium natural animate (undead)

**Initiative +4** Senses: Perception +8, darkvision

**HP:** 1 **Bloodied:** n/a

**AC:** 17 **Fort:** 17 **Ref:** 17 **Will:** 17

**Speed:** 6

**Immune:** disease, poison **Resist:** 10 necrotic **Vulnerable:** 10 Radiant

**Rending Claws** (standard; at-will) **Necrotic**

Melee; +8 vs. AC; 9 necrotic damage (13 vs. bloodied foes), the target is weakened (save ends); *Secondary Effect:* target suffers charisma drain.

**Weakened by Sunlight**

Undying spawn are less effective in daylight or situations that emulate daylight. They are at -4 to all attacks, damage and skills in such situations.

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Tradespeak, Elvish

**Skills** Bluff +11, Nature +10, Stealth +9

**STR** 15 (+2) **DEX** 15 (+2) **CON** 12 (+1)

**INT** 13 (+1) **WIS** 12 (+1) **CHA** 18 (+4)







| Lesser Undying  |  |
|---|--|
| Level 6 Lurker  | XP Val 250                               |
| <b>Medium natural animate (undead)</b>  |  |
| <b>Initiative +10</b>   | <b>Senses:</b> Perception +9, darkvision |
| <b>Regeneration 5</b>   |  |
| <b>HP: 55</b>   | <b>Bloodied: 27</b>                      |
| <b>AC: 20</b>   | <b>Fort: 18 Ref: 18 Will: 19</b>         |
| <b>Speed: 6</b>   |  |
| <b>Immune:</b> disease, poison <b>Resist:</b> 10 necrotic <b>Vulnerable:</b> 10 Radiant   |  |
| <b>Rending Claws</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Necrotic</b>  |  |
| Melee; +11 vs. AC; 1D10+4 damage (2D8+4 vs. bloodied foes), the target is weakened; <b>Secondary Effect:</b> target suffers charisma drain and the Undying recovers 10 HPs. |  |
| <b>Weakened by Sunlight</b>   |  |
| Lesser Undying are less effective in daylight or situations that emulate daylight. They are at -4 to all attacks, damage and skills in such situations.                     |  |
| <b>Alignment</b> evil   | <b>Languages</b> Tradespeak, Elvish      |
| <b>Skills</b> Bluff +13, Nature +9, Stealth +11, Thievery +11   |  |
| <b>STR 16 (+3)</b>  | <b>DEX 16 (+3) CON 13 (+1)</b>           |
| <b>INT 13 (+1)</b>  | <b>WIS 12 (+1) CHA 20 (+5)</b>           |
| <b>Equipment:</b> funeral garb and vestments from before death.   |  |

### Lesser Undying Tactics

Lesser undying are more aware of their nature, even if on an unconscious level, and are careful not to let their ravenous nature overcome them. This sort of undying favor befriending a victim first, and then sliding in after trust has been gained to strike.

When the DM sets up an undying encounter, he should keep in mind that the creature is usually on aware of it's true nature on an instinctive level, and so efforts to interrogate it will not force it to realize what it is, consciously. If a lesser undying is exposed in such a manner that it must confront its nature, it will immediately frenzy and attack.

| Corrupted Undying   |   |
|---|---|
| Level 10 Lurker   | XP Val 500                                |
| <b>Medium natural animate (undead)</b>  |   |
| <b>Initiative +13</b>   | <b>Senses:</b> Perception +12, darkvision |
| <b>Regeneration 5</b>   |   |
| <b>HP: 82</b>   | <b>Bloodied: 41</b>                       |
| <b>AC: 24</b>   | <b>Fort: 22 Ref: 22 Will: 23</b>          |
| <b>Speed: 7</b>   |   |
| <b>Immune:</b> disease, poison <b>Resist:</b> 10 necrotic <b>Vulnerable:</b> 10 Radiant   |   |
| <b>Rending Claws</b> (standard; at-will) <b>Necrotic</b>  |   |
| Melee; +15 vs. AC; 2D6+5 damage (3D6+5 vs. bloodied foes), the target is weakened; <b>Secondary Effect:</b> target suffers charisma drain, and the Undying recovers 15 HPs. |   |
| <b>Weakened by Sunlight</b>   |   |
| Undying are less effective in daylight or situations that emulate daylight. They are at -2 to all attacks, damage and skills in such situations.                            |   |
| <b>Mesmerizing Touch</b> (minor; Recharge 5, 6) <b>Charm</b>  |   |
| Touch attack; +13 vs. Fort; The corrupted undying can hypnotize by touch; target suffers charisma drain and is stunned; save ends.  |   |
| <b>Corrupted Healing</b> (standard; daily) – <b>Healing</b>   |   |
| Touch; +13 vs. Fort; Corrupted undying can use their own second wind to induce a healing surge in another target. The target will suffer charisma drain when this happens.  |   |
| <b>Alignment</b> evil   | <b>Languages</b> Tradespeak, Elvish       |
| <b>Skills</b> Bluff +16, Nature +12, Stealth +14, Thievery +14  |   |
| <b>STR 18 (+4)</b>  | <b>DEX 18 (+4) CON 16 (+3)</b>            |
| <b>INT 15 (+2)</b>  | <b>WIS 14 (+2) CHA 22 (+6)</b>            |

### Corrupted Undying Tactics

Evil corrupted undying have become excellent masters of deception, working to gain the trust of potential victims and then strike when least expected.

Corrupted undying who are still resistant to their nature will still operate like lesser undying, although they may eventually come to accept their nature, as well.



## Elder Undying

Level 16 Elite Lurker

XP Val 2,800

Medium natural animate (undead)

Initiative +17 Senses: Perception +10, darkvision

Regeneration 5

HP: 240 Bloodied: 120

AC: 32 Fort: 28 Ref: 30 Will: 30

Saving Throws +2 Speed: 8

Immune: disease, poison Resist: 10 necrotic Vulnerable: 10 Radiant

Action Points: 1

**Rending Claws** (standard; at-will) **Necrotic**

Melee; +21 vs. Fort; 2D8+4 damage (3D8+4 vs. bloodied foes), the target is weakened (save ends); **Secondary Effect:** target suffers charisma drain, and the Undying recovers 15 HPs.

**Blight** (standard; recharge when bloodied) **Necrotic**

Ranged close burst 5; +19 vs. Fort; **Hit:** all targets take 4D12+7 necrotic damage and charisma drain; **Miss:** target takes 2D12+3 necrotic damage and grants combat advantage until the end of the undying's next turn.

**Endless Hunger** (Minor; at-will)

One Target; The elder undying marks a target he can see. That target will take 5 additional necrotic damage when hit by any undying.

**Weakened by Sunlight**

Undying are less effective in daylight or situations that emulate daylight. They are at -2 to all attacks, damage and skills in such situations.

**Mesmerizing Touch** (minor; Recharge 5, 6) – **Charm**

Touch attack; +19 vs. Fort; The corrupted undying can hypnotize by touch; target is stunned (save ends); **Secondary Effect:** target suffers charisma drain, and the Undying recovers 15 HPs.

**Corrupted Healing** (standard; daily) – **Healing**

Touch; +19 vs. Fort; Corrupted undying can use their own second wind to induce a healing surge in another target. The target will suffer charisma drain when this happens.

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Tradespeak, Elvish

**Skills** Arcana +16, Bluff +20, Nature +15, Stealth +18, Thievery +18

**STR** 21 (+5) **DEX** 20 (+5) **CON** 18 (+4)

**INT** 17 (+3) **WIS** 16 (+2) **CHA** 24 (+7)

### Elder Undying Tactics

On rare occasion an undying lives for centuries, and becomes so powerful that he or she is a force to be reckoned with. Dwelling in remote castles and demanding tribute from local towns and tribes of elves,

these undying are a terrible menace. They are usually surrounded by many undead and undying guardians and traps.

## Undying Lord

Level 16 Lurker

XP Val 1,400

Medium natural animate (undead)

Initiative +17 Senses: Perception +15, darkvision

Regeneration 5

HP: 120 Bloodied: 60

AC: 30 Fort: 28 Ref: 28 Will: 28

Speed: 8

Immune: disease, poison Resist: 10 necrotic Vulnerable: 10 Radiant

**Rending Claws** (standard; at-will) **Necrotic**

Requires combat advantage; +21 vs. Fort; 4D10+7 damage (5D12+7 vs. bloodied foes), the target is weakened (save ends). **Secondary Effect:** target suffers charisma drain, and the Undying recovers 20 HPs.

**Weakened by Sunlight**

Undying are less effective in daylight or situations that emulate daylight. They are at -2 to all attacks, damage and skills in such situations.

**Mesmerizing Touch** (minor; Recharge 5, 6) – **Charm**

Touch attack; +19 vs. Fort; The corrupted undying can hypnotize by touch; target is stunned (save ends); **Secondary Effect:** target suffers charisma drain, and the Undying recovers 15 HPs.

**Corrupted Healing** (standard; daily) – **Healing**

Touch; +19 vs. Fort; Corrupted undying can use their own second wind to induce a healing surge in another target. The target will suffer charisma drain when this happens.

**Alignment** evil **Languages** Tradespeak, Elvish

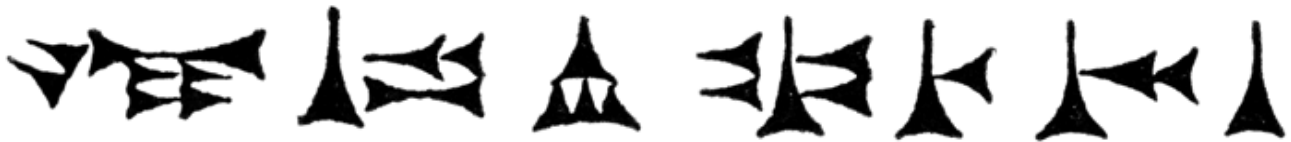
**Skills** Bluff +20, Nature +15, Stealth +18, Thievery +18

**STR** 21 (+5) **DEX** 20 (+5) **CON** 18 (+4)

**INT** 17 (+3) **WIS** 16 (+2) **CHA** 24 (+7)

### Undying Lord Tactics

A handful of undying live for a long time and become quite powerful. These undying usually surround themselves with lesser undying and sequester themselves away in remote lands, while preying upon local villagers for beauty and sustenance. There are almost always two or three undying lords in the service of an elder undying.



## Xoxtocharit



Among the many cultures of Chirak are a bewildering variety of humans both friendly and inimical to their neighbors, but few among all of the men of Chirak can rival the Xoxtocharit for sheer villainy! The Xoxtocharit are divided in to three principle cultures, including the xenophobic Kaz'Dul mountain men, the Zappun Lowlanders, and the elite Xoxtocharit. All of these cultures worship the 113 gods, and more about the nature of the Xoxtocharit can be found in the Gazetteer. Presented here are a variety of useful entries on some of the warriors and other threatening figures that can be found in the region, or moving abroad on sinister missions.

### Xoxtocharit and Demons

The Xoxtocharit revere the "113", the one hundred and thirteen demon gods of their dark religion. Not all of these gods are evil, necessarily, but they are all spirits, demons or other planar beings (and even some thousandspawn) that are sufficiently powerful that the faithful can gain some divine power from using their dedication to these entities as a focal point.

One of the most common rewards for worshipping the 113 demon gods is followers and servants. Many important officials and elite nobles in Xoxtocharit are accompanied by demon and spirit servants, or have bound cambions, tieflings and other planar beings in to service. DMs should be especially creative in coming up with unusual entourages among Xoxtocharit.

### General Kullanac

One of the secret advocates of the Hun'hunal cult, and a significant figure in the Usamanitza military, Kullanac is now convinced that the Hun'hunal entity may, in fact, be an ancestral spirit which has returned from the afterlife to restore greatness to its ancestors. He often engages in expeditions to find evidence of artifacts that will help promote and further his cult.

The following statistics work well for representing General Kullanac, or any other powerful general in the armies of the many city states of Xoxtocharit.

### Xoxtocharit General (Kullanac)

Level 12 Elite Soldier

XP 700

Medium Natural Humanoid (human)

Initiative +13 Senses Perception +20; normal

HP 280; Bloodied 140

AC 30; Fortitude 28, Reflex 27, Will 23

Save Bonus +2

Action Points 1

Speed 6

**Melee Basic Scimitar Attack** (standard; at-will)

+19 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage; High Crit Weapon (+1D8)

**Ranged Basic Spear Attack** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 10/20; +19 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage

**Enraged Slash** (standard; encounter)

+19 vs. AC; 3d8 + 5 damage; target suffers ongoing 5 bleeding damage (save ends). High Crit weapon (+1D8)

**Encouraging Shout** (standard; encounter)

Ranged 10; *Effect:* Kullanac shouts out a commanding war cry each ally within 10 squares may activate a melee basic attack against their nearest foe.

**Unexpected Recovery** (instant reaction)

*Trigger:* The general is bloodied. *Effect:* He gains regeneration 10 until the end of the encounter.

**Alignment:** evil **Languages:** Xoxtocharit, Tradespeak, Syrgian, Orcish, Zappun, Kaz'Duli

**Skills:** Athletics, Endurance, Diplomacy

**Str** 22 (+12) **Dex** 20 (+11) **Wis** 16 (+9)

**Con** 18 (+10) **Int** 16 (+9) **Cha** 14 (+8)

**Equipment:** Razor Scale +2 armor, scimitar+2



### Xoxtocharit General Tactics

A general is accompanied by his loyal soldiers, whom he directs in to battle. He will remain outside of the battle until he sees an appropriate opening, then charge in. He prefers to slay spell casters first.

### General Kullanac Lore

**History DC 25** Kullanac is the principle general of the city of Unsamanitza. He is known for his ruthless efficiency.

## Xoxtocharit Soldiers

The Xoxtocharit lowlanders breed elite soldiers to do their bidding, quelling uprisings among the subjugated masses, enforcing sacrificial rites for the priests, and battling insurgent rival city states. These soldiers are fearless, for they have been raised from a young age to believe that their only way to redemption in the eyes of the Demon Gods is through their sacrifice in battle.

### Xoxtocharit Soldiers

| Level 6 Soldier   | XP 250 |
|---|--------|
| <b>Medium Natural Humanoid</b>  |        |
| <b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +6; normal  |        |
| <b>HP</b> 72; <b>Bloodied</b> 36  |        |
| <b>AC</b> 22; <b>Fortitude</b> 19, <b>Reflex</b> 18, <b>Will</b> 16   |        |
| <b>Speed</b> 6  |        |
| <b>Melee Basic Scimitar Attack</b> (standard; at-will)  |        |
| +13 vs. AC; 1d8+ 4 damage ; High Crit Weapon (+1D8 on crit)   |        |
| <b>Ranged Basic Spear Attack</b> (standard; at-will)  |        |
| Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage; Each soldier has 6 spears  |        |
| <b>Phalanx Assault</b> (standard; encounter)  |        |
| +13 vs. AC; 3d8 + 4 damage; May only be activated when the attacker and 2 other soldiers are fighting adjacent to or in a line formation with one another. After the attack, all soldiers shift 1 and target is pushed 1. |        |
| <b>Alignment:</b> unaligned or evil <b>Languages:</b> Xoxtocharit, Tradespeak   |        |
| <b>Skills:</b> Endurance, Athletics   |        |
| <b>Str</b> 19 (+7) <b>Dex</b> 16 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 10 (+3)  |        |
| <b>Con</b> 16 (+6) <b>Int</b> 11 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 13 (+4)  |        |
| <b>Equipment:</b> scale armor, 6 spears, scimitars, 20 gold pieces  |        |

### Xoxtocharit Soldiers Tactics

The normal formation of a squad of Xoxtocharit soldiers is 60 men, with 30 in the rear throwing spears and 30 in front pushing forward in a phalanx to drive their

enemies before them.

### Xoxtocharit Soldiers Lore

**History DC 15** The Xoxtocharit soldiers are bred and trained to desire a glorious death in battle. They are reliant on phalanx tactics and spear casting.

**History DC 20** Xoxtocharit soldiers fear capture and subjugation as slaves more than dying.

## Kaz'Dul Mountain Men

Kaz'Dul Mountain Men are the rough barbarian wilderlanders of the high mountains of Xoxtocharit, freemen who have sought the life of freedom, away from the lowlander Xoxtocharit elites. Though not especially evil in any way, they are fiercely xenophobic and it can be very difficult to gain their trust. They also love capturing and enslaving foreigners for sacrifice to their dread Mountain God.

### Kaz'Dul Mountain Men

| Level 5 Skirmisher   | XP 200 |
|--|--------|
| <b>Medium Natural Humanoid</b>   |        |
| <b>Initiative</b> +8 <b>Senses</b> Perception +11; normal  |        |
| <b>HP</b> 62; <b>Bloodied</b> 31   |        |
| <b>AC</b> 19; <b>Fortitude</b> 18, <b>Reflex</b> 19, <b>Will</b> 17                                  |        |
| <b>Speed</b> 6   |        |
| <b>Melee Basic hand axe attack</b> (standard; at-will)   |        |
| +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage  |        |
| <b>Ranged Basic self bow attack</b> (standard; at-will)  |        |
| Ranged 10/20; +10 vs. AC; 1d10 + 4 damage  |        |
| <b>Bolo Trip attack</b> (standard; at-will)  |        |
| Ranged 5; +8 vs. Reflex; 1d6+ 4 damage   |        |
| On a hit target is knocked prone.  |        |
| <b>Avalanche!</b> (standard; encounter)  |        |
| Ranged sight; +8 vs. Reflex; 3d8 + 4 damage  |        |
| Target must be at least 20 squares away;; encounter is only activated during initial surprise round. |        |
| <b>Alignment:</b> unaligned <b>Languages:</b> Kaz'Dul dialect, Tradespeak                            |        |
| <b>Skills:</b> Endurance, Athletics  |        |
| <b>Str</b> 16 (+5) <b>Dex</b> 18 (+6) <b>Wis</b> 15 (+4)   |        |
| <b>Con</b> 14 (+4) <b>Int</b> 12 (+3) <b>Cha</b> 10 (+2)   |        |
| <b>Equipment:</b> heavy clothes, hide armor, self bow, hand axe, 1D10 silver pieces                  |        |

### Kaz'Dul Mountain Men Tactics

Kaz'duli prefer to lay in wait in an ambush, triggering carefully constructed landslide traps initially, then sending a mix of men with axes into battle while archers



fire from the rear.

### Kaz'Dul Mountain Men Lore

**DC 15** The Kaz'Duli are enemies of the Xoxtocharit lowlanders, and hostile to most foreigners.

**DC 20** They worship the mysterious Demon God of the Mountain, one of the 113, called by the lowlanders "The Smoldering Lord."

## Kaz'Dul Mountain Shaman

The Kaz'Duli shamans worship the Smoldering God, also called the God of the Mountain, one of the more blighted and fearful of the 113 demon gods. They are masters of their environment and feared by all other mountain men for their terrible visions.

### Kaz'Dul Mountain Shaman

**Level 8 Controller**

**XP 350**

**Medium Natural Humanoid (human)**

**Initiative** +7 **Senses** Perception +16; normal

**HP** 86; **Bloodied** 43

**AC** 22; **Fortitude** 19, **Reflex** 22, **Will** 20

**Resist** cold 5

**Speed** 6

**Shocking Staff attack**; (standard; at-will) lightning +12 vs. Fortitude; 1d8 + 5 damage and target is weakened (save ends)

**Spear of Ice**; basic ranged (standard; at-will) Cold Ranged 10/20; +13 vs. AC; 1d8 + 5 damage

**Freezing Blast** (standard; encounter) cold Ranged 10; +12 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage Burst 3 attack. All targets are slowed (save ends).

**Chain Lightning** (standard; encounter) lightning Ranged 5; +12 vs. Fortitude; 3d8 + 5 damage Burst 3 targets all creatures in burst.

**Alignment**: unaligned **Languages**: Kaz'duli, Tradespeak, supernal

**Skills**: Nature, Arcana, Endurance

**Str** 14 (+6) **Dex** 17 (+7) **Wis** 17 (+7)

**Con** 14 (+6) **Int** 20 (+9) **Cha** 16 (+7)

**Equipment**: ceremonial robes, lighting staff

### Kaz'Dul Mountain Shaman Lore

**Religion DC 20** The Kaz'Dul shamans worship a terrible deity they call the God of the Mountain, an exiled demon god from the Xoxtocharit pantheon of the 113. This god, like all the demon gods, requires sacrifice, but the Kaz'Dul prefer to use foreigners for this duty.

**History DC 20** The shamans of Kaz'Dul are an ancient sect, and some claim they were there long, long before the Xoxtocharit invasion of the region fifteen hundred years ago.

**Arcana DC 20** The shamans are proficient at cold and lighting magic.



### Kaz'Dul Mountain Shaman Tactics

The Kaz'Dul shaman prefers to have a handful of his people, or sometimes summons lesser devils to do his bidding. He sends his soldiers in to distract while he targets his foes with ice storms and lighting bursts, then moves in with his lighting staff if needed.



### Wild Devil Apes of Kaz'Dul

The wild devil apes of the Kaz'Dul highland are a bastard offshoot of a long-forgotten race of giants who are said to have interbred with devils in dark ceremonies to the God of the Mountain. Over dozens of generations this lost race degenerated as their breed was diluted with these carnivorous offspring, until they are nothing more than vicious, wild animals dwelling in the mountainous highlands. Despite this, the Kaz'Dul mountain men still revere them for their tainted infernal blood, and won't kill one without engaging in a proper ritual of appeasement to the Mountain God, lest they be cursed.

#### Wild Devil Apes of Kaz'Dul Lore

**Nature DC 20** The wild devil apes bear evidence of degeneration, and may be a devolved race of giants who somehow returned to animalistic ways.

**Arcana DC 25** The wild devil apes have the taint of infernal blood in their veins, and are often driven to strange, maddening behavior by the whispering voice madness.



### Wild Devil Apes of Kaz'Dul Level 8 Brute XP 350

**Large Natural Beast (half-devil)**  
**Initiative** +7 **Senses** Perception +14; night vision  
**HP** 106; **Bloodied** 53  
**AC** 20; **Fortitude** 23, **Reflex** 20, **Will** 19  
**Resist** Cold 5, **Vulnerable** Fire 5  
**Speed** 7

**Melee Basic Pummeling Strike** (standard; at-will)  
+11 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 damage; Reach 1

**Ranged Basic Thrown Rocks** (standard; at-will)  
Ranged 10; +11 vs. AC; 2d6 + 5 damage; Any medium target or smaller hit by a thrown rock is knocked prone.

**Rage of the Mountain God** (standard; encounter)  
Close Burst 1; +11 vs. AC; 4d8 + 5 damage; All targets in area are knocked prone.

**Black Curse** (instant reaction; encounter)  
**Trigger:** Foe reduces the devil ape to 0 HPs. Foe which slays the devil ape suffers a -2 penalty to all saves (save ends). This effect does not happen if the foe partook in a special ritual prior to combat.

**Alignment:** Evil **Languages:** Tradespeak, native  
**Skills:** Endurance, Athletics

|                     |                    |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Str</b> 22 (+10) | <b>Dex</b> 17 (+7) | <b>Wis</b> 12 (+5) |
| <b>Con</b> 16 (+7)  | <b>Int</b> 6 (+2)  | <b>Cha</b> 14 (+6) |

#### Wild Devil Apes of Kaz'Dul Tactics

Usually working in small groups of 1 to 4, the devil apes will first surprise foes with thrown rocks then charge in to lay waste with their brutal attacks.



## Chapter VII: Story Arcs of Chirak

Since I began running adventures in Chirak in 1992, numerous story arcs have helped to develop the course of the campaign. The following overview will provide a synopsis of the original campaign, along with a short overview of how a DM can take the storyline indicated and turn it in to a new adventure or campaign arc, along with specific ideas to help develop the adventures.

### A Note about Continuity

I personally like to keep a specific continuity to all of my campaigns and adventures. That means that what has happened before becomes canon, and what comes later will have been influenced by the prior adventures of others. Thus, in the following scenarios, the original tale (outlined in italics) has already happened within the canon of my universe, and some details of the event may be outlined elsewhere, or have influenced the history and nature of some places in Chirak.

However, that doesn't negate the value of these campaigns by any stretch. Each of the outlines below will include a way you can run the tale for your own take on the Chirak universe, effectively changing the landscape of your own campaign, but it will also include some ideas on how the original story can remain intact, and story ideas for where you can take further adventures on the same subject. For example, in the Tome of Planar Lore campaign arc, the book was already stolen and eventually recovered. But that means that yet another vile force could rise up to steal it, and the same essential campaign arc could still work to outline this new event. Likewise, in the later story arc involving the discovery of the Aquarius Stone, you could run this campaign such that the stone is discovered by your own party, replacing the trek of Mardieur Mardieux with one of your own PCs, or you could use the same plot line but substitute a different Zodiac Stone (there are plenty to be found, after all) in its place.

### Campaign I: The Warlord of the North

**Lands Visited:** *Legora, Hoagarit*

**Original Tale:** *The first story arc ever in Chirak featured a band of adventurers in Legora, facing an invading horde of Hoagarit, which they thwarted through diplomacy and force.*

**Setup:** In this campaign, the characters are all either native Legorans or mercenaries who have come to seek employment. The port city of Carton, ruled by the Jarl Erimdorn is the site of activity as the PCs are recruited to aid against an enormous horde of Hoagarit horse

warriors assembling south and east, under the leadership of a powerful new warlord named Ghunshak. **Complications:** The warlord Ghunshak has indicated that he would be willing to settle peacefully if the Jarl offers up his most attractive young daughter, Erimanda, in marriage, along with a suitable dowry. In exchange, the warlord will move his forces north, where the lake people of Darik must then contend with him. This is clearly a form of extortion, but the Jarl's advisors are suggesting it is worth the sacrifice, since the largest force the Jarl can muster is less than ten thousand men, and the warlord's legions are at least forty thousand strong. Worse yet, the city of Darik is ruled by the Jarl's ally Meradmanam, who is also married to his oldest daughter Brithinia, and he does not want to guarantee his own safety at their expense.

**Resolutions:** The Jarl is looking to the help of the PCs, with the possibility that he will send them to Darik as well as several other small towns to try and rally forces against the Hoagarit. While traveling to alert the neighboring towns, a wizened old Cannesh woman, a seer of the Bacgruit tribe, appears to the PCs and claims that the warlord is gaining his charismatic power from an ancient undead sorcerer named Vargarun who is using the warlord as a vessel to conquer the land. The wise woman believes she knows where the barrow of this old king is, a wight who holds a long-standing grudge against the family of the jarl that goes back three centuries, and she can lead them to this evil being to slay it. Without his counsel, she feels the warlord will quickly lose control of his army.

#### Possible Encounters:

- Opening battle with Hoagarit scout force
- Meeting with the Jarl of Carton
- Travel with the Jarl to meet the warlord, and hear his terms of marriage
- Jarl asks PCs to journey to find allies
- Skirmishes with Hoagarit horse warriors while traveling to Darik
- Meeting with the Jarl of Darik, who commits his forces to stop the horde
- Diplomatic encounters with the lesser lords of small towns
- Possible encounter with Hoagarit attacking a town the PCs were traveling to
- Encounter with the Cannesh wise woman
- Journey to the ancient Barrow Mound and confrontation with the ancient Wight



## Campaign II: The Crystite Uprising

**Original Cast:** *The Lone Paladin and others*

**Lands Visited:** *The Crystite Kingdoms, Madagar*

**Original Tale:** *In a side story of a Lingusian epic, a Paladin of Naril in one of the Cities of the Gods at the*

seek personal escape. Either way, they have limited time and must rely on the hubris of the overlord to not seek aid from other provinces so that they are not met with overwhelming force.

