



AN **ELRIC!** SUPPLEMENT

THE UNKNOWN EAST

FORGOTTEN FOES OF THE BRIGHT EMPIRE

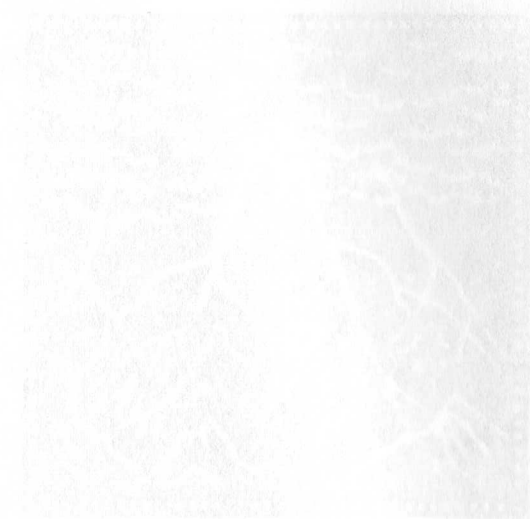


LAWRENCE WHITAKER



Keep

THE UNKNOWN EAST





"VERILY IT WAS IN THE EASTLANDS, BEYOND THOSE SAVAGE MOUNTAINS CALLED THE RAGGED PILLARS, THAT I WOULD FIND MANY STRANGE ADVENTURES. AYE, ENOUGH TO FILL SEVERAL VOLUMES - OR A LIFETIME."

**-FROM THE JOURNALS OF DUKE
AVAN ASTRAN OF VILMIR**

THE UNKNOWN EAST

BY
LAWRENCE WHITAKER

BASED UPON THE JOURNALS OF
DUKE AVAN ASTRAN OF VILMIR

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WHEN IS THE UNKNOWN EAST SET?

LIKE PREVIOUS publications in the *Elric!* series, this book is set about one year before the events in *Elric of Melniboné*. Terann Gashtek has not begun in his plan to conquer the Unknown East and Moonglum has not yet ventured into the Young Kingdoms.

REFERENCE SOURCES

MICHAEL MOORCOCK mentions the Unknown East in passing rather than in detail. Only two of its characters are fully described: Moonglum, the cocky Eshmirian, and Rackhir, the renegade Warrior Priest of Phum. The Unknown East is mentioned in almost every Elric story, but we get the best information from the following stories or novels: "The Flamebringers" (*The Singing Citadel*), "To Rescue Tanelorn" (*The Singing Citadel*), *The Fortress of the Pearl*, *The Revenge of the Rose*, "Sailing into the Present" (*Sailor on the Seas of Fate*), *Stormbringer*.

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PLAYTESTERS

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INTRODUCTION

THE PEOPLE OF the Young Kingdoms and Melniboné refer to the lands beyond the Sighing Desert as the Unknown East, the Unmapped Kingdoms or simply the Eastern Lands. The Eastlanders call their continent Menastree; throughout this book the terms Menastree and the Unknown East are used and refer to the same place. The Unknown East is unexplored by the Young Kingdoms and to them is a mystery; Melniboné was once its conqueror, but since the war with the Dharzi it has largely forgotten whatever it knew about the East. Thus, the people of the Young Kingdoms view the Unknown East as a myth: some saying that the world ends at the edge of the Sighing Desert, others believing it to be a place of demons and monsters, their tales stirring the imagination and adding to the romance of these unknown, uncharted lands.

This book describes the Unknown East: its people, their countries, habits, desires and conflicts. In doing so, the author has needed to rationalize some of the inconsistencies prevalent in Michael Moorcock's references to the Unknown East in the Elric saga. The Elric stories were not written in a chronological series and such inconsistencies have grown with the saga. This book takes the disparate references to the Unknown East, places them in a logical framework, and develops them into a detailed study for use with the *Elric!* game. If any inconsistencies remain between the Elric stories and this book, it is hoped that your enjoyment will not be diminished.

The book is organized into four sections. The first chapter discusses the history of the Unknown East, its economy and society. Information on how to get from the Young Kingdoms into the Unknown East is provided, as are game statistics for selected examples of eastern flora and fauna.

The second chapter examines the individual countries, describing their geography and looking at the people who live there. Each country also has a short essay focusing on an element which has contributed to the eastern mythos: Phum's Warrior Priests, for example, or S'aleem's Blue Assassins. The section rounds off with an overview of eastern religions.

Rules for creating an eastern adventurer are provided in the next chapter, including variant occupations, names, equipment lists and prices, and weapons and armor unique to the Unknown East. A section on magic describes the radically different application of sorcery, and provides guidance on playing a sorcerous adventurer. A modified adventurer sheet is presented for those who wish to design an eastern character.

The final section concerns adventuring in the Unknown East, and includes a digest of characteristics for a variety of eastlanders, scenario hooks that can be developed into fully fledged adventures, and finally a scenario, "The Eastward Urge", designed to introduce Young Kingdoms adventurers to the Unknown East. To complete this section an overview of the future of the Unknown East is given, looking at the continent's fate through its sacking at the hands of The Flamebringer and up to the end of the world.



TRIBESMAN OF NISHVALNI-OSS
PREPARE FOR WAR

A TRAVELLER'S GUIDE TO THE

EASTERN LANDS

HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY, MAGIC AND TECHNOLOGY,
ECONOMY, LANGUAGES, FLORA AND FAUNA

THIS SECTION DETAILS the history, economy, social structure, beliefs and technologies of the Unknown East. It is a place ripe for adventure, and the following section aims to set the scene. In doing so, extracts from the journal of Duke Avan Astran of Vilmir, the only Young Kingdoms explorer to have visited the East and chronicle its people, are given to provide flavor of what is in store for those who venture forth and see for themselves what is held beyond the Sighing Desert.

Balance in favor of an allegiance with Chaos. Those who still supported the Balance, the Menastrai, found themselves drawn into a conflict that would inevitably become civil war.

THE MENASTRAI

The war was a brief and bloody affair; the supporters of Chaos laid siege to the city of H'hui'shan, the stronghold of the Menastrai and after three days of brutal fighting destroyed it. However when the Melnibonéans searched the ruins for survivors, they found nothing: the Menastrai had disappeared from H'hui'shan, leaving behind only the destruction of their once fair city.

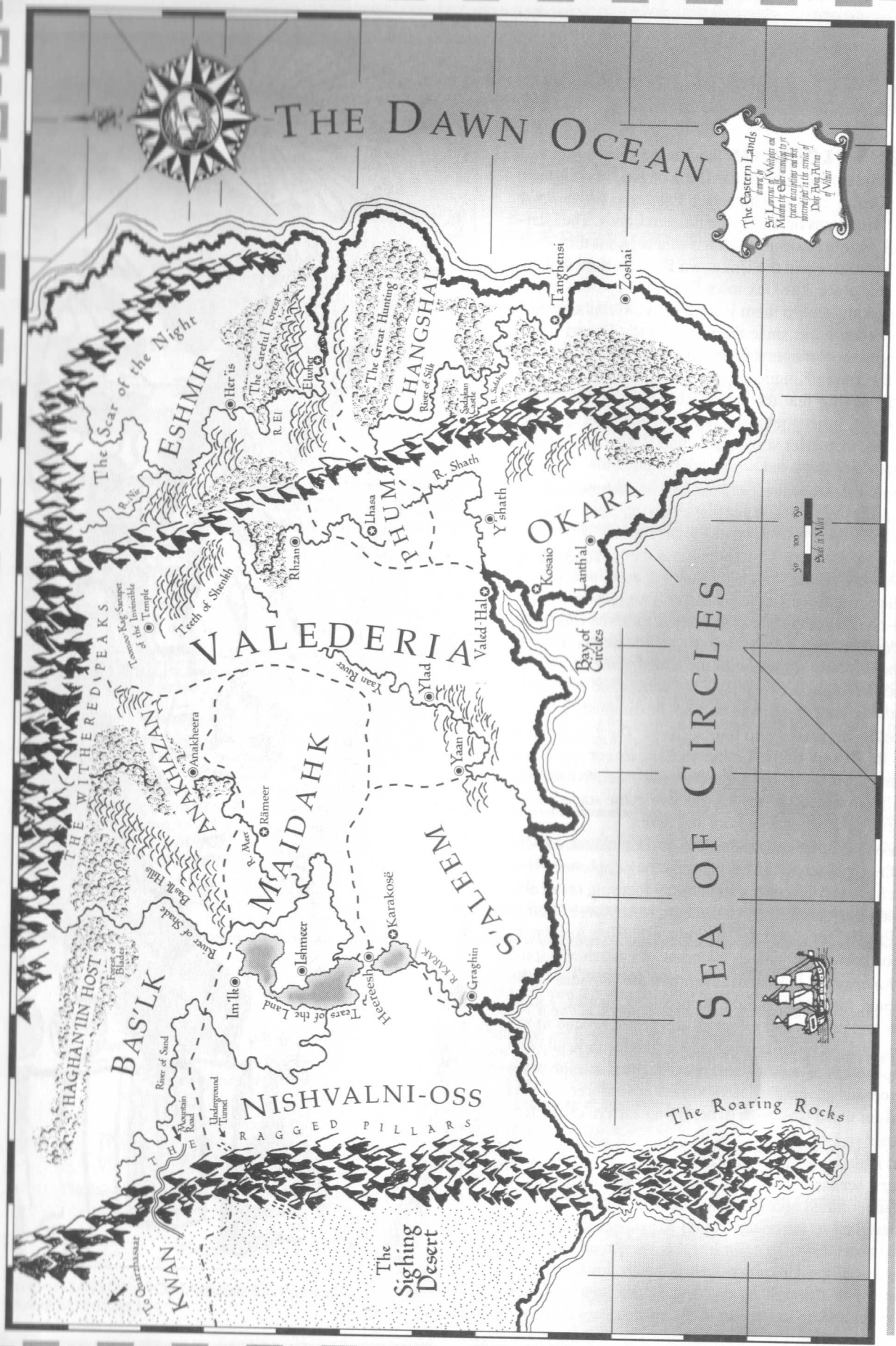
The Menastrai used the siege to call upon ancient and benevolent sorceries. A gate was opened between H'hui'shan and the continent far to the east of Melniboné and the Menastrai evacuated to the unmapped eastern lands moments before destruction befell their city, closing the gate behind them. Satisfied that it had rid Melniboné of the restrictive influence of the Menastrai, the Chaotic faction allowed itself to forget about them and turned its attentions to the lands surrounding Melniboné, intent on subjugating all that stood before them.

The Menastrai named the continent Menastree and decided that they could survive without fear of retaliation by Melniboné. In the years that followed, the Menastrai built cities and towns—settlements of a splendor that eclipsed even that of dreaming Imrryr—employing peaceful sorceries to bring stone and precious metals from all over the continent. Vast blocks of stone floated through the eastern skies as the Menastrai sang their enchantments, each stone placing itself in the complex and beautiful pattern that would become the new structures of the Menastrai home. As the priests of the Menastrai sang, the cities built themselves, becoming beauty incarnate—every street, every building, every stone placed to blend with its environment, just as the laws of the Balance dictate.

HISTORY

TWENTY THOUSAND years ago, the Elemental Rulers Grome and Straasha waged a war that irrevocably changed the design of the Earth, bringing into existence the continents, islands, oceans and seas that are described in the Elric saga. Monumental forces rocked the planet, raising mountain ranges, submerging continents, bringing forth deserts and forests, arctic regions and lakes. A consequence of these changes was the separation of the great continent that straddled the Earth into western and eastern halves by a vast, almost impassable mountain range that is known as The Ragged Pillars. This division meant that the east and the west would develop along completely different paths, and, aside from Melniboné's domination of both Young Kingdoms and Unknown East, both have followed very separate courses of history.

Twelve thousand years ago, in the west, a race of strange, lithe, Balance-aligned people settled a group of islands which they christened Melniboné. However for the people of Melniboné, a greater conflict was to ensue. As history progressed, the proto-Melnibonéans discarded the Cosmic



MAP OF THE UNKNOWN KINGDOMS

And the Menastrai encountered humans. The native inhabitants of the east were but savages when compared with the grace of the Menastrai—but, while Melniboné was conquering the simpler peoples, the Menastrai coexisted in peace, realizing that in their simplicity, the natives were vitally close to the aims of the Balance. The Menastrai encouraged cooperation and harmony with the natives (who, in their guttural tongue called themselves The Valni), respecting their territories and allowing those who expressed an interest to merge with Menastrai society.

THE CONQUEST OF MENASTREE

Thousands of years passed, an interregnum that saw the Balance incarnate in Menastree and the emergence of city-states that would later form the nation-states of the present day Unknown East. War was unheard of, and sorcery—save for the most benevolent magics of the Elements and the Balance—banished from the mind. But Fate itself dealt the Menastrai a bitter hand. Melniboné, in its lust for new territories, turned its greedy eyes upon the lands east of the great deserts bordering its Bright Empire, lands that had previously never been of concern to it. Using sorcery and dragons to pass The Ragged Pillars, Melniboné surged into Menastree, finding there the ancient enemies they had thought to be long dead. The Menastrai, having spent close to six thousand years in peace had lost the art of combat and had no time in which to call upon the sorceries that had helped their ancestors to escape from H'hui'shan. For Melniboné, conquering the eastern continent was an easy affair, and in doing so, it sought to stamp out every trace of the Balance that it could find. The great cities of the Menastrai crumbled beneath dragon venom; millions of people were killed in purges aimed at erasing the memory of the Balance from those who survived. The Melnibonéans tried their utmost to stamp the footprint of its own corrupt civilization on Menastree, but somehow failed to do so. The Menastrai, realizing the corruption Chaos brought with it, cunningly accepted Melnibonéan dominance while secretly maintaining their own standards of philosophy. When Melniboné found that it had no one to resist it, it ceased its bloody cleansing of those who outwardly worshipped the Balance and turned instead to exploiting the eastern continent for its natural resources: fine timbers, rare spices and

herbs, minerals and precious metals, abundant and exotic fish from the warm, pale-blue seas lapping the coasts. The savagery of the initial conquest lapsed into a quiet, robber economy that left the Menastrai to bide their time and await for the Balance to realign itself.

The Balance returned to Menastree as a result of war—but not between the inhabitants of the eastern continent and the Melnibonéans, but war between Melniboné and the peculiar race calling itself the Dharzi. Once again, war erupted throughout the world as the Dharzi sought to destroy Melniboné and vice-versa. The war began in the eastern continent, but soon swept further west until the hub of the Bright Empire became its focus. Unable to wage a protracted war without substantial reinforcements, the Emperor of Imrryr recalled the forces holding Menastree back to Melniboné, leaving the eastern continent to resume its interrupted destiny. Melniboné soon forgot its eastern empire, so intent was it on holding onto its territories in the west. Menastree was the first of the conquered lands to gain its independence—and that it already had an extensive civilization prior to being ensnared by the Bright Empire meant that it had a strong cultural heritage to fall back upon. When the war with the Dharzi reached its brutal climax, the eastern continent had already established its own nation-states: Changshai, Okara, Phum, Valederia and Maidahk, later followed by Anakhazan, S'aleem and Eshmir. In the five hundred years that have passed since the end of the war with the Dharzi, the eastern continent has reverted back to its allegiance with the Balance, its peoples developing a civilization that owes little to the Melnibonéan heritage. New religions and philosophies emerged; new methods of government and cooperation between states. Battered for so long by the tainting ways of Chaos, the nations of the Unknown East turned their backs on the forces of entropy and Law, forging for themselves new identities based on the older, more harmonious ways of the Menastrai.

In the time of the Elric saga, the people of the Unknown East have made great advances over their cousins in the Young Kingdoms. Seeing the Young Kingdoms as being lands filled with uncouth barbarians, the peoples of the Unknown East have again embraced their anonymity, choosing not to venture forth to see what exists on the west of The Ragged Pillars.



THE ROAD EAST

REACHING THE UNKNOWN EAST

IT IS A PERILOUS JOURNEY. Travellers face the harsh mountains known to the Eastlanders as The Ragged Pillars and to my knowledge only one safe passage through the mountains exists. We located it more by chance than foresight and then had to endure waist-deep snow, bottomless crevasses and strange, winged things that we were later told were the wyrms that feed on the souls of men. Perhaps souls that have been frozen by the intense cold are less palatable than those cultivated to room temperature. — From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.

Getting to the Unknown East from the Young Kingdoms, and vice-versa, is indeed a difficult task. The Ragged Pillars provide a formidable barrier where they divide the land, and when the mountains reach the sea, they carry on, creating the navigational nightmare that is the Roaring Rocks. It is the almost impassability of these obstacles that has kept the Young and Unknown Kingdoms separate since the days of Melnibonéan rule.

However it can be done—Duke Avan Astran reached the Unknown East by land, Count Smiorgan Baldhead, travel-

ling by sea, reached Graghin, on the southern coast of the eastern continent, after passing the Roaring Rocks (although most of his fleet was lost in the attempt). And Moonglum found it possible to get through the Ragged Pillars to warn Elric of the imminent arrival of the Flamebringer.

THE RAGGED PILLARS

There are, contrary to Duke Avan Astran's journal, two passages through the Ragged Pillars. The first is the one Astran describes; a road, of sorts, built by Melnibonéan slaves at least 4000 years ago. The road is one hundred miles long, beginning in the eastern reaches of the Weeping Waste and is paved with granite cobbles, winding gently through the foothills of the Ragged Pillars becoming steeper and more treacherous as it climbs into the mountains. For most of the way it is wide enough for no more than two horses walking abreast, and quite often it narrows considerably. Further complications are the fierce snows that sometimes completely block the pass altogether—most often in the winter months. However for much of the year the snow is at least two feet deep, making progress slow, cold and frustrating.

The road finally emerges on the eastern side of the Ragged Pillars, dropping down into the southwestern quarter of Bas'lk. The road is well known to the Valni that frequent the foothills of the mountains and is called in Ulish

"The Stairway to Shenhk". It is their belief that when a person dies, the soul makes the trip along the road eventually arriving in Shenhk's land of paradise.

The second route through the Ragged Pillars is known to very few people but is the one taken by Moonglum on his epic ride to warn Elric of the Flamebringer's coming, and indeed, was used by Elric several years before when he made his first excursion into the east in search of Eshmir. This route goes under the mountains and is thought to be an ancient Melnibonéan supply route carved by Earth elementals. The passageway starts in the far north of the mountains, almost parallel with the Haghan'iin forest. Its entrance is in the foothills and is hidden from view by long, dense forests of pine trees. Those who know where to look find that one of the smaller foothills harbors a cave mouth. The cave travels far into the rock, and although its path is straight, it is rough-hewn, pitch-black and knee deep in water that has seeped through fissures in the rocks above. The passage descends and ascends seemingly at random, and every so often ancient skeletons of men, animals and other creatures are encountered—unfortunates who either ran out of food, drowned in the deep reservoirs of melt water, or were crushed in the occasional slips of rock in the tunnel's weaker sections. The passageway runs diagonally under the mountains and is two hundred miles long, emerging on the Young Kingdoms' side of the Ragged Pillars almost in the middle of a range of low hills on the eastern edge of the Weeping Waste.

THE ROARING ROCKS

THE RAGGED PILLARS jut out into the ocean on the southern edge of the eastern continent and become the fearsome, semi-submerged mountain range known as the Roaring Rocks. It is the turbulent currents that have come to give the rocks this name; the sea eddies violently around the gnarled peaks, the sound of its turbulence being amplified by the crevasses formed where the mountains twist away from each other, resulting in an incessant roar of spray and crashing waves. The Roaring Rocks cannot be sailed through: the turbulence that exists between the mountains is strong enough to shatter even a battle barge. Instead, one must sail around them, and even then, ship captains must battle against the unpredictable currents, maelstroms, violent winds, and submerged reefs that constantly threaten to grind a ship's hull to matchwood. The only safe way to get past the Roaring Rocks is to approach within no more than fifteen miles and then sail due south for another twenty miles, before sailing due east again for a further thirty. Only then is it safe to sail north and eventually meet with the coast of the Unknown East. Count Smiorgan realizes this when his ill-fated expedition strikes out from the Island of Purple Towns, but the other captains make serious errors in judgement and sail too close to the Roaring Rocks, either being smashed upon the hidden reefs or capsized by the ferocity of the sea.

MAGIC AND TECHNOLOGY

NEVER BEFORE HAVE I encountered such feats of agriculture as those worked in the Unknown East. Rivers flow through deserts, their courses steered by the artifice of mankind and relying on human ingenuity rather than on the work of demons, spirits of elementals. If the Young Kingdoms are ever to raise themselves above the level of petty squabbles, there is much we must learn from the example of the people of Maidahk, S'aleem and Valederia. — **From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran**

Just as it shaped the Bright Empire, Melnibonéan sorcery shaped the Unknown East during its four thousand year rule. But with Melniboné's departure and the assertion of the ways of the Cosmic Balance, sorcery has been all but forgotten in the Eastern Kingdoms: indeed, it is actively outlawed in all but one country and sorcerers are both feared and despised throughout the eastern continent.

SORcery OF THE EAST

THE ONLY PLACE WHERE sorcery is still actively pursued is the small country of Phum, one of the first areas to be colonized by the invading Melnibonéans and here was established the Enclave of Tumburu. In this towering complex of stone, gold and human bone, Melniboné studied and perfected its magics, some of which would eventually be deployed in the war with the Dharzi. To protect the Enclave, an order of warrior-priests was established: The Knights of Tumburu, servants of Chaos who were skilled not only in fearful sorceries but also in martial skills. When Melniboné left the East, the Enclave of Tumburu remained, and these warrior-priests took a vow upon their own souls to maintain the traditions of sorcery and worship of Chaos. While the rest of the East developed and refined the meaning of the Cosmic Balance, the Warrior Priests of Phum entrenched themselves in the study of the old magics, sealing themselves off from the rest of the world and becoming a hermetic sect of devotees to the ways of Entropy. Their magic is wild and more like the magic employed by the Dragon Princes of Imrryr than the magic practised in the Young Kingdoms. The Enclave of Tumburu is feared and avoided, and it is said that they spend their time in preparation for the time when Chaos and Law will meet to decide the fate of the Earth. The magic of eastern sorcerers is discussed in greater depth later in this book.

TECHNOLOGY

IN TERMS OF TECHNOLOGY the Unknown East differs little from the Young Kingdoms. Slaves are common, usually criminals or those who serve no other purpose to society, although slaves in the Unknown East enjoy a far better lifestyle than their Young Kingdom counterparts. Without the influence of Law, mechanical innovations are few: techniques for glass and metal working are known and widespread throughout the civilized nations, and steel is the common metal used for weaponry and armor. The common beast of burden is the camel—a beast unknown in the Young Kingdoms—horses are rare, usually possessions of the very rich. Maritime technology is, if anything, less advanced than in the west. Some countries are landlocked and thus have no merchant or military navies. Those that have access to the sea have only developed coast-hugging vessels for the transportation of goods between ports: the long-range ships common to the Young Kingdoms have never been perfected, meaning that the Unknown East has developed as a land, rather than a sea-based power.

Agriculture is far more advanced than in the west. Crop rotation and soil cultivation are widely understood, particularly in Eshmir and Anakhazan where the alluvial soil is extremely fertile and welcoming to a wide variety of fruits and vegetables. In the more arid sections of the East irrigation systems have been developed that prevent the onslaught of the deserts, tailoring their agricultural produce accordingly. As a consequence the diet of most Eastlanders is varied and well balanced, mixing fruits, vegetables and a wide selection of meats and fish. Again it is the adherence to the principals of the Cosmic Balance that has led to humankind maintaining a stable and profitable relationship with the land.

ECONOMY

THEY RELY ON NOT JUST a coinage, but also a fascinating array of international bargains and agreements, designed to ease trade between nations that might otherwise never benefit from the produce of their neighbors. It is inconceivable that such systems would ever arise in the Young Kingdoms, for trade there is too much bound up in military might and competition rather than cooperation. Too much in the Young Kingdoms is dictated by piracy and the number of swords a country can muster. Here in the Unknown East, it is common for nations to sit down and actually talk! — **From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.**

The Unknown East has a complex economic structure. Barter is only used in the most rural of settlements and all civilized nations have a minted coin. The coinage used

throughout the Unknown East is the silver Rahnd. Although different nations mint their own particular variations, the Rahnd is accepted throughout the civilized states and exists in quarter, half, three quarter, 1, 5, 10, 50 and 100 denominations. In terms of buying power 1 Rahnd is worth 6 Young Kingdoms Bronzes and is equivalent to about 8 United States Dollars (5 English pounds). Bronze is not accepted as a coin since it is considered to be a base metal. Gold coins do exist but are extremely rare and are usually reserved by governments for major international trade agreements in the form of bullion.

An advanced economy is found in the lands that comprise the Valederian Directorates (Valederia, Anakhazan, Maidahk and S'aleem). This group of four nations trade freely with one another and have pooled their knowledge and resources to ensure that prices in each member-state are not prone to fluctuation and that goods in one state can be bought at a fair price in another. This makes the merchant class extremely powerful throughout the east—and none more so than the Merchant Venturers. Entrepreneurs that actively seek out markets and relish in discovering new and cheaper means for developing, producing and selling their products. This has led to nations such as Eshmir and Valederia commanding a trading position almost equal to that of Melniboné. Produce from one nation is quite commonly found in another, and the vast network of Merchant-Venturers has led to the establishment of continent-wide fashions and trends.

LANGUAGE

I FOUND IT [*'pande*] more akin to poetry than language, with an alphabet based not just upon the sounds a mouth can make, but also on the moods and inferences those sounds can impart. Songs in the *'pande* tongue are marvels of harmony, rhythm and structure with such a rich, hypnotic sound that I found myself half-entranced listening to even the most simple of folk-tunes. — **From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran**

The language of the Unknown East is *'pande*. It derives from a mixture of the original tongue spoken by the Menastri and the High Melnibonéan tongue imported during the Dragon Isle's occupation. While it does bear a passing resemblance to some parts of Young Kingdoms common, it is a very difficult language to learn, integrating abstract poetry with the substantial rigors of a conversational mode of speech. *'Pande* relies heavily on accented vowel and consonant sounds which are fluid to the ear. In written form it uses a flowing, elegant script that reads from right to left. Most people can read and write in the Unknown East—again a decree of the Balance—and although some do remain illiterate, the percentage of these is far less than in the Young Kingdoms. Those speaking Low Melnibonéan

can probably make themselves understood in 'pande and understand enough of the language to get by. Adventurers having a skill of 80% or more in the Melnibonéan Low Tongue have a nominal chance of 15% to understand and make themselves understood in 'pande. Adventurers fluent in High Melnibonéan find 'pande a coarse version of this most superior of tongues.

The Valni tribes have their own language called Ulish. This is quite close to the language spoken by the tribes of the Sighing Desert, Lesh, and indeed, Lesh is a develop-

ment of Ulish (some of the Valni tribes having crossed the Ragged Pillars to establish themselves in the Sighing Desert many thousands of years ago). Ulish has a written form which is a series of horizontal and vertical marks made at different heights above and below a thin, horizontal guideline. In spoken form, Ulish is a guttural series of sibilants and hard consonants, softened with whistles to signify tenses. Ulish is sometimes learned by the merchant venturers who trade with the Valni tribes and some tribes also learn 'pande.

CLIMATE AND GEOGRAPHY

GEOGRAPHICALLY, the Unknown East is a land of extremes. From the lush, temperate forests of Eshmir and Changshai, through the veldt and wheatfields of the Valederia Directorates, to the inhospitable, windswept rocky deserts of Nishvalni-Oss. It is a land of great beauty and exquisite cruelty: sweeping plains of rough countryside crumble into chasms and steep sided valleys, the distant mountains of the Withered Peaks, Ragged Pillars and Shenh Mountains rearing like giants on three sides.

The eastern continent is essentially a huge valley formed by the three mountain ranges; the result of the great battle between Lord Grome and Lord Straasha in the distant history of the Earth. Natural geological activity has shaped a large part of the eastern continent though, particularly the vast glaciers to be found in the Withered Peaks and the Scar of the Night Mountains in northern Eshmir. The melt waters of these glaciers form the rivers that flow through the continent and the great lakes of Maidahk were created by two huge sheets of ice that settled in the central continent and melted perhaps a million years ago.

The Unknown East is generally warmer than the Young Kingdoms, although it is not as hot as the Sighing Desert or the dry, arid lands of Dorel. Temperatures vary across the continent, and the general averages are summarized in the chart below.

Nishvalni-Oss and Bas'lk are arid scrublands. The thin soil cannot hold water and although the area receives a lot of rainfall (on average twenty inches a month, the result of warm air passing over the Ragged Pillars and forming a warm front), water

drains through the thin soil leaching away nutrients and minerals. The plants growing in these lands are short, hardy trees and leafless shrubs that gather in patchy clusters where the water table is high enough.

Further east the quality of the soil improves greatly, particularly in Maidahk, Anakhazan and Eshmir. Here, the wind-born dusts from the desert lands have been deposited at the margins of the ancient ice sheets to form a deep, well drained and fertile loess soil. The engineers of Maidahk have created elaborate irrigation schemes to ensure that the soil is never too wet, ensuring that the land is almost self-fertilizing. This provides for an excellent soil for cultivating crops and the techniques employed in Maidahk have been adopted in Eshmir and Anakhazan—both of which have gone on to become the most prosperous producers of grains, vegetables and cotton in the Unknown East.

Temperatures drop steadily as one moves east through the continent: the lands west of the Shenh Mountains are still very warm by Young Kingdoms standards, although in Changshai and Eshmir, the climate is more akin to that found in Vilmir and Ilmiora: warm, balmy summers, followed by a cool autumn and then a short, cold winter period. The Shenh Mountains again help create another front that keeps both Changshai and Eshmir well supplied with rain, particularly during the spring and summer months. An inch of rainfall a day is not uncommon during the warmest periods of the year in Changshai, and the winter can bring harsh snows and biting frosts.

AVERAGE SEASONAL TEMPERATURE GUIDE

Nishvalni-Oss, Bas'lk, Maidahk, Anakhazan, S'aleem

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Spring 18°-20° | Summer 27°-30° |
| Fall 19°-22° | Winter 11°-13° |

Valederia, Phum, Okara

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Spring 17°-19° | Summer 24°-27° |
| Fall 15°-18° | Winter 8°-11° |

Eshmir, Changshai

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Spring 14°-18° | Summer 20°-24° |
| Fall 15°-18° | Winter 8°-10° |

FLORA AND FAUNA

THERE WERE ALL manner of beasts that I had never seen before, many benevolent and some malign. Strange creatures of legend like the Manticora of Changshai and the Sand Dragons of Nishvalni-Oss; it is said that the Withered Peaks are home to lizards related to the great Dragons of Melniboné—beasts whose hides steal the very souls of men. And the plants! Never have I seen such variety as I saw in Anakhazan. Orchids shaped like insects and wild, rambling flowers that moved visibly as one stepped closer to look at them. In the forests of the Haghan'iin (where men fear to tread) it is rumored that the plants can think and feel just like humans—and some, I have been warned, even explode...—From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.

The range of plants and animals in the Unknown East is vast—too great to catalogue here, and even the botanists of Maidahk have yet to note and describe the millions of different species occurring throughout the eastern continent. Needless to say, there are many examples of flora and fauna that are unique to the Unknown East; rare tropical orchids grow in abundance in the pleasant forests of Anakhazan, Changshai, Eshmir and Okara. Bizarrely shaped cacti litter the dust plains of Nishvalni-Oss and stranger things grow in the forests of the Haghan'iin. This section provides details for a few examples of flora and fauna unique to Menastree.

PLANTS

HORNET ORCHIDS

These exotic flowers grow mainly in the forests of Anakhazan and, as Duke Avan Astran observes, are shaped like insects. The bowl of the flower is slender and wasplike, its delicate flesh striped in yellow and green, much like the dangerous hornets that frequent the areas where the orchids grow. The petals of the flower are arranged like the wings of the insect—gossamer thin and appearing to be stretched ready for flight. The orchid's appearance is, of course, a defense mechanism and means of propagation, the hornet it resembles being attracted to the flower and collecting the pollen. The hornet that the flower has modelled itself upon is a hazardous beast with a sting that can fell a man in seconds: animals sense this, and do not approach the flower (which is scentless). Those versed in such matters know that when the Hornet Orchid is dried and ground into a

powder it makes a useful healing balm. A single flower, if used to treat a wound, increases the healing process by 1 Hit Point. Beware though: the Hornet Orchid you reach to pick to treat that cut might be the hornet itself, and its sting is not to be reckoned with.

THE FAL TREE

During the war with the Dharzi, terrible sorceries were unleashed by both the Beast Lords and the Melnibonéans. These magics affected everything that they came into contact with, and many creatures were mutated by the spells that spilled across the fragile landscape. The Fal tree is such an example and this volatile plant is found only in areas where the stuff of Chaos has been released wholesale. The Fal tree stands twenty or so feet high at maturity and has a strange, rubbery bark that is warm to the touch. This is one tree that you don't dare cut down: its sap is extremely volatile and when placed under pressure (such as being struck by an axe for example) explodes, spraying scalding hot splinters of bark and acid-like sap across a wide area. The Warrior Priests of Phum prize the sap of the Fal tree which they carefully collect and then distill, creating Falian Oil. This viscous black liquid is kept in vials which, when dropped, thrown or launched, explode like modern handgrenades. The damage caused by the sap is intense. Anyone within four feet radius of an explosion takes 4D6 points of damage; within four to eight feet 3D6, eight to ten feet 2D6 and 1D6 to anyone within ten to twelve feet. A mature tree that is caused to explode has double these ranges and double the damage for each range band.



THE EXPLOSIVE FAL



WHIP ROSES

WHIP ROSES

The Whip Rose is a plant native to Eshmir but has managed to find its way into Changshai and Okara. It resembles a wild, thorny rose with between five and six flowers usually a deep pink in color. If anyone approaches the Whip Rose, to smell it for instance, the plant automatically retracts away from the intrusion, shrinking back upon itself and its flowers closing up. However if anyone tries to touch the plant, the stalk whips forward with a speed equal to a DEX of 2D6+8: DEX vs DEX rolls are needed to avoid the lash of the thorns as the plant strikes, otherwise 3D4 points of damage are sustained from the half-inch thorns covering the stem.

HAAJYA

This aromatic plant is found extensively throughout Changshai and Okara. It is a bland object; a dense, green bush with serrated-edged, diamond-shaped leaves. When chewed, the leaf heightens the senses of the imbiber, increasing temporarily Perception skills by 1D6 points. A single leaf can produce this effect for about an hour of game time, and the people of Changshai chew the haajya leaf in much the same way that some cultures take other stimulants. The downside of imbibing of the haajya is that once the effect wears off, Perception skills fall by 1D6 points for 1D3 game hours, the symptoms being akin to those produced by the common cold. Valerians think that haajya is addictive and frown upon its use, but this has never been proved.

ANIMALS

ANIMAL LIFE IS extremely varied throughout the Unknown East, with many creatures unknown in the Young Kingdoms being found in abundance: lions, camels, gazelle, giraffe and zebra, all can be found in the savannah lands of Nishvalni-Oss and Bas'lk. Stranger creatures are also known or rumored; Changshai's horrifying Manticora, the Wyrms of the Withered Peaks and the Sand Dragons which inhabit the vast stretches of arid land around S'aleem and Maidahk. Descriptions and statistics for some of these creatures are provided below.

CAMELS

IHAVE NEVER SEEN *their like before. As high as a man and half again, with strangely humped backs—some species having at least two such protrusions—and thickly set, large-eyed heads. Their gait appears to be ungainly at first, and to ride one is, at first, a nauseous experience. Yet these creatures cannot be bettered over the harsh terrain of the continent of Menastree; their stamina is exceptional—they can travel for many days with neither food nor water—and at times their speed can rival that of a fine draft horse. — From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.*

Camels are the traditional beasts of burden with the dromedary (single humped) species being slightly more common than the Bactrian variety. They are prized for their stamina

and sure-footedness, with the finest specimens changing hands for many hundreds of Rahnd. To Young Kingdoms natives, camels appear to be the worst way of travelling; when walking they have a drunken gait, and the swaying motion may unsettle some riders. But in the hands of a skilled controller, camels can move quickly and with agility across terrain that is unfavorable to horses and other beasts of burden. Unless trained, camels are notoriously stubborn, and wild camels are more likely to lash out with a kick or spit than let themselves be ridden. Adventurers that are used solely to riding horses find that their Ride skill is reduced by half when trying to ride a camel.

CAMEL

| characteristics | rolls | averages |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| STR | 4D6+20 | 33-34 |
| CON | 2D6+15 | 22 |
| SIZ | 4D6+25 | 39 |
| INT | 5 | |
| POW | 3D6 | 10-11 |
| DEX | 2D6+6 | 13 |
| MOV | Walk 7, Canter 9, Gallop 11 | Av. HP: 33 |

Average Damage Bonus: +4D6

Weapons: Kick 35%, damage 1D8+db
Spit* 30%, damage special

**If angered or annoyed, a camel can spit at its foe. The ball of mucus has a range in yards equal to the camel's STR, and if it strikes, has a percentage chance equal to the camel's DEX x3 of striking the target in the eyes. If hit in such a way, the target is blind for 2D3 rounds, the time taken to remove the sticky, foul smelling mucus from the face. In this time, all skills and attacks are reduced to half their normal value.*

Armor: 1 point of thick hide

Habitat: widespread throughout the Unknown East

NYAN-NYANG (VALNI HUNTING DOG)

THE VALNI USE a breed of semidomesticated dog for hunting and companionship, and these small, fox-like, curly-tailed dogs are common throughout the Valni tribes. They are perfect hunters; lean, gazelle-like physiques with an amazing turn of speed and sense of smell and hearing. The Valni use them to flush out game and antelope from the brush and then to drive the prey towards the waiting spears of the hunters. The Nyan-nyang (which means 'alert animal' in Ulish) are also greatly valued members of Valni society, providing companionship and receiving great love and respect in return. Valni who have seen the so-called civilized attitude to dogs have been shocked and angry at their mistreatment; one Valni myth tells of Shenhk sending a great dog-demon to one day destroy civilized society for the way it has treated these animals.

NYAN-NYANG

| characteristics | rolls | averages |
|-----------------|------------|------------|
| STR | 1D6+1 | 4-5 |
| CON | 3D6 | 10-11 |
| SIZ | 1D4+1 | 3-4 |
| INT | 07 | |
| POW | 1D6+6 | 9-10 |
| DEX | 2D6+8 | 15 |
| MOV | Running-10 | Av. HP: 06 |

Av. Damage Bonus: -1D4

Weapons: Bite 30+1D10%, 1D10-1D4 The Nyan-nyang usually hunt in packs of 3D6 dogs, led by an alpha male. If one dog attacks, the rest usually join in. Valni dog handlers can command their dogs to attack en-masse

Armor: 1 point for loose folds of skin

Skills: Dodge 80%, Listen 90%, Scent/Taste 85%, Track 95%

Habitat: Nishvalni-Oss and Bas'lk. Some domesticated examples in Maidahk.

LION

PRIDES OF THESE LARGE, feral cats, are found throughout the savannas of the Unknown East. A pride is generally dominated by the male lion, although the bulk of the hunting and rearing of young is performed by the females of the group. Lions are not man-eaters; in fact, most of their time is spent basking in the sun. Hunting takes place every three to four days, and not every attempt is successful. Generally speaking it is unwise to approach a pride—males defend their territory fiercely, especially if there are cubs present. But if left alone or observed from a distance, lions pose no threat to humans. Statistics below are for male lions, with female differences given in parentheses.

LION

| characteristics | rolls | averages |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| STR | 5D6+12 (4D6+12) | 29-30 (26) |
| CON | 2D6+6 | 13 |
| SIZ | 4D6+12 (3D6+12) | 26 (22-23) |
| INT | 5 (6) | |
| POW | 2D6+6 | 13 |
| DEX | 3D6+6 (3D6+8) | 16-17 (18-19)w |
| MOV | Run 8 | Av. HP: 20 |

Av. Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: Claw 60%, 1D8+db
Bite 58%, 1D10+db
Rake 80%, 2D8+db

Lions can claw and bite each round, with the bite attack coming five DEX ranks after the claw. If both connect, the lion can rake with the hind legs.

Armor: 2 points of fur

Skills: Climb 75%, Dodge 48%, Scent/Taste 85%, Track 80%

Habitat: Nishvalni-Oss, Bas'lk, Maidahk, S'aleem



THE MANTICORA

MANTICORA

THE FOLK OF CHANGSHAI speak in hushed tones of the Manticora, the most feared beast said to haunt the wild forests of their land. Those who have seen it—and lived—describe it as a fearsome cross between a lion, serpent and man; a venom spitting monster with the face and voice of a beautiful woman, the body of a huge lion, and the tail of the scorpion. Beware the song of the Manticora! — From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.

The Manticora is a legendary creature supposedly confined to the vast forests of Changshai. It is said to be the result of Melnibonéan experiments, the spawn of a sick attempt to cross a human with a lion and a serpent. When the Melnibonéans left the Unknown East, the Manticora were released into the forest of Changshai to breed and wreak havoc. Despite the stories, no sightings of a Manticora have ever been proven beyond reasonable doubt, although the remains of humans and animals, savaged by some huge creature, have been discovered and attributed to the elusive Manticora. If such a creature exists—and Kaleg Vogun, Usurper Prince of the Tanghensi, is in a constant search for these creatures, ever hopeful to use them in his battle against his half brother—then its statistics might be as follows...

MANTICORA

| characteristics | rolls | averages |
|-----------------|--------|-------------------|
| STR | 3D8+15 | 28-29 |
| CON | 2D8+10 | 19 |
| SIZ | 2D8+12 | 21 |
| INT | 1D8 | 4-5 |
| POW | 3D8 | 13-14 |
| DEX | 2D8+6 | 15 |
| MOV 8 | | Av. HP: 19 |

Av. Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: Claw x2 45%, damage 2D6+db
 Sting 40%, damage venom POT equals Manticora's CON
Singing: The Manticora is said to be able to enchant the soul with its delicate human voice. Manticora sing a beautiful, haunting melody which may paralyze the soul of those who hear it: match the Manticora's POW against the listener's on the Resistance Table. If the Manticora is triumphant the target is held motionless for 1D6 rounds, entranced by the creature's song. In this time the Manticora uses its venomous tail to repeatedly sting the target until it is dead. The song of the Manticora affects everyone in a radius equal to the creature's POW in yards, although only one target can be attacked at any one time. During each round of paralysis the affected person may try to break out of the trance by again matching his or her POW against that of the Manticora on the Resistance Table.

Armor: 4 points of unnaturally toughened hide

Skills: Dodge 30%, Hide 95%, Jump 40%, Move Quietly 98%

Habitat: The forests of Changshai

SAND DRAGON

NOT A REAL DRAGON, but a huge, fearsome lizard that inhabits the more arid areas of the Unknown East, preying on whatever crosses its path. Sand Dragons are tunnelling creatures attracted to the surface of the desert by the vibrations produced by living creatures on the sand above. Resembling pale, eyeless Komodo Monitors, Sand Dragons follow their prey for many miles, tunnelling after the vibrations, steadily heading for the surface. The only warning one gets before a Sand Dragon attacks is an explosion of sand and the terrifying roar of the creature as it lunges for the nearest available meal. Once seized, the prey is dragged beneath the sand where it is suffocated and then devoured. Merchant caravans are always scared of the possibility of Sand Dragon attacks since large vibrations may attract several of the beasts. When crossing known Sand Dragon hunting regions, camels are made to walk very slowly and any undue noise is forbidden, communication being reduced to sign language.

SAND DRAGON

| characteristics | rolls | averages |
|---------------------|--------|-------------------|
| STR | 3D6+12 | 21-24 |
| CON | 2D6+6 | 12-14 |
| SIZ | 2D6+15 | 22 |
| INT | 3 | |
| POW | 3D6 | 10-11 |
| DEX | 2D6+10 | 17 |
| MOV 10 (Tunnelling) | | Av. HP: 18 |

Av. Damage Bonus: +2D6

Weapons: Sand Explosion*—special

Bite 65% (35%), damage 1D10+4+db

**When a Sand Dragon is just beneath the surface of the sand and within a few yards of the source of vibration, it uses its powerful tail and hindlegs to launch itself from the sand, hurling itself at its prey. The resulting explosion of sand causes a momentary sand storm which can blind those who do not manage to cover their eyes. Luck rolls should be made; those failing the roll are rendered blind for 1D6 rounds as sand and dust is blown high into the air and into the eyes. All skills are reduced to half their usual percentage in the confusion. Sand Dragons aim to seize their prey with their powerful teeth and drag it below the sand. Use the drowning rules on page 59 of the Elric! rule book to determine suffocation. Sand Dragons are blind, and are immune to any attacks or spells that affect sight. The Bite percentage has two figures; the first represents the initial attack after the Sand Dragon launches itself from the ground; the second represents the creature's reduced chance to find its prey once it is out of the sand.*

Armor: 6 points of sand-colored scales

Skills: Dodge 5%, Scent/Taste 85%, Sense Vibration 105%



SAND DRAGON

WYRM

LIMBLESS BUT WINGED: great serpents with rainbow scales that descended from the heights, screaming, intent on stealing our souls and leaving behind the drained husk of the body. These monsters are to be feared—Chaos-spawned beasts, so damned by nature that they must reside in the mountains, far from human sight. — From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.