In the end, if the PCs make it to the mountains in the south they can get lost and avoid further detection by



*center of Lingusia was transported to the Crystite Realms, where he discovered the plight of the people being subjugated by these strange beings. He stays to lead a rebellion.*

**Setup:** The PCs may all be planar travelers if so desired. Otherwise, they can be natives who are on a Pardainse airship that suffers a malfunction and crashes in the Crystite Lands.

Here, they discover a farming settlement where Hybrid overseers drive the slave farmers to produce food for the Crystite Empire. The PCs can either help or seek a means of escape.

**Complications:** The Cylovite Overlord Kitah realizes he has foreigners in his province and musters troops to find and convert them. Simultaneously, the Zamedian elves of the town who have been enslaved are begging the PCs to help them escape south, back to their mountain homeland. Other species are enslaved as well, including orcs, dwarves, ogres and humans from Sabiri and Madagar. All would like freedom, except those who have been granted the status of overseers.

Some of the slaves have discovered ruinous catacombs beneath the province, remnants of an ancient pre-apocalyptic city. They think the best possible means of escape is through these catacombs.

**Resolutions:** This could turn in to a sort of quest to free the slaves for the PCs, or they could turn a blind eye and

the Cylovites. If they are captured, then the Cylovites will take them to the Changing Pits of one of their fortresses, and work to convert them to hybrid thralls. This can lead to additional efforts by the PCs to both escape and shrug off the mind controlling powers of the overlords.

### Possible Encounters:

- Crash landing/gate opening drops PCs in to the farming province. Thrall soldiers attack the intruders
- Slaves help PCs go underground if they aren't captured
- Cylovite Thrall hounds and soldiers seek PCs in hideout while the underground slaves beg for help to escape
- Escape via overland journey could lead to skirmishes with Hybrid troops
- Escape via catacombs could lead to encounters with ancient animates, golems, aberrations and deadly forgotten traps
- Arrival at the mounts and reunification of the freed slaves with their Zamedian tribe

## Campaign III: The Tome of Planar Lore

**Original Cast:** *Mardieur Mardieux, Caratea, Amysteri, Svonn Rass, Cortas, Collector Seven, Braxus, Asheldin Darkblade, and more*

**Lands Visited:** *Espanea, Pardainse, The Planar Realms, Nithiad*





**Original Tale:** *This arc set off the first true tale of Chirak, a campaign which ran for several years. Mardieur Mardieux, Caratea, Amesteri, and others were all part of the crew that dealt with Santana's plot to steal the Tome of Planar Lore to gain mastery over the Portals of Chaos. Using the book, he rekindles the Rifts of Chaos and summons his demonic minions. The storyline progressed through multiple arcs, both in and out of the planes, until the book was captured in the Acheronic Fortress of the Machine Lords in the Planar Hub. The story arc ended when the adventurers were betrayed and slain by Minhauros, who revealed his secret part in the plans to resurrect himself. The souls of the adventurers were sold to the Lich Lord Malenkin, who had a grudge against the party.*

**Setup:** The premise of this campaign is simple: The Tome of the Planes is a potent book and artifact kept safely in the Grand Library of the Preservationists in Barcen, Espanea. A number of vile foes have formed an alliance in which they intend to seize the Tome of the Planes in order to unlock its staggering power as a gateway to the beyond. Specifically, they believe that the god Minhauros is not truly dead, and that his spirit is still locked within his corpse, which floats in an unknown region of the nameless void called Limbo. Only the book can find his body, allowing them a chance to resurrect their beloved god.

For alternative possible spins on this plot, consider the following: The Planar Prison of Zvhaergas is a sentient tower and planar realm all its own, in which great criminals of the outer planes are incarcerated forever, unable to escape. The Tome of the Planes may be the only artifact in existence capable of creating a gateway that lets one of these prisoners escape.

There are other dead gods in Chirak that one might want to try and resurrect. The mystery of what happens to a god's soul when he dies is unknown, but it is commonly believed that the soul is stowed in the god's Zodiac Stone, or locked in his corpse. In truth, the spirit in the corpse of a god is more like a shadowy remnant of the original god, which does indeed leave a sort of imprint on its Zodiac Stone. The Book of the Planes can easily open a gateway to the resting place of a god's body, or even in to the special demirealm which is found inside the body of a Zodiac Stone. In theory, uniting both the spirit of the Stone and the shade of the god's body might cause a true resurrection, but no one has ever attempted this.

Another interesting spin: the PCs are the ones who seek to steal the Tome of the Planes. Perhaps they are evil and seek to resurrect their dead god, or maybe they are good, and wish to try and restore a lost good god, as well. Finally, they might be mercenaries, working with another agent, a patron such as the warlock Santana who is paying them to help him in his evil plan.

The Preservationists will naturally be opposed to any theft of the Tome of the Planes. The grand Library is very secure, and thievery may be the simplest means of trying to get it, but an assault by force against Barcen would work if the attackers were strong enough. In the original tale of theft, the attackers called upon a small army of devout demonic servants who swelled up from the aquatic Rift of Chaos, a permanent planar gate to the Abyssal Realms. The demonic assault was repelled, but gave the attackers enough time to enter the harbor, siege the library, and steal the tome.

Once the tome is secured, it has to be taken to a special fortress in the planar realms, called the Acheronic Fortress, where a race called the Machine Lords can help to decipher it, revealing the page which contains the gateway to the portal so desired. Even then, the journey will be difficult, as it open only to the plane itself, and the journey to the desired object may be long and difficult.

**Complications:** The PCs seeking to recover the tome will need to find a way to follow the thieves in to the Planar Realms. There, they must find out how to track them, and in doing so eventually go to the Acheronic Fortress to try and confront their foes, only to discover that they have already opened a gate and passed through to find the body of the fallen god. At that point, they must pursue them, discovering that the gateway leads to a region of Limbo which mirrors the southern lands of Nithiad and Huron, a sort of "Dream made Real" by the last thoughts of the fallen god Minhauros (or whichever god you choose). In this case, the illusion-made-real reflects the homeland of the fallen god when he was mortal. After a series of harrowing adventures (which with Minhauros involved a diabolical maze that they could not escape without the help of Minhauros' bastard daughter Milina) and evading deadly traps, the characters must try and stop the villains from awakening the shade of the dead god. Worse yet, the villains need a corpse, fresh, in which to provide a body for the shade. In the original tale, all of the PCs were slain in a diabolical trap at the very end, while moving through the mountainous body of the fallen god, so large it seemed to be like a normal mountain to them. The villains used the body of Mardieur Mardieux to awaken the shade of Minhauros, who then came back to life. Minhauros' stone was taken from Milina, who was left with but a shard, and he was fully restored (or so it seemed; his shade and spirit were never reunited, it turned out; the spirit in the stone is but a shade as well, a mere engram of memory of its former owner, and not a true soul.)

This ended the original campaign arc and opened a new campaign arc, for in the course of their adventures the heroes had angered the Lich Malenkin, who insisted he take their souls for his own means, and to keep them from returning to their bodies to cause trouble for



Minhauros. The heroes were so trapped for a year, before a lucky break allowed them to return in homunculi bodies in Campaign Arc IV.

You can always try something like this in your own campaign, but I recommend that you have a series of “possible options” for the story. In this case, if the players had survived the trap that killed them, one of the fallen villains, or a subject intentionally brought along to serve as a host, could have been the body which the god’s shade inhabited. The original events were essentially unscripted: I had no intention of killing the PCs, but it happened, and the opportunity to use that

The original campaign extended in to two arcs, the second of which (Campaign V) resulted in the final showdown with the shade of Minhauros. You could easily postpone such a conflict for a future time when your PCs are suitably epic, as well.

If you engineer (or by happenstance) the PCs deaths and integrate it in to the plot, then go immediately to Campaign V and continue from there.

**Possible Encounters:**

- Theft of the Tome of the Planes by the minions of the villains could have PCs present
- Siege of Barcen as cover for the theft of the Tome could



arc as in the storyline worked out great. Likewise, converting a TPK (total party kill) in to a new story arc was a lot of fun, although one player never really forgave me for it!

Resolutions: The storyline as presented is pretty complicated, but the resolutions are many. PCs could get lucky and thwart the villains early on, perhaps catching up to them sooner than later. If as DM you maintain an event-based timeline then you control this. If you use a predefined timeline, and the PCs find a way to shave some time off their pursuit, then this option is indeed possible.

If the god is awakened, then the PCs are (usually) obliged to stop it if it is evil. Even if it was the shade of a good god that was resurrected, perhaps even by the PCs themselves, they will quickly discover that this is really an undead shadow of its former self, and the shade must still be stopped as it begins to go mad.

also have PCs present

- An assault on the island HQ of the villains leads to the discovery that they have fled to the planes
- The journey to a known planar gate on the Mythric Isles to follow the villains
- An encounter with a powerful planar being, the ancient entity Totamon, a librarian who can tell the PCs where the Tome has gone
- The journey to the Acheronic Fortress and the siege of the fortress
- Discovery of the planar gate, and following the villains through it in to the illusory realm of the dead god
- The passage through many deadly traps and terrain (such as mazes, spectral armies, and memory-recreations of the god)
- The arrival at the vast and mountainous body of the dead god, floating in Limbo
- The assault on the villains, and either the thwarting of the resurrection of the god’s shade or the witness of it



happening, and the god departing, possibly, leaving the PCs supposedly entombed in his old corpse while he returns to Chirak to finish the job he started two millennia ago. Luckily, the Tome of the Planes is left behind to aid their escape!

#### **Campaign IV: Zodiac Stone Unearthed**

**Original Cast:** *Mardieur Mardieux, Syria Nystor, Nissan Dreylore, Cortas, Asheldin Darkblade, Trector Cyberius, Aesrik Krenshaw, Vimi, Corstanas, Sythinira, Brigihita, Asar, Silent, Katin, Kryvysk, Collector Seven, and more*

**Lands Visited:** *Mercurios, Kasdalan, Nubiria, Shokoztoni, Espanea*

**Original Tale:** *The third campaign arc began where the last ended: a year later, gem stones on a shelf in the lich Malenkin's tower. Malenkin's cloning experiments go awry when the captured adventurers manage to free their souls in to clone bodies, and are restored to life. They separate, wandering in different directions. Amysteri becomes a ranger defending the humans of Scale Wood. Caratea returns to Espanea to lead a rebellion against the forces of Minhauros, which have conquered the capital. Mardieur heads south and discovers the Aquarius Stone, then goes on to thwart a plan of conquest by Lady Poe, discovers a Tomb of Horrors, and returns to Mercurios where he establishes his villa and receives his wizardly training at the Tower of Kaledon. He eventually confronts the fleet of ships sent by Minhauros-conquered Espanea and Nithiad, and returns to Barcen where he destroys Minhauros in an avatar vs. avatar duel.*

**Setup:** This tale is intended to be a sequel to the previous campaign arc, and it assumes that the shade of the god that is restored at the end of the last adventure has been let free to wreak havoc in the world for some time, and the adventurers, who eventually escape imprisonment either in the planes or otherwise (such as in the original story, where their bodies are gone and their souls escape in to homunculi, which take on the forms of their original bodies after their souls come to inhabit the new forms), and then seek to restore the balance and destroy the errant god-shade.

You can use this story arc without the original campaign before it by simply introducing the situation: a vile shade of darkness has returned, an undead god (Minhauros or another) who has drawn forth a great army of demons and other dark minions with the intent of slaughtering his enemies, enslaving the Espaneans or another group who are descended from his enemies of old, and eventually restore his power to the point where he can finish his conquest.

In the old days, one fact about the Apocalypse has long been lost: the reason Minhauros, Ga'Thon and Shaligon united to instigate the terrible conflict was because they sought unlimited power. These three gods had become privy to an ancient secret, kept in a remote tower now lost to time, about a potent ritual that would allow a god to fuse himself with as many as four of the Zodiac Stones, increasing his power to improbable levels. The trio of conspirators had intended to become nearly omnipotent in this manner, although each quietly plotted to destroy the others and seize all of the stones for themselves, after the slaughter of their foes was over.

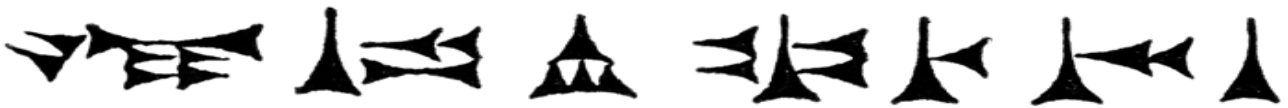
This original plan never came to pass, for it turned out the Apocalypse was a stalemate, after which the great sacrifice of Akquinarios and then Pornyphiros led to the death of all the gods, insuring the usurpers would not live to destroy the world in their madness. But now, Minhauros (or one of the others) is back, and his long term plan is to find the stones, claim them from their avatars, and finish what he started.

**Complications:** At this level of the story, nothing should ever be easy, and the threat Minhauros poses in one which is best confronted with an army at the character's backs. Likewise, by now the DM should include a shard or Zodiac Stone which one of the PCs can find, giving them an edge against the threat of the reborn god.

In the original tale, a number of side stories presented themselves: scheming villains (Lady Poe) who wanted to gain the Zodiac Stone from its bearer first, warfare and civil strife among potential ally kingdoms that needed to be resolved so that those same kingdoms could unite to create a force large enough to oppose Minhauros's armies. Finally, when the PCs are tough enough and ready to face off their mortal enemy, they needed to siege Barcen, somehow free the imprisoned king, and then confront the ultimate bad guy once and for all in a show down of epic proportions.

#### **Possible Encounters:**

- Assassins sent by the shade god to slaughter the PCs
- Civil wars among potential allies that must be resolved to gain their armies in a crusade against the god resurrected
- Other villains who seek to confront the PCs to steal the Zodiac Stone they possess, or to offer a duplicitous alliance
- Potential allies who seek the PCs out to offer their services in the coming war
- Rescue of the king and queen who have been deposed by the shade god



*“Passage to the Body of the Dead God Minhauros in Limbo”*

### **Campaign V: The City in the White Desert**

**Original Cast:** *Myriad heroes eager to aid the city of Eristantopolis*

**Lands Visited:** *Masiria, the White Desert*

**Original Tale:** *This was a short campaign arc in which an army of demonic beasts rose up in force, blocking the trade routes between Eristantopolis and Masiria. The City in the White Desert is the fabled Mecca of knowledge and the birthplace of the Preservationist movement, so the threat that a horde of monsters rising up to destroy it was one to be taken seriously.*

**Setup:** This story is a good short campaign arc, although it could easily be expanded in to a larger premise. In the original tale, a half-demon named Baslak Nahur (see appendix I for more on this foe) has rallied a horde of orcs, half-demons, and other monsters together to disrupt trade and eventually march on Eristantopolis to sack it. The characters were well-meaning travelers to the city who realized its peril and worked to intervene. In the end, they went to the fabled Black Dome of the region where they were able to petition the aid of the

(very dangerous) animates in that facility to protect the White City, although that in turn led to the animates of the Black Dome demanding payment in the form of the grand library itself....

**Complications:** There are lots of interesting possible complications in this tale, from the animates of the Black Dome and their mysterious intentions to local barbarian tribes who may be antithetical to both sides, but could possibly be swayed to help the PCs with sufficient incentives.

#### **Possible Encounters:**

- The animates of the Black Dome
- The forces of Baslak Nahur
- Local barbarian tribes
- Caravans being attacked by Nahur’s forces
- Worst Case Scenario: the siege of Eristantopolis!



## Campaign VI: The Journey West

**Original Cast:** *Mardieur Mardieux, Kaosark, Sabirina Kabaël, Olivar Unares, Meridii, and others*

**Lands Visited:** *Sabiri, Pelegar, Helios, Konan-Dal*

**Original Tale:** *This story arc followed campaign V, relaying the further adventures of Mardieur Mardieux and companions as he decided to set off on a visionary journey to the fabled West. The principle here is a hero's journey, a vision quest if you will, to a region considered akin to fable by the eastern kingdoms of Chirak. The main focus of this story arc is that of an avatar who has begun his quest, and seeks answers to the mysteries of the gods. He travels towards Abraheil, the Shattered Lands, and many questions. Along the way, dark and powerful evils confront him.*

**Setup:** The main focus of this sort of story arc should be on the characters and their decision to pursue the mysteries of the Zodiac Stone that they either recently acquired or received in a prior campaign arc. The notion of the hero's journey of discovery is prominent here.

In Chirak, most regions beyond the core kingdoms around the Sea of Chirak are considered fabled and mysterious lands, about which more rumor, myth and folklore abound than any reality. The farthest west any of the Kaldinian cultures have penetrated, for example, is the colonial town of Fartheren, about one hundred miles from the western coast of the Sea of Chirak. Beyond that, almost no direct interaction with kingdoms such as Pelegar, Abraheil, Helios and so forth are ever to be had. Even further away, in realms such as the southwestern Therias, or eastward beyond Correnstal to the Yellow Kingdoms and the Sappharitic Kingdoms lie many more mysteries than truths. Even the relatively close northern realms of Syrgia are considered largely the domain of myth.

**Complications:** Essentially, any characters who wish to learn some of the real truths of the world will find it desirous to set out to explore the mysteries of the lands, and to spread the word of any avatars that may be present. The acquisition of believer and followers is imperative to a character that is serious about pursuing the long and tumultuous road to godhood. The West is an excellent choice of direction, if only because it is said that the very bodies of gods who fell in the mortal plane can be found there, such as the flesh of Ga'Thon in the Cossarit Mountains, and the frozen, stone body of Pornyphiros even further beyond. Many terrifying and evil entities still dwell in the region of Pelegar, remnants of the Apocalypse who are now without purpose and have turned to suffering and woe as their repast. These are the foes worthy of an epic party of heroes!

## Possible Encounters:

- The demons and monsters of Pelegar would seek to oppose good avatars
- The West's known avatars descended from Pornyphiros would immediately seek to gain alliance or establish a new avatar as a nemesis, depending on his intentions
- The old kingdoms of the West are often more savvy to their predicament and legacy than the eastern kingdoms, and will seek to slay or ally with avatars that enter their lands

## Campaign VII: War in Correnstal

**Original Cast:** Arcain, Quinna, Fletcher, Burlysar, and others; Second group included Trandil the shaman, Kargath and Ibex the minotaurs, and the Lone Elf

**Lands Visited:** Correnstal, Dragos

**Original Tale:** This story arc presented the strife-torn land of Correnstal and a fight for power between the king and his eldest, while dark Dragosian forces and goblinoid armies led by the Eradariin intervene. The hearty corporal Arcain aids the young Quinna in getting to the capitol, where it is revealed that she is the true heir to the throne. Along the way, traitors and Dragosian spies seek to stop her, but fail. Quinna begins her reign as a young monarch, surrounded by treacherous allies, facing the deadly enemy kingdom of Dragos.

After a year, Quinna is being groomed to assume the role of the throne, while the manipulative nobles who have secretly allied themselves with the Dragosians prepare for civil war. In the mountains, the Eradariin rise up, but daring crews of militiamen are able to staunch the Dragos-influenced elves and their goblin hordes from starting a new war in the Kyurtaim Mountains. Setup: This is a campaign region rife with political and military intrigue. The Kyurtaim Mountains are riddled with the tunnels of the Lower Dark, and within can be found the scheming red elves, the eradariin, who wish to come back to the surface world with their army of goblins and conquer the humans. They have struck a pact with the Dragosians, who are scheming to at last topple the Correnstalian regime and plan to divide the kingdom up with the red elves. In the midst of this, an ancient king and his eldest relative, in line for the throne, must contend with an errant girl who turns out to be the closest legal heir to the throne, but was a bastard child who was spirited away as an infant to avoid embarrassment for the throne.

Complications: Characters could be soldiers or mercenaries in the service of one or more of the sides in this nebulous conflict. There is a legend in Correnstal that when the time is right, the first king of the land will rise again to protect this land from foreign invaders (the Dragosians) and the PCs may end up seeking out this legendary tomb in the heart of the realm to awaken a



forgotten king from some sort of suspended animation, or undeath even. The old king of Correnstal may decide that Quinna is the true heir, and must be so groomed. She ends up being the charge of the PCs, who must safeguard her against assassins and other dire threats. In the Kyurtain Mountains the red elves work with the vile necromancer Lord Feral and his crew of Dragosian insurgents to find safe passage to the surface world to begin their attacks, and the PCs may be hired to investigate the recent rash of goblin sightings in mountain towns. Finally, the Dragosians may tire of this game entirely and march on Correnstal in an effort to seize their rival kingdom by force.

#### Possible Encounters:

- Red elf and goblin armies in the mountains
- Dragosian insurgents
- Assassins sent to slay the rightful heir
- The spirits guarding the tomb of the First King

#### Other Campaign Nuggets

The following are brief synopses of other campaigns I have run to provide some inspiration for you. These are not outlined in any detail, but may give you some interesting ideas.

#### The Northern Companies

A tale of Lady Arvyllia Poe, Draelon Khorst, and their company of mercenaries in the war-torn lands of Syrgia. Syrgia in the north is riddled with rival kingdoms, while battling constantly against incursions from their western enemies, the Xoxtocharit, and their rivals in the south, the Legorans. This is a harsh land, difficult for most to deal with in its near year-round frozen winter, and in the original tale, a dissident renegade daughter of Lady Poe, the queen of Kasdalan, joins forces with a rough crew of mercenaries to forge a new kingdom in the northlands.

#### The Wanderers of Sabiri

This tale was set in the Sabiri lands and neighboring region. The tale of the warrior Marlonius Kord, Torgin the Dalevar dwarf champion, dervish Kiara Byarne and the many evils they thwart. Marlonius and co. begin in the city of Fartheren, where they stop the Ghoul Lord Boolion from awakening with the sacrifice of an Eholim woman. They journey north, to discover Madalios, and awaken a vampire elvish princess, bearer of a shard of Pallath, who is ultimately united with her people the Zamedians. The crew thwarts evil arcanists and rescues a Madalian city state under siege before assaulting the Kossarit orc queen in the heart of her empire with their mercenary company. The crew saves a powerful but undying elvish queen who they ultimately rescue from

her terrible affliction, after battling a diabolical orcish queen and her red dragon minion.



#### The Everdread Lands

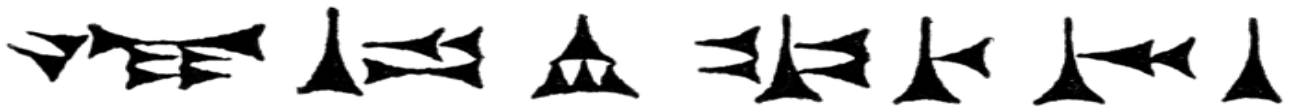
This tale was of a young centaur woman named who is charged with recovering the Dreaming Stones of the old dragon kings. She braves the domain of a demonically corrupted dragon and retrieves it, deep in the Everdread Desert, where she uncovers a mystery surrounding the role the dragons played in the Apocalypse, and how at one time in the past there were three great races of the dragons, one of steel, one of light, and one of the gems of the earth.

#### The Hunter of the Thousandspawn

This tale was of the wandering journey of the mysterious paladin Erishma, who had been charged with a blood duty to hunt down and stop the thousandspawn. She journeys to the sky realms in the east and fights a vampiric entity, then discovers a trade port to the utter east, before wandering southward again to eventually pursue the resurrected Zam Redar.

#### The Return of Pallath

This tale of Chirak begins in Espanea with a stalwart crew, including the preservationist Maretz, the Espanean nobleman Maximus Rheams, and the tuadathen elf Nethander. The crew moves to Grelmaine, where the threat of the thousandspawn Kostchie the Damned is thwarted during the Grelmanic revolution, and Maximus



meets the young warlock Rasvana, as well as the necromancer Sedara Braims. During this event they discover a shard of the Pallath Stone. The crew returns to Espanea and deals with the Obsidian Skulls and the discovery of a dragon cult trying to raise Tiamat, the dragon goddess of destruction. Here they receive the aid

In the end, the demon lord Kraish'degar of the City of Chains in the Abyss seeks revenge upon the heroes, and after they seek to free Rasvana from his clutches, they are tricked in to a portal to the mysterious Far Realm, a planar region at the edge of creation, and are never seen again. Meanwhile, Von and the elder white dragon lord



of the draconian woman Von, who is the reincarnated spirit of the great dragoness Tiamat, a destroyer of worlds who was called upon by Minhauros and others during the Apocalypse as an ultimate weapon.

The group eventually travels to the planes, and meets the living castle Zhaergas, during which they accidentally aid the ancient red dragon Rovas in escape and thwart a plan to raise the physical body of Minhauros, deep in limbo, from being raised as an undead monstrosity by Baslak Nahur. They return in the Dreaming Plains of Ulos, where they meet Erishma the paladin who seeks to slay all of the thousandspawn, and then travel to Pelaeus in time to stop the resurrected Zam Redar from uniting his army of old from Daman, as well as regaining control of the few living dragons to start a new army. At last, they travel to (and liberate) the Pallis Esemanthis, and discover is a secret pathway to the City of the Sun, where Maretz accepts his heritage as an avatar of Pallath, and proceeds to destroy the cancer of Chaos which gnaws at the fusion heart of Sol.

Kaos, awakened as Tiamat and Bahamut respectively, travel in to the cosmos to begin their cycle of death and birth anew.



## Chapter VIII: A Guide to the Planar Realms and Astrophysics of Chirak

The Planar Realms are a confusing issue of study. Prior to the great Apocalypse, the ancient empires of humanity used the planes as a means of safe travel between distant locations. They had also discovered the myriad and diverse other-worlds, countless dimensions which seemed to exist within an infinite expanse. The ancient scholars and explorers spent much time and effort studying these other dimensions.

According to surviving texts such as *The Book of Planar Lore* (a tome which still exists intact in the custody of the Preservationists of Barcen), the infinite dimensions of the Planar Realms are shadow worlds, like reflections in a vast pool of water emanating in ripples away from Chirak. Chirak, the book contends, is the first world, and in some ways the only world. All other dimensions are shadowy ripples, moving across the great void called Limbo, or the Outer Darkness.

This cosmocentric view is seen by some modern scholars, especially the Preservationists, as an incorrect view, brought about by the hubris of modern man's ancestors. It is thought by most Preservationists that such hubris was the cause of the Apocalypse, for had humanity been more humble and willing to regard the greater cosmos with equality, they might have realized their errors of thought and been able to act according to need, stopping the events that led to the Great Betrayal.

Other factions think differently. The Arcanists, for example, enjoy the concept that Chirak is cosmocentric. To them, this means that there may be a way to gain control over these so-called shadow worlds. The Concord of Kaledon, however, questions all of this, preferring instead to send out its own planar travelers to try and learn the truth of the matter.

Layered on this curious reality is the astronomical element to the world. Chirak is not a solitary body. It has a known moon, a secondary orbiting satellite of unknown nature, and a bright sun which, also, has an additional orbiting satellite. According to the Ptolemaic astrophysics of the world, the sun revolves around Chirak, as does the moon. Further out are twelve known objects, called planets that maintain irregular orbits (encyclical) around Chirak. These twelve objects are thought to be planets, and there is one for each of the Zodiac Stones. Each planet, in

turn, moves in an orbit of irregular cycles, and once a year each planet passes through a constellation, made up of the stars in the sky, which represents the same zodiac that the planet is believed to be attuned to.

To date, it is known that the ancients created airships which could move through sky and space. These airships, it is believed, were used to actually visit the twelve worlds of the Zodiac, and according to some ancient references, many strange and wondrous things were found, but all knowledge of these explorations was unfortunately destroyed during the Apocalypse. To date, only two airships are even known to still exist. One, the *Cannadad Dei*, was piloted for a time by the legendary explorer Nosaj of Legoras. It is currently in the possession of Captain Asheldin Darkblade, an agent of Mardieur Mardieux. The other is moored to the *Pallas Esemanthis*, the ancient, towering relic that was once the Solar Observatory of the Servants of Pallath, the fallen Sun God. The priest and new-found avatar Marez is known to have traveled on this particular vessel. Captain Darkblade is not known to have journeyed beyond the cloud layer, however, due to the hellish Sky Gaunts of Ga'Thon which dwell in the upper atmosphere. These immense, bloated entities, some much, much larger than even the greatest dragons, seem to act as entities of destruction, shattering any airships which attempt to leave the world of Chirak below. The remnants of ancient sky cities, which were once immense floating platforms on which ancient sky-islands placed in the air by lost civilizations, are still known to exist in the upper atmosphere, and according to those who still dwell upon them, the Thousandspawn lurk just overhead, a few miles higher, and on rare occasion descend to terrorize the dwellers of these islands.

So, to wit, the Astrophysical and Cosmocentric model of Chirak looks like this:

- Center of the Universe: Realms of Chirak
- Orbiting Chirak: Two moons and one Sun. Both Sun and Moons have smaller orbital bodies around each, respectively.

Beyond Chirak, moving along the lengths of great Crystal Spheres: Twelve Zodiacal Planets. No more is known about these planets.





- The Stars are a mystery, though they are thought to be glittering reflections of light emanating from the Crystal Spheres.
- The Planes are cosmic shadows, or ripples, extending from Chirak outward across a vast sea of emptiness called Limbo, or the Outer Darkness.
- Each ripple/shadow is an entire dimension. There are at once an infinity of dimensions, though they have an ending, as well.
- That ending is called The Beyond, where all time and space ends in Chaos.
- Known dimensions which are close to Chirak include the Fey Realm, the Dreamlands, Perdition and the Abyss.

#### **A Word about the Feywild of Chirak**

The Feywild, Fey Realms, Weiriding, or whatever name you choose to use for it no longer exists in Chirak. The first and greatest casualty of the Apocalypse was Ga'Thon's destruction and absorption of this sacred realm of life from which all fey creatures are drawn, and it had a profound impact on the Realms of Chirak. Should you wish to use the Feywild in some manner in a Chirak campaign, there are a few suggestions:

#### **Spectral Echoes**

The Feywild is destroyed, and though it no longer exists as a living realm, there may be ghostly shadows of it that manifest in the planes as "ghosts" of this realm, some of which may be inhabited by rogue fey or eladrin who are so tethered to the fey wild that they would sooner seek a home in these ghostly shards than suffer to live in the mortal plane.

#### **Demiplanes**

Some of the more powerful immortals of the feywild did, in fact, escape the destruction of their home plane by traversing the astral void and seeking out new homes in the form of demiplanes (see the appendix on Lost Therias for examples of such immortals and their Spirit Worlds.) These demiplanes would contain elements of the feywild that seem distinct, though small in scope.

#### **The Echo of the Dreamlands**

The power of some immortals of the feywild (such as Thyladion and Morrigan) have led to an effort to reconstruct the feywild, to bring it back to life. These beings seek to dream the feywild back in to existence, each one taking a turn in a special chamber in Lost Therias, where they collectively use their unconscious dreams to gradually reconstruct the feywild as an extension of the Dreamlands. The problem with this approach is that at least one of the participants must be dreaming at any given moment for the realm to exist, and should any one fail in this task, it will all be for naught. The complication (i.e. plot device) to this is the need to find a way to make this dreaming realm of the feywild real, outside of the Dreamlands.

#### **Other Planar Feywilds**

Just like the mortal plane of Chirak, there are shadow realms of the feywild in other universes, which many eladrin fled to. These realms are still intact for adventurers to explore.



## Chapter IX: Artificing & Devices

This is a unique brand of ritual magic to Chirak, a combination of gadgeteer and inventor with magical talents. The Artificer is a unique sort of skill which allows the ability to produce wondrous items, and is a bit like knowing Ritual Magic. Any character who has the Ritual Magic feat and who invests in the Artificer skill (below) may attempt to create the wondrous items listed.

Artificers are essentially talented wizards and otherwise non-magical men who have learned to imbue magic through in to devices rather than as raw spells. They do not harness the chaotic energy of magic, but instead channel it in to objects, granting them life.

Artificers are most renowned in Pardainse, the kingdom of the dwarves in the Burgeness Isles which is well-known for inventing many unique devices, including gun powder. The class itself can be found abroad, however, for the artificer is a profession that many have found to be a unique and useful form of magic.

Animates are also known for being great artificers, for they are thought to be the product of the ancient pre-apocalyptic artificers of the Old Mythric and Inadasir civilizations, societies which had elevated this form of magic to an everyday form, making transportation, living, and even (unfortunately) warfare much more sophisticated as a result.

### **New Heroic Feat: Artificing**

**Prerequisite:** none

**Benefit:** The character may craft unusual devices and objects according to the artificing rules.

With artificing, the character can craft any technological device that requires steam, elemental power, or a wind-up mechanism. He must have the correct materials on hand, and pay the correct gold piece expenditure for such (or the appropriate time and energy to acquire them through other means). Some sample items follow at the end of this class description, along with costs, DCs for success on the skill check, and time to manufacture.

All devices that can be created with this feat have a design penalty (the difficulty class that must be rolled on the skill for base success, the time to craft,

and the cost in materials (along with any special considerations). If all three goals are not met, then the device cannot be crafted. The artificer can try to speed up production if he so desires. For every day the artificer tries to shave off of the production time listed, apply a -2 penalty to success.

Artificers may also do the following tasks with their feat:

**Repair Construct:** An artificer can make a skill check to repair a construct (such as an animate). If he makes a DC 15 Intelligence check then the artificer expends one healing surge of his own and the construct is healed for their surge value.

**Sabotage Device:** The base DC may vary, but just as an artificer can make wondrous items, he can also damage them. Use the creation DC of the item below and subtract 6 for the sabotage DC against a Wisdom check. Success means the device has been temporarily compromised. If the artificer beats the unmodified DC, then the damage is permanent and will require a new skill check, one quarter construction time and one quarter creation cost of another artificer to repair to restore the item to functionality.

### **Sample Artificer Devices:**

Sample groups include curious gadgets, guns and explosives, mechanicals, and transportation. Any of the following devices can potentially be created by a character with the artificing skill, but the plans and schematics for devices must first be found before the device can be constructed. Although most devices below have blueprints available for purchase, more wondrous devices (DC 30 checks and higher) should be very difficult to find. The assumption is that these devices are truly wondrous and representative of the magic of the ancients, and so the knowledge necessary to make them has been lost to time. These devices include "schematic required" in their cost listing.



## Curious Gadgets

### Antikythera Device

**Design penalty:** DC 18    **Time to Craft:** 1D4 weeks  
**Cost:** 1800 GPs    **Formula Cost:** 180 GP

This sophisticated navigational computing device will grant a +4 skill bonus to the user on any skill involving navigation. It also lets the user predict seasonal events, celestial movements and eclipses, and other phenomena.

### Calculating Machine

**Design penalty:** DC 22    **Time to Craft:** 1D6 weeks  
**Cost:** 10,000 GPs    **Formula Cost:** 1,000 GP

This creates a simple calculating machine, one which can be used for innumerable mathematical applications. When applied to tactical combat, the artificer can use the device as a standard action to make a DC 15 intelligence check. If he succeeds, he gains a +2 bonus to his next attack roll. If the device is used before combat begins (but within 10 minutes of a known encounter) then the roll applies to his party's initiative.

The device can also aid the artificer in designing other objects. When using it to assist in making other devices, he can make an intelligence check with a DC of 20 +2 for every 5 points or fraction thereof of DC the device has over 20 to create the item. If he makes his check, he gains a +2 bonus to the crafting DC or may reduce the creation time in half.

**Example:** When using this to craft an elemental flying ship, he can make an Int check at DC 28, because the flying ship has a crafting DC of 36, which adds +8 for being 16 over. He makes his roll, and can now either get a +2 on his device check or reduce the crafting time from 1 year to 6 months.

### Elemental locator

**Design penalty:** DC 16+2 per extra elemental imbuelement

**Time to Craft:** 1 day per element imbuelement

**Cost:** 200 gps+100 GPs per extra imbuelement

**Formula Cost:** 20 GP

The artificer can imbue this object that looks and works like a compass with a small bit of elemental force. The object has a pointer that will point to the nearest location of a pure version of that substance.

More than one element may be imbued in the object; a switch lets the user recalibrate it to each element, which it will then point to the nearest source of.

### Gate activator

**Design penalty:** DC22+2 per extra use

**Time to Craft:** 1D6 days+1 day per extra use

**Cost:** 500 GPs +50 GPs per extra use of imbuelement

**Formula Cost:** 180 GP

The gate activator looks like a sophisticated key or similar object. It can activate inert planar portals, and will reveal hidden portals. The gate activators work like a sort of skeleton key, allowing the user to activate any portal (DM's discretion). It is useable once (to activate a gate) and additional charges must be paid for to make it work for additional activations.

### Mesmer's Glasses

**Design penalty:** DC 18    **Time to Craft:** 2 days  
**Cost:** 600 gps    **Formula Cost:** 100 GPs

These simple glasses of thick material grant the wearer a +2 save bonus against phantasms and illusions when worn. If on rolling a save against such the wearer rolls a 1, the glasses overload and shatter. Shards!

### Navigational compass

**Design penalty:** DC 16    **Time to Craft:** 1 day  
**Cost:** 50 gps    **Formula Cost:** 10 GPs

The navigational compass always tells the user true north and adds a +1 skill bonus to navigational attempts on both land and sea. It usually doesn't work in planar travel, though.

### Spell Activation Device

**Design penalty:** DC 25+level of ritual magic spell  
**Time to Craft:** base item 1 day +1 day per level of spell

**Cost:** base item 100 GP times the ritual spell level  
**Formula Cost:** 100 GPs

Any device can be turned in to a spell activation device, but it requires attaching an elemental converter to the object, which uses copper wires, a small crystal (nothing special, quartz will do) and some curious nodes made of elemental essence. The resulting device will store one ritual spell, but the number of spells it can store may be increased, with appropriate higher costs and difficulties. Thus, if the



artificer creates a stop watch and makes it a spell activator that can hold a total of ten spell levels, he must make a skill check with a DC 35, spend 11 days on it, and spend 1,000 GP in raw materials to do so.

A spell activation device essentially lets the artificer prepare a ritual magic spell(s) and place them in to the device, to be discharged as a standard action at a later date. Once the spell is discharged, it is gone. Note that in order to imbue the device with the ritual spell, he must actually pay the cost and spend the time casting the original spell, but instead of it taking effect at that time, the essence of the spell is locked in this device, allowing it to be saved for a more timely release.



### Sextant

**Design penalty:** DC 15      **Time to Craft:** 1D6 days  
**Cost:** 250 gps      **Formula Cost:** 100 GPs

The sextant is a simple navigational tool that adds a +2 skill bonus to any navigation attempts when at sea.

### Stop watch

**Design penalty:** DC 15 (normal) or DC 20 (elemental)  
**Time to Craft:** 1 day

**Cost:** base item 200 GPs (normal) or 500 GPs (elemental)

**Formula Cost:** 100 GPs

This creates a simple stopwatch. The basic stopwatch is a mechanical wind-up mechanism that can help to tell time and record the time taken to perform events. The more sophisticated version is imbued with elemental force (pick one), and runs without being wound up. It can tell precise time and can alert the holder if an entity of the same elemental type as that used to imbue the watch is within 100 feet.

### Telescope

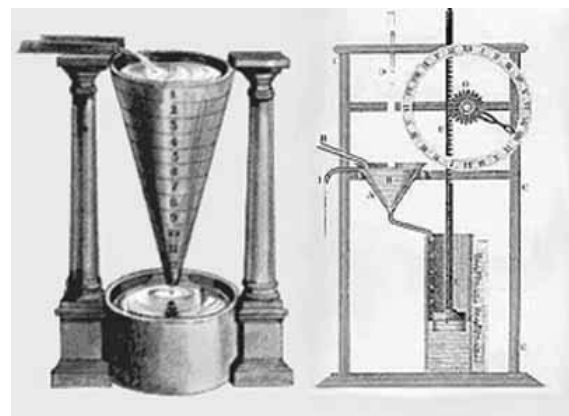
**Design penalty:** DC 20      **Time to Craft:** 1 week  
**Cost:** 300 gps      **Formula Cost:** 100 GPs

This creates a simple telescope with up to 20 times magnification. Add +2 to Perception checks when being used.

### Water clock

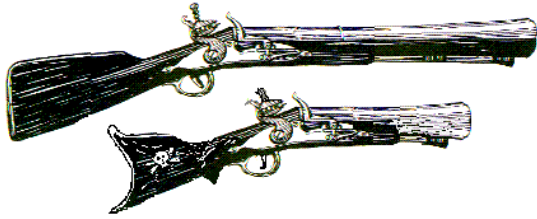
**Design penalty:** DC 15      **Time to Craft:** 3D6 days  
**Cost:** 800 gps      **Formula Cost:** 250 GPs

This device allows for precise time measurement using a simple system of levers and pulleys powered by running water (although beads or sand could be used, too). The device can be quite elaborate. Although it serves little practical purpose for the stalwart adventurer, the water clock usually commands market prices of 1,500 GPs or more, and so can be a lucrative source of income.





## Guns and Explosives



### Blunderbuss

**Design penalty:** DC 26    **Time to Craft:** 18 days  
**Cost:** 1,000 gps    **Formula Cost:** 500 GPs

This short-barreled blunderbuss is a primitive sort of shotgun, favored by dwarves. It is also load: very slow (6 standard actions) and high crit:

### Blunderbuss

*Damage:* 2D10; two-handed weapon; *Range* 4/8; *Load:* very slow (6 standard actions); High Crit; *Enc:* 30 lbs.; *Cost:* 2,500 gps; *Ammunition Cost:* 1 G.P. per bullet

### Bomb

**Design penalty:** DC 20+ 2 per 1[W] of power  
**Time to Craft:** 1 day per 1[W] of power  
**Cost:** 300 GPs for 1[W] of explosive power; 900 GPs for 2[W], 2,700 GPs for 3[W]  
**Formula Cost:** 500 gps

A bomb is a simple device which requires gunpowder (see the separate entry), one horn for each 1[W] of explosive power. Bomb base damage is 1D12, and damage rerolls and adds over on a natural 12 (this applies to all dice rolled for the bomb, no matter the base size). This is a thrown weapon with a range of 5/10, and it has an area effect of ranged burst 1, 2 or 3, depending on the weapon damage. Thus, a 3[W] bomb has a ranged burst 3 effect. The bomb's attack is fire damage, and all creatures in the area are attacked (Dex vs. Ref). Once used the bomb is, of course, gone.

### Horn of Gunpowder and Bullets

**Design penalty:** DC 18    **Time to Craft:** 1 day  
**Cost:** 15 Gps    **Formula Cost:** 5 GPs

This makes enough gun powder to fill one horn, which is enough to load and fire 100 bullets in a standard pistol or musket. One horn will also provide enough explosive force for a 1[W] bomb.

### Matchlock musket

**Design penalty:** DC 25    **Time to Craft:** 18 days  
**Cost:** 800 Gps    **Formula Cost:** 500 GPs

The musket is a longer range weapon, with a smooth barrel for longer shots over the pistol. Dwarves don't favor the musket, they prefer pistols and blunderbusses. The musket is Load: Slow (6 standard actions) just like the pistol. It requires bullets and a horn of gun powder as well to reload.

### Matchlock Musket

*Damage:* 2D8; two-handed weapon; *Range* 20/40; *Load:* very slow (6 standard actions); High Crit; *Enc:* 25 lbs.; *Cost:* 2,000 gps; *Ammunition Cost:* 1 G.P. per bullet

### Matchlock pistol

**Design penalty:** DC 24    **Time to Craft:** 10 days  
**Cost:** 400 gps    **Formula Cost:** 500 gps

This weapon is a useful and deadly ranged attack. It requires 6 consecutive standard actions to reload, so most pistoleers carry a brace of pistols and sometimes have a "powder monkey" whose job it is to follow them and reload.

### Matchlock Pistol

*Damage:* 2D6; two-handed weapon; *Range* 8/16; *Load:* very slow (6 standard actions); High Crit; *Enc:* 10 lbs.; *Cost:* 1,000 gps; *Ammunition Cost:* 1 G.P. per bullet

### Spear gun

**Design penalty:** DC 22    **Time to Craft:** 1 day  
**Cost:** 300 gps    **Formula Cost:** 100 gps

This creates a spring-loaded spear caster that will add +2 to the damage of any spear fired from the device. Furthermore, it lets such a spear be used as an aquatic weapon, with a maximum range of 20 feet. The spear gun requires a minor action to reload.

### Staff Musket

**Design penalty:** DC 26    **Time to Craft:** 25 days  
**Cost:** 3,500 gps    **Formula Cost:** 1000 gps

The staff musket is similar to the sword pistol, but it is a musket strengthened to work like a staff as well as being capable of being fired like a musket (see musket statistics, above). It does not garner any special bonus if a critical is rolled, however. The user must declare if he is using it for melee or ranged attacks. If he ever rolls a 1 in combat, the weapon



must make a save or be unusable as a musket until repaired.

### Sword Pistol

**Design penalty:** DC 26    **Time to Craft:** 20 days

**Cost:** 2,500 gps    **Formula Cost:** 1500 gps

The sword pistol is just like a normal matchlock pistol, but the weapon has been built in to the hilt of the sword grip, and the pistol's muzzle runs along the length of the blade. The blade itself functions like a shorts word or rapier (designer's choice). When using this weapon, the wielder can fire it like a pistol or strike like a sword. If he is proficient in both types of weapons, and he strikes for a critical with the weapon, then he may also roll damage for the pistol at the same time and to the same target, having impaled and then fired upon that target at the same time. The pistol damage is not maxed, but is rolled normally as bonus damage. The pistol must not have been discharged first; this only works if it's loaded when the critical happens.

## Mechanicals

### Automaton (no intelligence)

**Design penalty:** DC 25    **Time to Craft:** 1D6 months

**Cost:** 100,000 gps, schematic required

**Formula Cost:** 10,000 gps

This creates a simple automaton of small or medium size (3-6 feet) that may be configured as the creator desires. It will function at the creator's beck and call, but has no intelligence, and so can only perform simple commands programmed or spoken in to a receiver. The automaton has the following traits: Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int --, Wis --, Cha --. It is treated like a 1<sup>st</sup> level fighter or rogue in all other design aspects, with the following changes: It may be programmed with only one skill, and it must be based on a physical trait. It can respond to simple commands related to its base abilities (as defined by its base class). It takes a minor action for the artificer to program and order the automaton to act each round. Once programmed, the automaton will continue until the order is changed. All other construct traits apply to the automaton, as well.

### Automaton (animal intelligence)

**Design penalty:** DC 26+2 per level of creature

**Time to Craft:** 1D6 months+1 week per level of the emulated creature

**Cost:** 150,000 gps per level emulated, schematic required

**Formula Cost:** 15000 gps

This automaton is an emulation of an animal form, or possibly an advanced version of the base automaton. The creation of this automaton involves careful construction, imbuelement with an elemental type of the caster's choice (the elemental type will indicate it's elemental origin, and magic which could affect an element of said type will affect the automaton in the same way), and choice of form.

The automaton's base form of emulation may be whatever the creator chooses. It will always have animal (Int 3) intelligence, however. The level of the emulated creature will determine the difficulty. If the creature emulated is a minion, it will cut the design cost by 75%. The statistics of the final automaton will be as per the base creature, but the Int is set to 3, and the construct qualities are added to the creature.

Because the automaton is semi intelligent, it will be able to respond to simple orders in the language of its creator, which can be shouted as a free action. If left to its own devising, it will act on its own (as the DM wishes). The automaton may attempt to defy an order if it feels it has reason to do so (master is cruel, for example). A defiant automaton will require the master make an Int vs. Will attack. Success means it obeys. Failure means it has broken free and the master has lost control. Loyal and well-treated automatons usually do not resist efforts to obey.

To regain control of an independent automaton, the master must capture it and attempt a DC 26 Artificing check to "fix" it, reprogramming it to be obedient again.

It is also possible to find automatons made by other artificers and try to program them for loyalty. The artificer must make an artificing check equal to the creation DC of the creature as if he were making it, although the time is only 1D12 hours to perform this task, and no gold is expended. If he fails, it cannot be programmed to serve him. If he succeeds, then it is now obedient to him.

### Animate (sapient machine)

**Design penalty:** DC 36    **Time to Craft:** 2D6 months

**Cost:** 500,000 gps/level machine, schematic required

**Formula Cost:** n/a (100,000 gps)

This allows the artificer to create true life. The end result is an animate (see player characters section) which may feel loyalty to him, but remains willful



and independent of his master. The animate character race may be referred to on how to design this creature. It will function like a normal player character. The animate may be designed for greater functionality, if so desired. Add 50,000 gps in cost, +1D6 weeks and +2 to the DC per level over 1 if so desired.



## Transportation

### Elemental Carriage

**Design penalty:** DC 32    **Time to Craft:** 1D6 months  
**Cost:** 180,000 gps, schematic required  
**Formula Cost:** n/a (75,000 gps)

This device is a handy carriage, which seats four plus one driver, powered by nothing other than the motive force of an elemental engine. It can move up to 20 miles per hour, and has a tactical movement rate of 18. The device, if attacked, has 200 HPs and defenses of 18. It is unaffected by will-based attacks.

### Hot-Air Balloon

**Design penalty:** DC 28    **Time to Craft:** 1D6 weeks  
**Cost:** 75,000 gps    **Formula Cost:** 10,000 gps

The hot air balloon can seat up to 6 comfortably with two weeks provisions. It is not terribly reliable, and requires some effort at successful navigation. The pilot will have to attempt a DC 20 intelligence check (add 5 to the DC for bad weather) to keep it on course per hour. The rate of travel will vary, approximately 1D6 miles per hour.

### Dirigible

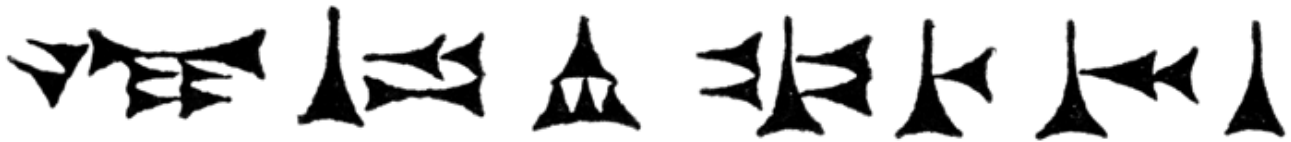
**Design penalty:** DC 32    **Time to Craft:** 1D8 months  
**Cost:** 250,000 gps    **Formula Cost:** n/a (200,000 gps)

The dirigible is a form of hot air ship which works much like the balloon, but with better steering (DC 15 for base navigation on Int, +5 for bad weather) and a travel rate of 2D6 miles per hour.

### Elemental Flying Ship

**Design penalty:** DC 36    **Time to Craft:** 1 year  
**Cost:** 500,000 gps, schematic required  
**Formula Cost:** n/a (100,000 gps)

The flying ship is powered by an elemental engine. It is statistically the same as a *spelljamming ship*, is seaworthy, and in flight can achieve cruising speeds of 50 miles per hour in atmosphere, and indeterminate speeds if it leaves the atmosphere. The cost of the ship doubles if it is designed to withstand the rigors of the vacuum of space, and such a spell requires the Enchant Magic Item ritual to imbue the ship with a magical envelope of air and gravity. There are presently only two known ships of this nature, the Cannadad Dei, piloted by a crew of adventurers in Espanea, and its sister ship, which rests at dock on the tower of the Pallath Esemanthis in Pelaeus. No modern artificer should be able to craft this vessel unaided. It should require first the discovery of the plans for how to do so in ancient ruins or some forgotten library, and then the acquisition of the enormous resources (as well as a base ship) to do so. Astral skiffs, spelljammers and other devices are all available artifacts in Chirak and its planar environs. This artifact represents a basic evolution for such vessels.



## Appendix I: The Legacy of Mardieur Mardieux

### Villa Mardieux: A Base of Operations for New Adventurers

#### From the Annals of Collector Seven

Nestled in the beautiful wine country of the three counties of Manark, Villa Mardieux is a lush chateau founded by the fabled young avatar of the Aquarius Stone.

Mardieur Mardieux was a minotaur of the Huron tribe, noted for his stark white fur, richly illustrated tattoos of victory, and a self-professed singing voice that could never be satisfied with just one minotaur dirge. Like most civilized minotaurs it was a hard road for Mardieur, who was captured in his teens in a Nithiadian raid. He fought as a gladiator for almost a year before he managed to escape, and made his way to the Isle of Espanea, befriending the paladin Caratea and half elf Amysteri along the way. Together they fought against dark forces that conspired to steal the Book of the Planes from the highest of orders, the Preservationists, and ultimately fell in to a dark trap laid by the vile servants of the spirit of Minhauros. Mardieur and his adventuring companions were slain, but to insure they would not reincarnate, Minhauros, who had taken possession of Mardieur's body, gave their souls to his lich-servant, Malenkin.

Mardieur, Caratea and Amysteri languished for a year in Malenkin's grasp before circumstances allowed them to escape in to the bodies of formless homunculi. Their very spirits altered the magical flesh into likenesses of their original forms, and the three lived yet again.

Suffering for so long took its toll on the adventurers, and they eventually parted ways, each seeking to find a source of power great enough to bring revenge upon Minhauros. Mardieur took a path southward, and in so doing came across a mysterious burial site being looted by agents of Kasdalan. There, seemingly by accident, he stumbled across the grave of the legendary Xernethian elf named Itharian, former avatar of the Aquarius Stone, and the last defender of the Pellucid Empire against the encroaching forces of Zam Redar centuries ago.

It took Mardieur a year or more before he grew to control the stone, and in that time he became a champion of the kingdom of Mercurios, the bane of the Kasdalanians, and gradually earned the trust of Iron Dukas himself. When at last all was ready, Mardieur, with many allies, led an assault against the vast forces which

had been assembled by Minhauros to sack the city of Barcen. The assault was a success, and Mardieur fought the god-spirit possessing his own body, slaying Minhauros a second time. With the aid of his mysterious ally Kal Vassos, Minhauros' spirit was at last placed to rest in a sacred tomb on the Isle of Time.

Mardieur Mardieux subsequently left the management of his Villa in the care of his allies, including Lord Krenshaw and Sythinira, then began his pilgrimage to become a true avatar, journeying to the West, where it is said that many secrets of the ancient remain to be discovered. He was last believed to be in the dreaded kingdom of Pelegar, where entities of untold evil worked to thwart his advancement.

Mardieur Mardieux is a background character that works best with an occasional, momentous appearance. However, adventurers looking for a base of operations and an organization to join will find that Villa Mardieux in Manarak is always hiring daring souls to do good in the name of the avatar, and to serve and protect the great kingdom of Mercurios.