The upper reaches of the Withered Peaks and the Scar of the Night mountains are home to the strange Wyrms that steal the souls of men. Reputedly a creation of the Dharzi, these large, snakelike reptiles do not feed on flesh but on souls, draining the bodies of their prey and storing the POW in their multicolored scales in much the way that a camel stores fat in its hump, building up reserves that it uses as food over a prolonged period of time.

Wyrms are identifiable by their hideous scream. Whenever the terrible, high-pitched echoing cry is heard, an attack swiftly follows, the wyrm plummeting from a nearby peak, aiming to snatch the highest source of POW available. If successful, the wyrm then returns to its nesting place, catch still alive, where it then begins to drain the prey of its POW until only a withered, soulless carcass remains.

Sorcerers prize the hide of the wyrm. The scales of the head are where the POW is stored, and using the correct combination of Sphere and Rune, an eastern sorcerer can use this stored POW to augment his or her own reserves. A wyrm can store up to 3 times its own POW characteristic in stolen POW, and if killed and then skinned within a few hours, this stored POW can be made available to someone

capable of using it. The Warrior Priests of Phum often mount expeditions into the Withered Peaks in search of wyrm-hide, taking with them human sacrifices to attract the creatures.

WYRM

| characteristics | rolls | averages |
|-----------------|---------|------------|
| STR | 3D8+8 | 21-22 |
| CON | 2D8+12 | 20-22 |
| SIZ | 3D8+8 | 21-22 |
| INT | 2D8 | 9 |
| POW | 2D8+10* | 17 |
| DEX | 3D8+10 | 23-24 |
| MOV Fly-12 | | Av. HP: 23 |

*There is a chance that a wyrm will have stored POW. Roll on below table: 1D10 1-3: no stored POW; POW stat is as generated normally. 4-8: Stored POW equal to POW x2 9-0: Stored POW equal to POW x3

Av. Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 7 points for thick, blue-green scales

Weapons: Bite* 38%, Damage 1D10+3+2D6

POW Drain**

**If the bite attack succeeds, the target is held firmly in the creature's jaws. Target must roll STR vs STR on Resistance Table to escape the powerful bite of the wyrm. The usual tactic is for the wyrm to seize its prey and then fly swiftly back to its nest.

**The wyrm drains 1D3 points of POW each round that the target is held in its jaws—when zero POW is reached, target is dead.

Skills: Dodge 46%, Screech in a blood curdling manner 79%, Sense Tasty Souls 100% ☉



STEALER OF SOULS

PLACES, PEOPLES AND STYLES OF THE EAST

EASTERN POWERS

TRIBES, NATIONS, BLUE ASSASSINS, THE FLAMEBRINGER, WARRIOR PRIESTS OF PHUM

THIS SECTION DESCRIBES the individual nations of Menastree and the people living there. Countries are described alphabetically, save for the Valederian Directorates, which are gathered together as a whole.

BAS'LK AND NISH-VALNI-OSS

ONCE, THE VALNI were widespread throughout Menastree, but now they are confined to Bas'lk and Nishvalni-Oss. These countries encompass vast savannas, veldt and isolated forests, gradually changing to featureless deserts of bleached stone, parched soil, and rough, hardy plants in the south. These are the hottest lands in the Unknown East. Although the Ragged Pillars have prevented the advance of the Sighing Desert, Nishvalni-Oss is dry and unsuited to the cultivation of crops. There is usually one heavy rain each couple of days, caused by the movements of westerly warm fronts breaking against the Ragged Pillars, but the rainfall seeps quickly into the dry, loosely packed soil, leaching away the vital nutrients needed for crops. Bas'lk is slightly cooler, and here tough savannah grasses have managed to take; the Valni tribes bring their livestock to graze and then harvest the grass for sustenance as they move around Bas'lk and Nishvalni-Oss.

Aside from the great River of Sand, the only other large sources of water are the three great lakes known to the Valni as The Tears of the Land. The Tears also mark the boundary between the Valni lands and the Valederian Directorates, with the border towns of Im'lk in the north and Heereesh in the East marking the meeting of the two cultures. Both towns are simple affairs where the Valni come to trade goods with the civilized peoples—spices brought from the

Forest of Blades, salt from the dry salt-lakes of northern Bas'lk and wooden ornaments carved from the trees of the forests. The civilized traders (mainly from the Valederian Directorates) bring crops, fruit, weapons, alcohol and livestock and have been accused in the past of having deliberately perverted the simple nature of the Valni by encouraging such trade. Indeed, slave caravans from Eshmir and Okara still deal in human merchandise reinforcing this reputation. The more corrigible merchants argue the opposite, explaining that relations would be far worse with the Valni if it had not been for the beneficial effect of mutual trade.

While strangers are tolerated, they are not encouraged; small bands of vicious Valni bandits have been known to prowl the borders of Nishvalni-Oss, preying on caravans that stray too far from the acknowledged roads. Lone travellers are few in the Valni lands and although a mutual respect exists between the Valni and the civilized nations, there is always a climate of distinct unease.



VALNI TRIBESMAN STALK A GAZELLE

THE PEOPLE

The Valni are largely nomadic, with hundreds of tribes shifting from one fertile area to another on a seasonal rotation. Although the tribes each have different names for themselves and differing customs, collectively they call themselves Nishvalni (The People) and their lands are called Oss (Home)—hence, Nishvalni-Oss, The Home of the People. Bas'lk is another Valni word and means 'The Good Grazing'.

Valni are dark skinned with tones ranging from dark brown through to midnight black. Hair is always black and grows in a thatch of tight curls. Amongst the Valni common to Bas'lk, the hair is worn long and is set into a complicated pattern of dreadlocks. In Nishvalni-Oss, the style is shorter, sometimes cropped closely to the skull. Eyes are either hazel or dark brown. Physically Valni are short in stature but broad in frame: obesity is extremely rare and muscles are well developed in both male and females—the results of a rigorous lifestyle and a healthy diet of fresh fruit and cured meats.

Living in the hottest part of the east, Valni wear very little. Loincloths for both sexes are generally the norm, and these are made from animal skins or plaited grasses—not because they have never developed cloths: Bas'lk linen is a prized commodity—but because thin hides and grass kilts allow the body to breath while still allowing for a certain amount of protection. Both sexes usually go bare-chested. Jewelry is extremely popular; all ages and sexes wear beads, necklaces, rings and torcs in a variety of metals, woods, ceramics and bones. Generally the brighter the jewelry, the higher in tribe standing the individual.

Both sexes share roles equally: sexual equality is a way of life. Men mind the children and women go to war: there is no job that cannot be done by either sex. The tribes believe that all humans are equal in the sight of the spirits and model their societies accordingly. They are open and friendly in most instances; a curious people, always fascinated by new experiences and eager to learn more of new ways, even if they eventually decide to leave them well alone. The Valni harbor no thoughts of conquest but protect what is theirs with a calm reserve until provoked into confrontation. The tribes make contact with the civilized nations only to trade, otherwise they wish to be left alone.

Each tribe is an extended family with between one and two hundred members—larger where two clans have merged to form one tribe. Culturally the tribes are hunter-gatherers, although some actively herd livestock and tend to remain in one area for longer periods of time, while others are predatory and violent, taking by force from weaker tribes what they cannot be bothered to create themselves.

Every tribe possesses a head man or woman, known as the *Si* (a male head) or the *Sa* (a female head). The *Si/Sa* of the tribe is chosen according to the will of the tribe's allied spirit, as administered by the shaman. Those who aspire to lead the tribe may spend years courting the shaman in a bid to prove their worth before the eyes of the spirit. Those who cross the shaman are almost certainly doomed to remain in

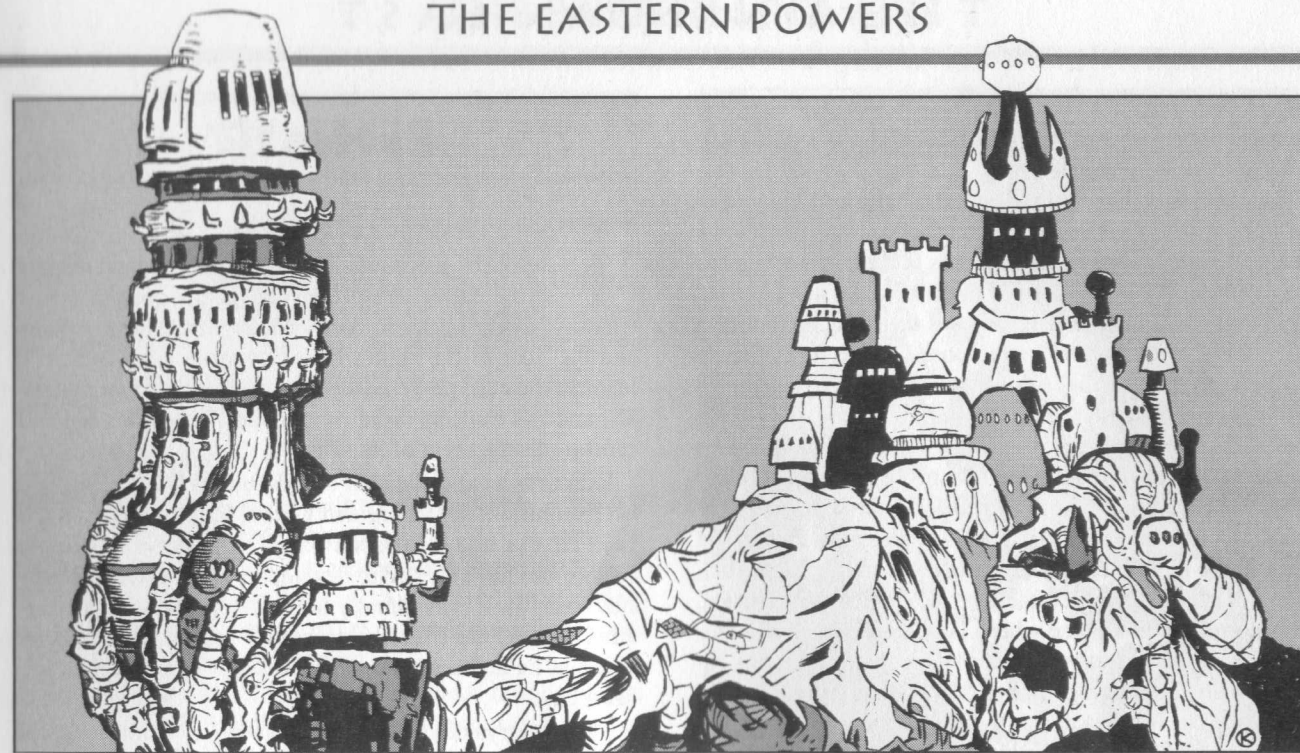
the rank and file, and it is considered bad luck to anger the shaman or go against his or her wishes. The *Si* or *Sa* is chosen when the previous head dies: no-one directly challenges the current leader since this is considered to be acting against the will of the spirit. Only the shaman can depose the *Si* or *Sa*, being the only one in the tribe capable of interpreting the spirit's will and thus deciding who is fit to lead. Power struggles based around the courting of the shaman and defaming the current leader happen more frequently in some tribes than in others.

CHANGSHAI

ON THE EASTERN SIDE of the great Shenh Mountains lies Changshai, the kingdom of the trees. Seventy percent of Changshai is covered by dense forests that sweep across the country. Viewed from the eastern slopes of the Shenh Mountains, Changshai has the appearance of being a frozen sea with swells of silver and shadow-green. It is dense; in places little light reaches the forest floor, creating huge pockets of darkness, its silence broken by birdsong and occasional glancing shafts of sunlight that burst through the canopy of green. The floor of the forest is rich in all manner of plant life, from the simplest fungi through to the most beautiful flowers. Insects, as countless in their variety as the trees themselves, crawl through miniature forests of ferns and sweet, lush carpets of grass. Deer, wild boar, and large, feral cats graze and prowl the forest: wolves howl throughout the night, and in the northern reaches, silk worms spin their magic while illuminated by glowing flies and luminous fungi. The plants are the true rulers of Changshai, providing protection, food, fuel, with the many animals providing good hunting.

Well-worn paths wind through the ancient woods and terminate in small villages. Buildings cluster in enlarged clearings, made from local timbers and designed to almost blend with their surroundings. When Melniboné ruled, the Changtse were slaves, bred on the Dragon Isle and brought here to serve the Bright Empire. When the Dragon Princes departed, the slaves were left behind and they quickly spread through the forest, building for themselves the villages and small pockets of community that now pepper Changshai.

Despite its undisputed beauty, Changshai is a nation at war with itself. For the past twenty years, a bloody, intractable conflict has raged between the king of Changshai, the Drei Myur, and his half-brother, Kaleg Vogun, Usurper Prince of the Tanghensi. Some claim that Kaleg Vogun is the rightful Drei of Changshai and that Myur is the impostor; others declare that Kaleg Vogun is a demon in kingly guise who seeks to establish a reign of evil upon the Earth—still others claim that the Warrior Priests of Phum engineered the entire affair, interested in seeing the effects of a civil war for some bizarre, chaotic reason. The stories dif-



SADAKAN CASTLE

fer according to who one talks to and there are thousands of permutations of each legend.

Currently Kaleg Vogun is winning. In the early years of the war, Vogun drove Myur out of Changshai's capital, Tanghensi, and forced him to retreat back to the Sadakan Castle—once a summer residence for the royal family. Vogun had the support of the people of Tanghensi and in usurping Myur's capital he demonstrated to many that he was the best person to rule. Those who stayed loyal to Myur were purged, and eventually Myur's supporters found themselves pushed back through the country and into the foothills of the Shenh Mountains. Kaleg Vogun holds the country in a vice-like grip: those who openly oppose him die, and many have pledged their support to the Usurper Prince purely out of fear, believing that their best hope is to wait for Myur to either surrender or die so that their lives might once again return to normal.

Vogun commands no structured army: instead, pockets of armed militia hold the forests of Changshai, paying lip service to Vogun's rule, but effectively carving little empires of power for themselves. Vogun's forces fight amongst each other for the pettiest of reasons, and this confusion adds to the misery that sorrowing Changshai must endure. The only cause that unites Vogun's forces is a wish to see Myur dead. Few know why and few care; twenty years of bloodshed has hardened the hearts, minds and souls of the Changtse, many knowing nothing except The War. They fight because that is what they have always done—and if they cannot fight the Drei Myur's forces, they will fight each other.

The Drei Myur has managed to retain a semblance of order amongst his own supporters. When he left Tanghensi, he took with him the support of the nobility and regular

army. Those who allied themselves with Myur recognized that Kaleg Vogun was an uncontrollable force and decided that discipline and the old traditions of Changshai should be maintained if they were not to become like the marauding scum supporting the Usurper Prince. When Myur reached the Sadakan, the army reorganized itself, recruiting new soldiers from the refugees who fled Vogun's raiding parties, training them to fight in the manner upheld by the Changshai regiments for centuries. Myur's army is small but organized—it is also loyal. And although twenty years of fighting has taken its toll on the morale of the troops, none have ever lost sight of the fact that Old Changshai must be preserved and to do this the Drei and his bloodline must survive. If the kings falls, then so does Changshai and the war is lost to the Usurper Prince.

Twelve years ago, Kaleg Vogun made a serious misjudgment in his strategies. His confidence inflated at having driven the Drei Myur out of Tanghensi, he turned his sights upon Eshmir. Believing his forces strong enough to be able to attack and annex lands close to the Eshmirian/Changtse border, Kaleg Vogun marched north, sacking a number of small Eshmirian towns as he pressed into the country. He had reckoned without the plucky determination exhibited by the Eshmirians. A counter force confronted the Tanghensi on the northern side of the Eshmir valley, the consequent battle lasting for three days and three nights. Half a million warriors lost their lives with seventy percent of the casualties being suffered by the Tanghensi. Kaleg Vogun was pushed back, his pride shattered and his dreams of an empire stretching across the eastern edge of the continent dashed in the process. Many Eshmirian heroes arose from the Battle of the Eshmir Valley, which is commemorated in Eshmirian songs and stories, among them Moonglum,

who gained his first taste of war, and Rackhir who had turned his back on The Warrior Priests of Chaos and hired-out his services as a mercenary.

Tanghensi, the once proud capital of Changshai, is a forlorn place. Although untouched by the war, its streets have been stripped bare of all the artifacts that had once marked the dynasty of the Drei Myur's family. Vogun has replaced these with gaudy statues and mosaics depicting himself in a variety of victorious and heroic poses. Since formal trade with other nations is nigh-on impossible, food in Tanghensi is of poor quality and quite often in short supply. What little food is imported usually find its way into the hands of the black marketeers—one of the few professions to actively profit from protracted hardship. Mercenaries looking for work amongst the disparate bands of guerrilla fighters at large in the huge forests are a common sight in Tanghensi, many of whom have fled the laws of their own countries, seeking refuge in a place where lawlessness has been elevated to a high art form. Rumor has it that Vogun has recently been courting a number of sorcerers from Phum in an attempt to introduce magic into his campaign and the madness that has entrenched itself in Changshai has made the country ripe for the work of Chaos.

THE PEOPLE

Fair of skin and with hair coloring ranging from light browns through to jet black. Changtse men are hirsute, taking great pride in plaiting their thick beards into complex designs. Women wear their hair long and threaded with a complicated arrangement of beads and combs. Physically the Changtse are average, reaching about six feet in height in men and five feet eight in women; muscular development is seen as a sign of potency in both men and women and it is not uncommon to find both with highly developed physiques.

Changshai is a nation at war and attire reflects this. Clothes are heavy and functional, with leathers been worn as a matter of habit along with thick jerkins and breeches of wool or coarse linen. Silks and other fine materials are reserved for the nobility and even then, only for special occasions. Both men and women dress almost alike with skirts only being worn by women when occasion might demand it. Weapons are also normally kept on prominent display—swords (scimitars for women) and daggers draping from decorative sashes.

Changtse say little, suffer much, and act with caution. Most have lived through twenty years of strife and their suspicious nature reflects this. They always seem to be on their guard, and for anyone used to exuberant company, Changtse often appear to be rude and uncouth. This is not so: children have been taught from birth that silence is the best defense and caution the greatest ally; the adults have had to learn from bitter experience.

The other habit peculiar to the people of Changshai is the chewing of Haajya weed. Its effects are described in the earlier section on Flora and Fauna.

ESHMIR

THE GOLDEN GARDEN of the east; mercantile capital of Menastree, Eshmir is one of the youngest of the eastern kingdoms but is arguably the most wealthy. Lying between the northern Shenh mountains and the Scar of the Night, Eshmir boasts the most fertile lands in the east, possesses the most accessible raw materials, and has built its rapid success on shrewd dealing and careful management of its reserves.

Eshmir is a nation born of bloodshed. Its lands were once hotly contested by Phum and Okara. Eshmir has endured such attacks and always survived: to preserve its wealth Eshmirians have needed to develop military as well as mercantile skills. It is eventually only the terrible might of Tern Gashtek, the Flamebringer, that brings Eshmir to its knees as he and his reavers lay waste to much of the civilized East.

The countryside of Eshmir is beautiful to behold. Gently rolling valleys sliced by crystal-blue rivers, the hill sides covered in a wild variety of trees, occasionally giving way to the farms that provide grain, vegetables and meat for the thriving cities of Elwher and Her'is. Further north, in the foothills of the Scar of the Night mountains, hundreds of mines drag copper, tin, iron silver and other precious minerals to the surface. Eshmir produces some of the highest quality iron in the Unknown East, much of which is exported to Maidahk, whose advanced smelting techniques have managed to produce some of the strongest steels available. In turn, Eshmir buys in things it cannot produce for itself: cotton, rare grains and spices, olive and other, more exotic oils. The diversity of Eshmir's trade is reflected in the industries the country supports; from the smallest farms and mines, run by family concerns, through to massive ranches and open-caste quarries, owned by powerful merchants and the Eshmirian government.

Eshmir has two major cities. Elwher is the capital, straddling the mouth of the River El. It is a young and vibrant place of gold, marble, silk and gleaming, unpretentious spires. Its wide, arcaded and symmetrical streets, with their sandy-red facades, radiate the flamboyance and style that has made Eshmir famous. Taking its cue from Anakhazan, Elwher is a cultured place where art, philosophy and science mingle and grow. The bulk of its population is literate, and while commerce is the city's lifeblood, culture is at its soul. They say that Elwher is the home of all stories and it is true that the people of Elwher hunger for literature, music and new means of artistic expression. It is unlike the dark, torturous streets of the Okaran cities, places long past their prime, but is a city of light, story and song: a twinkling wide-open eye that looks upon the world and likes what it sees.