#### The Villa Mardieux Grounds

The villa consists of five main regions:

**The chateau**, in which a small garrison of professional soldiers and hired hands reside

**The temple to Akquinarios and Mardieux**, where a handful of dedicated priests offer services

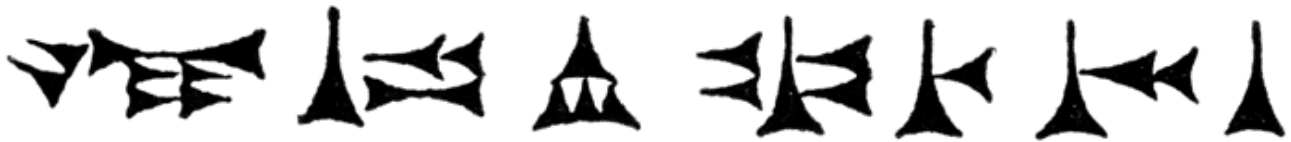
**The Vineyards**, where some of the finest wine in the land is produced under the Mardieux label

**The Library**, where scholars work to record the tales and deeds of the avatar and his agents

**The Training Grounds**, where adventurers in the service of the villa hone their arts

The villa is managed by Lord Aesrik Krenshaw in Mardieur's absence. The chief seneschal is Lady Sythinira, who carries on her duties though she longs for her native home in the eastern mountains. They usually hire between twenty and thirty reliable recruits a year, bringing young mercenaries and adventurers in to the service of the villa. The senior priest on duty is the





unusual Padre Kryvysk, a lizard man priest of Laddaskar, who works with the dedicated priest of Mardieux, the minotaur named Silent, to help teach the minotaur theology and history to aid him in his new pursuit.

DMs looking for a convenient institution from which to base activities for a group of player characters could do worse than to situate their headquarters out of the Villa Mardieux. The villa is charged with many tasks, assigned by the provincial governor or even the king Iron Dukas himself. Thought Mardieur has been away for a year now, should he return he is often known to have duties which he expects of his charges.

Some of the jobs that the Villa Mardieux may deal with include:

- Assassinate the chieftain of Kraggit Orc tribe in the east who threatens war
- A diplomatic mission to Dragos or Correnstal
- Rescue a captured merchant held by hostile Nubiri tribes
- Fight in the border skirmishes with Hashykarystir
- Quell an uprising among the Northwood barbarians
- Escort a noble on a diplomatic mission to Kasdalan, Daman or Pelaeus

### The Tower of Kaledon

Within the city of Manark is the oldest and most famous of the Towers. This venerable order has founded numerous towers of learning and sorcery throughout the realms of the Sea of Chirak. The Dreharadin Tower of Manark is regarded by many to be as old as the one in Barcen proper, and is considered by most wizards of the realm to be the preeminent center of studies in sorcery. The master of the tower is the elder Kal Vassos, a close ally to Mardieur Mardieux, and many of the students of the tower end up working with the agents of the Villa to accomplish the will of the king of Mercurios and the avatar.

### The Cannadad Dei

This legendary flying ship is believed by most to be singularly unique, and while it is believed that the ancients regularly used such vessels for travel, only the Cannadad Dei still exists and functions.

The legends of the Cannadad Dei tell of a Legoran raider and adventurer named Nosaj who traveled to the four corners of the world on many adventures nearly a

thousand years ago. On one such adventure he was given this ship in exchange for his great deeds. Although no one knows what happened to Nosaj, the ship eventually ended up in the possession of a solitary sea giant dwelling in the western reefs of Espanea near the Mythic Isles named **Vorastus**. Vorastus claimed to have personally known Nosaj, and he took a liking to Mardieur, Amysteri and Caratea, granting them the use of this ship for good. It's been working for the Villa ever since.

The Cannadad Dei is not just any old flying ship, however: it has been enchanted so that the entire massive vessel, which looks like a war-ready longship complete with oars and a battering ram in the shape of a dragon's head done in Legoran decorative style can fold up in to a small square of wood the size of a bread box. A user who invokes the ship's name and concentrates will cause the ship to spring forth, fully enlarged and ready to carry up to two hundred individuals. The vessel has all the properties of a planar spelljamming ship, but is believed by most to be nearly indestructible, as the last time it was nearly destroyed the ship returned to the form of a small box, and a month later returned to normal, fully repaired.

The Cannadad Dei today acts as a vessel for special missions carried out in the name of the Villa, Iron Dukas or Eddernine, or King Marcus Darego of Espanea. Its current captain is Asheldin Darkblade, and it is entirely too likely that PCs in the service of the Villa may get an opportunity to ride upon this legendary vessel.

### Heroes and Agents of the Villa Mardieux

The villa also comes with a number of lively personalities, who can serve as NPCs that aid the PCs in various ways. The following is a brief list and introduction to the many agents of the Villa, with essential data on who and what they are:

#### Aesrik Krenshaw

**Level 30 Paladin**

**Human male age 48, lawful good**

The famous hero of Krenshaw county has carried his family name in the service of king and gods for decades, and continues to do so. He is the protector of the counties of Manarak, and one of Iron Dukas' most trusted knights. His squire is Arden, a young man of some skill. Krenshaw is a dedicated agent of Mardieur Mardieux, and oversees operations at the Villa.

**Amesteri****Level 18 Warden****half elf female age unknown, unaligned**

A chaotic and driven ranger-bard from a distant northern elvish tribe in the Legoran lands, she was hateful of all her human kin, and fought for the sake of it. She helped to solve the mystery of the Book of the Planes, and experienced death and rebirth with Mardieur, before retiring to the life of a scout soldier in the border wars with the Hashikarystyr lizard men.

**Captain Arden****Level 12 Warlord/Wizard****Human male age 33, good**

An old captain of the Nubiron trade route town Arbor, Arden's community was saved from orcs and ogres by Mardieur. He begged to serve Mardieur, and became his squire and eventually garrison captain. He is the chief protector of the villa and a servant of the Tower of Kaledon as well, where he is learning to dabble in magic.

**Argos****Level 11 Fighter****Minotaur male age 24, good**

A crude dark-furred sort of minotaur from the Sandstrider minor tribe, Argos was freed from servitude by Mardieur. Argos serves Sythynira loyally on the Villa of Manarak, appointed by Mardieur as her protector. He fights with the battle axe and shorts word. He is a good friend to Silent, as they both survived together in the Nithiadian arenas. It was on a visit to Eddernine that their Nithiadian owner lost possession of the two, after an unfortunate run-in with the avatar. Argos has remained a dedicated servant to the Villa ever since.

Argos is also a lead contact with the Kraggit Orcs, who have come to trust him. He often attends missions in to the Dryssyrian Mountain when the job requires diplomacy with the orcs, rather than battle.

**Asar****Level 8 Barbarian/Ranger****Human male age 21, unaligned**

A Northwood barbarian with few scruples, he became a loyal ally of the Villa and servant of Mardieur after the avatar aided his people in being freed from a cruel noble. He continues to work at the Villa, as well as serving the Tower of Kaledon as a guard. He prefers two long swords in battle.

**Asheldin Darkblade****Level 18 Swordmage****Masirian male age 49, good**

Asheldin started as a navigator, became a first mate in the service of Espanea, then joined Mardieur Mardieux's crew on board the legendary Cannadad Dei. He eventually became an Espanean rebel during the dark times of Minhauros's reign, and ran messages to Mercurios. In the end, he became the captain of the Cannadad Dei, in the service of Kal Vassos at the Tower of Kaledon.

**Astrail****Level 10 Fighter****Dwarf female age 121, lawful good**

Astrail is young warrior-maiden of the Burgeness isles who wishes to seek fame and fortune on the Cannadad Dei. She maintains the cannons and keeps up on general maintenance. She is a wide-eyed and exuberant soul, and sometimes is mistaken for an overly large young human girl when she's not wearing her plate armor, warhammers and brace of pistols.

**Belar****Level 9 Fighter 9****Human male age 30, good**

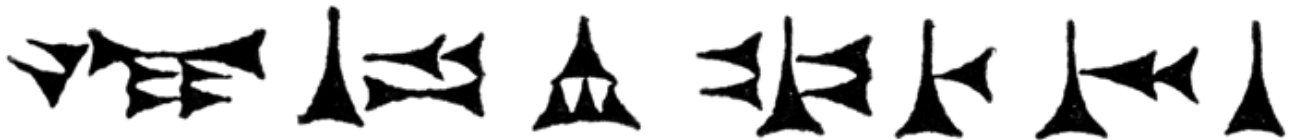
A rough and tumble Mercurian soldier, he was part of the armies that amassed to defend the Iron King at Eddernine against Minhauros's forces when they attempted to siege the Mercurian Capitol (and failed). He was promoted into the ranks and is now a captain, released in to the service of the king's armies. He prefers the great sword. He regularly volunteers for special duty at the Villa.

**Braxus Norspatter****Level 16 Wizard****Dwarf male age 224, unaligned**

A famous dwarven artificer, and the chief engineer of the Cannadad Dei, but dry-dock only—he hates flying! He is also now a friend of the animates of Beltraine, and seeks to learn more of the mysterious sentient golems. He often petitions for the use of agents of the Villa on quests related to the discovery of new lore and diplomatic missions relating to the sentient golems.

**Brighita****Level 15 Barbarian****Human female age 27, unaligned**

A survivor of the Kasarak highlander tribes, she is an enemy of Kasdalan. Brighita was briefly an ally of two avatars, including Gilrad of the extraplanar realm called



Lingusia as well as Mardieur, but was critically wounded in battle, and her spirit was captured in a soul gem. She was eventually freed thanks to the help of Kal Vassos and the Chronomancers. She returned to her native land in the southern Kasark mountains, where she relays information about Kasdalani troop movements to the Mercurians. She favors the great sword.

#### **Caratea**

**Level 16 Paladin**

**Eholim female age 50, lawful good**

The winged prodigy of divine planar spirits, Caratea was blessed with a fragment of the spirit for Pallath, and carries on in the name of the lost sun god. She is the force of bright inspiration, and helped to free Barcen of evil. When fighting against the forces of Minhauros, her wings were clipped, but she persevered, and acquired a sacred shard of the Libra Stone. She continued her fight against the arcanists in the west, where she was seemingly killed by members of the Brotherhood of the Asp, though the regenerative properties of the Libra Stone may have saved her life force.

#### **Collector Seven**

**Level 12 Fighter**

**Animate collector, unaligned**

Collector Seven is a reconditioned animate from the depths of Beltraine. He was accompanied by a guardian unit, which was damaged and taken in by the dwarves of Burgeness Isles in Pardainse. Collector 7 was last known to be wandering the Pellucid Lands. His records, which he freely transcribes and sends to the Tower of Kaledon, are masterful records of anthropological observation and historical documentation.

#### **Cortas**

**Level 8 Rogue/Fighter**

**Human male age 40, unaligned**

Cortas started his journey long ago with Mardieur, part of a crew of a ship that was wrecked by dire forces seeking to oppose the minotaur and his allies long ago. Cortas survived many harsh times, always acting as Mardieur's man Friday. Once he was hired as the old quartermaster of the Cannadad Dei, Cortas quickly rose through the ranks to become first mate. He continues to serve aboard the legendary flying ship. He has more lives than a cat.

#### **Sir Damon Corstanas**

**Level 19 Paladin**

**Human male age 45, lawful good**

Damon Corstanas is the dedicated once-blind knight of Laddaskar whose sight was returned by Mardieur Mardieux. He served for many years as a double agent, in Correnstal, until he was discovered and blinded in the dungeons of Dryfar. He was rescued by a gentle Correnstalian girl named Vimi, who he subsequently took as a squire, to teach her the ways of the Iron Knights. She acted as his eyes for three years until he was at last healed by Mardieur.

Damon is an honorable soul and a venerable agent of the Iron Order and now acts as an elder teacher at the Villa. Damon's young prodigy Vimi is an active agent of the Villa now, carrying out and even leading missions.

#### **Janna Corlaine**

**Level 12 Storm Sorcerer**

**Human female age 28, unaligned**

Janna is the wife of Asheldin Darkblade and chief navigator of the Cannadad Dei. She is an Esterhabauan woman and water witch, widely regarded as one of the best in her class. She once sought entry into the order of the Preservationists but eventually settled for her duties on board the Cannadad Dei, and worked on ships as a water mage and navigator. House Corlaine is a lesser noble family of wealthy Esterhabau merchants, and they are proud of her.

#### **Katin**

**Level 18 Fighter**

**Human male age 26, unaligned**

A native Mercurian, Katin was employed by the Villa but eventually left to return to Eddernine as a professional mercenary. He prefers a falchion in battle. He will still heed the call of the Villa on occasion if they seek him out.

#### **Padre Kryvysk**

**Level 24 Cleric**

**Hashykarystir male age 62, lawful good**

A monastic priest of Laddaskar, Kryvysk was an aberrant child, born in to the Grayscale clan of Hashykarystyr, a clan which was wiped out in intertribal warfare decades ago. His mother, or perhaps a servant fled in to the human lands and left the infant at the steps of a monastery dedicated to Laddaskar, the place where Kryvysk grew up and spent most of his life. The monks of the order raised him in their image, and he became a powerful priest and advocate of peace between his humans and lizard men. Padre Kryvysk first met Mardieur on a mission to destroy or disable the Tower of



the Basilisk, a potent weapon of war his people had built. These days he serves as a temple caretaker on the Villa, and teaches the priest minotaur Silent about history, theology and philosophy.

#### **Mardieur Mardieux**

**Level 30 Ranger/Wizard avatar**

**Minotaur male age 28, good**

A Huron minotaur who went from being a simple freeman sailor of Espanea to the avatar of Akquinarios. He killed A famous Lich known for his horrific tomb, Minhauros, Santana (or thought he did), and many other villains along the way, then founded the Villa Mardieux Winery in Manarak. He was last seen wandering westward to in search of the body of the god Pornyphiros. He left a legend in his wake.

Mardieur will primarily appear in the background in most tales. He is a young avatar, and still questing for immortality. Nonetheless, a resurgence of Akquinarios worship has been spurred by his presence, and especially by his actions in liberating Barcen and Espanea from the resurrected Minhauros a few years ago.

#### **Nissan Draylore**

**Level 14 Wizard Illusionist**

**Human male age 35, lawful good**

Nissan is a teacher of the Tower of Kaledon and seeker of knowledge. He is adventuresome, and tries to travel with Syria Nistor. He is sought after for marriage by Kalthea Lyn Vassos, of the Vassos clan, but he spurns her overtures, too beguiled by Syria and her mysterious ways.

Nissan is readily considered the most proficient illusionist in the land, who is not also a gnome! He plays this down as much as possible, to remain anonymous.

#### **Silent**

**Level 11 Fighter/Cleric**

**Minotaur male age 23, good**

The brood brother of Argos, captured and raised by the same Nithadian slaver, he was also freed by Mardieur, and his tongue, once cut out, eventually restored through the avatar's magic. Silent fights in the same pit-style as his brother, and eagerly seeks to learn to speak many languages. He became profoundly religious after Mardieur headed for The West, and is now studying under Padre Kryvysk to be a priest of Mardieur.



#### **Syria Nistor**

**Level 12 Fey Pact Warlock**

**Human female Age 29, good**

Syria is a practiced mage of the Nubirion realms, and youngest daughter of the King of Varkal. She is eternally questing, and wanders the lands now, though she serves often as an agent for the Villa, and is a trusted ally of the avatar and his servants.

#### **Sythinira**

**Level 17 Fighter/Druid**

**Xernethian elf female age 89, good**

Sythinira is the elvish maid who helped get Mardieur back on his feet after is shaky recovery from death and eternal imprisonment. She renounced her tribe's xenophobic ways to travel to the human lands of Mercurios. She is now the maiden seneschal of Villa Mardieux, and keeper of the vineyards and brewery. She longs to return to the wilderness with Mardieur gone, but her loyalty to him is too great.

#### **Tia**

**Level 5 Rogue**

**Human female age 18, good**

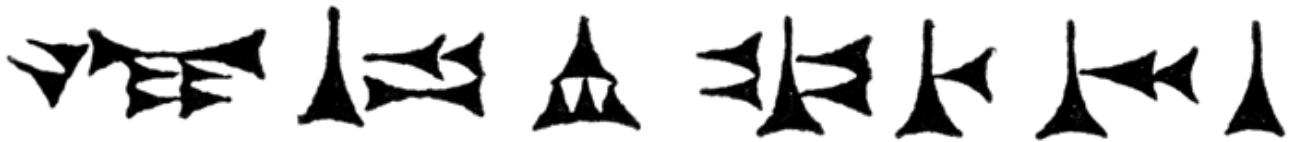
Tia is a young scamp orphan brought in to the fold of the villa by Mardieur. She is Sythinira's handmaiden now, and slowly becoming cultured. Despite this, Tia has become an exceptional rogue and uses her skills for the Villa when asked.

#### **Vimi**

**Level 6 Paladin/Rogue**

**Human female age 18, good**

Vimi was a young scoundrel on the streets of Dryfar in Correnstal who was taken under Damon Corstana's wings after she helped the aging Iron Knight to escape from the dungeons of her home city. She struggles to follow in his footsteps, and adopt the ways of the Iron Knights of Mercurios



## Appendix II: Legends of Chirak

The following is a short list of other interesting NPCs that a DM may wish to include in scenarios. A few of the more famous ones have detailed stats, as well.

### Alas Dar Tazhan

#### Level 16 Swordmage Masirian male age 101, unaligned

Tazhan tried to perform forbidden foreign magic in his native land and was exiled and maimed, losing his tongue. He has since come to serve as Marcus Darego's bodyguard, and was a rebel against Minhauros' occupation. He has learned to cast magic that grant him speech, and to perform silent magic.

### General Arcain

#### Level 15 Warlord Human age 42, good

Arcain is the soldier who took to caring for Quinna, the bastard daughter of the king of Correnstal. He led the squadron that brought news of the goblin uprising in the Kyurtain Mountains to the king of Correnstal, and discovered an insidious plot to conquer the land by the Dragosians along the way. When Quinna's lineage was revealed, she appointed him her protector and general. Many of his men died defending her from the Dragosian invasions.

With the arrival of the mysterious man who claims to be Urso Vanasas, the First King of Correnstal, Arcain finds his protectiveness of Quinna torn with his sense of loyalty to a legendary figure among his people.

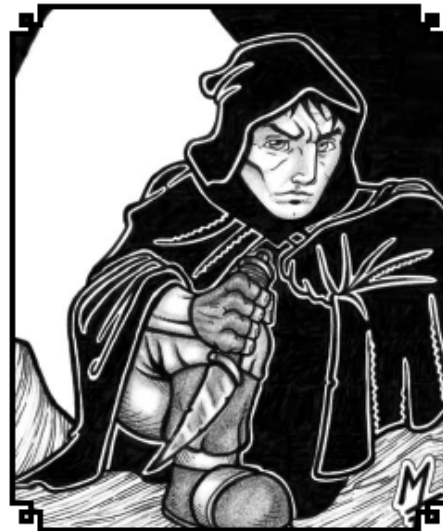


General Arcain

### Astur "Jyp" DiCarlo

#### Level 14 Rogue Human vampire male, evil

The villainous and resourceful spy of lord Vassos Kerr of the Esterehabau Isles, Astur is a cunning villain. While he sometimes plays the ally, Astur is almost certainly anything but trustworthy, seeking out secrets and mysteries like a ferret. His bloodsucking nature remains largely hidden, and few outside of his boss know he is undead.



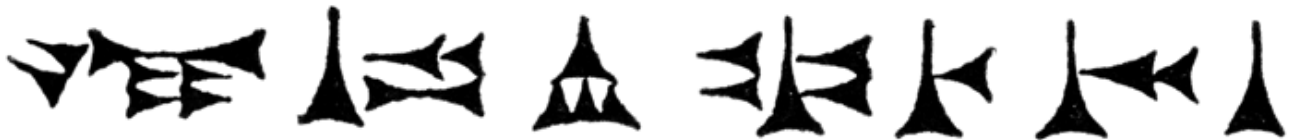
Astur "Jyp" DiCarlo

### Baslak Nahur

#### Level 22 Warlock/Fighter Cambion male, chaotic evil

Baslak Nahur has been heard to blame his parentage on a tryst between a comely young necromancer and the demon lord Orcus, though whether this is true has never been determined. He is most definitely a minion of Minhauros, who plotted to use the Book of the Planes to re-open the gates to Limbo where Minhauros's soul lay trapped in his moldering corpse.

Baslak was thought to be slain in the retaking of Barcen, impaled outside the walls by the rebels, although later it was learned he lived and escaped to the planes, where he lived in exile until he attempted to gain control of the reincarnation of Tiamat, Lady Von. Baslak was badly wounded and turned partially to stone in Limbo by the magic of Pallath's avatar, Maretz, but he survived yet again. There is a rumor that he dwells on a remote island in Sontaniardes, building up an army for



purposes unknown in a forgotten ruin.

#### **Daes'Harvi Vassos**

**Level 38 Wizard Chronomancer Human Mythric male, lawful good**

Daes'Harvi is the ancient immortal progenitor of the Vassos clan, first of the chronomancers to oversee the Temple of the Zodiac on the fabled Kael'hylos Island (also called the Isle of Time). Little is known about this man or his mysterious island, where it is said that the power of the old Mythric people still exists in a microcosm.

#### **Erishma**

**Level 22 Paladin Half-eholim female, good**

Erishma was born of the blood of "The Twelve," and was charged with the divine task of stopping the thousandspawn. She has subdued and imprisoned many, and her last great exploit was to thwart Zam Redar. She was trapped with Maretz in the Far Realm for a time before managing an escape. She is a single-minded warrior of strong purpose, and sees herself as the last true servant of her lineage. She knows of only one other descendant from "The Twelve" at this time, Sedara Braims, who has most decidedly fallen from grace.

#### **Kal Vassos**

**Level 30 Wizard-Chronomancer human male age unknown, lawful good**

The latest in the ancient line of the Vassos clan, Kal Vassos is the servant of the Temple of the Zodiac, and oversees the hidden temple. Vassos is also a member of the esoteric Chronomancers, of which only a handful exist. He has many temporal spells, used for careful purposes. Kal Vassos has a secret relationship to Zam Redar, about which more can be learned in the Gazetteer entry on Kasdalan.

#### **Kaos**

**Level 30 Elder White Wyrms male, unaligned**

Kaos is the greatest elder white dragon known as the Reaver of the North, who answered the call of Zam Redar's Orb of Dragons and later met Lady Von, and together they learned that she was the reincarnation of Tiamat, and he held the reincarnated soul of Bahamut in his own heart. Despite a brief affair, Lady Von was subsumed in to the soul of Tiamat and left for the heavens with Rovas, Tiamat's timeless protector.

#### **Kaosark**

**Level 14 Ranger Undying male half elf, unaligned**

Kaosark is the spirit of a devoted preservationist who died in battle a century earlier, and was brought back from the dead by the Phylos, the avatar of Pornyphiros in The West. Kaosark serves as a protector spirit of the western lands now, an *Einheriar* of sorts who is periodically restored to life to accomplish the mysterious missions and will of Phylos. Most recently, he has been resurrected twice to serve as guide and aid to Mardieur Mardieux; the first time, he was swallowed by a rift to the Abyss and disincorporated. The second time, he was taken by a demonic sword of the planes, his soul possessed. He has not been seen since, but it is inevitable that he will return.

#### **Kiara Baiyarne**

**Level 13 Rogue Human female, unaligned**

The only daughter of a prominent Espanean Naval Captain and Noble Mother, this stunningly attractive and charming girl is rebellious in nature, and worked as a dancer in the merchant district of Corlione. Her whorish lifestyle caused her father to shun her and she was shortly disowned. After teaming up with Marlonius Kord, She has since vanquished many beast and foes with her finesse and dancing abilities. She is slowly putting her former promiscuous lifestyle behind her. Her reputation as a beautiful "Sword dancer", graceful yet deadly, have been told throughout the Sabiri lands and soon reached her homeland of Espanea. Among the Sabiri, she has drawn the attention of the assassin cult of the Shumari'in due to her skills.

#### **Queen Kia'Vahlu**

**Level 30 Invoker Genasai female, good**

Queen Kia'Vahlu is the eternally youthful high priestess and servant of Kalie'yana, demiurge of the seas. She is queen of a small tribe on the Island of Time, where the elder clan of Vassos maintains its mysterious temple of the Lost Gods.

#### **King Marcus Darego**

**Level 24 Warlord Human male age 41, lawful good**

The king of Espanea, once lord of Barcen, Marcus Darego fell victim to a planar plot to steal the legendary Book of the Planes, the lost book of Mythric Lore and key to the universe, but was rescued and helped see the book safely hidden away. He was jailed by followers of Minhauros during the invasion of Espanea, and eventually freed by patriots at which time he started a



guerilla rebellion. He at last found a wand filled with a fragment of the stone of Pallath to kill Minhauros, and snuck in to the court of the demon god where it proved useless, when Mardieur appeared and killed the dread god in mortal form. He was grateful for the save.

**Lady Maria Darego**

**Level 9 Cleric/Warlock Human female age 28, good**

The shattered wife of Marcus Darego, who was taken as the “bride” of Minhauros. She was brutalized countless times by the demon god, and was committed to a sanitarium eventually, unable to function in normal life. Her current status is unknown.



*Maximus Reams*

**Malenkin**

**Level 22 Wizard Lich/Death Master Undead human male, chaotic evil**

Malenkin is the ancient lich necromancer who allied himself with demons and was told to dispose of the chosen one of Akquinarios’ soul. He failed, but lived on.

Malenkin has a tower from which he performs his dark experiments, guarded by a small army of the undead. This tower is found in the highest peaks of the Dryssyrian Mountains. The Kraggit orcs venerate him almost as if he were a god.

**Maretz**

**Level 16 Cleric of Pallath, Avatar Human Espanean male, good**

Maretz was a scholar who began to study the path of the old sun god, and grew interested in the mixed mythology of this deity. His path led him to Grelmaine,

where he uncovered a stone that proved to be the Pallath Stone. He eventually became a true avatar and journeyed to the City of the Sun, where he stopped the cancerous Chaos which sought to destroy the sun. Maretz and his companions were eventually tapped in the Far Realm by their sworn enemy, Kraish’degar.

**Marlonius Kord**

**Level 12 Fighter Human male age 23, unaligned**

An Espanean knight of chaos, Marlonius wanders the Sabiri lands, and was at least accidentally responsible for foiling the awakening of the demon god Boolion. Marlonius comes from a long line of merchantmen, though he walks a different path. He leads a band called the Skullmen, fiercely loyal mercenaries, of which Kiara Byarne is also a member.

**Maximus Reams**

**Level 12 Fighter Human male age 25, unaligned)**

Maximus Reams began his career as a cutthroat mercenary, but his exposure to the avatar Maretz and later an incident in the planes changed him to a nice guy. This upset his fellow member of the Obsidian Skulls who sought revenge for his betrayal. Maximus eventually planned to benevolently conquer the world with his consort Rasvana, but in protecting Maretz and then rescuing Sedar from his foe Kraish'degar he was spirited away to the Far Realm, and has remained trapped since.

**Milina**

**Level 30 Warlock Avatar Tiefling female, age unknown, unaligned**

Milina is the bastard daughter of Minhauros, born of his contact with a planar woman in the dreamlands. Milina hates her father, and hoped always to see him dead. She was constantly used by him as a puppet for his schemes. Once Minhauros’ soul was supposedly destroyed, Milina began to roam the planes and the lands of Chirak, seeking her new path as an avatar, bearing a shard of her father’s zodiac stone.