The second city is Her'is. Smaller than its sister, but no-less bright. Her'is sits beside the fast flowing El river on the northern side of the Careful Forest. Her'is is young and

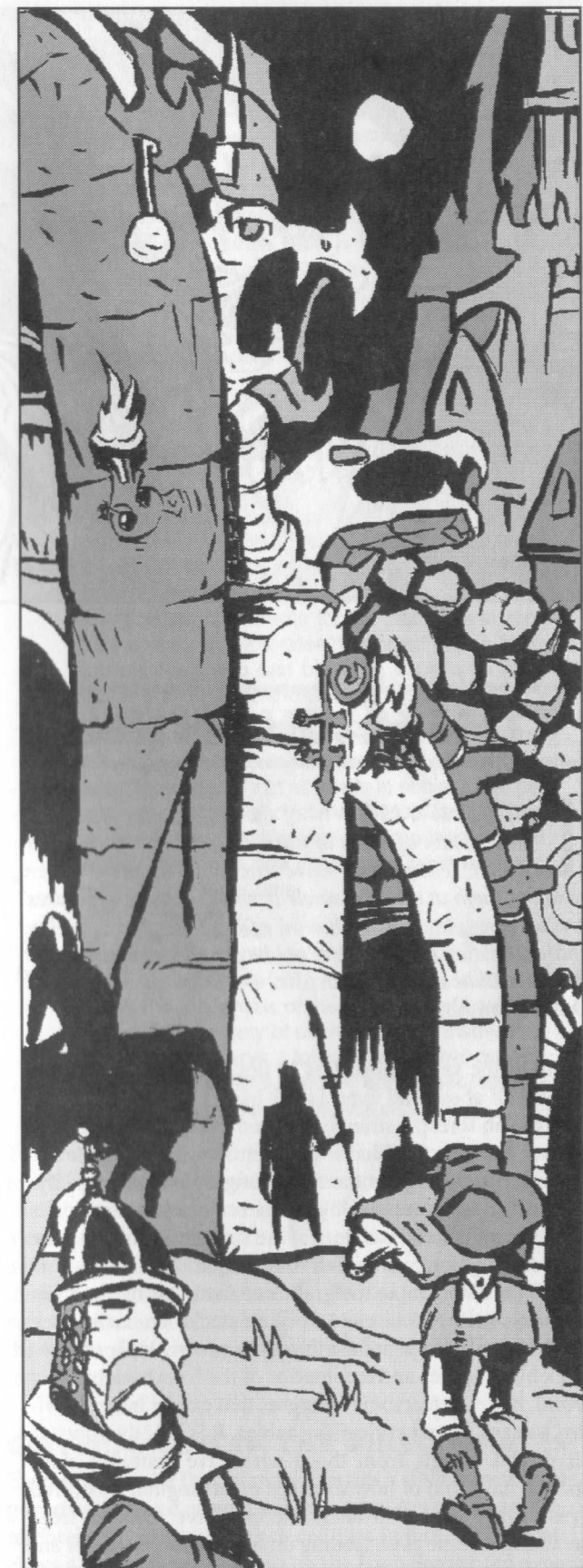
built on commerce, its buildings tall and graceful, its streets wide and lined with trees, fountains and open gardens. It is more thoughtful than the impetuous Elwher and is the home of Eshmir's religious philosophy, the Elithior. Amongst the towers and spires of the city, copper-plated domes litter the rooftops, single wide slits opened and trained on the night skies. Within reside the scrutineers, eyes fixed upon telescopes, astrolabes and charts, plotting and watching the movements of the heavens, following the doctrines of the Elithior that forms the heart of Eshmir's religion.

THE PEOPLE

Eshmirians encompass all body types, ranging from the tall and slim through to the short and stocky. Hair is normally brown, red or blond, with the eyes being brown or blue in color. Eshmirians have a distinctive accent; a soft, lilting brogue that has a soothing effect on the listener, especially when employed in song or story.

Eshmirians like to display their wealth in their dress. Silk, samite, fine linens and colorful robes of rich wool or delicately embroidered cotton are common amongst those that can afford it. Amongst those that cannot, clothes are more simple, but normally gaily colored—reds and greens being a particular favorite in Elwher. Eshmirians are fashion victims with dozens of new styles rising and falling almost weekly. It might be turbans decorated with ostrich feathers one week, peaked hats the next. Social status is evident from the flamboyance of the clothing and how up to date the fashion is.

Eshmirians are noted for the generosity and good humor. Everyone is welcome in Eshmir, and no outward prejudice exists towards any of the other nations—save the Tanghensi of Changshai, who so vainly tried to sack the country. Eshmirites love singing and telling stories; they adore conversation and mock debates on trivial themes. The more serious minded nations of the Unknown East—Anakhazan or Valederia for example—can barely understand how a people preoccupied with indulging their whims have come to be the most powerful trading nation in the Eastern Kingdoms. For their part, Eshmirians reckon it is better to keep smiling and have a happy corpse rather than dwell on miseries that cannot be avoided. Eshmirians have a saying: "Beneath the stars, optimists and pessimists are alike: but the optimists have a better time..."



STREETS OF ELWHER



A HAGHAN'IIN

THE HAGHAN'IIN

LITTLE IS KNOWN of the Haghan'iin Host, but men speak of them in hushed tones and with great dread. Those who have encountered them never speak of them at all. It is unclear whether these creatures are human, plant or a mixture of both—yet they display characteristics that could never be found in anything but the most Chaos-ridden of beasts. — From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran

North of the savannas of Bas'lk lies a massive forest that few speak about and even fewer have visited. This is the Haghan'iin forest, a strange, tortured place that is a relic of the war between the Dharzi and Melniboné. During the terrifying battles between these two mighty nations, horrifying sorceries were employed on both sides, the spells twisting not just the warriors of the two armies but also the very countryside over which they fought. The Haghan'iin forest is a testament to the gruesome nature of the war. For countless miles its warped trees cluster in on each other, sunlight unable to penetrate the dense canopy layer of inch-thick black leaves and the interior of the forest is a twilight world, home to fearsome creatures that can be heard howling, screaming and crying like babies. It is as if the forest is alive, and reports from those who have ventured close enough have told of how the trees open languid, blood-red eyes to peer at the intruders. People have seen the trees breathing—some even feeding on the tattered shapes of animals using probing branches equipped with talons and tearing claws.

The Haghan'iin Host reside nowhere but in this forest, the consequence of hundreds of years of mutation—a bizarre and bitter combination of fauna and flora. Physically the Haghan'iin resemble humans: bipedal, binocular, five-fingered and toed. But the resemblance ends there. The Haghan'iin have no blood; instead the oil of the Fal tree courses through their veins, making them dangerous to kill. Their skin, in its natural state, is of a greenish-brown hue, although a strange ability allows them to blend chameleon-like with their forest surroundings, giving them almost total invisibility. This ability ceases if a Haghan'iin leaves the forest and it appears that this is an ability conferred by the forest and not inherent in the Haghan'iin.

The Host speaks no tongue recognizable by humans, communicating by rapid changes of skin color and in high pitched screeches and hums, like the chattering of forest insects. It is known that they hate all forms of life not connected with their forest, and those who stray into Haghan'iin territory are hunted down, captured, and subjected to strange rituals designed to bind the body and soul of the intruder with the fabric of the forest. Survivors of such rituals bear livid scars across their body, deep incisions made by wooden skewers where seeds have been forced into the wound. One expedition into the forest told how eight of its members were lashed to trees and over the course of many days turned into trees themselves, screaming while their limbs hardened and became branches.

Haghan'iin fear magic and cannot use it. This is probably a throwback to the residual sorceries that made them what they are, and the collective consciousness of the forest manifests itself in panic when magic is encountered. Had Elric not been so qualified in sorcery, it is likely that he would have never escaped the Haghan'iin clutches.

THE VALEDERIAN DIRECTORATES

FOUR NATIONS MAKE UP the Valederian Directorates: Anakhazan, Maidahk, S'aleem and Valederia. The Directorate itself is a treaty formed about a hundred years before the fall of Imrryr and proscribes that the four founding nations will share a common set of beliefs and philosophies. These are centered on the preservation of the Cosmic Balance and are as follows:

- Each nation will fight against the intrusive influence of Chaos or Law and can rely upon the other nations of the Directorate to provide aid if called upon.
- Free trade exists between the Directorates with importation taxes being levied only on goods coming in from non-Directorate nations. This has the effect of keeping prices of staple foods at a set level and ensures markets for the agricultural producers of the Directorates. Imported goods from outside the group can be more expensive than elsewhere in the Unknown East.
- Ideas are to be exchanged freely throughout the Valederian Directorates and education is to be allowed for all people at all levels in society. The Directorates, principally Valederia itself, are learned countries and have established an educational system of schools and universities far in advance of the Young Kingdoms.
- It is the duty of each member of the Directorates to maintain and uphold the will of the Cosmic Balance: all people are born free and should remain free of the influences of the extremes of Law and Chaos. It is the duty of each nation to ensure that its peoples preserve a tolerant and liberal outlook in matters of politics, religion and society to promote the Balance in the individual.

The Valederian Directorates have been enormously successful. As individual nations their strength is slight, but allied by the common tenets of the Directorate, they present a considerable economic, social and military force. The unity of the Directorate has helped maintained peace throughout Menastree since the demise of Melniboné; a peace that remains until Terarn Gashtek raises arms against the whole of the eastern continent and comes close to wasting it completely.

GOVERNMENT IN THE DIRECTORATES

Each nation in the Directorates operates a similar method of government based around the Senate, an elected group representing the interests of each country. In turn, each Senate elects a chief senator who sits on the High Senate, the overall decision making body for the Valederian Directorates,

Haghan'iin live in the trees and have carved entire cities from the forest. They move easily through the upper reaches of the trees, using vines and creepers to shift silently and swiftly. Haghan'iin females are known to be non-sentient, little more than mindless breeding machines useful only for rearing young. Females either breed males or females—never both—and those that breed males are regarded as prized possessions by the leaders of Host. Females live apart from males, corralled in the high reaches of the tree cities, tending the young Haghan'iin automatically. To kill a male-bearing female is to murder part of the forest, and brings about the full wrath of the Host; such was Elric's mistake, and when his magics destroyed the entire male-bearing stock of females, the Host tracked the albino into Anakhazan, there to clash with the armies of Countess Guyë and even more of Elric's magic. This resulted in the destruction of the Haghan'iin and an end to this bizarre race.

Since this book is set prior to Elric's illustrious adventures, the Haghan'iin are very much in existence, and an expedition into the Haghan'iin forest to retrieve rare and valuable herbs and plants would make an excellent basis for a scenario. The statistics for individual Haghan'iin are provided below; statistics for females are listed in parentheses.

HAGHAN'IIN

| characteristics | rolls | averages |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------|
| STR | 2D8+3 (1D8) | 12 (4-5) |
| CON | 2D8+4 (2D8) | 13 (9) |
| SIZ | 2D8+3 | 12 (4-5) |
| INT | 2D8 (1) | 9 (1) |
| POW | 3D8 | 13-14 |
| DEX | 2D8+6 (1D8) | 15 (4-5) |
| APP | 2D8 | 9 |
| MOV | On foot-8, Swinging-10 | Av. HP: 13 |

Average Damage Bonus: +1D6

Weapons: Hunting bow 40+5D10%, 1D6+1/2 db
Long Spear 50+3D10%, 1D10+1+db
Club 30+3D10%, 1D6+db

Armor: None, but the ability of the Haghan'iin to blend into their natural surroundings means that all chances to hit them are reduced to one third normal. Also, Haghan'iin do not have blood, but Falian oil (see Fal Tree, page 13). The oil is less volatile than that found in the Fal tree, but if an individual Haghan'iin is reduced to less than one third of his hit points with a single blow, there is a chance equal to his POW that he will explode. The damage caused to those within range is as follows:

0 - 1 yard radius: 3D6

2 - 3 yards radius: 2D6

4 - 5 yards radius: 1D6

Skills: Climb 90+3D10%, Dodge DEX x2%, Hide 90+3D10%, Jump 80+2D10%, Listen 60+2D10%, Move Quietly 90+2D10%, Natural World 70+2D10%, Swing Using Vines 70+3D10%, Throw 40+3D10%, Track 50+3D10%

Females have no skills.

which convenes in Valed-Hal, the capital city of Valederia. While each member of the Directorates can make its own laws and operate its own rules, the autonomy of the different countries is controlled by the laws and rules laid-down by the High Senate, which can force each nation to adopt an agreed set of laws and rules applying universally. The chief senators from each member nation decide on laws common to the Directorates and then seek permission from their national senates for their implementation. In addition, new laws that are proposed for an individual country must also be agreed by the High Senate, meaning that matters of domestic and international policy can be laborious and complicated to decide. It is thus the case that all the member states try to minimize legislation—as much to avoid the soul-crushing bureaucracy that accompanies the process as to preserve the freedom of the individual. One therefore finds that the same laws apply throughout the Valederian Directorates: if it is illegal in one country, then it is most likely illegal in the rest. Anakhazan, with its twin provinces, is the only exception, where many of its laws were made before its entry into the Directorates. In fact, the Guyë province is constantly striving to maintain the freedom and individuality it possesses, since the Freyr clan constantly lobbies the High Senate to impose curbs on some of the practices enjoyed by the Guyë half of the nation. So far, the Guyë province has maintained its position, but the political struggle has been a constant source of tension between the two factions of Anakhazan.

ANAKHAZAN

FAIR ANAKHAZAN is a country of stark contrasts. The southern and central regions consist of deep, wooded valleys, fertile plains given over to farming and viticulture, and a scattering of innumerable small towns and villages, each characterized by the deep yellow sandstone that is used in the buildings. In these areas the climate is warm and pleasantly humid with soft winds rolling in from the Bas'lk Hills, filtering through the valleys and forests, bringing with them the scent of exotic flowers and fragrant cypresses. South and central Anakhazan is idyllic. Yet travelling north, the temperature drops sharply and the landscape seems to retract, giving way to scarred limestone plateaus and vast stretches of cold, damp moorland populated only by sheep, goat, boar and wolf—a veritable wasteland in comparison with the riches of the rest of Anakhazan. And always in the distance, somehow continually out of reach, the imposing backbone of the Eastern continent: the aptly named Withered Peaks. A shattered range of mountains, sharp and jagged, scraping at the cold inhospitable skies, home to the feared Wyrms which drink men's souls. In the winter months, the sky above the Withered Peaks is alive with a blaze of color—strange lights that flash and fade against the pitch blackness, great sheets of light that writhe and flicker before descending behind the

mountains into the uncharted, unreachable, northern territories beyond, where it is said that the world ends.

Politically too, Anakhazan is a nation of contrasts. It is ruled by two great families. On the eastern side of the country, the Clan Freyr; on the west, the Clan Guyë. Both factions are separated by the mighty River Meer, dividing Anakhazan into two distinct provinces, predictably named after the respective families. The Freyr Clan is ruled by Count Kores Freyr, a stern patriarch who, despite being allied to the Balance, sympathizes with Law to a great degree. It was the Freyr Clan that moved Anakhazan into the Valederian Directorates, maximizing its trading position in the face of competition from Eshmir and Valederia. Freyr province is a strict place, reflecting the Count's heavy-handed rule: laws exist for just about everything and personal freedom is set aside in order to ensure the freedom of society as a whole is maintained. Personal excesses are curbed, with public displays of exuberance tolerated only upon certain, traditional festival days. Many see the eastern side of Anakhazan as a drab, unfeeling place and prefer the far more relaxed Guyë province on the other side of the river.

Ruled by the Clan Guyë, with Countess Anathaym Guyë at its head, this province leans more towards Chaos than Law, with personal freedom being seen as the best way to ensure social harmony. The population is encouraged to behave freely and to speak its mind, public expression being the best way of keeping people happy and tolerant. Guyë province is extremely liberal in what it allows, and while it has an amicable, if at times, strained, relationship with the Freyr province, it frowns upon the rather sedate and orderly way in which Count Freyr seeks to prevent personal liberty. It is therefore the case that if it is banned in Freyr, it is normally encouraged in Guyë: only the sensibilities of the two Clan heads prevents Anakhazan from descending into the kind of civil war afflicting Changshai—that and a realization that while differences occur, Anakhazan is above petty squabbles and should, after all, serve the Balance in its entirety.

Anakhazan has only one major city, Anakheera. Founded during Melnibonéan rule, proud, ancient Anakheera straddles the river Meer, one side belonging to each Clan. On the eastern side, life is quiet, rational, and subject to the justice of Freyr's prefecture which maintains a level of public sobriety at all times. Taverns exist, and street markets flourish, but stripped of the exuberance natural to such places, they are dull when compared with the jewels on the other side of the river. The Guyë quarter of Anakheera is a far more lively place—a maze of streets that contrast sharply with the Freyr quarter's grid-like structure—filled with all manner of shops, businesses, taverns, brothels and smoke-houses (where various narcotics can be indulged without fear of damaging public morals). It is the Freyr quarter of Anakheera that the merchants visit to trade, but the Guyë quarter where they flock to spend their profits. At sun set, dozens of bridges spanning the river creak under the weight of bodies as people leave the Freyr quarter and head for the bright lights of western Anakheera.

THE PEOPLE

The Anakhazani tend to possess thick, red, brown or black hair and are tall and elegant in posture and movement, reflecting perhaps, the old traits of Melniboné. Skin is tanned to either a deep gold or rich bronze. Anakhazani have long, open faces with proud noses and full, dark lips. Eyes are usually brown or green.

Loose robes made from cool linen and silk, draped with brightly colored cummerbunds and sashes, are the favored form of attire. The men wear baggy trousers which fit tightly at the ankle; the women wear long, full skirts which are usually split to the hip at either the front or the back. Hoods of a light cloth are common, and turbans are sometimes worn by the nobility. Ear rings, nose rings, and gossamer thin chains of gold suspended between the two are also fashionable, although usually only amongst the wealthy members of the Guyë Clan. Sandals are the predominant form of footwear, but many women wear silk slippers decorated with tiny bells that jingle merrily with each graceful step.

The Anakhazani are a proud people with a highly developed sense of culture. Debate and conversation are considered to be high art-forms, although the more traditional pursuits of painting, sculpture and music are also held in great esteem. Martial arts are practised and taught in the many academies throughout the Guyë province country, and indeed it is the Guyë nobles that make up the bulk of the officers in Anakhazan's army. Those educated in the Freyr province tend towards the study of politics and philosophy; Guyë might produce the best warriors, but Freyr produces the best diplomats. Anakhazani try to further all aspects of their minds and bodies, believing that a person functions better when the spirit and the flesh have been raised to their highest levels.

THE GLOBE OF FUTURE NATIONS

Anakhazan is rumored to be in possession of a globe that displays the nations of the world in the next time cycle and beyond: word of this treasure even drew Elric to Anakhazan, the albino believing that he might find some of the answers that had eluded him during his fraught life. The globe itself is a closely guarded secret with only the heads of the Freyr and Guyë clans knowing its whereabouts and what it professes to show. Forged by the Menastrai before the Melnibonéan conquest, the globe is hidden in an underground fortress far in the north of the country. Guarded by Wyrms brought from the Withered Peaks and other, strange enchantments, only those who remain true to the aims of the Balance are allowed to gaze upon it—and even Count Freyr and Countess Guyë have not dared to suppose that they are eligible to learn of its secrets. Anakhazani legend has it that as the end of the world approaches, a Champion of the Balance will come forth from the deserts to meditate at the Temple of the Globe before taking part in the final battle that will herald in the next cycle of time. And, despite its reluctance to believe in myths of this kind, Anakhazani

accept utterly that this is what will happen. Until then, the two clans are united in keeping the globe a secret and each family sends a select group of warriors to maintain its defense. Attempts to see the globe have been made and all have failed, the defenses protecting it being too much even for Warrior Priests of Phum who once tried to destroy it.

MAIDAHK

SHOW A MAIDAHKIAN *a withered twig and he will show you the bridge it will one day become* Old Valederian Saying. — From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.

South of Anakhazan is Maidahk, the land of the Engineers. Hotter than Anakhazan and more arid, it is a place of rough, stony deserts and great strips of wasteland where little grows except cactus and tough, inedible plants adapted to the intense climate. Yet Maidahk is also a place of arable fields where crops have been successfully grown for over two centuries and where some of the most sought after cattle can be found.

Maidahk's strength is in the ingenuity of its engineers. People who have decided to tame the lands around them and make them into a place fit to support life without resorting to sorcery. Maidahk has spent a great deal of time and energy in developing irrigation schemes, diverting rivers, creating dams and reservoirs, feeding the land to make it green. Rather than being a massive tract of uninhabitable desert, Maidahk is a place of patchwork fields of corn, wheat, barley, oats and orchards bearing exotic fruits. This organic wealth makes it one of the most important members of the Valederian Directorates, and what it lacks in military might it amply compensates for in technical expertise.

Maidahk's capital is Råmeer, an incredible feat of engineering. Towers and great houses; museums and libraries; palaces, gardens, and monuments honoring those who achieve. To walk Råmeer's streets is to see architecture at its most awe-inspiring and to be surrounded by a thriving community of builders, architects, engineers and all manner of occupations in between. Råmeer is a plan of concentric circles, the marvelously Gothic university at its heart—a fusion of complex, impossibly tall towers driving skyward from a collection of narrow, bizarrely shaped buildings clustering around the spires in a conspiratorial huddle. The central ring of the city, girdling the university, is known as The Arc and is the prime residential district, home to the wealthy and the more powerful of Råmeer's guilds. Most of the grandest and more elaborate buildings are found in The Arc, including the grandiose and imposing parliament hall, The Scales, designed to resemble a huge balance, built from blood-red sandstone and marble imported from S'aleem. Beyond The Arc, radiating out for about a mile, are the concentric streets and avenues of Råmeer's residential areas. Some are grand impersonations of The Arc, while others are little more than ghettos, long forgotten by

their designers and now left to the ravages of decay of poverty.

The worst of these areas is The Marsh, half a mile from The Arc on the western side and encompassing a block of eight streets and two avenues. The Marsh is a centre for organized crime and its depravity contrasts sharply with the studious air prevalent throughout most of the city. Travelers are warned to steer clear of The Marsh, especially at night, and even Rameer's elite city guard, The Fencers, refrain from entering this area without very good cause.

The Marsh and some parts of Rameer aside, Maidahk's people are warm spirited, farsighted, and committed to improving the country through artifice and hard graft. The College of Engineers is called upon from all over the east by those who want to emulate Maidahk's achievements. The sciences are taught readily and treated more seriously here than in any other country, the result being that Maidahk leans more towards the side of Law in its dealings with the Cosmic Balance than to Chaos.

THE PEOPLE

Maidahkis tend to have dark skin, dark hair and dark eyes—the result of the powerful sun that bathes their country for most of the year. Black hair is the most usual color with red and brown hair being uncommon and blond very rare. Both men and women are of an average height—about six feet and five feet five inches respectively—and encompass all types of build and stature. The Maidahki accent is soft and lilting, sentences usually ending in an upward inflection almost as though a question is being asked.

Clothes reflect the Balance and the influence it has on the lives of all those in the Valederian Directorates. Light cotton garments sporting a great degree of symmetry, coupled with simple robes and hoods to protect against the sun's extremes. Sandals are the most common form of footwear and leather is kept to a minimum, canvas or heavier cottons taking the place of animal hides. Maidahkis do not make a great display of personal wealth although it is common for those who have money to sport refined, tasteful items of jewelry such as brooches, filigree rings and discreet ear studs. Weapons, other than short bladed knives, are not normally worn publicly unless one happens to be a warrior and licensed in the use of such hardware. The Fencers sport twin rapiers which are used together in combat; in fact, the rapier is considered by Maidahkis to be the most noble of weapons and fencing is taught more as an art form than as a method of combat.

Maidahkis believe in personal advancement through cooperation, not competition. Measured debate is favored above argument, and it is the aim of the individual to show no leanings to either Law or Chaos. Maidahki engineers are responsible for some of the greatest feats of construction in the entire eastern continent and almost all Maidahkis love to involve themselves in projects that require an understanding of the physical sciences.

THE BRIGAND ENGINEERS OF LOHEB BAKRA

Ten years before the fall of Imrryr, Valederia was threatened by the Warrior Priests of Phum. The Blue Assassins had carried out a successful assassination attempt on one the feared Knights of Tumburu; Sadachar the Black was ambushed and stabbed to death while returning from a pilgrimage into the Shenkh Mountains. The Warrior Priests discovered that the assassins responsible originated from the Valederian town of Ylad and, in seeking retribution, sent the Knights of Tumburu, including Rackhir the Red Archer, to destroy the town.

Loheb Bakra was in Valed-Hal when the news reached the High Senate of the attack against Ylad. Unable to raise an army of sufficient skill and numbers to go against the Knights of Tumburu, they turned to Loheb Bakra who had been demonstrating his designs for war engines to the assembled heads of the Valederian Directorates. Loheb Bakra agreed to test his machines in the defense of Ylad and so, accompanied by a motley army of raw recruits, a handful of experienced soldiers and a ragtag of volunteers, he marched north to meet the Knights of Tumburu in the fields and low hills leading down to the sleepy agricultural town of Ylad.

Bakra's engines were extremely varied in their design: huge, steam-powered trebuchets that delivered boulders six feet in diameter; wind-powered chariots employing vast sails to catch the gentle breezes and scoot through the fields, armed with spears and blades to chop at the legs of approaching cavalry camels—and other strange and deadly devices that it was hoped would withstand the onslaught of the Knights of Tumburu and their powerful sorceries.

The Knights of Tumburu expected little resistance when they rode into the Ylad valley and were stunned when, from the hills, the wind-chariots ploughed into their ranks. And then, as they tried to gather together their wits, the steam trebuchets rained rocks onto the battlefield, striking with an accuracy even Loheb Bakra had not imagined.

The battle of Ylad Vale lasted for ten hours. Eventually the Knights of Tumburu, battered and bloody from their unsuccessful attack, turned and fled. They realized that with all their martial skill and sorcerous knowledge, they had simply not planned for the use of machines on the battlefield—machines that held them at bay and then cut them down when they tried to advance.

Loheb Bakra was hailed as a hero, and the survivors of the battle of Ylad Vale who had operated his machines formed their own company at arms, pledged to the defense of the Valederian Directorates. Thus were the Brigand Engineers born. Where a threat of arms exists against a village, town or city in the Valederian Directorates, Loheb Bakra's Brigand Engineers can be found, their ever more bizarre machines ready to take on any odds that might be levelled against them.

THE BLUE ASSASSINS

HE [Rackhir the Red Archer] had heard her scream when the Blue Assassins had crept into the Unholy Fortress, pledged to murder evil-makers..." — 'To Rescue Tanelorn', Chapter 3, *The Singing Citadel*

THE CULT OF the Blue Assassins is shrouded in mystery, yet one thing is certain: they despise Chaos and have pledged to strike at its heart whenever possible. It was the Blue Assassins that attempted to murder Sorana, the beautiful, dread sorceress and lover of Rackhir. It was the Blue Assassins that took the life of Yaldishan Kamiir, the bandit-sorcerer who plagued the free roads of Valederia. They have made it their job to attack those in sympathy with the Lords of Entropy and to wipe them from the face of the Earth.

It is said that the Blue Assassins originated soon after Melniboné conquered Menastree. A group of Menastrai refugees fled into the lands that would one day become S'aleem, hiding on one of the tiny islands in Lake Karak and plotting how they might somehow bring down the Dragon Princes. After months of planning they decided that they would use stealth and cunning to destroy those who represented Melniboné's power. Dedicated to this task, the refugees began to train themselves in the arts of the unseen warrior: silent movement, disguise, the development of potions and poisons, bizarre modes of combat that would not be anticipated by the opponents. After years of study and training, the first of the refugees emerged from the island and travelled to the outpost of Yaan (where the Valederian city of the same name now stands). This small band, num-

bering no more than four, stole into the city, disguising themselves as Valni traders. Then, after the market had settled down for the night, the Menastrai killed the guards at the main gate, making no more sound than the rustling of windblown leaves and leaving behind them bodies that had turned midnight-blue in color—a result of the poison used on the blades of their carefully prepared throwing knives. The assassins quickly found the chambers of the Melnibonéan governor of Yaan, and having bypassed his guards, killed the him and his harem, leaving behind more of the blue-stained corpses but no trace of who committed the crime.



refugees themselves have survived the centuries through the sustenance provided by certain herbs and benign spells. Whatever the truth, they are extremely secretive and brilliantly organized. Assassins are trained from birth in the arts of stealth and deception, schooled to hate Chaos, and taught to lead a double life: normal citizens on the one hand, destroyers of Chaos on the other. Many assassins lead normal lives for years, only rarely being called upon to carry out an assassination. Others are constantly engaged in organizing the cult's massive intelligence network, tracking Chaos worshippers and questing Knights of Tumburu. No assassin ever reveals anything about the structure of the cult or its training methods: assassins who are taken alive never talk, despite the most foul tortures, and those that can take their own lives rather than betray the cult itself.

PLAYING A BLUE ASSASSIN

ONLY ADVENTURERS that roll the Assassin occupation can be members of the Blue Assassins. The cult recruits from among its own ranks, and assassin adventurers come from a long line of Blue Assassins. The children of assassins are taken to the secret training camps scattered across the Valederian Directorates and there schooled in the arts of murder. Then they reenter society, leading normal lives until called upon by the sect's elders to act against Chaos. An adventurer with a Blue Assassin background may take up the career of another adventurer in addition to his or her activities as an assassin.

S'ALEEM

CONSIDERED BY MANY to be Maidahk's poorer cousin, S'aleem appears to be less significant than the other members of the Valederian Directorates. It lacks the magnificent and ambitious architecture of Maidahk, the sprightly conflict of Anakhazan and the natural tenacity of Valederia, but possesses instead a calm reserve that has often acted as a moderating influence in the political arena of the Directorates.

Hot and flat, S'aleem is mostly open savannah, its huge plains dominated by hardy grasses and herds of antelope and bison. Small villages and homesteads are the most common forms of settlement, sometimes with a single extended family dominating the community. S'aleem supports two cities: Karakosë, the City on the Lake, and Graghin, the larger of the two and S'aleem's only sea port. Communication between Graghin and Karakosë is excellent: long, narrow-sailed ships ply the currents of the Karak river, transporting produce along S'aleem's spine.

S'aleem has borrowed much from other nations, especially Maidahk's principles of irrigation to make its own lands fertile. It was for this reason that S'aleem entered the Valederian Directorates: Maidahk promised to help introduce an irrigation system into S'aleem if it would agree to enter the Directorate treaty. The symbiosis has served both countries well; S'aleem's main crop is rice, which it grows in abundance and trades with the other Directorate nations. The lands around Graghin and Karakosë and almost all the way up the river, resemble a patchwork of paddy fields, fed by the Karak, thousands of man-made tributaries diverting water to the rice crops on either side.

Graghin operates a thriving fishing industry and is a prime exporter of sea food to the Directorates and beyond. Square-sailed junks ply the coastal waters, bringing back shark, marlin, tuna, lobster and a hundred other species that are then salted and shipped to Karakosë and the other neighboring countries. The merchant venturers who trade in preserved fish are known as Scalers, and it is the Scalers that control the merchant economy in both Graghin and Karakosë. Rice is the staple product but fish is more profitable and the Scalers occupy a very powerful position in S'aleem's economy, much to the chagrin of the rice producers and traders.

THE PEOPLE

S'aleemites have a typically olive-colored skin with dark hair and eyes. The mouth is often wide, and with slightly thicker lips than elsewhere in the Unknown East. Height and bearing is average, although S'aleemites tend to be slighter in build than in other countries, leading many to consider them as weaklings. The S'aleemite accent is a sharp, clipped version of the rolling tongue found in Maidahk—and peppered with the slang terms that are always popular throughout the country. One could be forgiven for thinking that they speak a different language to 'pande altogether.

Dress is simple. Light cotton robes in restrained colors, decorated by unfussy items of jewel. S'aleemites do not display opulence, believing that the land is the greatest bearer of riches. The Scalers often disagree, having tasted the ways of life in places such as Anakhazan and Eshmir, where to display one's wealth is considered to be a sign of power. Weaponry is never publicly displayed, and the carrying of anything more threatening than a staff is illegal in Karakosë and Graghin.

S'aleemites have some curious habits, their creation of slang terms being one example. 'Pande is rarely bastardized in the Unknown East, but S'aleemites seem to enjoy creating new words or expressions for normally humdrum items, events or actions. For example, walking is called 'drudging'; men are called 'heds' and women 'huds'. S'aleemite expressions are often adopted by other nations and used as expletives. To quote a favored curse: 'If I ever get my gadding hands on that young rascal, I'll skitter his udderlugs for him.' It is thought that many expressions used by the S'aleemites harken back to the code language developed by the Blue Assassins, finding their way into common usage over the years.

VALEDERIA

THE LARGEST of the Directorate nations, Valederia dominates central Menastree, running across the continent from the Withered Peaks in the north to the Bay of Circles in the south.

Valederia embraces the gamut of climates. The northern quarter of the country, from the foothills of the Withered Peaks to the hills known as the Teeth of Shenhk, is temperate and verdant, suffering no real extremes of temperature or rainfall and thus leading to huge fields of wild grass and fragrant coniferous forests. As one travels further south, temperatures increase steadily, and on the coast—especially around Valed-Hal, the nation's capital, it can be miserably hot all year round with little respite in the autumn and winter months, save for the monsoons, where brutal rains lash the country for up to two hours each day.

Valederia is sparsely populated, the bulk of its inhabitants living in the three major cities of Valed-Hal, Yaan, and Rhzau. Small villages, towns, and extended farm settlements are scattered throughout the Valederian plains but essentially the country is very civilized. A rudimentary network of roads has been established, linking together the cities and important towns, leading to excellent routes of communication. In this way Valederia remains a unified state despite its size and fragmented population.

The three major cities of Valederia are rather uninspiring. Valederia lacks the flamboyance of Eshmir and the architectural vision of Maidahk, its cities are neither impressive nor dismally bleak. Some say this is because the Valederians are themselves intrinsically boring, but in truth it is because Valederia has directed its energies into establishing a coherent philosophy for itself and by extension the other

countries in the Directorates. Valederians put economic sensibilities before architectural frivolity and see their cities as being in keeping with the demands of the Cosmic Balance. Nothing is allowed to dominate anything else, and everything has its rightful place and function. Visitors from outside the Directorates find the cities—Valed-Hal especially—as being functional places where people exist, not living and breathing cities where people actually live.

Valed-Hal is a major sea port and has been since the Menastrai first came to the east. Over the millennia it has changed many times, and none of the original Menastrai or subsequent Melnibonéan buildings have been left standing. One of the largest cities in the Unknown East, it is a very ordered place, with its different functions divided into clearly defined areas. The inhabitants of Valed-Hal live in the north, surrounded by parkland and pleasant communal gardens. The mercantile district, where all trade is conducted, is hidden away from the view of the populace by a barricade of cypress trees forming a huge semicircle around the unpleasing sight of warehouses, shops and stores. The government district occupies Valed-Hal's centre, and is a bland neighborhood of faceless buildings clustered around a small private park used by government officials and civil servants. The harbor district is the only place in Valed-Hal with any true identity. The oldest part of the city, its quay and harbor walls were built by the Menastrai, and are still standing. An impressive maze of interconnecting locks, marinas and small harbors that seethe with the kind of energy displaced from the rest of the city. The harbor front is a mass of small taverns, shops, market stalls and hostleries of one kind or another. Foreigners are attracted to the Harbor district almost immediately, and it often seems to be a settlement that is completely autonomous of the rest of Valed-Hal. The government recognizes this as one of the city's strengths and has declared that the Harbor district must not be changed in any way. This means that while the old buildings are left standing, new ones cannot be built and repairs must be in keeping with traditional values. Therefore the harbor district, beautiful and quaint as it is, gradually crumbling away—and as more people throng its tiny streets, the decrepitude is accelerated each year.

THE PEOPLE

Valederians are physically average, encompassing all body types and heights. Hair tends towards the lighter colorings, with brown, blond and red being more in evidence than black hair. All Valederians seem to be recognizable by their square faces, wide smiles, and sometimes vacant expressions, although in reality Valederians are practical, and capable of being very hardheaded.

The clothing favored in Valederia runs along similar lines to those styles found in Maidahk and S'aleem: simple, light robes unadorned by decoration or ornament. Fashion is considered to be a chaotic element and is actively discouraged, dress being preferably functional and plain. This does not stop the civil service or the senate from wearing brightly colored robes when engaged in public duties, and the

uniformity of Valederians in general marks the senate and civil service as being something very special and detached from Valederian society.

Valederians have an arrogance about them that separates them from the rest of the Eastlanders. Valederia is the largest country; it has, (in their eyes) the fairest means of government, and is the instigator of the most powerful trading group in the world. Valederians thus feel that they have much of which to be proud and believe themselves to be in advance of the rest of the Unknown East. Individual Valederians obviously realize that this is not the case, and recognize that the general view of the Balance is not shared by everybody. However the general impression Valederians give out is one of thinly disguised contempt for the countries outside the Directorate—and even for those within.

THE SENATE

Like the other nations in the Directorates, Valederia is governed by a senate—in fact, Valederia started the whole republican notion shortly after Melniboné departed the east. The senate is made up of elected officials that decide economic, social, military and judicial policy, implementing its decisions through a complex civil service. While the Valederians like to think that their government is fair, allowing each person to vote for the senator they want to see representing them, the system is far from perfect. Voting is restricted to those who have proved that they have the mental capacity to be entitled to vote—that is, those in the population who can read and write and have some basic understanding of economics and politics. This effectively alienates those who do not live in the cities and the poorer sections of the community that have not the required level of literacy, understanding, or even interest stipulated by the Valederian election rules. About twenty percent of the country is eligible to vote, and this twenty percent tends to comprise of the wealthy, the calculating, the ambitious and the self-serving. Elements that normally go hand in hand with corruption. In intent, Valederia's senate is well meaning and truly believes that it acts in the interests of its people, however each year the same senators are reelected, and this small group of men and women, two hundred in all, continue their cozy little existence while continuing to be ignorant of the true feeling of the people beyond the halls of government. The civil service compounds this state of affairs, shielding the senate from the populace and tinkering with its decisions to better reflect what the civil service feels is in Valederia's best interests. Corruption is widespread but unacknowledged. Information and knowledge is restricted, warped, and sometimes discarded. Anything that might upset the notion of the Cosmic Balance in the minds of the Valederians is carefully edited or suppressed, done so by the civil service in the interests of the status quo.

OKARA

FOR CENTURIES the nation of Okara has harbored ambitions towards greatness, to expand its borders beyond those imposed by geography and politics. With each attempt it has failed, and with each failure has become weaker, more fragile, and less able to force-feed the other nations of Menastree with its beliefs. Frustrated and alone, Okara resides in a wilderness of its own making, overtaken and overshadowed by the nations surrounding it.

Physically Okara is an uninspiring country; flat and almost barren, it lacks splendor of any kind and the insipid nature of the land contrasts starkly with the unease and frustration shared by its people. In the north the desert laps deeply into its heart: arid and stony with little basis for agriculture. In the east, the Shenh mountains rear menacingly, separating it from the more temperate lands of Changshai, and in the south, the fertile savannah plains are largely desolate, save for scatterings of modest villages, too small to be properly called towns. These southern parts of Okara are the domain of the Nomad Lords—large bandit gangs that prey on the weak villages and constantly threaten the struggling King Usheri in his fortress capital of Kosaio, Okara's only true port. It is from among the Nomad Lords that Terarn Gashtek arises, ultimately to lay waste to much of the Unknown East, and his story is told in greater detail later.

King Usheri has ruled for twenty years, kept in power by the dark machinations of his large, devious family. Usheri has, at one time or another, courted the favors of all the eastern nations—and where his plans for alliance have been rejected, he has tried to use force to make his voice heard. Usheri envisages a Menastree united not by the Balance but by the sword. Contemptuous of the success of the Valederian Directorates and scornful of the independence of Eshmir, Usheri has sought to undermine both at differing times. Few nations trust Usheri and view him with disdain. Every country knows that he would be the one to control such a united Menastree, seeing no place for others in his great scheme of things.

Some merchant-venturers from other nations engage in trade with Okara; the mines in the foothills of the mountains provide copper, bronze, iron and a small quantity of gold—but nothing that cannot be bought elsewhere. Instead Okara has to fend for itself, Usheri ever dreaming of greater things but lacking the basic means of realizing his ambitions.

Okara has three large areas of settlement. Y'shath is in the north, the centre of the mineral trade and closest to Valederia. It is little more than a glorified town with a ramshackle appearance and a reputation for violence and unrest. Mercenaries and outlaws congregate there, the detritus from the rest of the Unknown East, many to hire their services to merchant caravans or en-route to either the Nomad

Lords in the south or to fight in the civil war raging in Changshai. A mean and dirty place, Y'shath is frequented by the most desperate and dangerous people of Menastree.

On the coast, Kosaio, Okara's capital, is an imposing walled city built by the Melnibonéans and the closest thing that Okara has to grandeur. Its vicious spires loom above the huge, twenty foot thick walls, impossible towers that no human architect could ever design. Within, labyrinthine streets snake between lopsided buildings carved from the rocks upon which Kosaio is built. King Usheri's influence is everywhere in the city. His palace, known to all as That Excellent Ruin, squats spider-like at the centre, the other buildings paying homage to it.

Kosaio is renowned for producing counterfeit goods, often excellent copies of originals from other Eastern cities. "Made in Kosaio" is an insult that merchants often use to describe the goods of their rivals.

Fishing vessels ply the coastal waters, bringing back all manner of sea creatures, including jellyfish, a favored dish of Okarans and Kosaions in particular. The entire city seems to be alive with activity: however the discreet observer soon realizes that its existence is a sham, a poor impersonation of other cities designed to honor King Usheri's vision. Usheri has urged his people to adopt the ways and customs of other nations, hoping to steal the best parts from each and create the perfect city. Kosaio is far less than the sum of its parts, and Usheri's intrinsic mistrust of even his own people has led to the creation of a city where no-one trusts anyone else. Usheri has the feared Iotai, his secret police to watch Kosaio, and the Iotai quickly crushes anyone who dares to denounce or act against Usheri's interests. People vanish without trace, stolen from the streets by Iotai agents for perhaps having made the wrong joke or sung the wrong song. In creating his ideal of a city, Usheri has forged a soulless, distrustful monster very much in his own suspicious image.

THE PEOPLE

Okarans are traditionally tall and burly—wide of frame and thickly boned. Their eyes have a distinctive slant towards the temple, and this lends them a somewhat harsh appearance. Women are a little more fair, with a less defined slant to the eye: generally females of Okara are short, slim, and have a more delicate bone structure. Hair tends towards darker colorings, although light brown is occasionally found, particularly amongst those who come from the south of the country and along the coasts.

The people of Okara are reserved in their tastes and fashions. Clothing is simple but sturdy, usually comprising of simple, linen shirts with strong breeks and topped with a long-coat or robe. In the mountainous areas the Okarans frequently wear the skins of yaks and other furs, to protect themselves against the fierce cold that permeates the higher altitudes. Turbans are common and hats are unknown, but the Okaran's do allow themselves some splendor in this respect: amongst the wealthy turbans are rich and ornate, kept in place with bejeweled pins and decorated with the

feathers of peacocks and Birds of Paradise. Even the lower classes make sure that their turbans always look splendid, and many villages specialize in creating their own designs that provide an identity for the wearer—it is possible for an Okaran to know exactly what region of the country someone is from by the design of their turban, and sometimes even which village or town by the style of decoration.

THE FLAMEBRINGER

HIS FACE WAS ALMOST *as fleshless as the skulls hanging outside his tent. His cheeks were sunken and his slanting eyes narrow beneath thick brows.* — **The Flame Bringers**

This book is set many years before Terarn Gashtek's rise to power, and so the following events have not yet happened. The following description is told in the perfect sense in order to more easily communicate the Flamebringer's story to the reader.

Among the Nomad Lords of southern Okara, the most powerful was Terarn Gashtek. Tired of King Usheri's impotent promises of a world ruled by Okarans, Terarn Gashtek sought to destroy Usheri, snatching the sovereignty of Okara for himself. Certain merchant-venturers from Eshmir learned of Terarn Gashtek's arrogant assertions and took this information back to Elwher. The scrutineers looked to the stars and saw within them the signs of a great struggle looming. Mistakenly believing this to be of King Usheri's making, Eshmir foolishly sent weapons to Terarn Gashtek, hoping that in doing so they might strike up lucrative trade deals with Okara's new ruler.

Gashtek used the weapons to unify the bandit gangs roaming southern Okara, and, with a force of fifteen thousand behind him, launched his attack on Kosaio.

The city fell within a month, its large—but poorly trained—militia unable to withstand the siege conditions. Despite Gashtek's promises of safe passage if he surrendered, King Usheri was publicly beheaded in Kosaio's main square and the inhabitants of the city presented with an option: join Terarn Gashtek and conquer the east, or die. Unsurprisingly most chose the latter, and by the end of the first week of Kosaio's occupation, the city had been all but purged of dissenters.

It was during this purge that Gashtek made his most lucrative discovery. Lying drunk between two wenches was Drinij Bara, a sorcerer of some repute who had fallen into a squalid style of life consisting of drinking, womanizing and gambling. In his drunken ramblings, Drinij Bara foolishly revealed that his cat held his soul, and on Terarn Gashtek's orders both sorcerer and familiar were brought before him: Gashtek made the sorcerer an offer he couldn't refuse. Provide sorcerous aid or have the cat killed, thus ending Drinij Bara's own life.