Milina was most recently seen in the port city of Graven, in the Isles of Sontaniardes, where she was inquiring about the whereabouts of a mysterious brother, though little more was learned by those eavesdropping...



**Milina, Daughter of Minhauros**  
**Level 30 Warlock Avatar (solo) XP 95,000**  
**Medium Natural Humanoid (tiefling)**  
**Initiative +17 Senses Perception +16; low-light**  
**HP 1176; Bloodied 588**  
**AC 49; Fortitude 45, Reflex 48, Will 44**  
**Class Traits:** Infernal Wrath and Bloodhunt (tiefling traits, PHB), Warlock's Curse (+3D6), Scimitar Proficiency  
**Resist 20 fire**  
**Speed 6 Save Bonus +5 APs 2**  
**Bonus Standard Action:** Milina may take two standard actions per turn  
**Melee Basic Scimitar Attack** (standard; at-will)  
 +30 vs. AC; 2d8 + 13 damage; Lifedrinker effect; High Crit  
**Weapon**  
**Ranged Basic Eldritch Blast** (standard; at-will)  
 Ranged 10; +33 vs. Ref.; 2d10+18 damage  
**At-Will Attack:** Hellish Rebuke (see PHB)  
**Special At-Will Attack:** Hellfire Curse is an At-Will for Milina (see PHB)  
**Encounter Powers:** Spiteful Darts (see PHB)  
**Daily Powers:** Hurl Through Hell, Tartarean Tomb (see PHB)  
**Utility Powers:** Wings of the Fiend, Ambassador Imp, Cloak of Shadow (see PHB)  
**Alignment:** unaligned  
**Languages:** all  
**Skills:** Arcana +27, Endurance +26, History +27, Insight +21, Intimidate +23, Stealth +22  
**Str 12 (+16) Dex 14 (+17) Wis 13 (+16)**  
**Con 24 (+22) Int 24 (+22) Cha 17 (+18)**  
**Equipment:** Bloodcut Starleather armor +6, Lifedrinker Scimitar +6  
**Special:** Milina bears a **Shard of the Taurus Stone** (see page 64); this grants immediate benefits as follows:  
 --Milina may re-roll 1 attack, skill or other check twice per day  
 --She may cast an Augury once per day (page 64)  
 --She has the *Path of the Avatar Feat*  
 --**Indomitable Power** (At-will - Minor action – personal – *Effect:* You are rendered magically immovable; push and slide effects will not affect you for the remainder of the encounter unless you wish them to. In addition, you double the squares of any push or slide effects you cause)  
 --Milina's **Concordance level** is 20



Milina, Daughter of Minhauros

#### Morkant Aliorse

**Level 15 Invoker/Wizard Human male age 41, chaotic evil**

Morkant is a xotcharit mage who helped to bring Minhauros back. He may well have escaped the retaking of Barcen, to live for another day for evil....rumor has it he is secluded away in the depths of a ruined castle east of the city of Barcen, working with the Order of the Ebon Skulls to commit new, evil deeds.

#### Mortencus

**Level 14 Warlock Human male, evil**

Mortencus was a student of Lickros, who was a lich in cahoots with Santana and his mysterious order. He died in the Plane of Concordant Opposition, in the Iron City, while trying to get the Book of Planar Lore, but was later resurrected so that his secrets could be retained for use by the Order of the Ebon Skulls. He was kept in a remote dungeon for months before being freed on condition that he now works for the greater villainy of the Ebon Skulls.

#### Nethander

**Level 12 Rogue/Wizard Tuadathen elf male, good**

Nethander journeyed to Corlione to make his fame as a thief, and got swept up in major events involving the avatar of Pallath. He is presently trapped in the Far Realm with his compatriots, although of them all Nethander is the only one with a means to escape.





Nethander does want to get back to Corlione to resume his thievery as a profession.

### Quinna

**Level 9 Rogue Human female age 19, good)**

Quinna is a young woman raised in the Kyurtain Mountains in Correnstal, who became embroiled in a mystery surrounding the uprising of goblins and red elves in the mountains. She made a name for herself as a scout in the militia before it was revealed that she is the legitimate heir to the throne of Correnstal. Much more about her can be found in the entry on Correnstal in the gazetteer. Her most faithful servant is General Arcain, elsewhere in this lexicon of personalities.

### Quinna

**Level 9 Rogue**

**Human female (Correnstalian)**

**Medium Natural Humanoid (human)**

**Initiative +9 Senses Perception +9; normal HP 84, Bloodied 42**

**AC 24; Fortitude 19, Reflex 25, Will 21**

**Class Traits:** Sneak Attack (+3D8), first strike, rogue weapon talent

**Speed 6 Save Bonus +1**

**Melee Basic Short Sword Attack** (standard; at-will)  
+11 vs. AC; 1d6+4 damage; High Crit Weapon (+1D8)

**Ranged Basic Short Bow Attack** (standard; at-will)  
Ranged 20; +14 vs. AC; 1d6+8 damage

**At-Will Attacks:** Deft Strike, Sly Flourish (see PHB)

**Encounter Power:** Rogue's Luck (see PHB)

**Daily Power:** Knockout (see PHB)

**Utility Power:** Chameleon (see PHB)

**Alignment:** good

**Languages:** Correnstalian, Tradespeak, Mercurian, Dragosian

**Skills:** Stealth +14, Thievery +14, Bluff +13

**Str 22 (+12) Dex 20 (+11) Wis 16 (+9)**

**Con 18 (+10) Int 16 (+9) Cha 14 (+8)**

**Equipment:** Short Sword +2 magical, leather armor, short bow

### Rasvana

**Level 13 Sorcerer Human female age 20, evil**

Rasvana was a farm girl from Grelmaine who was taken in by Maximus Rheams and trained in her inherent sorcerous arts. She was a loyal ally to the evil Maximus, and even worked to defeat his later good nature. She was the bait used by the demon lord Kraish'degar to lure her companions to the *City of Chains*, where they were subsequently entrapped in the Far Realm. Rasvana



herself was subsequently freed by the demon lord, and now wanders the regions of Mercurios, seeking a new path.

### Rasvana

**Level 13 Sorcerer**

**Human female (Grelmanic)**

**Medium Natural Humanoid (human)**

**Initiative +9 Senses Perception +6; normal HP 90; Bloodied 45**

**AC 24, Fortitude 24, Reflex 25, Will 28**

**Class Traits:** Storm Magic (See AP): +5 dmg with arcane powers, Storm's Embrace

**Resist 10 thunder, Resist 10 lightning**

**Speed 6**

**Melee Basic Staff Attack** (standard; at-will)

+16 vs. AC; 1d8+5 damage

**Ranged Basic Lightning Strike** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 10/20; +15 vs. Reflex; 1d8+9 lightning damage and 3 damage to one other target within 10

**At-Will Attacks:** Storm Walk (see AP)

**Encounter Power:** Primordial Storm (see AP)

**Daily Power:** Howling Hurricane (see AP)

**Utility Power:** Fog Form (see AP)

**Alignment:** evil

**Languages:** Grelmanic, Tradespeak, Espanean, Mercurian

**Skills:** Arcana +14, Diplomacy +15, Insight +11

**Str 14 (+8) Dex 17 (+9) Wis 11 (+6)**

**Con 12 (+7) Int 13 (+7) Cha 19 (+10)**

**Equipment:** Magic Staff +3



Rasvana



### Rovas

Rovas is the most legendary of red planar dragons, a first-born son of the monster children of Tiamat, and presently the guardian of her newest reincarnation, Lady Von. His legacy as a major draconic participant in the Apocalypse is known to scholars and dragons alike, for he was chosen during the great war to serve as bodyguard and consort to Tiamat, who had been summoned forth by the dragons allied with the betrayer gods, to use her in remaking the world in to a new shape and form. Tiamat was slain before she could begin her new incarnation as a destroyer god, and Rovas failed to protect her. Unable to truly destroy him, and fearful of his power, the elder dragons banished Rovas to imprisonment in the planar prison realm called Castle Zhaergas. Much later, as part of a grand scheme by several inmates to break free of the eternal prison, Rovas was able to flee from imprisonment through a rift created by the corrupting energies of Minhauros's dead god flesh in Limbo. He subsequently found the unawakened reincarnation of Tiamat, whose spirit inhabited the body of a draconic centaur named Lady Von. Coaxing her to wakefulness, the two proceeded to travel other dimensions, seeking to create new a new universe from the ashes of the old. Though they have not yet returned to Chirak, knowledge of their existence is a constant threat to all who know how destructive the Mother of all Monsters and her bodyguard can be.

### Rovas

#### Level 30 Ancient Red Dragon (solo)

Rovas' stats are as listed in the MM for Ancient Red Dragons, with the following additions:

**Class Template:** add the Warlock class template from the DMG: gains +270 hit points (1660 total); add the warlock abilities Warlock's Curse (+3D6), Vestige Pact (AP), Prime Shot. Add Warlock powers *Eldritch Blast*, *Eyes of the Vestige*, +1 Action Point and +2 Save Bonus

**Alignment:** unaligned

**Languages:** Espanean, Kasdalani, Tradespeak, Draconic, Old Mythic, Inadasir, Occultic, Elvish, Supernal

**Skills:** add Arcana +24, Athletics+32, Endurance+30, and Diplomacy+24

### Santana

#### Level 18 Wizard Human male age 48, evil

Santana was a member of the *Mages of the Luminiferous Aether*, who sought to steal the *Book of the Planes*, and unwittingly awakened the sleeping god Minhauros. Santana was believed to be killed in the siege of the Iron City in the planar realms, which was

attacked by an army of lizard men and other forces, but it was later learned he was captured and exiled to the living castle prison Zhaergas. When Zhaergas was disrupted by the escape of the dragon Rovas, Santana disappeared, and may possibly have escaped as well.

### Sedara Braims

Sedara Braims was the last in a long line of *chosen ones* who were descended from "The Twelve," a group of ancient heroes bent on stopping the threat of the thousandspawn. Sedara was an apple that fell far from the tree, corrupted by the seduction of necromancy and witchcraft, and the enigmatic prospects of immortality. She traveled to Grelmaine, and sought to plunder the tomb of Kostchie, which her ancestors had protected. Ultimately she succumbed to her sense of duty and was swayed from doing so, although she still seeks dark power. She joined the avatar Maretz along with his knight servant Maximus Rheams up until they made their pilgrimage to the Pallath Esemanthis, after which she left in the wake of a conflict with Maximus. She was last seen in the Daman/Pelaeus region, probably up to no good.



Sedara Braims



### Sedara Braims

**Level 15 Warlock Death Master (elite)**  
**human female (Masirian)**

**Medium Natural Humanoid (human)**

**Initiative** +14 **Senses Perception** +15; normal

**Aura:** Shroud of the Grave (see DMG)

**HP** 270; **Bloodied** 135

**AC** 27; **Fortitude** 28, **Reflex** 30, **Will** 33

**Racial/Class Traits:** Star Pact, Warlock's Curse+2D6

**Resist** 10 necrotic

**APs** 1 **Save Bonus** +2 **Speed** 6

**Melee Basic Dagger Attack** (standard; at-will)

Necrotic Dagger+3: +16 vs. AC; 1D4+6 necrotic damage and ongoing 10 necrotic (save ends)

**Ranged Basic Eldritch Blast** (standard; at-will)

Ranged 10; +20 vs. Ref.; 1d10+10 damage; see PHB

**At-Will:** Dire Radiance (Warlock, PHB)

**Encounter Power:** Coldfire Vortex (Warlock, PHB), Call of the Grave (Death Master, DMG)

**Daily Power:** Tendrils of Ga'Thon (Thuban-Warlock)

**Utility Power:** Shielding Shades (see PHB)

**Alignment:** evil

**Languages:** Masirian, Espanean, Grelmanic, Tradespeak, Old Mythic, Inadasir, Orcish, Elvish, Draconic

**Skills:** Arcana +17, History +17, Perception +15

**Str** 11 (+7) **Dex** 14 (+9) **Wis** 16 (+10)

**Con** 15 (+9) **Int** 21 (+12) **Cha** 23 (+13)

**Equipment:** Bracers of Defense Level 17, Cloak of Resistance +3, Deathcut Leather Armor +3, Magic Orb +4

leave or die. He vowed revenge and traveled to Mercurios to build a new army of followers. He is now a loyal member of Iron Dukas' council.

### Lady Von

**Level 14 Druid d**

**Draconic centaur female, unaligned**

Von was an elder loremaster of the northern dracotaurs who traveled south to her destiny, as the reincarnating vessel of Tiamat. After bonding with the Orb of Tiamat, she met Rovas, who became her guardian, and Kaos, who became her consort when he bonded with the Orb of Bahamut. She is currently traveling the planes, creating new dimensions and destroying the old. Many good aligned dragons fear her return, for when she is in possession of the spirit of Tiamat she can destroy entire living universes without a thought.

### Svenn Rass

**Level 16 Fighter/Rogue**

**Hashykarystir male age 23, unaligned**

A Kaasta lizard man from the planar realms, Sven Rass adventured on the quest for the Book of the Planes, and eventually became such a great adventurer that he seized control of his tribe. He came to the aid of Marcus Darego and Mardieur Mardieux when called upon to free Barcen.

Later, Svenn was usurped from his throne as chieftain and escaped with his loyalists in to the wastes of the plane of the *Outlands*. He later met with Maretz and crew, and aided them as mercenaries for a time. He was last seen wandering the Dreaming Plains of Ulos in Chirak with a company of swords for hire.



*Nethander*

### Trector Cyberius

**Level 21 Warlord**

**Human male age 41, unaligned**

The exiled general of Nithiad who backed the wrong regent in the last battle for power, he was forced to



### Zam Redar

#### Level 30 Wizard

#### Male Thousandspawn, evil

The most ambitious and dangerous man alive in Chirak today, Zam Redar has a long history, going back six centuries to when he appeared out of nowhere in the realm of Kasdalan and clawed his way to the top, becoming king of the southern lands, and marrying the deadly Lady Poe, who ruled as his queen for decades as they sought to conquer the known world of the time.

Zam Redar's conquering army brought down the old Pellucid Empire and laid waste to many of the budding cultures along the southern coasts of Chirak. He was undefeated until his own wife turned on him. Ambushed, Zam Redar was rendered unconscious and helpless in a coffin sewn with the anti-magical skin of mythical creatures. The coffin was then chained with primordial metal links that could resist even the greatest of Zam Redar's magic, and it was subsequently fed down the gullet of a vile Purple Worm that roamed the southern wastes.

Centuries later, Zam Redar was awakened by happenstance when the avatar Maretz and his company of adventurers slew the purple worm and found the coffin entombed within. Initially it seemed that Zam Redar was a grateful ally, but he soon turned on them, and appealed to the descendants of his most loyal followers in the kingdom of Daman to come to his aid in stopping the avatar of the sun.

Zam Redar was believed slain, or at least injured beyond easy recovery by the eholim woman and *chosen one* called Erishma. In fact, through the curious luck so typical of the thousandspawn, Zam Redar made good on an escape to the distant North, where he settled in the port city of Andos to recover from his wounds and begin plotting anew...

Zam Redar appears human to almost everyone except the rare soul who can detect thousandspawn (such as chosen ones). The following write-up omits the large number of sorcerous implements, resources, ritual spells and seemingly endless horde of dedicated minions that Zam Redar is able to muster with a moment's notice, providing instead the specific write-up of this most notorious thousandspawn as one might catch him on a "good day."

#### Zam Redar's Rituals and Spells

Zam Redar is a practiced wizard of the highest order. He in all likelihood knows as much magic as the finest wizards in all of Chirak, including Kal Vassos. The statistics for Zam Redar do not reflect the full repertoire

of spells available to the thousandspawn; DMs interested in making him an even more ridiculously difficult encounter than he already is are welcome to add a repertoire of spell powers to the existing roster of abilities; assume he has all of the powers a level 30<sup>th</sup> wizard would be expected to have, including his extended spell book. Zam's got them all, baby!

Likewise, Zam Redar has collected and learned virtually every Ritual he could get his hands on, and if he hasn't learned it yet then it's just because he hasn't gotten to that *particular* book—yet. It is safe to assume that he has all ritual magic spells in the PHBs to date.

*For even more information, read the gazetteer entry on Kasdalan and Maegar, as well as the section on Zam Redar's secret history, and how he came to meet Lady Poe.*

### The Orb of Dragonkind

#### Level 30 artifact

Little is known about this mysterious object, which is said to grant its owner control of the minds and souls of dragons. Whether the DM allows this potent artifact to fall into the hands of PCs or not is up to you, but Zam Redar can achieve the following effects with the orb:

- He has uncanny control and command total obedience from dragonkin, be they dragonborn or elder wyrms.
- Dragons refuse to attack him, no matter how much they wish they could
- Lesser dragons will heed Zam Redar's commands with blind loyalty
- He can summon up to 4 dragons of level 29 or less, or substitute 2 dragons of level 20 or less for 1 level 29 dragon to aid him in battle for an encounter

The Orb of Dragonkind is normally presented as a sort of macguffin for the DM to work with; it's power is so enigmatic and difficult to master that the practicality of the device is suspect, but in the hands of an evil overlord such as Zam Redar it can grant potent resources with which to assault brave adventurers.



**Zam Redar** XP 95,000

**Level 30 Wizard, Overlord of Ga'Thon  
Thousandspawn male (solo) controller**

**Medium Aberration (thousandspawn)**

**Aura 10** (chaos, necrotic; all foes in aura grant combat advantage to the overlord)

**Initiative** +26 **Senses** Perception +30; dark vision

**HP** 1152; **Bloodied** 576

**AC** 46; **Fortitude** 44, **Reflex** 42, **Will** 44

**Resist** 20 fire, cold, necrotic **Vulnerable** 20 Radiant

**Regeneration** 10. If Zam Redar takes radiant damage, regeneration doesn't function on its next turn. Zam does not recover damage inflicted by zodiac stones of gods other than Ga'Thon, Minhauros or Shaligon.

**Save Bonus** +5 **APs** 2

**Speed** 6

**Special:** Zam gains two standard actions per turn.

**Melee Basic Corrupting Touch** (standard; at-will)

+28 vs. AC; 2d8 + 5 necrotic damage and target is weakened (save ends)

**Ranged Basic Thunderwave** (standard; at-will)

Close Blast 5; +34 vs. Fort.; 2d6+13 damage and all targets are pushed 5 squares

**Compulsion** (standard; recharge 4,5,6) psychic

Range 10 burst 3; Level+4 vs. Will; 4D6+6 psychic damage and all targets are stunned (save ends).

**Call of Darkness (Standard; Encounter, recharge 6)**

Five aberrant minions of the overlord's level or lower appear within 10 squares of the overlord and act immediately after his turn ends. They remain for the duration of the encounter.

**Chaos Touch (necrotic effect)**

All damage the overlord does includes the necrotic trait and does 10 ongoing necrotic damage (save ends).

**Shapeshifter (minor; at-will) arcane**

The overlord can appear as any other creature it desires of its same size or one size smaller or larger. This effect remains in effect until dismissed as a free action.

**Nigh Unkillable (unique trait) healing**

Whenever the overlord reaches 0 hit points, it will begin to regenerate 5 hit points per round within one hour even if it was injured with radiant damage. If the overlord takes enough damage to kill it (the negative of its bloodied value) then it will disincorporate and reappear at a different location within 113 days.

**Time Stop** (Encounter, minor; Recharge 6)

Zam Redar gains two extra standard actions that can be used for any non attack action.

**Maelstrom** (Encounter, standard)

Close Burst 10; +39 vs. Will; **Hit:** all foes received 5D10+19 psychic damage and are stunned (save ends); **Miss:** half damage

**Angered** (instant, when first bloodied)

Zam Redar immediately uses *Maelstrom* upon being bloodied.

**Burning Heavens** (encounter, standard) Arcane

Any three targets within close burst 10; +39 vs. Fort.; **Hit:** 4D8+19 fire damage and 15 ongoing fire (save ends).

**Miss:** half damage. **Secondary Effect:** each ally adjacent to one of the three primary targets takes 15 ongoing fire damage (save ends)

**The Curious Nature of Dragons** (Minor, at-will)

Zam Redar has a unique sway over dragons: Range 20; +39 vs. Will; **Hit:** target draconic being must obey one chosen standard action determined by the DM for Zam Redar **or** take 4D10+19 psychic damage.

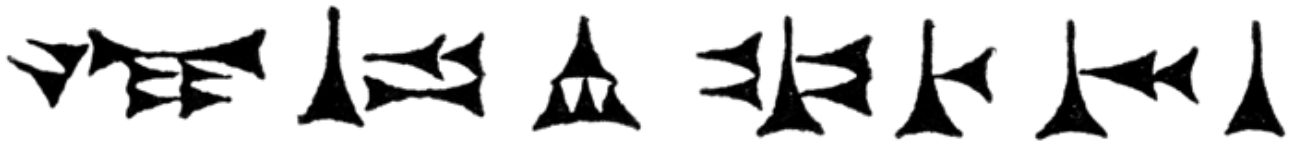
**Alignment:** evil **Languages:** native, one more

**Skills:** Athletics, Endurance, Diplomacy

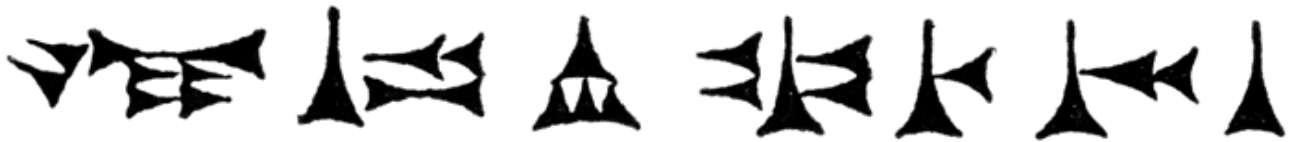
**Str** 26 (+22) **Dex** 26 (+22) **Wis** 28 (+25)

**Con** 29 (+25) **Int** 34 (+28) **Cha** 30 (+26)

**Equipment:** Staff of the Power +6, Orb of Dragonkind, Mantle of the Seventh Wind +6



*Zam Redar*



## Appendix III: The *Weird* Stuff

This appendix is designed to cover the weird questions and ideas that don't quite fit in anywhere else, or to address ideas you might (and I certainly have) think of regarding the Realms of Chirak. Weird campaign possibilities, secret story arcs, the nature of the greater planar cosmos, gods that are not affiliated with Zodiac Stones, and more. Read on!

### The Greater Planar Cosmos

Earlier, the nature of the planar universe as seen from the perspective of Chirak cosmologists and planar mages was discussed. But what about the *rest* of the universe? Whether we're talking infinite quantum realities, the Great Wheel of old conventional fantasy adventuring or the many worlds of the World of Tiers novels....does any of that fit in to the Chirak-centric cosmos?

The short answer is yes. Think of Chirak as a hub (the main hub, according to its native proponents) of a large section of reality. Chirak is one of those places that induce what are called "reality quakes" which echo through the infinite possibilities, creating shadowy universes that reflect similarities to it. If a universe has a twelve-aspect zodiacal system, one can assume that such a universe is a shadow reality created by the resonance of Chirak.

Shadow universes aren't "fake" by any means; they just reflect a tenebrous thread of commonality that stems from its root source. It is quite possible that a planar adventurer can travel from Chirak to one of these realms and back again with little difficulty. It may be somewhat harder to get back, but hopefully the traveler has a backup plan for such eventualities!

Other planes of existence work in the same way, becoming shadowy offshoots of the same reality quakes caused by the coterminous demiplanes of existence that are tethered to Chirak as well. What is "real" and "a mere copy" gets confused here, however, because the planar realms work a bit differently from the baseline prime material plane. Logic and physics can get very fuzzy in the planes, and as such, it is difficult to discern which came first in these universes.

Think of it as an X-Y axis. The X axis is the dimensional plane along which the waves of conventional reality (the prime material universe) propagate. At the "center" of

this otherwise infinite X-axis is Chirak, radiating outward (at least, until its radiant effect at last crashes in to another strong universe-propagation wave). Meanwhile, the Y axis, kind of an up-down deal, is fanning out in a whole different direction, creating a bizarre number of offshoot realities which defy most conventional laws of physics.

Now, if that hasn't confused you, then you haven't been paying attention!

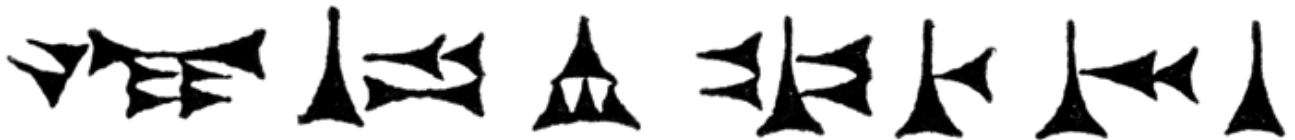
### Other Gods

Because the universe is infinite, gods exist all over the place. However, only on Chirak (and perhaps some other strong propagating realities) do the twelve Zodiac Stones serve as the means to attaining godhood.

Now, what it means to be a god can vary widely from one universe to another. In Chirak, being a god means becoming a symbiont with a cosmically powerful object that acts as the focal point for infinite divine energy. In another universe, it could mean you are simply born that way, or you must seek enough personal magical power to dominate all around you. In a few universes, being a god means transcending mortal flesh and becoming an energy being. There are all kinds of definitions of what a god is, and how one goes about becoming one.

In Chirak, all power of the divine is locked in the twelve Zodiac Stones, and only a bearer of such a stone can wield divine power (or grant it to followers as such). Because of this, gods from other universes who come visiting Chirak run in to a problem: whatever the source of their divine power in their home plane (be it themselves or an exterior source), such energy fails them in Chirak. They become mortal beings, albeit usually fairly powerful ones, because every iota of divine energy in Chirak is concentrated in the Zodiac Stones.

This has led to some interesting situations. There are stories in the early years of the post-apocalypse world about how several deities of neighboring dimensions attempted to steal their way into Chirak to seek dominance of the new realm, after becoming aware of the death of its deities. In doing so, they instead found themselves trapped and unable to access their divine magic. Rumors abound that a few of these trapped gods exist today, although it seems more likely they would have found a means of escape through some planar rift



left in the wake of the destructive end times.

There was another rumor that some of these gods tried to steal the Zodiac Stones, to amplify their own power. The stories conflict on this, but most ancient historians agree that for some reason this proved unfeasible. One suggestion was that the Zodiac Stones can only work with natives born of Chirak. Another suggestion was that, much like the spirits of the spirit world, these gods were forbidden from bonding with the stones. A final suggestion, which one mad scholar insists was the source of a great and powerful explosion several centuries ago, is that a foreign god who attempts to bond with a Zodiac Stone will find his divine energies infinitely expanded, and such a dramatic increase in power burns out the host in a fiery display of divine power. No one knows which, if any answer, is right.

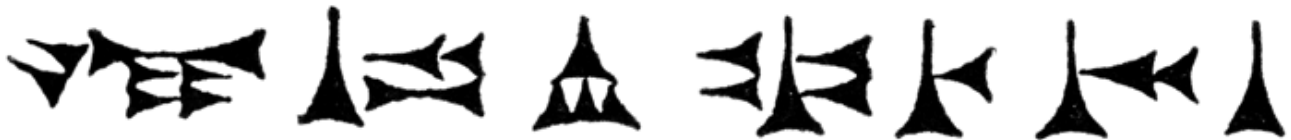
In any case, natives of Chirak are highly suspect of any foreign entity appearing and declaring itself a visiting god. The firm belief in the death of all old gods, and the notion that the Zodiac Stones alone hold the key to divine power, means that most natives view these extra

planar "gods" as nothing more than powerful interlopers looking for a free hand-out.