And so it was that with Drinij Bara's aid—or rather the

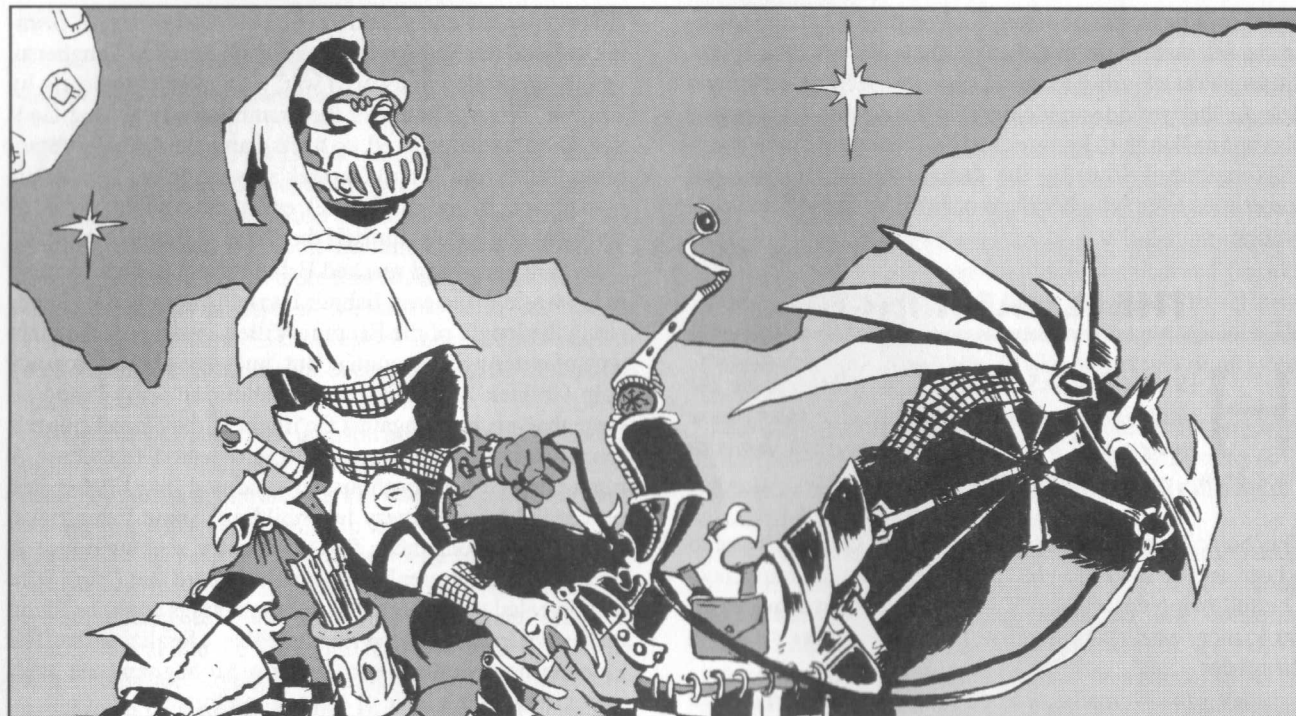
aid provided by Dag-Gadden The Destroyer—Terarn Gashtek crossed the Shenh mountains and attacked Tanghensi, which, embroiled in its civil war, was taken completely by surprise. Fire washed over the crumbling city as Dag-Gadden The Destroyer lived up to its name, and Kaleg Vogun himself met with Terarn Gashtek's sword on the steps of his own palace. In one cut Gashtek ended almost thirty years of civil war and earned himself the name of Flamebringer.

By now word had reached Eshmir that Gashtek planned to lay waste to the east. Eshmir hurriedly arranged its forces along the length of the Eshmir Valley, cutting off the main way of entering the country. But, unaware of the sorcerous help Gashtek had enlisted, the Eshmirian army lasted no more than six hours against the might of the Flamebringer's forces—swollen with recruits from defeated Tanghensi. A ragtag army of thirty thousand swarmed into Elwher and proceeded to sack every last building. Some Eshmirians, Moonglum among them, fled the country, seeking refuge in Anakhazan. However Moonglum had heard that Drinij Bara had revealed to Gashtek that richer pickings could be found on the western side of the Ragged Pillars. Realizing that the Flamebringer would stop at nothing, Moonglum rode west, intent on warning Elric of the coming threat.

Having taken Eshmir, Terarn Gashtek crossed the Shenh Mountains again and headed for Valederia. At its border he encountered a force of one hundred thousand—the amassed troops of the Valederian Directorates, Commanded by Countess Guyë. For two days the opposing forces waited on either side of a long, narrow valley, assessing the strategies open for attack and defense. Finally Gashtek decided that an attack was the only form of defense he would need and ordered Drinij Bara to be taken to nearby Phum, there to enlist the support of the Knights of Tumburu.

Survivors of the following battle swore that Terarn Gashtek's forces had not grown in size, but hundreds spoke of an invisible army that cut and sliced its way through the Directorate's ranks even before the Flamebringer had given his troops the order to advance. It is said that half the Directorate forces perished before Gashtek had crossed the valley separating them, although nothing will ever be certain. Some voices muted that Chardros himself had commanded this invisible attack, at the behest of the Warrior Priests of Phum; others said that it was the Knights themselves having become invisible through powerful sorceries. Whatever the truth, Terarn Gashtek defeated an army of more than twice the size of his own, and in doing so seized control of the civilized east.

After calculating his gains, and listening once more to Drinij Bara's tales of the wonders held in the Young Kingdoms, Terarn Gashtek decided to move west. Using the ancient tunnel leading through the Ragged Pillars, his forces emerged in the Weeping Waste. What happened to Gashtek is described in detail in Moorcock's story "The Flamebringers", however it is enough to say that with Elric's intervention the onslaught Terarn Gashtek promised was halted, the ragged conqueror dying on the point of Stormbringer, his soul forfeit for his terrible crimes.



WARRIOR PRIEST OF CHAOS

PHUM

THE SMALLEST OF THE KINGDOMS of Menastree, Phum is also its oldest established province. This was the first place colonized by the Menastri and became the centre of Melniboné's empire. It is the cradle of eastern civilization, but is no longer looked upon as the centre of the continent. Phum is feared, despised and ignored by the other nations: the reason? The Warrior Priests of Chaos, the infamous Enclave of Tumburu. More on this crazed secular society is provided later.

Phum is landlocked and must therefore rely on land-based trade. A lack of proper roads makes much of Phum's interior inaccessible, and even if other countries wished to trade with it, they would find it extremely difficult. Some merchants do venture into the Phum heartland, but they are few. Phum must exist on what it can produce for itself, and its resources are limited. Agriculture is subsistence based and only a handful of farms can produce enough to sell. Drought is the scourge of the country; dry seasons cripple the fragile Phum economy, and hundreds have died during such times. Even the considerable power of the Enclave of Tumburu cannot prevent Phum from wasting away when the rains do not come.

The capital is Lhasa. Built on the ruins of Melniboné's first city in the east, it is a ramshackle place with hastily erected structures resting uncomfortably against the walls of ruined buildings dating back to Melnibonéan rule. Streets end abruptly in towering blockades, the remains of

the ancient city walls; buildings shift uneasily on poor foundations, some occasionally collapsing for no apparent reason. Sewerage flows between the tenements and black-stoned houses, rats the size of small dogs scampering over the debris. Lhasa is not a pleasant place to live, and it resides in the long shadow of the huge Castle Tumburu, home to the Warrior Priests.

THE PEOPLE

Phumites encompass most body types and colorings. Tattoos are common, with many members of the high caste going to the pain and expense of having their entire bodies coated in gaudy designs, showing their wealth and standing. The low castes design their own, and the poor quality inks lead to infections that can permanently disfigure or poison the blood. Clothing varies. Those who can afford it buy fashions from Valederia, affecting the style and mode of dress, if not the philosophy behind it. The poorer castes wear home-woven garments of coarse wool and tanned animal hide—beggars often wear nothing at all, and fights can easily break out over discarded scraps of clothing.

Phumites are accustomed to hardship. Living in a poor country, they are used to shortages of food, disease and the crippling effects of drought. The lives of Phumites are nasty, brutish and usually short. This blighted society has further compounded its problems with its caste system. The social structure recognizes three castes: the high caste, which consists of land owners and those that manage to make money by exploiting the less fortunate; the middle caste, consisting of artisans and merchants, people capable of eking some kind of living from Phum's depleted resources; and the low

caste, peasants and beggars who either scavenge or starve. The size of each caste is inversely proportional to its social position. The high caste numbers less than a hundred families; the middle caste perhaps two or three hundred; the low caste runs into tens of thousands. Ninety percent of Phum's wealth is held by one percent of the country and no where is the social divide more apparent than in Lhasa.

Few Phumites get to travel. Those that do rarely return to their homeland, preferring to stay in whatever countries they drift to. The other nations of the east see Phumites as taciturn and untrustworthy—worse, perhaps, than the Okarans. In their defense, Phumites rarely make trouble and they are all too conscious of this reputation. This relates to the presence of the Enclave of Tumburu in Phum, with almost all eastern nations believing every Phumite to be a Chaos-worshipper. This couldn't be further from the truth: most Phumites have never heard of Chaos, and it is usually the high caste that indulges in actively allying itself with the Lords of Entropy, hoping to find favor with the Enclave of Tumburu. Common Phumites ignore the influence of Chaos, preferring to actively survive from one day to the next without concentrating on bringing further uncertainty into their lives.

THE WARRIOR PRIESTS OF CHAOS

Feared and hated, little is known of this strange sect of warrior-monks who call themselves the Enclave, or Knights, of Tumburu. It is thought that the Enclave has its origins in a small group of Melnibonéan knights headed by Tumburu Kal'saber, a Dragon Prince and favored disciple of Slortar. Kal'saber built the huge, labyrinthine castle that squats in the hills overlooking Lhasa, establishing in his followers a martial tradition mixed with mysticism and study of the ways of Chaos. When Melniboné left Menastree, the enclave remained, continuing its secular way of life and maintaining a last bastion of Chaos in a place where the Balance was destined to reassert itself.

The Knights of Tumburu rarely venture from their castle of basalt and bone. When they do, it is as individuals, either leaving the Enclave once their formal education is complete, never to return, or as inducted knights walking abroad on some mission of Chaos. It is believed that the Enclave maintains an army of demons which will be released one day to fight on the side of Chaos when it clashes with Law; but such conjecture has never been proven. No one who is not a devout disciple of Chaos has ever set foot inside the Enclave and returned, and the sorcerers who leave the Enclave never discuss its secrets, for fear, perhaps, of what might befall them if they do.

The Knights of Tumburu pledge their souls to a Lord of Chaos, and in order to prove their devotion are sent out from the Enclave to perform some quest that accurately displays their allegiance. These quests can take many forms and are usually designed to not only test the skill and resolve of the knight, but to further the aims of the Enclave itself. Knights have been sent out to undermine the Valederian Directorates,

to infiltrate the echelons of power in Eshmir, to observe the civil war in Changshai, gain knowledge of the Globe of Future Nations in Anakhazan and so on. Quests can take days, months or years to complete. Some Knights never return, dying in the service of their Chaos Lord. Others are more successful, gently furthering the aims and influence of Chaos while slowly eroding the equilibrium of the Cosmic Balance.

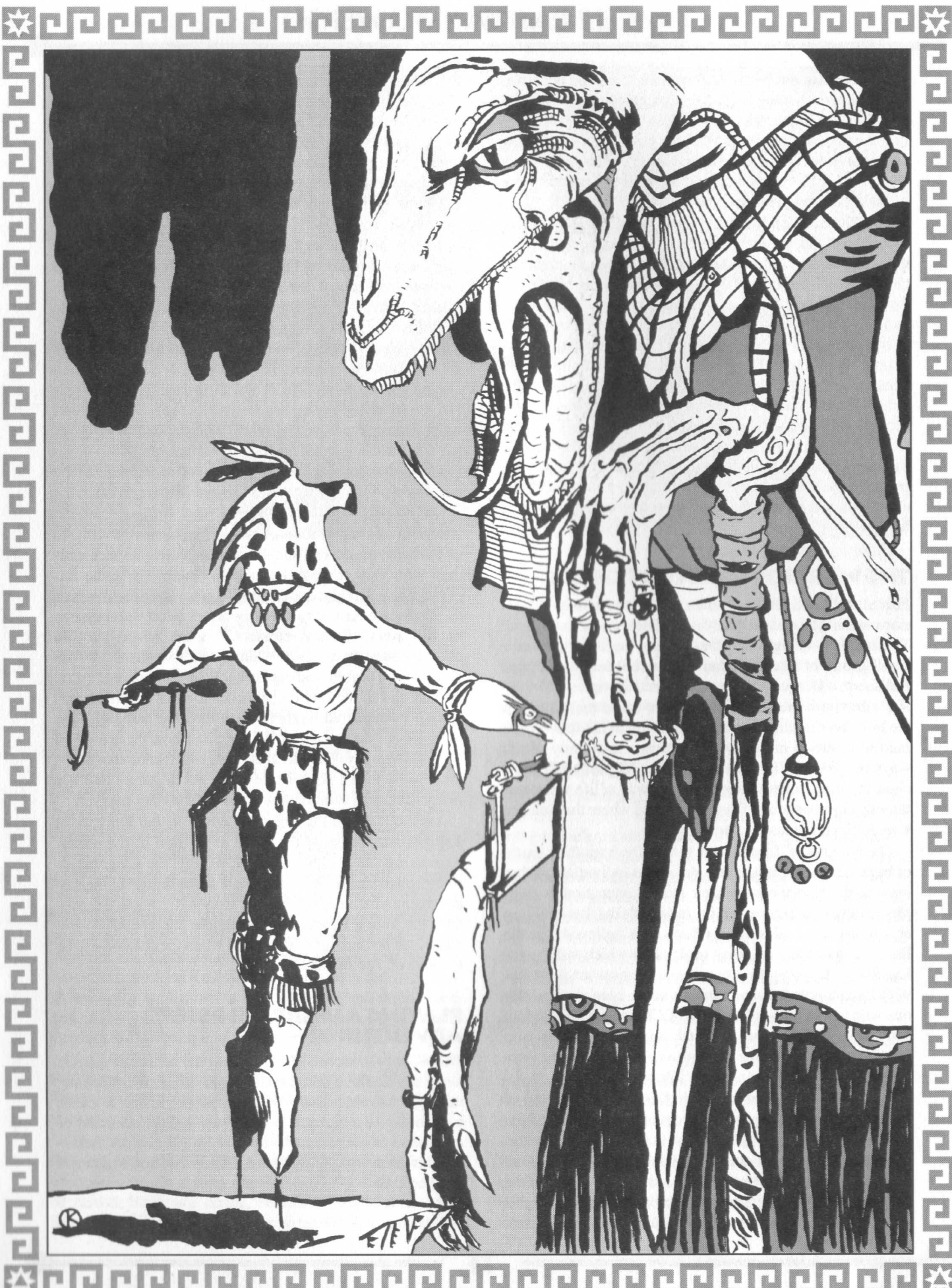
The Enclave renews its ranks in two ways. In the first, the high caste families of Phum present their children to the Enclave in an annual ceremony known as 'The Reckoning'. A child is eligible for The Reckoning when it reaches the age of two; the children are assessed by a council of high ranking Warrior Priests, and those who are deemed suitable (in gaming terms, those with a POW of 16 or greater) are accepted into the Enclave, renouncing their families forever. From then on they are schooled in the ways of Chaos and magic, after fifteen years being given the option of either leaving the Enclave to wander the world or to become initiate Knights, serving Chaos until the end of their days. The process of studying magic is described in more detail in the Magic section of this book.

The second way is through kidnapping. Selected Knights of Tumburu are sent out into the eastern nations to seek children who may prove to be valuable members of the Enclave. These Knights scour the villages, towns and cities of the Unknown East, scrutinizing young children and assessing their possibilities as recruits to the sect. When a suitable child is found, he or she is kidnapped, if necessary, by the Knight of Tumburu and taken back to the Enclave to be trained and indoctrinated. In order to control unruly offspring, beleaguered mothers often threaten them with the Knights of Tumburu who will come and take them away if they are naughty. The threat is more real than it seems, for the child-hunting Knights come in many guises and use many deceptions to acquire new souls for the Enclave.

Although this book does not cover it, the Knights of Tumburu are present at the battle at the End of the World. Answering the call initiated by Pan Tang, the Knights ride forth from their castle, laying waste to the armies of the east and eventually meeting with the army of Chaos as it devastates the Young Kingdoms. The whole purpose of the Enclave is to prepare for this day, and when the call comes, the Knights of Tumburu are ready.

PLAYING A WARRIOR PRIEST ADVENTURER

This is not recommended. The Knights of Tumburu rarely leave the Enclave and usually work alone, therefore not mixing with other adventurers. If a player wishes to create a sorcerous adventurer, it is suggested that the character be an itinerant sorcerer who has left the Enclave behind, refusing initiation into Knighthood. Magic is detailed later in this book. ☉



WORSHIP IN THE UNKNOWN KINGDOMS

EASTERN CULTS

SHAMANIC MAGIC OF THE NOMADS, THE PLANT LORDS OF CHANGSHAI, STAR-GODS OF ESHMIR

THIS SECTION EXAMINES the eastern religions and their significance. The Unknown East pays no allegiance to either the Lords of Law or Chaos, or even the elementals. The Valerian Directorates pay allegiance to the Cosmic Balance, which has no gods, and the Valni have their own, complex religious structure based around the Beast Lords. Some nations have no religious leanings at all, paying homage to whatever gods might have the best influence, and Eshmir has developed its own religion based upon the stars. This section describes the major religions in the Unknown East and the influence they exercise over the Eastlanders' lives.

SHENKH AND THE RELIGION OF THE VALNI

IN THE BEGINNING was the world, blind, deaf and dumb, and from it was born Shenhk: the Harbinger, first and greatest of the Spirits, born to speak the wishes of the great mother Earth. And Shenhk has many tongues. When the world is angry, Shenhk causes earthquakes, floods, droughts and hurricanes; he strikes the Valni with disease and famine. When the world is pleased, Shenhk brings bountiful harvests, strong children, good health and fine hunting. The aim of the Valni is to please Shenhk and thus please the world, for although the Earth cannot see or hear its children, it can feel their presence upon its soil and rocks; and so, if Shenhk is happy, then so is the world. Men were created to please Shenhk and to feel his wrath when the world is displeased.

To aid in his task of seeing and hearing for the world, Shenhk created the spirits, each spirit in turn creating a beast in its own image—and thus were animals, insects and birds brought to the world. The purpose of the spirits is to commune directly with men on Shenhk's behalf, and so it is that every tribe of the Valni allies itself to a particular

beast and keeps that beast sacred. The spirit chosen by a tribe is known as the Totem, and great wooden effigies of a tribe's totem adorn their settlements.

In reality, each tribe believes that its own totem is more important than the totems of its neighbors. This is demonstrated in the natural world by the relationship between the predator and its prey. Those Valni tribes that place warfare at the head of their priorities follow the major predators: the big cats, the bear, the snake, the birds of prey and so forth. Those of a peaceful disposition follow the more meditative creatures: the bison, the camel, the antelope, gazelle and mastodon. A tribe's character is generally reflected by the spirit it follows, and travellers from the civilized nations concertedly avoid contact with tribes following the predatory animals, preferring instead to trade with the more peaceful Valni.

THE SHAMAN

Each tribe has a shaman. The shaman is the one chosen by Shenhk to speak with the tribe's spirit and only the shaman has this power. A shaman is always recognized at birth although the way in which this recognition takes place can take a number of forms.

When a child is born, the current shaman is always present. He or she examines the afterbirth of the mother and, if the runes of the tribe's spirit can be seen in the afterbirth, this is a signal that the newborn child has been chosen by Shenhk.

If no rune can be defined, then the child is taken into the wilderness by the shaman who presents the newborn to the spirit and asks if the child has been chosen. If the spirits indicate favorably, then the child is returned to its parents for the first three years of its life, after which it passes into the hands of the shaman and is tutored for the rest of its life in the Lore of the Spirit, Shenhk and the world. When the old shaman dies, the new shaman, regardless of his or her

age, takes on the role. Needless to say, a shaman only ever takes on one child, and a shaman may spend many years looking for a suitable disciple. Many parents spend a great deal of time trying to prove their own child's worth to a shaman which has no disciple—sometimes even to the point of giving the shaman gifts and impossible promises which they hope will ensure that their child is chosen by Shenkh to follow in the shamanic tradition.

Shamans are all-powerful. Kingmaker, midwife, prophet and medium all rolled into one. A shaman never declares this power, but schools his or her disciples in the best ways to make use of it. A shaman never abuses the trust of the tribe, but almost always takes advantage of it. A shaman never rules a tribe, but influences how it is ruled and who does the ruling. The shaman advises the Si or Sa, but the Si or Sa rarely makes a decision without consulting the shaman first and awaiting an answer before carrying out an action.



NOMAD MAGIC

Shamans are not sorcerers and they do not summon and bind demons and elementals in the same way as Young Kingdoms sorcerers. The shaman can commune with the Beast Lords however, and have a unique link with the Beast Lord (or spirit) worshipped by their tribe. After meditating for a period of rounds equal to the POW characteristic, the Shaman can attempt to ask his or her spirit for advice on a given problem; to do this requires a Luck roll of POW x3. If successful, the shaman's prayers have been heeded by the Beast Lord who sends a sign in the form of an omen. Omens can take many forms—storm clouds gathering overhead to warn of danger; clouds of flies swarming from the Earth to indicate treachery or birds joining together in song to show that an outcome is favorable being just three examples. Omens need careful interpretation and a shaman may not always do this correctly. To see if an omen has been correctly divined, the gamesmaster should make a secret D100 roll against the shaman's Divination skill, success indicating that the omen's significance has been understood. A critical success indicates that the shaman has

had a vital insight into what the omen predicts and gains more knowledge from the experience than he or she would from a simple interpretation. Failure in the roll means that the Shaman has incorrectly divined the meaning of the omen—or cannot decide what it foretells; a fumble indicates that the Shaman has disastrously interpreted the sign, and this may have dire consequences for those who rely on this knowledge.

Shamans with a POW of 16 or greater can attempt to invoke the direct help of a Beast Lord. To do so requires a period of meditation equal to the POW characteristic in minutes. At the end of this period, the Shaman sacrifices 1D6 Magic Points and makes a Luck roll of POW x3. If the Luck roll succeeds, then the Beast Lord hears the call of its faithful servant and sends aid appropriate to the situation (a tiger to slay an oncoming foe, a flock of eagles to lift the shaman to safety, etc). If the Luck roll is a failure, no aid is sent. A fumble means that the shaman has in some way failed miserably to placate the spirit and may not attempt to call upon again it for 1D20 weeks—even attempting to commune with it by way of omens. Predictably, shamans are reluctant to invoke the aid of their spirit in this way lest the Beast Lord take extreme offense and revoke its aid irrevocably.

THE PLANT LORDS OF CHANGSHAI

CHANGSHAI has no formal religion. Before the civil war, it was always considered that the King was a divine being, sent by the Universal Creator to represent it on the Earth: all other gods paled into insignificance against the mighty Drei of Changshai. Despite this, the Changtse have always paid homage to the mighty forest that dominates the country, believing that it is Ish'ish'a'maal, the Lady of the Trees, who is their true god, the king being merely her appointed agent. As well as Ish'ish'a'maal, the Changtse, particularly those living in the scattered forest settlements, believe that each plant has its own Lord and that if one is at peace with that Lord, then the plants it controls will benefit human kind. Thus it is that herbs useful in healing are looked upon with reverence, lest the Plant Lord who made them becomes angry, and that poisonous plants are the result of a Plant Lord's fury with humans.

No formal church exists to worship the Plant Lords—each individual pays homage in his or her own personal way. However none can surpass the mighty Lady of the Trees, and before a tree is ever cut down, long, complex prayers are offered to soothe Ish'ish'a'maal in order to gain her approval.

Once civil war broke out, the Changtse's faith in the Plant Lords withered, many believing that their gods had forsaken them and allowed war to take its toll unchecked. Few Changtse can claim to be religious, and only a handful of settlements still offer the same reverence to the Plant Lords that was offered before the war began.

ESHMIR AND THE ELITHIOR

WE HAVE AN entire philosophy based on the stars in Elwher," Moonglum replied. "We regard them as the master plan for everything that happens on Earth. As they revolve around the planet they see all things, past, present and future. They are our Gods." —"Kings in Darkness", Chapter 1, *The Stealer of Souls*

In 'pande, *elithior* means constellation. The worship of the constellations that revolve through the sky began shortly after Melniboné's retreat from the Unknown East. Starting amongst the people inhabiting the forests of northern Changshai, the belief travelled with them as they moved into the lands beyond the forests that would one day become Eshmir. As Eshmir coalesced, the belief in the omnipotence of the stars grew, becoming entrenched in Eshmirian culture and eventually developing into its current state—that of a science and philosophy.

Eshmirians believe that the gods reside in the nighttime sky, their eyes are the stars, twinkling down from the heavens to view all that happens on Earth, seeing everything that happens at all times and in all places. And, as with all gods, they have their chosen servants on the Earth, those that organize the worship of the masses and interpret their wishes. In Eshmir these servants are called the scrutineers.

People studied the stars, watched the constellations, noting their positions at particular times in the year. To these scrutineers it became evident that certain constellations were ascendant at times that coincided with important events in the Eshmirian calendar. With further study the scrutineers found that they could predict the nature or outcome of certain events by watching the placing of the constellations, and it was discovered that specific constellations seemed to dictate the course of specific events. By charting the constellations and monitoring their positions, the scrutineers found that they could not only trace the likely course of history but could also predict to some extent what might take place, depending on the positions of the constellations.

The scrutineers reason that the stars know everything about the world and influence it from their position high above the Earth—they could be nothing if not the eyes of the gods. Not for them the fickle and petulant Lords of Chaos or the sterile Lords of Law, but the all-seeing, all-knowing Gods of the Night. The scrutineers gave them names, and these names were attached to the patterns made by the stars. Rethwyr, the constellation of the Oak tree, god of Woodlands; Anasyf, the huntress, goddess of warriors and hunters; Angharand, the Chariot, god of travellers and merchant venturers. Hundreds of constellations—hundreds of gods, each watching and shaping the lives of the men, women and children of the world, influencing in subtle ways current events and, depending on their positions, predicting others. The scrutineers, who now comprise an elite



AN ELITHIOR OBSERVATORY

sect of philosopher-astrologer-priests, watch the stars through their simple telescopes and keep meticulous charts of the relationships between the gods and the Earth. The Scrutineers advise peasants, nobles and kings alike and the people of Eshmir place their faith in the scrutineers' interpretations, questioning little and knowing that their gods watch over them always, even when hidden from view by the sun.

Scrutineers are all learned men and women. It takes years of careful study to master the complex relationships between the stars and the Earth and even longer to learn how to interpret the signs the stars give. They are trained in the embryonic sciences of astronomy and navigation and the esoteric arts of astrology and divination. When the trainee scrutineer is deemed to have reached a basic level of understanding in each of these disciplines they are apprenticed to an older, more experienced scrutineer who schools them in the finer arts needed to be completely conversant with the ways of the gods. Finally, after perhaps twenty years of training and study, the scrutineer is allowed to set up an observatory of his or her own and to join the Prefecture of Methanwyr, the ruling council of scrutineers who pool their knowledge, and advise the rulers of Eshmir. Each scrutineer studies two or three specific constellations and brings to the Prefecture their verdict on how the gods might act in the face of Eshmirian events. The Prefecture then advises the government and sovereign of Eshmir on how to conduct the country's affairs, based on what the gods have indicated. This process is laborious and agreement is often never reached on how the gods might influence the Earth, but history has shown that the stars do have an influence—and if that influence is not quite as the scrutineers interpret, then that is only to be expected. For after all, they are gods, and gods can do as much or as little as they please.

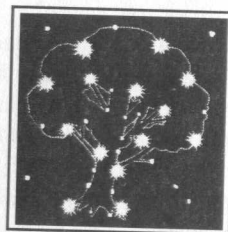
THE STAR-GODS OF ESHMIR

THERE ARE OVER a hundred gods in the Eshmirian pantheon, some representing specific objects or trades, others commanding influence over wide aspects of life. Six major gods are described below.



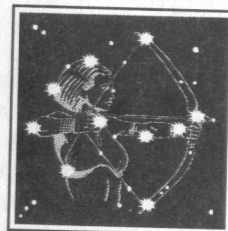
METHANWYR
GOD OF PAST, PRESENT
AND FUTURE

Methanwyr is the only god that does not have a full constellation attributed to it. Methanwyr has but a single star—the brightest in the nighttime sky—that remains in the same position all year and around which all the other constellations revolve. Methanwyr is believed to be the father of all the other gods and the only one that can see the past, present and future at all times. Methanwyr exerts no influence himself, but created the other gods to do this. As a consequence Methanwyr is studied by no one scrutineer, but instead is the patron after whom the Prefecture of Scrutineers is known.



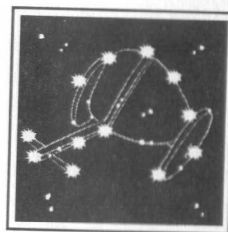
RETHWYR
GOD OF THE FORESTS

Rethwyr's constellation resembles a spreading oak tree and rules over the fate of forests, fields and animals. All nonhuman life falls within his domain and all farmers and foresters pay homage to Rethwyr in the hope of his continued blessing on the land.



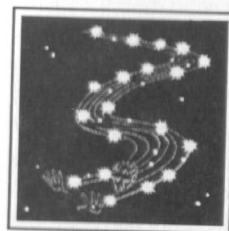
ANASYF
THE HUNTRESS

The constellation of Anasyf resembles a figure readying a bow—the hunter moving in for the kill. Anasyf is the patron goddess of warriors and hunters, and these people always feel at their most potent when Anasyf's constellation is high in the sky between late summer and early autumn. When Anasyf smiles upon the world, warriors and hunters alike believe that every blow or arrow they cast carries her blessing.



ANGHARAND
THE CHARIOTEER

The constellation of twelve stars, arranged into the shape of a two-wheeled chariot, represents Angharand, the patron of merchants and travellers. Those preparing for any kind of journey pray to Angharand for good fortune and speed in their travels. Merchant-venturers particularly view Angharand as their god and the one who blesses their caravans as they ply their trade through the Unknown East.



IUCHYR
THE RIVER GOD

Iuchyr's constellation snakes through the heavens like a winding river and it is he that watches over the rivers and the seas of the world. Sailors traditionally worship no other god and place their trust in Iuchyr. When his constellation is at its height, during the spring, tides are favorable and the seas calm. When it descends in the winter, the seas are more treacherous and those who worship Iuchyr spend many hours in prayer, asking him to make the seas favorable to their boats.



TEIRNY
GODDESS OF LIFE

Teirny's constellation resembles a woman with child, and she influences fertility in human kind in much the same way that Rethwyr looks over the land. Teirny is Rethwyr's consort although neither holds dominance over the other. It is a good sign if a child is born when Teirny is at her highest point, and the early part of the spring is the time when most children are born in Eshmir.

THE VALEDERIAN DIRECTORATES AND THE COSMIC BALANCE

THE NATIONS of the Valederian Directorates worship no gods, erect no temples, and pay homage neither to the Lords of Law, Chaos, Elements, Plants or Beasts. For them, the Cosmic Balance is a way of life—not a tentative faith in supernatural entities that may or may not exist. Those who follow the Balance try to achieve equilibrium in everything they say, think and do. Harmony is the essence, veering neither to Chaos nor to Law, but holding the two in symmetry and striving towards a personal well being and peace with the world around. The way of the Balance teaches that there is no right or wrong way; no good or evil, and thus no ultimate retribution or divine reward upon death. The laws which govern society are based on natural coercion: one does not try to harm society because in doing so one ultimately harms oneself. All actions are permitted as long as they do not come into conflict with society or harm other individuals in the process.

Perhaps such liberal sensibilities are doomed to failure. Law and Chaos are very real forces that seek to swing the Cosmic Balance to their own side, and no person is completely immune to these influences. However, the Valederian Directorates continue to believe, somewhat self-righteously, that they have got things right, and they secretly laugh at religions such as the Elithior and the shamanistic Valni, while outwardly stating that people should be free to believe what they want. ☼

PLAYING A SCRUTINEER ADVENTURER

PLAYERS WHO CREATE Eshmirian adventurers may opt to play a scrutineer if this occupation is rolled on the Occupation Table. Scrutineers are a combination of astronomer, astrologer and seer. By studying the stars and the relationships between the different gods of the Elithior, they hope to predict the future of the world. There is no magic involved in this; much of it is hard science, and very akin to the complex rules of astrology common in our own world.

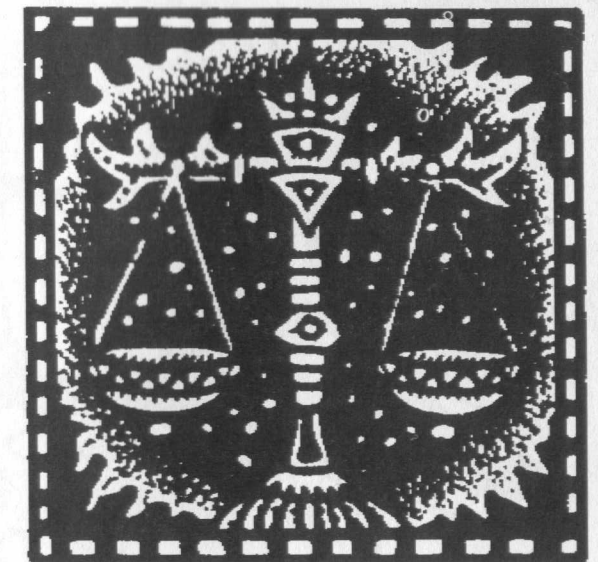
Commonly a scrutineer devotes his or her attentions to a single god, studying its movements every night and how it is positioned in relation to the other constellations. Scrutineer adventurers are encouraged to choose no more than two of the gods from the major pantheon and to concentrate their studies on these two constellations. For instance, a scrutineer adventurer who studies Iuchyr and Angharand probably specializes in advising sailors and merchants of the prospects of travel, and what the future holds for their ships and cargoes. The scrutineer's studies are recorded in great tomes not unlike the grimoire of a sorcerer, and like sorcerers, these tomes, or Atlases, are closely guarded. Filled with astrological charts, astronomical formulae, and religious prediction, scrutineers aim to chart the course of history by studying how the stars look down upon the world.

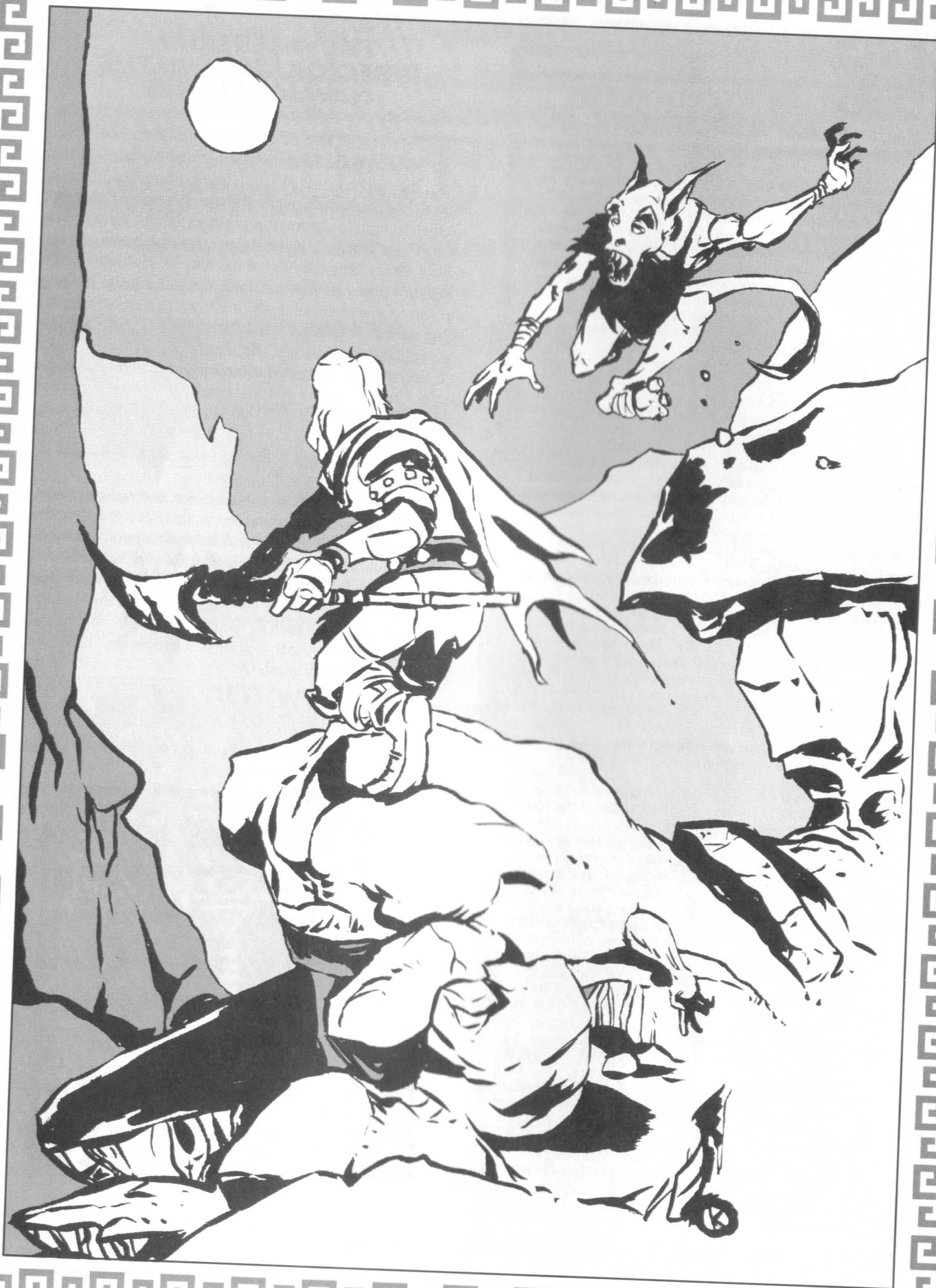
Scrutineer adventurers must take the Art skills of Astrology and Astronomy as part of their professional training. These new skills are explained below.

ART (ASTROLOGY): The study of the movements and relative positions of the celestial bodies interpreted as having an influence on human affairs. The scrutineer understands the behavior of the gods through the motions of the stars, placing their constant movements and positions into the context of a zodiac. The zodiac is like a chart, divided into regions of influence: war, peace, famine, prosperity etc. The presence of a particular constellation in a certain section of the zodiac, when compared to the position of other constellations, provides an indication of what the future holds.

Using this skill a scrutineer is able to gain some insight into what the near future has in store (1 day for every 5 points of Astrology skill). On a successful roll (and after the scrutineer adventurer has spent time consulting his or her charts and studied the celestial positions), the gamesmaster should provide a secret indication of what might lie ahead. The accuracy of the indication depends on the roll: a critical success might impart unerring accuracy in the scrutineer's predictions; a fumble might indicate a disastrous interpretation of what the gods intend. However all predictions are likely to be vague and in the most general terms: "You are likely to befall some strange mishap in the next three days—tread carefully" rather than "You'll fall down a concealed pit which is at the end of the passage leading into Kaleg Vogun's treasure room".

ART (ASTRONOMY): This is the scientific study of celestial bodies, involving measurements of distance, what a certain body might be comprised of, sidereal relationships, and so on. In the Elric era, astronomy is a very young science and is still open to misinterpretation—it is considered to be the lesser cousin of astrology. Despite this, a scrutineer can, with a successful astronomy roll, predict where a particular constellation or celestial body is likely to shift in the night sky. The scrutineer understands that comets travel on huge, fixed orbits, and that the Earth circles the Sun—that he works this knowledge into the more mystical art of astrology is understandable, for this is, after all, a culture where magic is still in influence.





CREATING EASTERN

ADVENTURERS

NATIONALITY, NEW OCCUPATIONS, OUTFITTING,
EXOTIC WEAPONS, PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

THIS SECTION PROVIDES all the information players need to create adventurers native to the Unknown East. There are some differences to the standard generation rules provided in *Elric!* and these are explained below.

To create an Eastern adventurer, steps one to five, as described in the *Elric!* rules are followed. Step 6, choosing a profession is handled slightly differently and is described in the section below, while steps 9, 10 and 11 follow as usual. The nationality of the adventurer is—or can be, at the game master's discretion—treated differently, as is choosing the profession for the adventurer. The adventurer sheet is also slightly different, in that some skills have altered base percentages to reflect the differing aptitudes and experiences of Eastlanders.

ADVENTURER NATIONALITY

GAMESMASTERS MAY ALLOW the players to choose the nationality for their adventurers, although a table is also provided to allow for the random selection of a home country. This table also directs the players to the table to be used for randomly selecting a profession—but game masters may allow this to be freely chosen by the players: certain countries have different professions to those found in the *Elric!* rules and these are described in Occupation Tables 1, 2 and 3 below.

NATIONALITY TABLE

Choose a nationality from those below, or roll D100 for a random result.

| 1D100 | Nationality | Occupation Table |
|-------|---------------|------------------|
| 01-13 | Anakhazhan | 2 |
| 14-15 | Bas'lk | 3 |
| 16-28 | Changshai | 1 |
| 29-42 | Eshmir | 1 |
| 43-54 | Maidahk | 2 |
| 55-58 | Nishvalni-Oss | 3 |
| 59-70 | Okara | 1 |
| 71-72 | Phum | 2 |
| 73-84 | S'aleem | 1 |
| 85-00 | Valederia | 1 |



ADVENTURER OCCUPATIONS

GENERALLY, the occupations found in the Young Kingdoms are found in the Unknown East. But there are some differences. Anakhazhan, Maidahk and Phum are landlocked, and have not developed any kind of navy or sea trade—ocean-going sailors are not found in any of these nations. Furthermore, the countries of Nishvalni-Oss and Bas'lk are both tribal nations and have developed unique occupations to suit their lifestyle.

EASTERN OCCUPATION TABLES

TO FIND THE ADVENTURER'S occupation, roll D100 on the appropriate table for the country of origin or choose one at the discretion of the gamesmaster. An asterisk indicates a new occupation or a variant of one described in the *Elric!* rules: refer to the following section for more information.

Occupation Table 1

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 01-03 | Amnesiac, drifter, madman |
| 04-05 | Blue Assassin* |
| 06-10 | Beggar, Vagabond |
| 11-20 | Craftsperson, Shopkeeper |
| 21-28 | Hunter, Forester |
| 29-33 | Mercenary, Warrior |
| 34-40 | Merchant Venturer* |
| 41-42 | Merchant |
| 43-47 | Minor Noble |
| 48-56 | Peasant |
| 57-61 | Physician, Apothecary |
| 62-66 | Pioneer* |
| 67-71 | Sailor |
| 72-75 | Scribe, Scrutineer* (Eshmir only) |
| 76-79 | Slave (free) |
| 80-84 | Small Trader |
| 85-90 | Soldier, Bodyguard etc |
| 91-92 | Tax Collector, Government Official* |
| 93-95 | Thief |
| 96-00 | Troubadour, Entertainer |

Occupation Table 2

Rolls between 01 and 66 are the same as for table 1

| | |
|-------|-------------------------------------|
| 66-70 | Bandit* |
| 71-74 | Scribe |
| 75-79 | Slave (free) |
| 80-86 | Soldier etc |
| 87-90 | Tax Collector, Government Official* |
| 91-95 | Thief |
| 96-00 | Entertainer, Troubadour |

Occupation Table 3

| | |
|-------|--------------------------|
| 01-05 | Valni Crafter* |
| 06-10 | Valni Fisher* |
| 11-14 | Valni Headman/Headwoman* |
| 15-45 | Valni Herder* |
| 46-75 | Valni Hunter* |
| 76-79 | Valni Shaman* |
| 80-00 | Valni Warrior* |

NEW OCCUPATIONS

BLUE ASSASSIN — You were trained by the infamous Blue Assassins, skilled in all the esoteric arts of death to kill evildoers. Yet something eventually turned you against the ways of the Blue Assassins: a sudden loathing for your profession; an assassination that went terribly wrong; an enemy finally engaged an assassin to fulfil a contract on you. Whatever the reason you have turned your back on the life of contract killer and seek a living through cleaner, though perhaps, no-less dangerous means. **Skills:** Climb, Disguise, Hide, Move Quietly, Potions, Track, Wrestle and two classes of weapon

BANDIT — Gangs of bandits plague the deserted trade-routes of the east, picking-off lone travellers and attacking in swarms the caravans of the wealthy merchant-venturers. For all your life the bandit group has been your family—ties deeper than blood-bound you to your brothers. Somehow though, you have always sought something else; tales of riches and splendors from those you captured and robbed have fired your imagination and now you want to see these things for yourself. Leaving the company of highway thieves behind you have wandered abroad in search of the life that awaits you on the other side of the bandit's sword. **Skills:** Dodge, Evaluate, Hide, Repair, Ride, Track, Trap and two weapon skills.