There is one final, bizarre twist on the whole notion of foreign gods. There is rumored to be a secret society, called the Flame Knives, from a distant dimension that serves a foreign god of deception and assassination named Haro. It is said that this secret order of assassins learned of the unique properties of Chirak to strip foreign gods of their powers, and have now exploited that several times, offering up their services to assassinate deities by luring them to Chirak and then striking when they are most vulnerable. No one knows if this story is truth or myth, although it is said that if you search long enough in the region between Shaddizhar and Adenach there is a great basin in which the bones of dead foreign gods can be found, moldering in ancient energies, stripped at last of their immortality.







## The True Nature of the Ancients

In the studies of historians in Chirak they have identified a number of ancient civilizations that dominated the world before the time of the Apocalypse. These include the following cultures, two of which still exist in some form in the present. This list can help harried DMs keep their factoids straight when the issue of ancient cultures comes up.

### Mythrics

The Mythric Empire is said to have spread out through the greater expanse of the Sea of Chirak, although at that time it was a land of plenty, filled with green mountains, lush forest and endless lakes; only after the apocalypse was the realm inundated in a watery grave. Remnants of the Mythric Empire can be found in Hoagarit, the many islands of the Sea of Chirak, and Legora. The Kaldinian and Pellucid cultures are descended from the Mythrics.

The lineage of the Mythrics can be seen in the dark and swarthy features of its descendants. The rugged good looks, hair from dark to blonde, and a mix of Caucasian and Latin features are prevalent among this group.

### Inadasir

The Inadasir culture dominated much the West, and most of its original lands were destroyed in fire and lava rather than submerged in water. The ancient capital of Inadasir is unknown, but some claim it was Beltraine itself, and others claim it was buried beneath the upheaval that created the Kossarit Mountains.

The people descended from the Inadasir are usually distinct for their chalk-white skin and uniformly black hair. They have decidedly different cultural traits from the East and are a more insular, traditional people by and large. Such groups include the Sabiri, Pelegar, and Madagar. Intermixed elements of the Inadasir can be found in Helios (with Therian blood) and Grelmaine (with Kaldinians in the mix).

### Eshadai

The Eshadai was a vast empire in the north, and most all of it is said to be submerged in eternal ice at the edge of the world. Much of the knowledge of this ancient empire is completely erased, entombed in forgotten ice caves and frozen cities that no living being dare approach. As such, little is known of this culture

anymore.

The people who are known to descend from the Eshadai include the Syrgians, Legorans and other northerners. Some claim that the cannesh as a species were part of the Eshadai cultural group, but the spirit bond that changed their species into shape shifters happened after the apocalypse.

Eshadai-descended cultures are almost Nordic in appearance and nature, and well suited to the rugged northern lifestyle.

### Abraheil

The western-most culture of the world, Abraheil is a shadow of its former greatness, but the land suffered fewer catastrophes than the rest of the world, as its final benefactor, Pornyphiros, gave up his life to stop the encroaching destruction of the world and its return to the elemental forces. Because of this fact, Abraheil was able to retain some semblance of its old culture, and the land is also believed to have a better memory of the ancient, pre-apocalyptic world than any other people.

The greater cultural expanse of the Abraheil include a variety of tribes in the north, as well as Sabradan, some Pelegar (who have interbred with old Inadasir groups), and the Therians to the south.

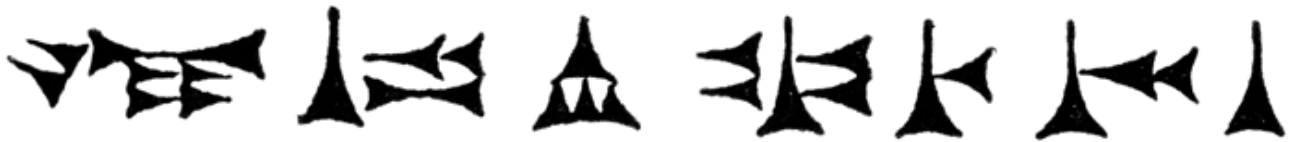
The people of Abraheil and their related groups are very fair of skin and prone to blondes and read heads. As their cultural group moves further south, they develop darker skin and more swarthy features.

### Occultic

There are two distinct cultures that share common language traits and even some architectural and ethnic trappings, but which have over time diverged radically from their ancient ancestors. Little is known of the Occultics, and the name itself is even a modern invention, as no specific old-world title has been found to describe these people. The modern descendants of the Occultics are the Masirians, Nubiri and Xoxtocharit.

Masiria is a small and isolated cultural group, but believed to be related closely to the Old Mythrics. Masirians themselves are descended from some of the most prosperous and lucky survivors of the ancient times and thanks to their retention of magical longevity in their magic they may also have also managed to retain some semblance of their old culture, as well. Masirians are curiously dark of skin and have very Egyptian features, but with an oddly fair, almost elvish characteristic added in.

The Xoxtocharit are a much harsher breed of Occultics,



and seem to have transmogrified much after the Apocalypse. Unlike the Masirians, who obsess with immortality, the Xoxtocharit obsess with death. There is a fair amount of cultural intermixing as well amongst the Xoxtocharit and their eastern Yin-descended cousins, who migrated through the region more than a thousand years ago before settling in the region of Hoagarit.

The Nubirion and Shokoztoni regions contain linguistic connections to the Occultic group, but the people have lost most all of their old memories of the Occultic culture, save perhaps for ancestral worship. The people of Nubirion are the darkest and most rugged of the Occultic group.

### Yin

Though few are aware of it, one of the largest of the old empires was Yin, which dominated the eastern realms of the Yellow Kingdoms and the Sapphire lands. After the apocalypse, a great many migrations of desperate people occurred, and over time these populations laid the foundation for the Hoagarit, and intermixed with the southern stock of the Nubiri and Shokoztoni as well.

The people descended from Yin are Asian in appearance, with a wide variety of such characteristics.

### The Lost Southern Empire

This empire was so thoroughly obliterated in the magical quakes, planar and temporal displacements, and volcanic eruptions that riddled the land during and after the apocalypse that nothing about it, not even its name exists anymore. It is known that the people of Nubirion, Ur, Adenach, and Shaddizhar are descended from this lost empire. The southern Carnassi of Therias are also migrants from this region, and in Kasdalan and Pelaeus these cultural groups intermixed with the Pellucid culture, descended from the Mythricks.

The people of this lost empire had dark features, deep brown to black skin, and were usually very tall. There are some rumors that the minotaurs and centaurs should rightly be considered a cultural offshoot of this empire, as magical humanoids that may have been created through their lost magic. Although most scholars contend that Beltraine is a city of the Inadasir people, a few suggest that the city may in fact be the only surviving remnant of the lost Southern Empire.

### Ancient Historical Lore

**History DC 15:** The ancients were a numerous lot, and lived in fabulous magical cities. They all died during the

apocalypse, and their magical wonders, which caused the catastrophe, were lost forever.

**History DC 20:** The ancient civilizations included the Old Mythricks and the Inadasir. Some ancient magic has been found in their ruins, including portals to other dimensions and a flying ship.

**History DC 25:** The ancients did not destroy the old world, it was the gods, who used the ancients as fodder for their armies during the apocalypse. Most people today are descended from the survivors of these lost times.

## Magic vs. Technology: Chirak as Sci Fi

The default assumption about Chirak is that the ancient world before the apocalypse was dominated by powerful ancient empires which had mastered magic. They could create flying ships, sentient golems, floating cities, and even children could learn simple magic to help them in day-to-day living. Everyone knew a spell or two, and most of the nonhuman races during this time were created by humanity or the gods, who dabbled in the magical synthesis of different beings.

Although this is all *assumed* to be magic, it's the old adage of Arthur C. Clark stated that any sufficiently advanced technology will be indistinguishable from magic. This "alternative world" concept for Chirak is something a DM could play with for a unique twist: what if all the magical technology and ancient artifacts of the lost empires are, in fact, technological devices?

In this variant on Chirak, minotaurs, ogres, centaurs, and other beings become genetically uplifted engineered races. Animates become true machines, sentient robots instead of sentient golems. Magical effects are psionic, or tap in to some sort of quantum energy to create reality distortions that work to the desired effect of the projector. Flying ships are really sophisticated and stylized aircraft, either using some form of known propulsion or a sophisticated form of anti-gravity. The Zodiac Stones aren't just magical devices for divine power, they're potent artifacts of a far-future technology in which the device itself harvests and directs the energy of a distant singularity, managed by the controlling AI in the latticework of the crystal to serve the needs of the stone-bearer.

Chirak wasn't really intended to be a high-tech far future experiment, but it was meant to sometimes feel that way. Nonetheless, I think anyone who wants to interpret the world as the product of a very powerful



future civilization is welcome to, and will find that it all fits in rather nicely! I would suggest reading a bit of Jack Vance's *Dying Earth* novels to help provide some inspiration for how to model a far-future universe in which magic is the end-product of technology. Another inspirational work would include Christopher Stasheff's *The Warlock In Spite of Himself*.

## So What Really Happened in The Apocalypse?

The short answer to this is that no one really knows exactly what happened any more. A fairly large mystery is about who initiated the conflict, why they did it, and how they set it in motion. Other mysteries include how long the event took place, if other worlds or dimensions were involved, and how much more of the world than is known today was destroyed during the event.

There are some known facts, and a lot of them sprinkled throughout this book. Here is a short list of what is considered "set in stone:"

**The Betrayers:** The conflict is said to have started when three or four gods, usually identified as the Betrayers, joined together to seek power. Usually the leader of the conspiracy is seen as Ga'thon, who in turn swayed Shaligon, Minhauros, and in some telling, Malib to his side. Whenever this happened, it is believed that Shaligon and Minhauros were young gods, who had recently ascended to divinity after stealing the Zodiac Stones of their former masters through deicide.

**Long Timeline:** Preservationists of Eristantopolis and scholars of Abraheil will tell you that the Apocalypse didn't happen overnight; it may have taken a thousand years for all events to set in motion. Almost everyone agrees, however, that the Final Battle took a day or two at the most, and was instantly devastating, wiping out civilization as all knew it.

**Great Armies:** The long period of political conflict, assassination, betrayal, and strife that was a part of the early years of this event eventually gave way to a lengthy period of open warfare. Scholars today feel that the gods chose armies, and powerful generals to lead them, from among their followers, both native to the world and from the other dimensional realms. Many of these followers were so powerful they were like minor demiurges themselves, sometimes suffused with power and shards from the Zodiac Stones granted by their



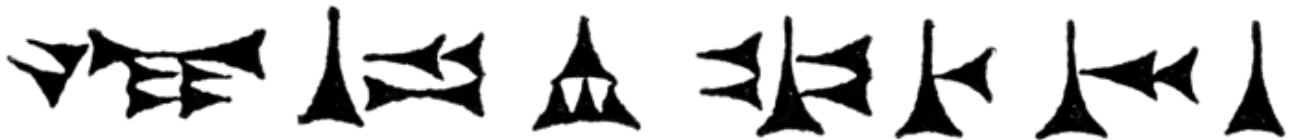
deities. Some of the generals and principle agents of the gods are believed to have survived the Apocalypse, and either they or their descendants live in the present.

**The Great Wars:** These armies, led by the generals of the gods fought for centuries against one another. Early on it is suspected (though there is little proof) that these were very structured conflicts, and that the armies were comprised of mostly nonhumans and constructs, such as animates, minotaurs, and goblinoids. Later, as the conflicts grew more serious and the war turned deadly to citizens, everyone got involved. A few manuscripts that still survive in the present describe almost incomprehensibly vast armies, both natives of Chirak and denizens of the planes, gathered in the millions to strike against equally mind-boggling forces on opposing sides.

A single document, called the *Accounts of Lay Clarian*, a document that seems to have been written by a Mythic soldier fifty years before the Final Battle, describes conflicts so intense and devastating that it is a wonder any living being survived. His manuscript references troops using planar gates for teleportation strikes, magic being used to seize mountainous rocks from space to drop on opposing forces, and potent magical bombs which would release elemental conduits when shattered, engulfing all around them in the element of their design. Flying ships armed with magical weaponry, animates that were one hundred feet tall, and dragons armed for war in full armor and weapons are all described in his accounts. There is some suspicion that his journal is a forgery, and this is suggested simply on account of the fact that few who read it can even imagine how its author, let alone his book, could have survived some of the events he describes in its pages.

**Other Worlds:** It is known that the Xylom demons claim to be from a world called Purgatory in their language, and it is one of the twelve worlds seen in the sky, associated with the Zodiac Stones. Purgatory was said to have been as badly damaged and affected as Chirak by the Apocalypse. Moreover, it is said that the planar realms associated with Purgatory were themselves rendered cosmic wastelands of death and fire, the infernal realms of the Abyss and beyond. No record of the nature of the other eleven worlds remains today outside of myths and rumors. It would be a great find for a scholar to discover if these worlds were visited by the ancients, or held life of their own.

**The Final Battle:** Much of the Apocalypse as studied by



scholars seems to have been a period of steady escalation, eventually leading to the gods taking a personal hand in matters of the conflict. The Final Battle is said to have been the result of all twelve gods and their greatest servants gathering in the mortal plane for a permanent resolution to the conflict. In doing so, they tipped the scales of devastation, leading to a runaway effect in which, in short order, the devastation caused by the powerful magic of their armies was replaced by destructive energies so vast an unfathomable that the world was nearly destroyed, and almost the entire world was blasted back to the stone age.

**Death of Gods:** It is largely unknown whether all of the gods died in the Final Battle, or if they died over a period of time, and only the last few living gods succumbed at the end. Most scholars believe that in the end, it was Shaligon, Minhauros, Malib and Ga'thon who stood against Pornyphiros, Akquinarios, and Pallath. One very old account, a fragment of a book found in ruins in southern Grelmaine, seems to suggest that Pallath fell from his chariot in the sky, mortally wounded by Ga'thon, but not before he slew Shaligon, allowing her blood to rain like a torrent upon the earth below.

Ga'thon, in turn, was rendered in twain by Pornyphiros, who then sacrificed all of his life and power to stop the four tides of destruction that were consuming all corners of the world. The destroyer god, Ga'thon, had supposedly called down a deluge of elemental forces from the planar realms, to consume the world. This weakened him so much that he was easily slain, but his flesh, ripped and blasted by Pornyphiros, fell and spawned the terrible creatures known today as the Thousandspawn.

Finally, Minhauros, who it was said had slain more of the other gods than any other, was struck dead by Akquinarios, who in turn hurled his body in to Limbo. Akquinarios, enraged and powered by energy stolen from Minhauros, momentarily went mad, driven by the essence of the betrayer god, and he used this vast power to annihilate the demon armies which drove relentlessly through the Mythric Empire, his sacred homeland. This destroyed Malib, who led the armies, but Akquinarios, who had turned his very form in to a tidal wave of water that flooded the land, realized his error and expended the last of his energy trying to contain his unbridled wrath. He perished, and some say that his very body is what is now called the Sea of Chirak.

There are as many alternative tales to the last stands of the gods as there are ways to tell it, but the above stories are the ones believed by the scholars of ancient

matters at learned locations such as Eristantopolis and Abraheil. Whether they are true or not depends entirely upon what you, as DM, find most useful for your campaign at any given moment. If, for example, you would like to enact a tale in which it turns out Malib is not dead but merely trapped in a watery prison crafted by Akquinarios, then by all means, do so! In fact, I rather like that idea; it might suggest that Piscrael, his successor, is nothing more than a former general possessed of a Zodiac Shard, perhaps eager to free his master, or find a way to at last wrest the Sapphire Stone away from his former master...

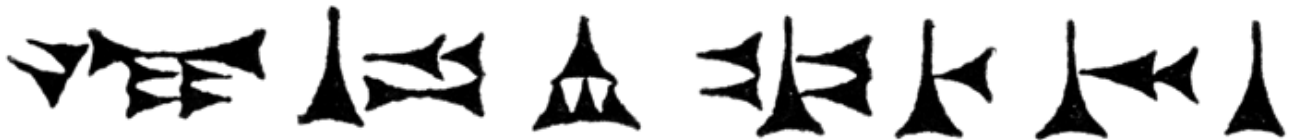
## Using Elements of the Apocalypse in Stories

There may come a time when you want to tie in an adventure to some specific details of the apocalypse; almost every adventure I have ever run in Chirak has had some tether to this ancient event in the past, actually, and the Apocalypse itself is designed to provide all sorts of potential conflict and plot devices for the DM to work with. The following list will help to suggest some potential ideas on relics, people, and locations that are indelibly related to the great catastrophe:

### Old Generals and Minions

There were many, many ancient generals and agents of the gods. If some tales are to be believed, the Last War of the ancients lasted a thousand years before the Final Battle (see earlier). If this is true, then that was a lot of time for ancient and powerful minions to rise to power and prominence. Some of these beings likely survived. In Therias, in the distant south west, for example, it is said that there are twenty four powerful beings, almost all of whom were ancient and powerful generals and agents of the old gods, who attempted after the Apocalypse to forge a new pantheon.

Gods could be spirits, planar beings such as angels, demons, devils and other beneficent or malignant spirits and so forth. Usually, if they are powerful enough to have survived to the present, they are very high level challenges, often venerated as (false) gods by locals, and usually more than a little inhuman in their way of thinking. These are often beings that resent their old, dead masters and are especially covetous of the Zodiac Stones, but angered that only mortal natives of Chirak can possess the power of such stones. They usually seek to thwart or manipulate such mortals who attain this power.



Sometimes these beings could have died, but in turn could come back as undead or resurrected entities in the present. Likewise, they may not have been immortal, but might have founded a dynasty, and their family heirs carry on some hidden legacy. The House of Braims in Grelmaine is one such house of twelve, descended from great generals of Akquinarios' armies who have forged an alliance dedicated to the slaying or incarceration of the Thousandspawn, for example.

### Lost Ruins

Lost ruins are an obvious favorite, but shouldn't be over played. In my years of running adventures in Chirak, only a handful of pre-Apocalyptic structures have been encountered and explored by PCs. One such ruin was the Pallath Esemanthis, a great tower forged by worshipers of the sun god Pallath in the region of Pelaeus. This structure somehow survived the Final Battle and still stands today. A few other ruins exist intact from this time, including some lost cities of the Mythic Empire, which are scattered across the Mythic Isles in the Sea of Chirak, as well as the ruins of Beltraine and the mysterious Black Dome near Eristantopolis.

Most ruins, however, are likely to have been forged by post-apocalyptic civilizations, which have, after all, had nearly twenty five hundred years to dig themselves from the ashes of destruction and return to a civilized state.

### Thousandspawn

Thousandspawn are great foes, and essentially limitless. Every member of this unique breed of monster is a being born from the fallen flesh of Ga'thon. When the ancient deity of destruction perished, he had somehow managed to imbue his own flesh with eternal life, even as his spirit and consciousness were slain. Each Thousandspawn contains a portion of Ga'thon's mind and essence. All Thousandspawn are powerful beings, and even the weakest of their kind are usually physically powerful, if mentally weak and unstable. The most powerful of these beings are both, and quite cunning as well. All are essentially immortal. There seems to be no way, outside of the power of the Zodiac Stones, to permanently destroy one of these entities.

You can use Thousandspawn to fill in the ranks of extremely potent foes to send against your PCs. Usually, the main mastermind behind your plots is likely to be one of these creatures. Most are driven by the latent sense of power, greed, or lust for destruction that their progenitor held. As such, Thousandspawn often have various motives for what they do, but almost without

exception they delight in conquering and subverting their enemies, making the races who served opposing gods bow before them, and they delight in using their magical prowess to make more monsters.

For some sample Thousandspawn monsters and templates see the Monstrous Appendix.

### Strange Landscapes

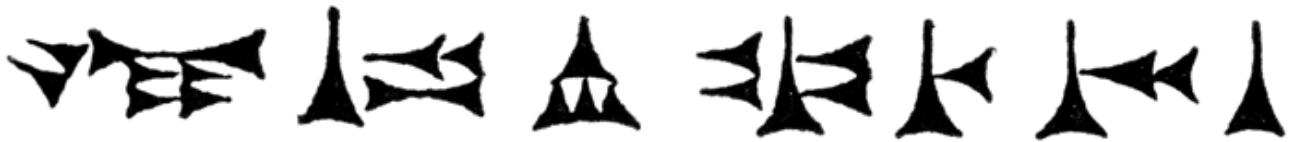
The Apocalypse not only ended civilization as the ancients knew it, but the world's very geography was altered. This is a world that shows clear and recent geological evidence of massive, devastating upheaval. The Sea of Chirak is a great body of water where once there was land. The Kossarit mountains are suggested by some to be the moldering body of fallen gods, and the Weeping Wall within those mountains is a vast basaltic expanse where the superheated body of the Fey Realm was expunged from the planar realms when it was destroyed. In Therias, the Hammerfall Sea is a vast crater where a rock was hurled in to the earth from space. In the Everdread Desert, endless tracks of lands blasted with magic radiation are barely habitable now. Terrible things happened, everywhere.

The most significant area of destruction can be found in the four corners of the world. Although the world is a normal sphere, no one today believes that the rest of the planet survived this conflict. In every direction beyond the great continent, sailors who travel far enough find elemental chaos. In the north it is a frozen field of ice. In the south it is endless seas of lava and boiling ocean. In the west it is a turbulence of water that engulfs the atmosphere and land. In the east it is said that the vapors of air send great bodies of stone in to the sky. There were once an unknown number of continents and other cultures on the planet, but now all save Chirak have been obliterated.

When working out locations for adventure, keep this idea of a war-ravaged landscape in mind. Regions of land which cause magical sickness from strange radiation, craters and holes, floating islands cast in to the sky as if gravity itself was destroyed, mountains that look like ancient giants who were slain and fell, to form great mounds of earth, and lakes which appear to be the foot print of behemoths are all appropriate geographical details for the world of Chirak.

### Ancient Fields of War

The thousand years of conflict that supposedly led to the Final Battle also left countless ancient battlefields littering the landscape. After twenty five hundred years



much of the relics from these ancient fields of war have rusted away or fallen to dust, but some of the more famous battlefields may yet yield strange relics or artifacts. Some of these regions may still cause sickness due to the ancient magic unleashed, or have strange and deleterious effects on magic cast in the region in the present. Undead may be more common, planar portals may litter the area, and sometimes even horrific monsters, immortal but in some state of torpor from the damage they received may lie about, waiting to be disturbed, with some hapless being providing just enough nourishment to awaken them again...

### Planar Rifts

The very fabric of reality was stressed by the Apocalypse. In addition to countless temporary and permanent gateways created by the armies of old, as well as more mundane portals used by the ancients for peaceful means, the world itself began to show stress fractures in its cosmic weave.

At its simplest the planar rifts are a convenient tool for DMs to introduce strange creatures or weird demiplanes of existence in to a storyline. Rifts could be anywhere, and could also lead anywhere. Likewise, just as PC s could enter one, so too could things come out of them.

Ancient portals that were designed for planar travel usually require special keys to activate, or special spells or words of power. Rifts are natural fissures in the cosmos, and so do not. They could fluctuate randomly, offering up a passage to a different plane of existence each time used, or they could be rooted to one location. Some only appear at dusk or dawn, others are permanent, and a few appear once and then never again. A small number of portals take the user forward or backward in time, and a few others take them to coterminous planes of existence where the world was utterly destroyed or (it is rumored) was never destroyed at all.

### Dead Gods, God flesh and Divine Blood

Chirak has at least twelve dead gods in the last twenty five hundred years lying around somewhere in the mortal realm and the planes. In addition, some of these gods died in a rather spectacular fashion, and their remains often had permanent, scarring effects on the world around them.

Regardless of the deity's nature, it is believed that the flesh of all the gods can reanimate dead forms and bring life to inanimate matter, and the divine blood of the gods can form portals to the planar realms and heal those

immersed in it. This is in fact true only for some gods, but most alchemists think it true of all of them.

For such a portion of a god's body to be useful, it must be pure and carefully preserved. It cannot have already been used, and must have been essentially untampered with. Once it has been used for the intended purpose of the alchemist, it loses its curious power and becomes a potent but inert substance which can be used for more mundane tasks (such as armor).

The acquisition of such substances should be very rare. If by chance some is found, it will have different effects, depending upon the deity the blood or flesh comes from, as seen below. Some of the known effects and remains are described and summarized here:

**Ga'thon:** His body is said to have formed the Kossarit Mountains in the west. Much of his flesh was split off, and formed a thousand (or more) creatures of chaos dubbed the Thousandspawn.

*Ga'thon's Flesh:* Pure versions of his flesh are extremely rare and usually preserved by Thousandspawn who are very powerful. The flesh can be used to create new monstrous Thousandspawn.

*Ga'thon's Blood:* This can be used to force monstrous mutations in other beings, although it also heals wounds in the process.

**Shaligon:** Her blood was spilt like a flooding rain from the atmosphere, and where each drop landed an orc was born. She had already crafted an army of such creatures for her legions, but the orcs were numerous and devastating to the survivors of the world.

*Shaligon's Blood:* It is possible her blood could have been kept in alchemical vials for the use in spawning more monsters, especially orcs. As for her body, no one knows for sure what happened to it, but most contend that her consciousness still exists, in some part, in every orc in the world.

**Akquinarios:** His body created the entire Sea of Chirak. As such, most of what was "his body" is simply sea water now.

*Akquinarios' Flesh/Blood:* It is said by some that the deepest, purest recesses of the great sea contain a pure essence of the god that can grant miraculous cures and immortality.

**Minhauros:** The body of Minhauros was cast in to Limbo, but his soul was trapped within, and eventually freed in to the host body of the (soon to be) avatar Mardieur Mardieux. This second body, weak and unbounded to the Taurus Stone, was slain and is said to have been interred in a tomb deep in the Espanean Mountains. Minhauros' original body is said to still rest in the plane



of Limbo, where priests of the dread god work to awaken him again. There are rumors that this body was destroyed by the avatar Martez, but whether that really happened or not is uncertain.

**Minhauros' Flesh:** This flesh can reanimate anything in to the undead.

**Minhauros' Blood:** There are rumors his blood can change a normal being in to a half man, half beast. Humans become minotaurs, elves become satyrs, and so forth.

**Malib:** Malib's body is said to have been annihilated by Akquinaros beneath the waters of the Sea of Chirak. Others claim that his body fell through the Rift of Chaos at the bottom of the sea and forms a vast mountainous expanse in the Abyss.

**Malib's Flesh:** It is said his flesh can turn its user in to a demon, or make a lesser demon greater.

**Malib's Blood:** This god's blood can supposedly grant prescience and a keen talent for planar travel.

**Pornyphiros:** This twin god's body is frozen as a hundred foot tall statue in the west, near the capitol of Abraheil.

**Pornyphiros' Flesh:** His body, which is said to have turned to stone, is said to radiate a healing energy that can extend life and cure disease to those who dwell near it.

**Gerigos:** The god Gerigos died early on, and was buried beneath the earth somewhere unknown. **Gerigos' Blood:** His blood is believed to have seeped in to the earth and formed sacred wells, called Ether Pools, which contain a sanguine essence of the divine. These pools were used to form the semi-divine hierarchy of Spirit Lords in mysterious Therias, and act as portals to the mysterious demiplane of the Spirit Realm.

**Durinalia, Medgenon, and Ithenor:** No one know what happened to the bodies of these three gods, and there is much mystery surrounding their deaths.

**Pallath:** Pallath is said to have been slain while in his sky chariot, and fell from the sky, turning to the same crystal as his stone and forming a vast crater in the Crystite Lands and Madagar. From the corruption of chaos which filled his slain form came the species of the Cylovites, and the terror they wracked. Many, many shards of his stone were believed to have been spread throughout the world.

**Pallath's Crystallized Body:** A crystalline shard of this god, easily mistaken for a Zodiac Shard, will turn its user in to a Cylovite or Hybrid.

**Zephyrs:** This deity was slain early on by Minhauros in the city of Beltraine, the folk tales say, and some believe that the god's body still rests there, used by the animates of that land for some mysterious purpose.

**Zephyrs' Flesh:** It is said that this may be a key component in the sentience of the animates.

**Zephyrs' Blood:** This blood, used on any unloving matter, can bring it to life.

**Medin'iel:** The tales speak of how Medin'iel fell in battle on the planet Perdition, and that his moldering corpse can still be found there, used as a charnel monastery for the guardians of Xylom.

**Medin'iel's Flesh:** Although his flesh is used as a monastic retreat, some claim that pure portions of his godheart can be used to restore life to the dead, returning even their body to normal, even if it was utterly destroyed.

**Medin'iel's Blood:** The demons of Xylom say that his blood can be used to purify and drive the taint of chaos from other demons, and purify a being of evil intent.

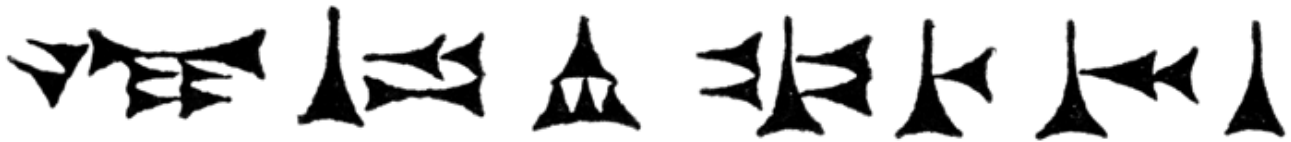
## Reliquaries

Most of these objects, be it preserved flesh or blood, can be found in the form of sacred reliquaries. These reliquaries are usually glass or ceramic vials encased in enchanted gold and silver, and occasionally might be ornate boxes of metal, wood, or even ivory carved from the bones of a powerful beast such as a dragon, in which the tissue is carefully preserved.

God flesh is so rare simply because when gods die their body transforms, usually in to an element of some dominance, but often a conflagration of all. Ga'thon, for example, died and became a vast mountain range, filled with sulfurous lakes, volcanic hot spots, and jagged, endless basaltic mountains. Akquinaros turned entirely in to a being of water. Pornyphiros, although he retained his physical form, turned to stone. Such is the way of the death of gods.

Because of this, god flesh is exceedingly rare. Sometimes a lucky alchemist, working with deep miners, may stumble across some pure, preserved portion of the body of the god. Other times it may have been something which was taken during the time the god was alive. While rare, it is still easier to find than one would imagine, if only because the gods, especially in the Final Battle, had an alarming habit of changing their size to gargantuan proportions. Indeed, Ga'thon was said to have changed to an aerial form that stretched for thousands of miles in the sky, a formless mass of chaotic destruction. Because of this, some gods seem to have left remains all over the place, while others have left not a single trace.

DMs can ascribe other unique properties to reliquaries not seen in the earlier discussion on god flesh. For



example, a reliquary containing Minhauros' blood could be used to control minotaurs, or might grant the bearer a strong attack involving a charge. If it is ever opened to gain access to the blood then the power of the artifact is lost, but such devices would make suitable magic items.

## Secrets of Chirak

There are indeed many secrets in Chirak. A few of them will be discussed, in brief, below. Future expansions for the setting will elaborate or focus on some of these secrets, as well:

### The New Pantheon

It is known that some beings have taken up Zodiac Stones or Shards and sought to follow the long road to godhood. These beings are often worshiped as new, young gods, but to date none have achieved the power of a true deity. Since some scholars portend that beings like Minhauros reached the path of the good in a thousand years or less, the fact that no creature since has done so is seen as a sign that there will be no more gods, that the binding power of the stones is lost.

There are two elements to this mystery that can be explored at length. One is whether or not this is true. Some of the demiurges listed in chapter IV could in fact be getting close to true godhood, but may simply lack a whole stone to finish the process. This could lead to new holy wars as they rally followers to strike against the avatars who bear shards of the main stone, in an effort to at last unite their power source. Kobal of the Sabiri lands is a prime candidate for this, as is Kalie'yana and Piscalael. Laddaskar is suspected by a handful of scholars to hold an intact stone; he could already be closer than any to the path of the god.

When the first new god appears (or if it appears) that might create a new time of prosperity across the land, and a unity amongst peoples not seen in ages. It might also lead to a new period of strife and conflict, one which leads to a new era of warfare and religious strife, as the envious opposition seeks to undermine the power of the young god.

### The God Hun'hunal

Little is as yet known of this mysterious deity revered by expanding cults from the region of Xoxtocharit. The people of this land have always traditionally been worshipers of the Demon Gods, the powerful generals of chaos who fought on the side of the Betrayer gods in the conflict. The Xoxtocharit are also suspected to worship

the Thousandspawn, those that they know of. But amidst this worship of chaos have sprung followers to a new, young deity who claims to have drunk from the wellspring of creation and become a true god through sheer will. This deity is called Hun'hunal.

Whether Hun'hunal (sometimes called Hun'hunal, Hun'Hanal, Hunanal or other variations) is even a real creature, let alone a deity is up for speculation. No one save the inner priesthood of this god has been said to encounter him, and they claim that as a true-born god he is already ascended in to the Celestial Realm, and does not choose to walk among men anymore. While no direct evidence of this god exists, plenty of his followers exhibit divine magic, and regularly summon up agents and minions through ancient stones. These spirits and demons do indeed claim to serve Hun'hunal.

Planar sages think Hun'hunal may in fact be a real god from another plane of existence, who has decided to try and gain a following in Chirak, but has not manifested here directly, to avoid losing his power. Instead, he acts through his agents, sending them in his stead, and uses limited manipulative sorceries to grant boons to his followers. Most scholars simply believe that Hun'hunal is a new avatar who has seized the missing Taurus Stone, however, and has tried to make himself seem more powerful than he really is, by disguising his real nature.

Others worry that this new young usurper god appears to be aligned with beings of chaos, and that some claim he was a child of Minhauros. The idea that the first new god in the world is not one of the Twelve and potentially a being of chaos is profoundly disturbing.

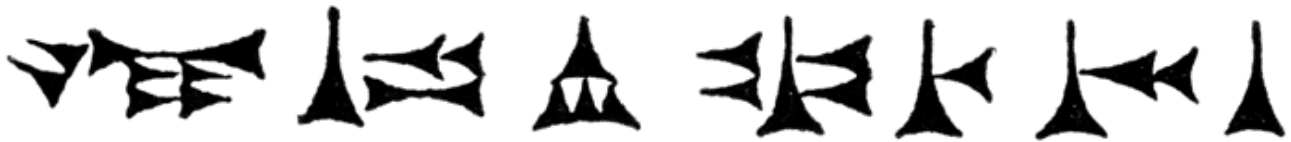
### Chronomancers and the Island of Time

The Chronomancers have no official recognition on Chirak, though a few belong to the Order of Kaledon, such as the revered Kal Vassos. They are a mysterious sect of mages, and practice magic unlike anything seen by another other wizard in the modern era. Some say that chronomancy is the last true art of the ancients.

The chronomancers are rumored to operate on an Island of Time, somewhere in the Sea of Chirak, that is at once a fabulous and real place. It does not exist in the present, but exists in both the past and future instead, and only the chronomancers and their guests can reach it.

The avatar Mardieur Mardieux, after slaying Minhauros' resurrected form, claimed to have journeyed to this mythical island, where a great mausoleum and monument to the Dead Gods was built and maintained by a benevolent people related to the Lessi, and the





Chronomancers placed the spirit of Minhauros in to a complex wall made of the same mineral as the Taurus Stone. There, along with many other god spirits, did he at last come to rest. Mardieur also said he encountered the spirit of Akquinarios in a similar wall of Jasper, and that while he did not see them, he believed that the other gods had shrines of their own as well.

The exact nature of this ancient island out of time and its mausoleum-shrine to the Dead Gods remains a mystery that has not been solved to this day. Questions unanswered include whether it is just the Twelve who died during the Apocalypse that are enshrined there, or if all gods throughout time find that their souls end up at rest here. Why the Chronomancers do this, and who exactly the Chronomancers really are remains another mystery as well.

### **The Solar Death**

Every year for centuries now the temperature of the seasons has dropped in tiny, almost unnoticeable increments. The notion is that the sun itself is slowly extinguishing, and will eventually die out, the final victim of the Apocalypse.

The venerable priest Marez, long known as the only dedicate to Pallath's memory and a firm believer that the existence of the sun proved that his god never really died, became an avatar from four shards of the Pallath Stone and eventually took a pilgrimage to the Pallis Esemanthis, the great and ancient tower of old that was once a solar observatory. After freeing it from the chaotic Sky Gaunts and soldiers of Daman who held the location, Marez journeyed up the vast spire and discovered an ancient animate and a gnome attendant who had taken care of the spire for ages. He also discovered a flying ship, a sister to the legendary Cannadad Dei, and with it he and his adventuring companions journeyed to the fabled City of the Sun, which turned out to be a great disk-like structure that existed in orbit over the Sun itself.

There, Marez discovered that the city was under perpetual siege from the demons of chaos, still carrying out the will of long dead masters, and that the city itself was built around a great telescopic device which could channel the divine energy of the Pallath Stone in to the heart of the sun to destroy a sickening, black mass of chaos which Ga'thon had unleashed during the Apocalypse to devour the sun. There were other agents

of Pallath who had arrived, bearing shards of the ancient god, to power the device to hold back the devouring chaos, but none were strong enough to stop it, merely detain it for short periods. With Marez, this changed, and at last they were able to eradicate and reverse the growth of the chaos.

Still, the chaos in the sun still remains, but diminished for now. Marez disappears not long after, dispatched in a trap to the far nether regions of the planar cosmos by the demon lord Kraish'degar, and so there is no one present with the strength to deter the devouring chaos from once again expanding to consume the sun.

### **The Thirteen Worlds**

It has been said before, but the thirteen worlds of the cosmos are as much a mystery as anything. The twelve planets of the Zodiac, plus Chirak itself, the two moons, and the Sun are the know objects in the ether of space. The Xylom demons claim that their world is one of the twelve, known as Perdition, and that the demon races all came from this planet before the corruption of chaos left their many species permanently changed. What of the other eleven worlds, then?

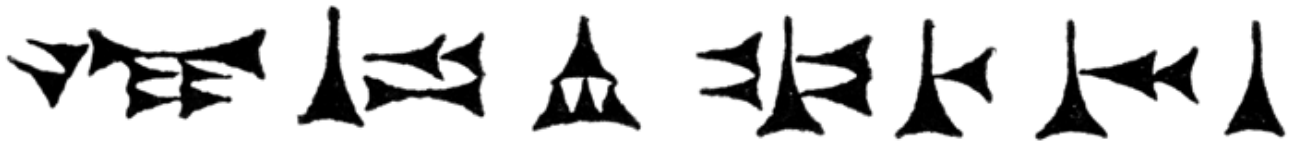
Precious little of the celestial mechanics and nature of planets is left in the recovered lore of the ancients. Those scholars and sages who have sought such information have pieced together a flimsy argument that most of the so-called other dimensions are, in fact, these other worlds. Not all dimensions, they contend, are actual physical places; the celestial kingdoms, abyss, and many strange planar demiplanes are all part of the weave of reality and stretch outward in to strange alternate universes. But some believe that the Shadow Plane, and Spirit World, and some other locations thought to be demiplanes are really physical locations on these other worlds.

The evidence for such information is scant, but an entrepreneurial scholar might put together an expedition of PCs to travel to these planes of existence, and seek out proof that they are, in fact, other worlds in the ether of space, coterminous with Chirak. Finding evidence could be as simple as looking upon a starscape and recognizing the known constellations and other planets in the sky, or it may be as difficult as finding learned scholars of that realm and consulting with them for esoteric lore.

W E T A S T T A



*Sythinira, of the Xernethian Elves*



## Appendix IV: Exotic Character Templates

### Undying Template

There will come a time when a player character suffers a demise as an elf, and by virtue of bad luck, DM fiat or storyline requirements he will return as an undying. This template can be used to simulate those who return from the dead.

DMs interested in some old school randomness may require a freshly deceased fey player character to make an “Undying check” at the terminus of their character’s life. This would require a charisma check against a DC 25 (heroic), DC 30 (paragon) or DC 35 (epic). If the check fails, or the player rolls a natural 1 on the roll, then the character returns as an undying.

This template works just fine for NPCs as well; particularly insidious DMs could apply it to satyrs, nymphs and other unusual fey as desired, to *really* surprise his players!

**Requirements:** Any fey type; must have been killed in some fashion that did not also lead to dismemberment or immolation.

**Attributes:** As base elf, eladrin, fey or half-elf type

**Move:** 6 squares or as base fey type

**Size:** as base creature

**Vision:** dark vision

**Racial Skills:** as base fey type; you may substitute Stealth +2 and Thievery +2 for one of the standard skill bonuses, if desired

**Undead:** Undying gain the undead subtype. Like most undead, undying do not age and are effectively immortal, until someone slays them.

**Base Fey Traits:** The undying gains the base traits of his character race.

**Powerful:** DMs should treat the undying character as two levels higher for purposes of calculating encounter level.

**Wilting Grasp:** The Undying gains Wilting Grasp at will power.

**Corrupting Touch:** The undying gains the corrupting touch utility power.

**Discomfited by Sunlight:** The undying finds sunlight painfully unpleasant, and must shield himself from it if possible. If unable to provide some reasonable cover (such as a thick cloak and hood) while in sunlight, then

the undying grants combat advantage to all foes around him.

**Hunger for the Beauty of the Living:** Undying do not heal normally. They must drain the life and beauty from the living in order to sustain themselves. At the beginning of each day and during every extended rest the undying loses 1 healing surge. When the undying reaches 0 healing surges, he may go in to a frenzy at the sight of beauty; each time a creature of Charisma 12 or better comes within sight of the undying, he must make a Will check (DC 15+ the subject’s Cha mod.+ ½ level) or immediately try and feed! He will not stop trying (by attack or deception) until he has gained at least one surge.

Undying can recover hit points by touching a target and invoking one of several powers, two of which are innate and at-will (see below). They may not go over their normal surge maximum.

**Special Death Requirements:** Undying who reach 0 hit points don’t die like regular characters. If an undying reaches 0 healing surges and is *then* reduced to 0 hit points, he is destroyed. Otherwise, he will return from the grave once again at an unspecified later date. This is usually a minimum of a few months, but can be years or even centuries. Roll 1D20 for the number of months the undying is in torpor. On a 19-20, re-roll and treat it as the number of years; if you roll 19-20 a second time, re-roll for the number of decades, etc. Finally, an undying can always be prevented from returning by means of decapitation.

#### Wilting Grasp

##### Undying Racial Attack Power

*“Your very grasp sucks the life and beauty from your foes.”*

**At-Will – Standard – Martial, Psychic**

**Close attack, one target**

**Attack:** Dex+2 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** Target suffers 1D6+Cha modifier in psychic damage and suffers a -2 penalty to all charisma rolls and skill checks (save ends)\*. The undying gains 1 healing surge *so long as the target also has healing surges left.*

Likewise, if the target took no damage from the initial attack (due to resistances or other effects), then the undying does not gain a healing surge. The charisma penalty is cumulative! Targets that are undead do not



take charisma damage or earn a healing surge to the undying.

*At 11<sup>th</sup> Level:* increase to 2D6+Cha modifier psychic damage

*At 21<sup>st</sup> Level:* increase to 3D6+Cha modifier psychic damage and a -4 penalty to all charisma based rolls and skill checks (save ends).

### **Corrupting Touch Undying Racial Utility Power**

“You mean well, but even when you try to heal, you cause damage, stealing the beauty and life of those around you.”

**At-Will – Instant Reaction – Arcane, Psychic**

**Trigger:** You touch your bare skin to another willing target in an attempt to heal or aid someone (inducing healing by any power, any other effect which induces a healing surge in another, or using the Heal skill). Must be adjacent to target in question.

**Effect:** Target suffers a -2 penalty to all charisma rolls and skill checks (save ends)\*; this penalty is cumulative. Target loses a healing surge. You gain one healing surge so long as the target had one to lose. Targets that are undead do not take charisma damage or earn a healing surge to the undying.

### **\*Charisma Penalties vs. Charisma Drain**

DMs using this racial template to create specific class-based undying should substitute the charisma drain effect (see the undying entry in the Monstrous Appendix) for the charisma penalty effect listed for these powers. Likewise, if the DM wishes, the charisma drain effect may also be used by player characters that have this template provided he feels it will not create any unbalancing effects to his game. As it is, the current method of handling racial template powers for undying provides a more immediate beneficial effect than the disease-based charisma drain, but ultimately it is up to each DM and his campaign/play style preferences.

### **Undying Racial Feats:**

The following appendix VII includes two new feats for the Undying: *The Undying’s Strangling Grasp* heroic feat and the *Wilted Lord* paragon feat.

## **Animate Guardian Template**

The following optional race can be used to generate interesting NPCs by the DM, or if he’s feeling generous, an occasional player may take a crack at this “Robocop” style animate:

These immense golems stand ten to fifteen feet in height and tower over most other creatures. They are suffused with radiant elemental energy and are always composed of dense metal plates. They are constructed by the various animate city-hubs as soldiers to protect factories, libraries and other important places of interest to the animate collectives, as well as body guards to the collector units. They tend to lack the sophistication of the collectors, being designed primarily to fight. A basic guardian unit can be built with the following rules; additional features can be added on to create more sophisticated (and dangerous) versions. Any feat in the standard rules that has animate as a prerequisite is available to animate guardians, but they also have several new feats available exclusively to this model of animate.

There are several new feats available to animate guardians, including *technomantic enhancements*, *incinerating fire spray*, *intervention* and *improved bolt loader*. They are detailed below in Appendix VI.

### **Animate Guardian Character Data**

**Average Height:** 10 to 15 feet in height

**Average Weight:** .75-1.5 tons

**Ability Scores:** +2 Str, +2 Con

**Size:** Large; may wield 2H weapons one handed; may wield weapons one size larger that do one greater grade of damage die;

also subject to size penalties in some circumstances.

**Speed:** 8 squares

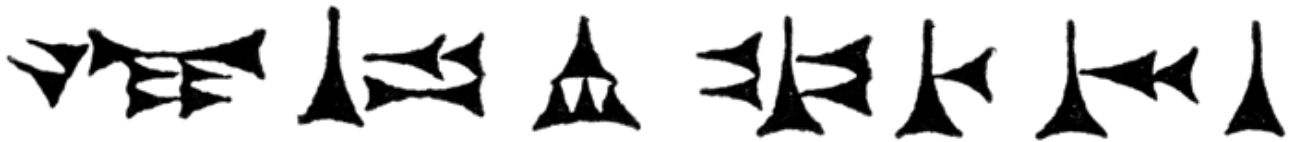
**Vision:** Low Light, but an animate guardian may choose better vision (see below)

**Languages:** Old Mythic, Espanean (or one other) and Tradespeak

**Skill Bonuses:** +2 Endurance, +2 Perception

### **Animate Guardian Racial Benefits:**

**Living Construct:** (see the Monster Manual). Animates are living constructs.



**Weapon Arm:** You may choose one two handed weapon of choice and equip it on your primary arm as a permanent weapon. This weapon can be wielded one handed due to the size of the animate guardian, and cannot be disarmed, although it can be broken. Replacements cost 10 times the base cost of the weapon. This weapon can be retracted to allow the use of hands. Retracting or readying this weapon is a minor action.

**Bolt Rifle:** Animate guardians may equip a bolt-rifle. This weapon will be grafted to their off-arm, and can be retracted or folded to allow easy use of hands. The retraction or readying of this weapon requires a minor action. Bolt Rifles do not supply free ammunition; one iron bullet for the weapon costs 5 gold pieces. It takes a minor action to reload the weapon. The bolt rifle provides the following basic at-will attack to the Animate Guardian:

**Bolt Rifle Attack** (Animate Guardian Racial Attack; At-Will; Standard; Ranged 10/20; Attack: Dex+2 vs. AC; Hit: 2D6+Dex damage; Load: Slow, High Crit; At Level 21: 4D6+Dex damage)

**Pig Iron:** Guardians are heavily armored from the day of creation. Guardian skin is natural plate armor, and all guardians are treated as if they have proficiency in plate

armor. This grants an inherent +8 modifier to armor class, but because it is heavy armor they can not apply Dexterity modifiers to AC.

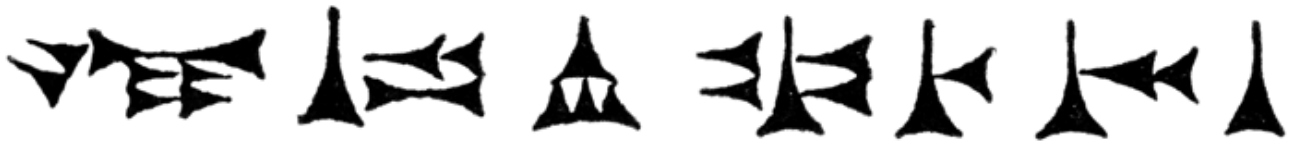
Guardian Animates can enchant their "skin" as if it were a suit of armor, although they can only enhance their natural plate, and cannot disenchant it (without losing their natural armor, anyway).

Animate guardians are most suited to martial class roles, but arcane or divine spell casters are not improbable. To date, no known animate guardian (or indeed animate or any sort) has been seen in a primal class role.

Animate guardian player characters might herald from one or more of the following unique origins:

- A unit buried in ruins long ago, and awakens with no memory of what its original duty was
- A special unit sent out in to the world with a specific high-risk mission by the collective
- A rogue unit that has escaped it's imperative programming, and may be hunted by other animates
- A guardian which failed in its duty to protect a collector, and is too shamed to return to its collective hub to report failure
- A rare confused guardian that was misprogrammed with a collector brain, and has difficulty reconciling its scholarly nature with its enormous combat body
- A perfectly normal guardian that protects another collector model played by a different player (or as an NPC)





## Appendix V: Compilation of New Feats

The following is a quick compilation of all the new feats introduced in *The Realms of Chirak* for ease of reference. This information is the same as that found within the main text, but gathered for ease of access.

### Heroic Tier Feats:

#### Advanced Fire Spray

**Prerequisite:** Animate, Fire Spray power

**Benefit:** You spray a lingering, burning fluid from your fingertips instead of normal fire. The animate may add ongoing 5 Fire damage (save ends) to his power's effect.

#### Ancestral Mage

**Prerequisite:** Level 1 (see below) in any Spell Caster class, Wis 13+

**Effect:** The Ancestral Magic feat allows a spell caster to use ancestral focus items (see below) as a mastered implement. In addition, the spell caster gains a permanent +2 bonus to Diplomacy or Bluff checks with spirits.

The ability to perform ancestral magic is an inherited trait, and should be chosen at character creation. The DM may allow a player to choose this feat at a later date if the plot would allow the spell caster to "discover" his latent talent for ancestral magic.

#### Aquatic Combatant

**Prerequisite:** Athletics (trained)

**Benefit:** you do not suffer a -2 penalty when using normal weapons underwater.

#### Artificing

**Prerequisite:** none

**Benefit:** The character may craft unusual devices and objects according to the artificing rules.

#### Bloody Strikes

**Prerequisite:** Lizard Man

**Benefit:** Your claw basic attack also causes ongoing 5 bleeding damage (save ends).

#### Burning Madness

**Prerequisite:** orc

**Benefit:** You can enter in to a frenzy of madness as a free

action:

#### Burning Madness

#### Orc Racial Utility

*You open yourself up to the burning madness of your race.*

#### Daily Utility

#### Minor Action – Self

**Effect:** You gain +2 to hit and damage until the end of the encounter, but your AC, Reflexes and Will are at -2 for the duration.

#### Fay Intuition

**Prerequisites:** Race-cannesh, Arcana, Wisdom 13+

**Effect:** A Cannesh with especially keen intuition gains an enhanced ability to divine the magical nature of things around him. He can "see" fey forms and spirits, circles of power and ley lines. He can extend this to conventional magic. The cannesh gains a permanent +2 bonus to his Arcana skill, and can identify any fey creature or spirit correctly by making an arcana check, against a DC equal to the 10+the level of the target inspected.

#### Hashikarystyr Weapon Mastery

**Prerequisite:** Hashikarystyr

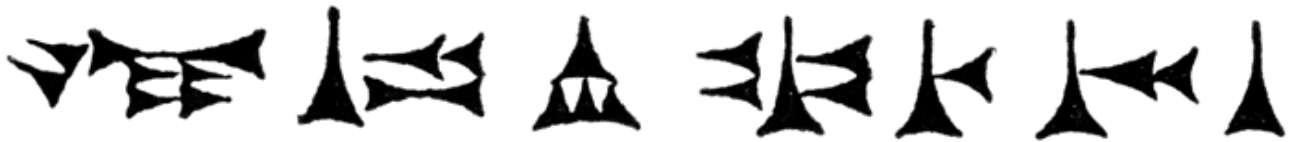
**Benefit:** You gain an additional +2 to damage when fighting with your racial weapons (scimitars and crossbows).

#### Mark of Shaligon

**Prerequisite:** Worshiper of Shaligon

**Benefit:** The character of any race gains the effects of the Eradariin Marks of Shaligon racial trait, and may brand ritual spells upon his or her body in lieu of a spell book. The bearer of this feat gains 1 new ritual spell when the feat is acquired, and may choose to brand himself with new ritual spells as tattoos instead of scribing them into a spell book in the future.

To brand his skin with a ritual spell, the worshiper must spend the usual requirements to learn the ritual, and 4D6 additional hours transforming the power of the ritual in to a single, comprehensible glyphic tattoo that is then etched upon his skin. Once done, the ritual is permanently understandable by the bearer, and he does not need to keep it in a ritual book.



### Mehaka Spear Mastery

Prerequisite: Mehaka

Benefit: You gain an additional +2 to damage when fighting with your racial weapons (spear and javelin).

### Photographic Recall

Prerequisites: Animate, Perception as a trained skill

Benefit: Animates can be constructed and magically programmed to record what they see and hear with stunning precision. As time goes by, this ability is nurtured and becomes truly vivid.

An animate may make a Perception check to recall any information previously experienced with startling precision. The length of time which can be applied to the recall is based on the following chart:

| Perception Check | Length of Time |
|------------------|----------------|
| 10 or less       | 1 week         |
| 11-15            | 1 month        |
| 16-20            | 1 year         |
| 21-25            | 10 years       |
| 26-30            | 100 years      |
| 31-35            | 1,000 years    |
| 36-40            | 2,000 years    |
| +5               | +1,000 years   |

The animate may photographically reconstruct an image recalled in a physical media (such as potter or painter). It will be almost lifelike, depending on the quality of painting materials. An animate with the Mimicry feat may precisely duplicate voices from any period of time (like a recording, but not as voice mimicry). Minutiae down to the signature on a clay pot or the runes on a banded ring may be recalled with this ability.

### Mimicry

Prerequisites: Photographic Recall feat, Charisma 14+

Benefit: Animates are able to study and precisely imitate the motions and voice of those they encounter. Some perfect it to an art.

The animate can study one target for a period of time and attempt to mimic that target with a Charisma check. The base DC for this task is 20. Modifiers include: +2 if the target is studied for at least one minute, an additional +2 if studied for 10 minutes or more. Penalties include: -2 per day since observing the subject, an additional -4 if the subject is being mimicked through second-hand (but accurate) information.

The animate will either precisely imitate the mannerisms or the voice of a target (or both, with two separate checks). The mimicry will be so precise that the

animate could be instantly assumed to be its mimicked target. The animate that does this is actually doing a form of pantomime, and is not creating movements that are able to duplicate combat or skill-based actions of the target. Nonetheless, the result is uncanny compared to conventional thespians, a mechanically precise duplication of life.

### Planar Attunement

Prerequisites: Planar Magic feat

Effect: The planar magician becomes attuned to a specific plane of existence. He gains a +2 bonus to his attack and damage rolls when casting magic on that plane, and a +2 save bonus against spells cast on him by creatures from that plane. The spells of the caster take on the type identifier of his native plane, as well (see below). These add an additional effect to the spell, listed below.

Additionally, magic the spell caster uses will take on a trait or element of the influencing plane. For example, if that plane is the Shadow Realm, for example, then shadow will always figure somehow in to every spell, even if it merely appears to wreath the caster in its darkness when he casts spells.

If the spell is summoning or creating beings to aid the caster, or summoning demons or other beings, they will always produce denizens native to that plane.

Type Effects: All type effects turn damage or effects in to its type (as well as the existing spell type, if any) and so creatures that would be affected by that type will react accordingly (i.e. a creature which is weak against radiant will take damage as if it were hit by a radiant spell.)

#### Sample Spell Effects by Plane:

##### Perdition, the Abyss

Type: Fire, Chaos or Cold (either, but choose one at the time of casting).

Effect: Looks a lot like a warlock. Spells are tinged with eldritch fire, and the sounds of screaming souls can be heard. Brimstone fills the air around the caster.

##### Greater Beyond

Type: Radiant

Effect: The caster's magic is accompanied by the sound of eerie bells and golden light.

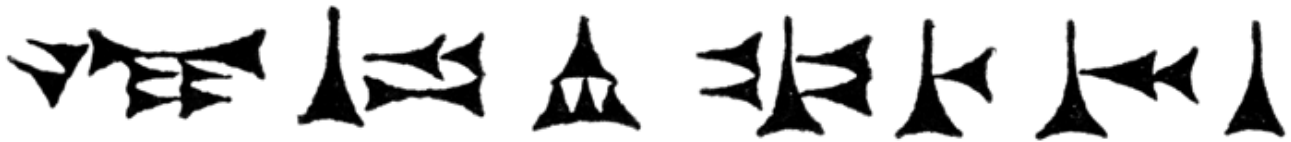
##### Shadow Realm

Type: Shadow

Effect: The caster and his magic is wreathed in penumbral shadows.

##### The Beyond, The Far Realm

Type: Psychic or Chaos (pick one at time of casting)



**Effect:** Black energies and dark, half-seen glimpses of *something from beyond*.

#### Outer Darkness

**Type:** Psychic or Necrotic (pick one at time of casting)

**Effect:** The caster and his target seem to contort and twist in strange and horrible dimensions.

#### Dreamlands

**Type:** Illusion or Sleep (pick one at time of casting)

**Effect:** The caster and target seem to be wreathed in a dream-like energy, in a half-dream state.

#### Temporal Plane

**Type:** Time

**Effect:** The caster and his target seem to be out of sync with normal time.

### Technomantic Enhancements

**Prerequisite:** Animate Guardian

**Benefit:** You may choose one normal animate enhancement and gain its properties as a racial trait; choose from Night Vision, Fire Spray, Change Self, Hardened Skin, or Machine Logic. You may pick this feat multiple times, picking a new ability each time.

### Undying's Strangling Grasp

**Prerequisite:** Undying racial template

**Effect:** You gain access to the following daily power:

#### Undying's Strangling Grasp Undying Racial Attack

*"You latch on to a foe and drain them utterly of all life and comeliness."*

**Daily – Standard – Martial, Psychic**

**Close attack, one target**

**Attack:** Dex+2 vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** Target suffers 3D6+Cha modifier in psychic damage, is weakened, and suffers a -2 penalty to all charisma rolls and skill checks (save ends both). The charisma modifier is cumulative! Gain one healing surge.

**Miss:** Target takes half damage and is weakened.

### Quickened Shapeshifting

**Prerequisites:** Race-cannesh, Dex 14+

**Effect:** The Cannesh has become so efficient and precise in his ability to shape shift that he is now able to change form as a free action instead of a standard action, although he may only shift form once per round.

### Sabiri Tattoo Magic Feat

**Prerequisites:** Sabiri, Ritual Magic Feat, Dexterity 13+

**Effect:** The Sabiri have learned the unique art of inscribing ritual spells on their own bodies. Through the use of this feat, along with 100 gps worth of tools and a special ink which comes from the blood of an enchanted creature (usually a gorgon), the Sabiri artist can spend one day (12 hours) placing the inscription for any ritual spell in question upon the body of a person. All features of the ritual spell must already be in place; the recipient of the tattoo must already have learned the ritual spell, for example.

Once it is placed upon the character's skin, then he can never lose or forget the spell; he knows it innately. Characters can have eight imbued ritual tattoo on each of the following areas: head, arms, legs, neck, chest and back. A Disenchant spell will remove a tattoo to make room for another one.

If the tattooed character dies, it is possible to take the ritual spell from his flesh. The character must make an Arcana check at a DC of 15+the spell's level to grasp the weave of the spell tattoo. It is also possible to imbue it on one's own kin through the process described above.

Tattoo artists among the Sabiri often charge enormous sums to foreigners for the privilege of an integrated tattoo rune. The base price is usually 200 gpps, plus maybe some task.

## Paragon Tier Feats:

### Faywere - Cannesh Lord

**Prerequisites:** Race-Cannesh, any 2 attributes 16+, level 11+

**Effect:** The cannesh discovers his heritage as a true shapeshifter. He loses his Tribe trait but gains the ability to transform in to any listed cannesh animal form (bear, rabbit, wolf, raven, and others at the DM's discretion). Use the Animal Form abilities as listed for each tribe; the feywere gains all of them, though he may only use one form per encounter.

### Gift of Kalie'yana

**Prerequisite:** worshiper of Kalie'yana, Ritual Caster (Water Breathing)

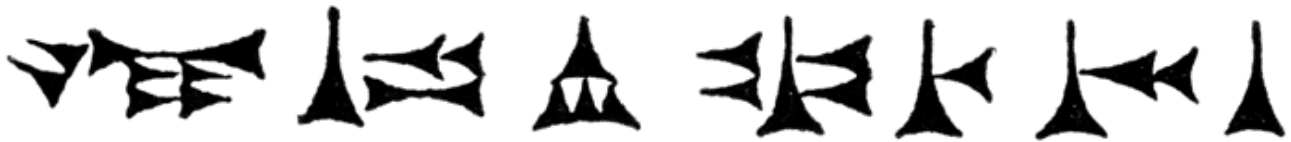
**Benefit:** You gain the benefits of the Water Breathing spell as a permanent effect on yourself only.

### Improved Bolt Loader

**Prerequisite:** Animate Guardian, Level 11+

**Benefit:** You enhance your bolt gun so that it is Load: normal (may reload and fire in a standard action).





### Intervention

**Prerequisite:** Guardian Animate, Level 11+

**Benefit:** This feat grants access to the Intervention Racial Power:

#### Intervention Animate Guardian Racial Attack

*"You move swiftly to intervene in an attack against the one you are charged with protecting."*

**Daily – Instant Reaction – Martial**

**Trigger:** an ally is attacked

**Effect:** The guardian can shift up to 6 squares and switch places with the designated ally, who is shifted to one square adjacent to the guardian. The guardian animate then takes the damage intended for that unit.

### Kalie'yana's Mystery Aquatic

**Prerequisite:** worshiper of Kalie'yana, at least one skill in Arcana, Religion, History or Nature as trained

**Benefit:** The demiurge aids you in your mental faculties when submerged in water. So long as you are completely submerged in water, you may roll twice on any Arcana, Religion, History or Nature check and gain the better of the two results.

### Kalie'yana's Swimmer's Blessing

**Prerequisite:** Worshiper of Kalie'yana

**Benefit:** You and any ally within 3 squares of you gain a +2 bonus to swim speed. Creatures who do not breathe water (either naturally or by ritual) must still make swim checks. This feat is often used by the military wing of her Church, the Raven Knights of Kalie'yana, to patrol harbors, mount attacks on undersea enemies, and sneak aboard pirate vessels or islands.

### Kalie'yana's Watery Boon

**Prerequisite:** worshiper of Kalie'yana, Ritual Caster (water walk and water breathing)

**Benefit:** The component cost and casting time of your Water Walk and Water Breathing Spells are reduced by 50%, and you gain a +2 Arcana bonus when casting Water Breathing.

### Path of the Avatar

**Requirements:** Possession of a Zodiac Stone or Shard; Level 11 or better, Concordance Score is 16+

The bearer of a zodiac stone or shard has become attuned to it, and the stone merges in some way with the bearer's flesh. He is now a conduit for its power.

The caster may attempt Arcana or Religion checks to unlock new divine powers from a Zodiac Stone (shards have no more powers). The stone will grant one additional daily power use to the avatar, with one power

immediately revealed. Each level that the avatar advances, he may make an Arcana or Religion check (DC 30) to see if he can learn a new daily power. If he fails, no power is revealed. The avatar gains an additional daily power slot for the powers revealed by the stone at level 25 and level 30. If The zodiac stone is acquired after reaching those levels, then he may make a skill check once a month to unlock new powers, and gain new daily slots until he has all 3.

Finally, the bearer of the stone ceases to age. This process will reverse if the character is killed or the stone is cut from his or her body. To do so, the attacker must inflict damage to himself until he is bloodied, and spend at least one full combat round digging it out. This will also eliminate all other effects of the feat until the stone is recovered.

### Planar Magic

**Prerequisites:** Wizard or Warlock, Arcana, and Int 15+

**Effect:** The planar mage is essentially a normal spell caster who has learned to achieve greater spell effects when connected to or drawing from his or her plane of focus. Wizards and Warlocks can learn this feat.

The mage can use this feat with a +2 bonus to the Arcana skill to identify magic or creatures of planar origin. He can automatically identify portals and rifts to planar realms, and can learn to activate those gates with an Arcana check (base DC 15 plus appropriate adjustments). He can also tell if the gate is one or two ways, an important thing to know.

### Wilted Lord

**Prerequisite:** undying, level 11+

You gain the following special power:

#### Wilted Lord Undying Racial Attack

*"Your mere presence causes plants to wilt and beautiful beings to succumb to fits of hideousness."*

**Encounter – Standard – Arcane, Psychic**

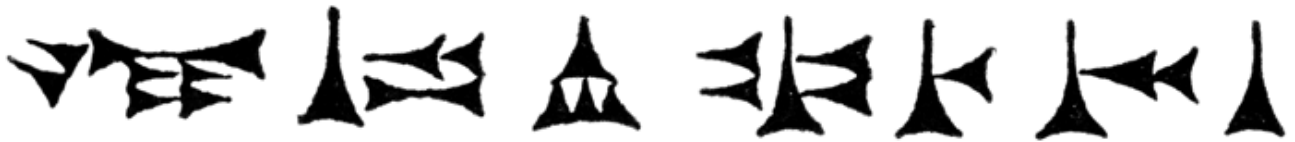
**Range: Close Burst 3**

**Sustain Minor**

**Aura Effect:** You project an aura which initiates the attack against any creature starting its turn inside or *moving through* the burst area:

**Attack:** Cha vs. Fortitude

**Hit:** Each target suffers 2D6+Cha modifier in psychic damage and suffers a -2 penalty to all charisma rolls and skill checks (save ends both). The undying recovers 1 healing surge for each turn an attack is initiated by the aura effect.



## Epic Tier Feats:

### Path of the Demiurge

**Requirements:** Must have Path of the Avatar feat; level 21 or better, Arcana and Religion trained, must have acquired Charisma times 10 in dedicated followers and a cult in your name, and have the demigod epic destiny path.

**SPECIAL:** The Path of the Demiurge feat is a prerequisite for the Demigod Epic Destiny.

**Effect:** The avatar has graduated to the realm of the demiurge, a process that often takes centuries. In

distance. Only strong magic designed to obfuscate its location can prevent his detecting its presence.

At this stage, the Demiurge begins to feel the connection between his inner strength through the stone and followers. He will begin to accrue followers, starting initially with his base followers (the ones he earned himself, the hard way). Each month he must make a roll on the followers chart below. If the Demiurge loses 100 followers (Follower rating drops by 5), he will lose concordance. If he ever loses all his followers, his concordance immediately drops to 1! Naturally a demiurge needs to increase his following to have a prayer



addition to all abilities of the avatar, the Demiurge can now grant divine magic to others, 1 cleric or paladin follower per day per point of concordance he has with the zodiac stone.

The demiurge is immortal (does not age), but removal of the stone will negate this trait, as with the avatar ability. However, the demiurge retains a psychic connection to the stone, and can innately detect where the stone is at any given moment, without regard for

of gaining the Path of the God feat.

*Chapter IV discusses one more epic feat: The path of the god. Such a feat as this is normally beyond the scope of player characters, but those interested in the feat may refer to that chapter for more details.*

# Summary of New Feats

| Name                                   | Prerequisites  | Effect   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Heroic Tier Feats</b>               |  |  |
| Advanced Fire Spray                    | Animate, Fire Spray power  | gain ongoing 5 fire to fire spray  |
| Ancestral Mage                         | Level 1 (special) Spell Caster class, Wis 13+                                    | ancestral focus item feat, +2 diplomacy bluff against spirits                          |
| Aquatic Combatant                      | Athletics (trained)  | no penalty to combat in water  |
| Artificing                             | none   | ability to learn and craft devices   |
| Bloody Strikes                         | Lizard Man   | claw basic attack gains ongoing 5 bleeding   |
| Burning Madness                        |  | gain burning madness racial attack   |
| Fay Intuition                          | Race-cannesh, Arcana, Wisdom 13+   | +2 Arcana skill, and can identify any fey  |
| Hashikarystyr Weapon Mastery           | Hashikarystyr lizard man   | +2 to damage with scimitars and crossbows  |
| Mark of Shaligon                       | Worshipper of Shaligon   | gain mark of Shaligon ritual tattoo  |
| Mehaka Spear Mastery                   | Mehaka lizard man  | +2 to damage with spear and javelin  |
| Photographic Recall                    | Animate, Perception as a trained skill   | gain special recall check  |
| Mimicry                                | Photographic Recall feat, Charisma 14+   | gain special mimicry effect  |
| Planar Attunement                      | Planar Magic feat  | +2 attack and damage on specific plane, +2 save bonus on plane, planar trait           |
| Quickened Shapeshifting                | Race-cannesh, Dex 14+  | shape shift as a free action   |
| Sabiri Tattoo Magic Feat               | Sabiri, Ritual Magic Feat, Dexterity 13+   | gain access to Sabiri tattoo magic   |
| Undying Strangling Grasp               | Undying racial template  | You gain access to this daily power  |
| <b>Paragon Tier Feats</b>              |  |  |
| Feywere - Cannesh Lord                 | Race-Cannesh, any 2 attributes 16+   | gain multiple shapeshifting forms  |
| Gift of Kalie'yana                     | deity (Kalie'yana), Water Breathing ritual                                       | ritual becomes permanent for yourself  |
| Kalie'yana's Mystery                   | deity (Kalie'yana), and trained in   | roll twice on skill checks with key skill  |
| Aquatic                                | Arcana, Religion, History or Nature  | when submerged   |
| Kalie'yana's Swimmer's Blessing        | deity (Kalie'yana)   | you and ally gain swim bonus   |
| Kalie'yana's Watery Boon               | deity (Kalie'yana) Water Breathing and Water Walk rituals                        | gain bonuses to ritual casting of these spells   |
| Path of the Avatar                     | Possession of a Zodiac Stone or Shard; Level 11 or better, Concordance Score 16+ | special attunement; powers and skill checks (see feat)                                 |
| Planar Magic                           | Wizard or Warlock, Arcana, and Int 15+   | +2 arcana to identify magic and beings of planar origin, identify and activate portals |
| Wilted Lord                            | undying, level 11+   | You gain this power  |
| <b>Epic Tier Feats</b>                 |  |  |
| Path of the Demiurge                   | special; see text of feat  | special; see text of feat  |
| Path of the God Feat                   | special; see text of feat  | special; see text of feat  |
| <b>Animate Guardian Optional Feats</b> |  |  |
| Technomantic Enhancements              | Heroic; Animate Guardian   | gain one normal animate enhancement  |
| Incinerating Fire Spray                | Guardian Animate, Level 11+, Fire Spray Animate Racial Power                     | increase fire spray damage die to D10  |
| Improved Bolt loader                   | Animate Guardian, Level 11+  | Change bolt loader to load: normal   |

# Summary of New Monsters by Level

| Name                                | Level     | Type                     | Page |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------|------|
| Skerradi Warrior                    | Level 1   | Soldier                  | 231  |
| Skerradi Hydromancer                | Level 2   | Controller               | 232  |
| Benign Spirit                       | Level 5   | Lurker                   | 229  |
| Undying Spawn                       | Level 5   | Minion                   | 239  |
| Kaz'Dul Mountain Man                | Level 5   | Skirmisher               | 243  |
| Animate Worker                      | Level 6   | Skirmisher               | 213  |
| Cannesh Wolf Hunter                 | Level 6   | Skirmisher               | 217  |
| Fir Bolg Hunter                     | Level 6   | Skirmisher               | 226  |
| Lesser Undying                      | Level 6   | Lurker                   | 240  |
| Xoxtocharit Soldiers                | Level 6   | Soldier                  | 243  |
| Fir Bolg Archer                     | Level 7   | Artillery                | 227  |
| Animate Collector                   | Level 8   | Controller               | 214  |
| Cannesh Bear Warrior                | Level 8   | Brute                    | 218  |
| Cannesh Raven Scout                 | Level 8   | Lurker                   | 219  |
| Cylovite Hybrid Thrall              | Level 8   | Minion                   | 220  |
| Fir Bolg Shaman                     | Level 8   | Controller               | 227  |
| Kaz'Dul Mountain Shaman             | Level 8   | Controller               | 244  |
| Wild Devil Apes of Kaz'Dul          | Level 8   | Brute                    | 245  |
| Quinna, Rogue                       | Level 9   | NPC Ally                 | 272  |
| Hybrid Thrall Commander             | Level 10  | Soldier                  | 220  |
| Eholim Sky Guardian                 | Level 10  | Artillery                | 225  |
| Fir Bolg Chieftain                  | Level 10  | Elite Soldier            | 228  |
| Deathgaunt                          | Level 10  | Lurker                   | 230  |
| Corrupted Undying                   | Level 10  | Lurker                   | 240  |
| Cannesh Rabbit Shaman               | Level 11  | Controller               | 218  |
| Animate Guardian                    | Level 12  | Soldier                  | 215  |
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| Gloomwarden                         | Level 12  | Controller               | 230  |
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| Xoxtocharit General                 | Level 12  | Elite Soldier            | 242  |
| Rasvana, Sorcerer                   | Level 13  | NPC Adversary/Ally       | 272  |
| Cylovite Overlord                   | Level 15  | Controller               | 221  |
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| Sedara Braims, Warlock Death Master | Level 15  | Elite NPC Adversary/Ally | 274  |
| Undying Lord                        | Level 16  | Lurker                   | 241  |
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| Overlord of Ga'Thon                 | Level 20+ | Template                 | 237  |
| Milina, Avatar                      | Level 30  | Solo NPC                 | 271  |
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| Zam Redar, Overlord of Ga'Thon      | Level 30  | Solo NPC Adversary       | 276  |
| Xylom Demon Character Template      | Variable  | Racial Template          | 223  |
| Eholim Character Template           | Variable  | Racial Template          | 225  |
| Skerradi Character Template         | Variable  | Racial Template          | 232  |
| Undying Racial Template             | Variable  | Racial Template          | 290  |
| Animate Guardian Racial Data        | Variable  | Racial Template          | 291  |

## Summary of New Magical Items and Devices

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| <b>New Implements</b>           |                             |      |
| Rune Totem                      | totem, implement            | 57   |
| Bleeding Dagger                 | weapon, implement           | 58   |
| Ancestral Focus Item            | implement (focus item)      | 59   |
| Legoran Fetch                   | implement (fetch)           | 122  |
| <b>New Artifacts</b>            |                             |      |
| Zodiac Shard                    | heroic and paragon artifact | 81   |
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| <b>Artificer's Devices</b>      |                             |      |
| Antikythera Device              | device                      | 258  |
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## Designer's Notes and Afterword

Putting together *The Realms of Chirak* was a real interesting experience....I have literally dozens of different drafts lying around, a veritable evolution in manuscripts that led at last to the product at hand. This is decidedly an indie press publication, as it was handled from the ground up with the bare minimum expense and the maximum amount of care one can muster while still living a normal life and working a full time job in the real world. My main out-of-pocket expense came in the acquisition of inexpensive royalty-free art packages, as well as a beautiful cover commissioned from Simon Tranter, who gave the Realms of Chirak that extra little touch to make it stand out. I've never been fond of the drab era of faux-leatherette photo shopped covers that the D20 era brought to the gaming hobby, and I am very happy to have a real, honest-to-god fantasy cover for my game.

The main problem in this book has been the mechanism by which I introduced maps to the product. All of the maps for my campaign setting are hand drawn by myself, meaning they are not done by an artist, or by someone who knows much about transferring and manipulating them in the medium of digital design. As such, I have done the best I can with the resources at hand....perhaps, if there is ever a second edition, I will be able to advance the quality of the cartography.

Writing the rules content for 4E was an interesting challenge, and almost every rule or stat block originally designed for the book a year ago with the appearance of 4E underwent multiple revisions with subsequent play tests, not to mention the evolution of the 4<sup>th</sup> edition mechanics over the course of a year's worth of new official releases. Suffice to say, I believe that the bulk of new material introduced in this book will add to a Chirak campaign just fine, but your mileage may vary. When in doubt, always side with what works best for you and your group's play style!

If time permits and Chirak sells reasonably well (and for an indie release that could mean anything!) I will plan to release some expansions. One such expansion is already included, at least in bare-bones format in this book; the Gazetteer entry on Far Therias was a last second inclusion, as I decided it would be worth having a

bit of data and some maps on this extreme end of the world; it has been the subject of a lengthy campaign over the last year or so, and has evolved in to its own special niche of Chirak. Other regions definitely deserve more attention in the future, including Xoxtocharit, the eastern lands of the Yellow and Sapphiric Kingdoms, and so forth. I am also very interested in exploring in greater detail the mysteries of the North.

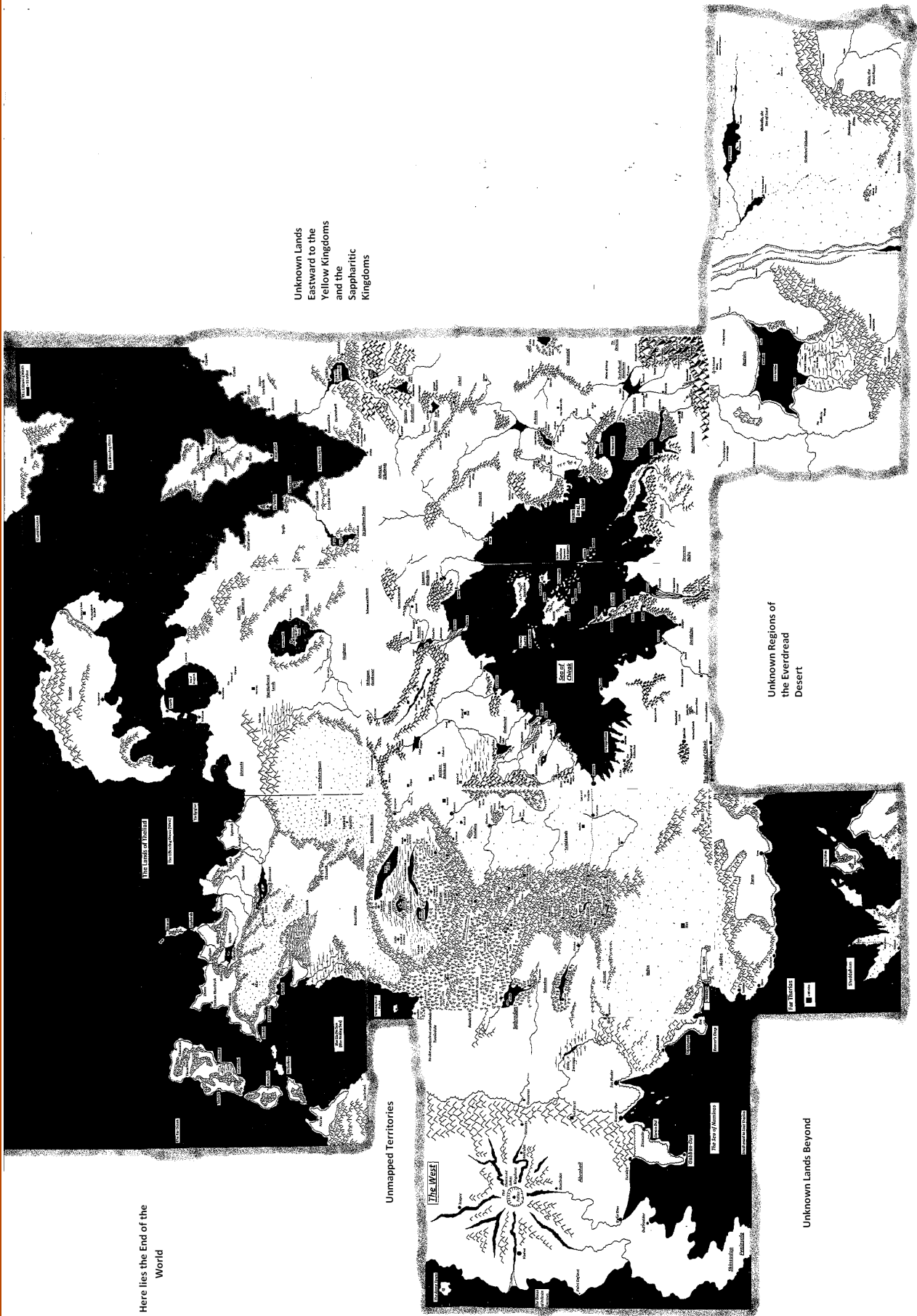
Anyway, it's been an interesting experience. I hope to release a Runequest/BRP-compatible edition of the Realms of Chirak soon, as well; there is a mostly complete manuscript with full rules and statistics making the setting ready-to-play, especially handy since I run Chirak campaigns using the Runequest ruleset as often as I do D&D.

In any case, I hope you find this setting an interesting locale for your fantasy adventures. Enjoy!

--Tori bergquist  
October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009

# The Known World of Chirak

Here lies the End of the World



Unmapped Territories

Unknown Regions of the Everdread Desert

Unknown Lands Beyond

Unknown Lands Eastward to the Yellow Kingdoms and the Sappharitic Kingdoms

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