MERCHANT VENTURER — You made your living through the caravans that cross the great wilds of the east, transporting goods from one far-flung country to another. Sometimes you accompanied the caravans yourself, facing the dangers of the deserts, the constant fear of bandit attacks, and the strange creatures that roam the wilderness. At other times you spent your days in the cities of Menastree, cutting deals for new and profitable goods, pricing each according to the risk of transporting it to a place where it can be sold profitably. But there was something missing in your life: maybe the exhilaration of being on the open road; maybe a deep-felt longing to join the freewheeling adventurers who sometimes accompanied your caravans. Eventually you left behind your business and joined the ranks of the adventure seekers, placing the bright, heady life of the adventurer above the margin of profit. **Skills:** Bargain, Evaluate, Fast Talk, Insight, Own Language, Other Language, Ride, one skill as a personal speciality and one weapon skill.

ADVENTURER OCCUPATIONS

PIONEER — Your life has been spent as a pioneer, one of the many who leave the crowded, smelly cities and head into the unclaimed, uncharted wilds to make a new life for yourself far away from what the self-satisfied city dwellers term 'civilization'. You are used to long days of toil beneath a blistering sun and the fear of drought; the hard rains that drive down from the mountains which threaten to crush your crops into the parched soil. You have become hardened like the very rocks from which you and your fellows have carved a home for yourselves. It is some strange circumstance then that has caused you to take on the mantle of the adventurer. Personal tragedy—a farmstead razed by marauding bandits. Financial ruin of your crops at the hand of the uncontrollable elements or some other, more deeply personal reason. **Skills:** Craft, Natural World, Navigate, Repair, Ride, Search, Trap, one skill as a personal speciality and one weapon skill.

SCRUTINEER — (Eshmirian adventurers only) A watcher of the stars, you are familiar with the face of the gods and the intricate movements of the constellations as they wheel across the heavens. You know that Rethwyr and Teirny watch over every aspect of life, and have charted their movements for years. Perhaps you have decided to take the word of the Elithior to other countries; maybe the indecisive folk of the Valerian Directorates can be yet persuaded to place their faith in the stars. Or perhaps the gods themselves have commanded you to go forth into the world and learn more of the people around you. Armed with your atlas and your astrolabe, you can predict for yourself an interesting future. **Skills:** Art (Astrology), Art (Astronomy), Evaluate, Insight, Navigate, Oratory, Repair/Devise, one skill as a personal speciality and one class of weapon.

TAX COLLECTOR, GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, DIPLOMAT — The business of government is tough; tougher than many realize, what with its intrigues, secrets, feuds and constant need to win the hearts and minds of the populace. You've spent a great deal of time in this arena, either as a tax collector, ensuring that each and every man pays his dues, or as a high-level bureaucrat, serving those that claim to serve the masses. You've been a party to it all: petulant kings, the aspirations of despots, the ruthless, unseen crimes that permeate every level of government. For some reason you've bored of the tensions of high office and seek new challenges—something

more straightforward, something that cannot be predicted. Something away from the marbled halls and society dinners. The life of the itinerant adventurer. What made you change? Corruption? A political scandal you couldn't survive in the public arena? Whatever, life has to be simpler out there... **Skills:** Bargain, Evaluate, Fast Talk, Insight, Listen, Other Language, Unknown Kingdoms, one skill as a speciality and one weapon.

some other means of survival. What caused this change? An accident that has shamed you into leaving your tribe? A desire to discover more about the city-dwellers who come to trade with the Valni? You heard once, of great ships, powered by the winds that ply the oceans: maybe, in your dreams, you seek to let your soul sail on the vast oceans and take the ways of the Spirit to other, far-flung lands... **Skills:** Craft (fishing), Jump, Listen, Natural World, Repair, Sailing, Swim, one skill as a personal speciality and one weapon skill.

HEADMAN/HEADWOMAN — You are the Si or Sa of your tribe. The one chosen by the Shaman and hence forth the Spirit to lead your people. It is to you that they look for guidance in their lives; upon you is entrusted the future of the tribe. And so why have you left this burden behind? Deposed perhaps, by a usurper who has courted the favor of the Shaman? Disgraced by the failure of yet another hunt or harvest -shamed by the gods? Or maybe you simply wish to relinquish the responsibilities incumbent on the head of a Valni tribe and wish to experience the ways of the city dwellers—ways you have heard about and are intrigued by. Without your tribe you fell curiously free to pursue your own destiny without having to preserve the destiny of others. **Skills:** Dodge, Insight, Listen, Natural World, Oratory, Ride, one skill as personal speciality and two weapon skills.

HUNTER — Your home is being alone on the plains, you and your bow, your wits pitted against the bestial cunning of the beasts that you hunt. Skilled in the way of the wild, you have a certain empathy with animals: few creatures can defeat your instincts or your skill with a bow or spear. Maybe you have left the tribe to go in search of even bigger game. Is it possibly because you have simply grown tired of the plains of your youth and seek new horizons? Whatever the reasons, a hunter's skills are always in demand, even to the city dwellers who wouldn't know a cougar track even if the cougar was standing with them nose to nose... **Skills:** Listen, Move Quietly, Ride, Scent/Taste, Search, Throw, Track, Trap and two weapon skills. In addition a hunter has a hunting dog (Nyan-Nyang) as a companion (see 'Flora and Fauna' earlier in the book).

PRIMITIVE OCCUPATIONS

Available only to Valni adventurers.

CRAFTER — From wood and bone you carve the materials needed for your tribe. With flints and stones you can turn the detritus of the Land into items useful and ornamental, functional and precious. It was you who carved the great totem for your tribe; it was you who fashioned the Headman's costume for the great Festival of the Summer Hunting. Your skill lives and breathes the way of the Spirit and you embody its ways in everything you craft. Yet you have seen the strange and wonderful things the travellers from the cities bring to the tribes of the Valni and you have marvelled. Now has the come the time when you feel you must discover for yourself what other secrets the peoples of the cities possess; perhaps you can learn from their ways and brings these back to your tribe, extending the influence of the Spirit and making the ways of the city dwellers the ways of the Valni. **Skills:** Craft (appropriate to a primitive society), Evaluate, Natural World, Scent/Taste, two skills as personal specialities and two weapon skills.

FISHER — In your tiny coracle you fish the great lakes that border the lands of the city dwellers. With nets and spears you hunt the fish that the Spirit has provided so that its children might eat. You understand the ways of the water, the habits of the fish, and the nature of the weather. But for some reason you have been forced to seek a life away from the rivers and lakes, forced to walk abroad in a land of strangers in search of

(CONTINUED)



VALNI SHAMAN IN VISION-TRANCE

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 45)

SHAMAN — The Spirit speaks through you. As Shaman you are the link between mankind, the spirit of your tribe and the greatness of Shenkh. Adept at defining the many omens that show the will of the spirits and the will of Shenkh you control a unique power: it is the Shaman who chooses who will lead the tribe; the Shaman who decides what the people will believe. It is a cunning conceit: conjurer and healer, sage and charlatan and yet supported by an unyielding faith. What then has caused you to leave this behind? Has your tribe decided that the Spirit has deserted you and cast you into exile? Perhaps that last prediction you made about the Sa's fourth child proved to be hideously wrong. Maybe the Spirit itself has declared that you leave the tribe and wander into the world of the adventurer. **Skills:** Art, Craft, Natural World, Oratory, Physik, Potions, Ride, one skill as a speciality and one weapon skill.

WARRIOR — The success of a tribe depends on its warriors. The defenders of the lands, livestock and integrity. You fight for your Si or Sa, your Shaman and your totem. Your courage is unbending and your skill with weapons a thing to be admired. Your leaving the tribe to follow the adventurer's path is for you a strange thing. It is possible that your tribe is dead, slain in a bloody feud of which you are the only survivor. Or perhaps you are on a quest decreed by your Shaman, in search of some magical fetish that will bring strength and prosperity to your people. Whatever your reasons, you are a match for any of the city dwellers with their fancy swords and lances: all you need is your spear and bow to show them true mastery of arms. **Skills:** Brawl, Dodge, Jump, Physik, Throw, one skill as a speciality and three weapon skills.

DESIGNING EASTERN ADVENTURERS

THE DESCRIPTIONS of the different countries provide information that will help players design interesting and detailed Eastern adventurers. The following section provide some information on starting money, equipment and providing adventurers with a suitable name.

SORCERERS

SORCERERS ARE EXTREMELY rare in Menastree with most being Knights of Tumbro, remaining in seclusion at the Enclave. No player can automatically roll a sorcerer as a profession; if a player wishes to play a sorcerer, it is for the gamesmaster to decide. Sorcerers are usually lonely and may attach themselves to an adventuring group for companionship. They are also powerful, and most eastlanders are suspicious of magic. Gamesmasters may either allow the character without further ado, as long as the POW score is 16 or greater, or call for the player to make a Luck roll against POW x1 (again, if the adventurer's POW

NAMING THE ADVENTURER

MOOCKOCK INDICATES that the names of Eastlanders are much different to those found in the Young Kingdoms. It seems that many Eastlanders have two names (exceptions are Moonglum and Rackhir); it is likely that the surname is the untranslatable 'pande equivalent of a descriptive surname. For example, Terarn Gashtek might be translated into the Young Kingdoms common tongue as Terarn of the Desert. Moorcock is never specific, and gamesmasters are encouraged to decide if the surname is descriptive or derived in some other way. Eastern names are less prosaic than their Young Kingdoms counterparts, reflecting the eloquence of 'pande and echoing a distant Melnibonéan heritage. The following list, divided into male, female and surnames provides examples which can be inspirational or used directly to name a freshly rolled adventurer.

MALE

| | | |
|--------|---------|---------|
| ADRIJ | HALATH | QORATH |
| BAH'AL | KALEG | REDITH |
| BRYN | KEMAL | REDRIR |
| CARAS | LOHEB | SOREL |
| DRINIJ | LOKRI | TASIS |
| E'MAL | MORGELT | TEERGUN |
| FENIR | PERITH | |

FEMALE:

| | | |
|--------|---------|---------|
| ANATH | ILITH | MEDITHA |
| ANJOU | ILSA | MYRSAL |
| ANSAL | JESSEL | OONE |
| ASHLYN | JURA | SORANA |
| CERI | KELLIS | THALL'A |
| CHALLA | MAGDA | |
| GEERHA | MARGAYN | |

SURNAMES

| | |
|---------|-----------|
| ASHTILK | MELHADRYR |
| BAKRA | PRAEDAS |
| BARA | TALEK |
| BEDRIN | TALHEB |
| FREYR | THANWYR |
| GASHTEK | VOGUN |
| GUYË | YEARL |
| MEGRIIS | |

is 16 or higher). If successful, then the adventurer has been trained by the Enclave of Tumbro and has since chosen to wander Menastree instead of becoming a Warrior Priest. Rackhir and Sorana are examples of Warrior Priests who have made similar decisions.

There should never be more than one sorcerer in a group of adventurers. Sorcerers are not friendly towards each other and do not mingle outside of the Enclave. Moorcock is never specific about why this is, and players should spend some time with the gamesmaster deciding on the sorcerer-adventurer's motivations, aims and background.

SKILLS FOR SORCERERS

Sorcerers have the following skills:

Art (choose), Dodge, Insight, Million Spheres, Other Language (High Speech), Unknown Kingdoms, Young Kingdoms, one class of weapon and one skill as a personal speciality. To represent magical training, one sphere and one rune should be chosen or rolled for randomly. Sorcerers with high POW scores may have more than one of each. See the section on magic for more information.

BEGINNING MONEY

All Eastern adventurers begin with some money. To determine how much money in Rahnd a new adventurer has, use the following method:

- Multiply the adventurer's age in years by 10.
- Make a Luck roll: for a Critical Success, double the figure found above; for a normal success, increase the amount by 50%; for a failure, do not modify the amount; for a fumble, reduce the amount by 50%.
- If the adventurer is a merchant, then property equal to R2500 is also owned (this may represent trading stock).
- If the adventurer is a noble, then property equal to R5000 is also owned (this represents estates or a private residence).
- If the adventurer is Valni, further reduce the starting amount by dividing by 10.

Example: Lawrence creates Thackliss of Okara, a merchant-venturer by profession who is 23 years old. His starting money equals R230 (age x10); this is modified by his Luck roll, which he fumbles, reducing his money to R115 (-50%). However Thackliss also has a reasonable town house in Kosaio worth R2500. What a shame this will soon go up in flames when Terarn Gashtek rides in during the first game session.

All new adventurers receive a camel, saddle and tack, and one weapon of their choice. All other equipment must be bought using starting money.

SAMPLE PRICES

THE RAHND is the standard unit of currency in the Unknown East, with all nations accepting the silver coin without exception. Prices are naturally very different to those found in the Young Kingdoms, as is the range of goods. The following section details average, common prices in Rahnd. Where something costs less than 1 Rahnd (R1), the amount is expressed as a decimal fraction (R0.5, for example). Denominations of the Rahnd are quarter Rahnd, half Rahnd and three-quarter Rahnd coins. Prices differ most markedly between goods commonly available in the Valedorian Directorates and elsewhere. Where a price is given in parentheses, this is the cost of goods outside the Directorates.

FOOD AND DRINK

- Bowl of porridge R0.25 (R0.5)
- Goblet of poor wine R0.5
- Goblet of fine wine R1
- Half-dozen slices of unleavened bread R0.5 (R0.75)
- Half-dozen onions R0.25
- Half a dozen hen's eggs R1 (R1.25)
- Jar of honey R1 (R1.5)
- Jar of ale R1.25
- Ostrich egg R3 (R2.5)
- Pint of milk R0.25
- Pint of ale R0.5
- Preserved fruit in crystallized sugar R10 (R15)
- Whole roast side of beef R3.25 (R4)
- Whole roast fowl or game R1 (R1.5)
- Whole steamed fish .. R1.25 (R.75)
- Whole roast suckling pig R2
- Whole boiled ham R2.5

CLOTHES

- Cotton trews R2
- Decent boots R15
- Excellent travelling cloak R20
- Fashionable hat or turban R1.5
- Fine evening robes in silk R30
- Heavy cotton robes (desert wear) R2.75
- Light cotton robes (town wear) . R2
- Linen shirt R1.75

- Outer clothes:
 - for a beggar R0.25
 - for a laborer R4.25
 - for a crafter/mercenary R9
 - for a merchant R31
 - for a minor noble R70
- Sandals R1.5
- Tabard or cotton jerkin R2.75

SERVICES

- Basic medical attention R1.25
- Haircut or shave R0.75
- Indifferent meal R0.5
- Good meal R1.25
- Gourmet dinner R10
- Shelter, per night:
 - inn floor R0.5
 - dormitory R1.25
 - private room R8
- Adept of love, per evening:
 - semi-skilled novice R1
 - enthusiastic expert R10 +
- Stable a camel, per evening ... R0.75
- Have a letter written R0.75
- Skill training, nominal per week .. R10
- Hire a carpenter/other craftsman, per day R7+
- Armor er, per day R7.5
- Reliable personal servant R5
- Bribe an Official R6 (R4)
- Legal representation, daily R10+
- Hire foot messenger for local journey R0.5

THINGS

- Camel saddle and tackle R50
- Horse saddle and tackle R100
- Book of lays or history R25
- Blank book (suitable as grimoire or scrutineer's Atlas) R10
- Leather backpack R6
- Canvas backpack R2.5
- Rope (30 yards, STR 40) R4.25
- Steel Chain (15 yards, STR 64) .. R50
- Iron padlock and key R2.75
- Steel crowbar R7
- Shovel R2.5
- Pickaxe R3.75

- Bundle of 20 arrows R3.25 (R3)
- Lockpicks R13.25 (R10.75)
- Canteen/gourd (2 liter) R2.5
- Canvas sheeting, waxed (30 square feet) R1.75
- Small desert tent (2 people) R18
- Larger tent (4 people) R29
- Huge, nomad tent (12 people +) . R60
- 3 candles (provide 1 hour of light each) R0.25
- 3 torches (provide 2.5 hours of light each) R0.75
- Oil lamp (provides 4 hours light per fill) R1.25
- Lamp oil (enough for 4 fills) R0.75
- 5 steel fish hooks R0.25
- Bronze skillet/saucepan R2.5
- 2-wheel cart R50
- 4-wheel cart R170
- Large rowing boat R45
- Small fishing craft R300
- 10 oar coastal ship R700
- 200 oar war galley R3000
- Wattle and daub hovel R10
- 3-room stone and tile house R470
- 3-yard stone wall around the house R390
- Home of a minor noble R3400
- Home of a successful merchant venturer R24000
- King's/Governor's residence all the nation's taxes for 4 years
- 10-yard wooden bridge R100
- 100-yard stockade R450
- Adult slave servant's POW xR100
- Adult slave (educated) servant's POW+INT xR100
- Herbs for healing/meditation (3 doses) R0.25-R20
- Herbs for sorcery (3 doses) R3-R80

LIVESTOCK

AVERAGE CONDITION

- Laying hen R3 (R3.25)
- Milk cow R230 (R290)
- Bison R300 (R320)
- Watchdog R7
- Fine hog R100
- Piglet R4.25
- Saddlehorse R1500

SAMPLE PRICES

COSTS OF STANDARD WEAPONS IN THE UNKNOWN EAST

Where weapons and armor appearing in the Young Kingdoms do not appear here, they are not used in the Unknown East.

Hand-to-Hand Weapons

- Iron Claw R7
- Cestus R40
- Shortsword R21
- Rapier R70
- Broadsword R40
- Scimitar R30.75
- Falchion R30
- Greatsword R120
- Dagger/Dirk R15
- Mace, heavy R30
- Mace, light R12
- Warhammer R33
- Great Hammer R40
- Quarterstaff R10
- Thieves' bludgeon —
- Axe, Battle R25
- Spear, long R16
- Spear, short R10
- Cavalry Lance R110

Impromptu Weapons

- Maul R2
- Butcher's Knife R2.25
- Concealable Knife R1.75
- Timber Axe R3.25
- Hatchet R2.75
- Hand Sickle R2.5
- Scythe R6
- Grain Flail R1
- Whip R2.25

Missile Weapons

- Throwing Axe R25
- Throwing Dagger R15
- Thrown 1H Spear R10
- Thrown 2H Spear R16
- Sling R2
- Bow, Desert Recurved R40
- Bow, Hunting R25
- Net R4

Armor and Shields

- Soft Leather R17
- Leather and Rings R75
- Half Plate R60
- Half Plate and Mail R120
- Half R12
- Small R18
- Full R20
- Large R25

- Fine quality horse R4000
- Poor qual. camel R300 (R325)
- Average qual. camel .. R500 (R550)
- Excellent qual. camel R800 (R850)

JEWELRY, ETC.

- Antique silver brooch, bracelet or necklace R300
- Gold ring with fine gemstone . R750
- Gold ear ring with gossamer chain linking to nose stud R150
- Gold amulet worthy of nobility R1000
- Diamond bracelet, ring or torque R1500+
- Single scale of Wyrn hide with 2D6 points of stored POW R5000 per point of POW

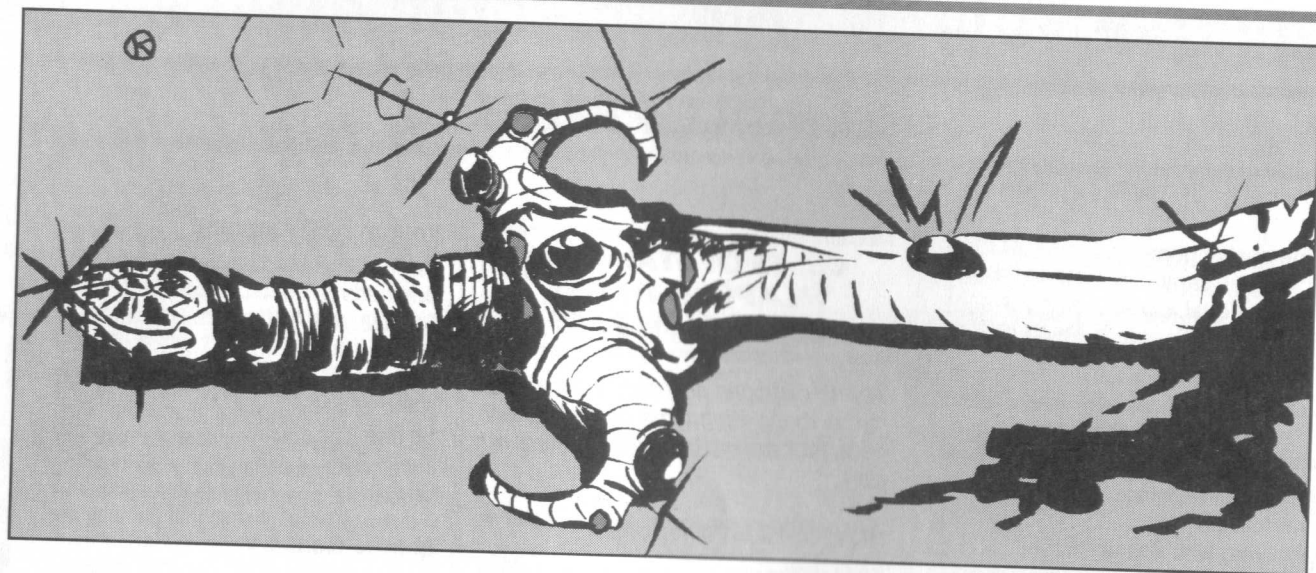


NEW WEAPON TABLES

| HAND-TO HAND WEAPONS | base chance, or starting skill points | damage done with attack | needs 1 hand/ 2 hands | hit points | length of weapon | designed to impales? | designed to parry? | minimum STR/DEX | weapon class | average cost in rhand |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Akras | 25 | 1D3+3 | 1H | 15 | short | yes | no | 4/4 | 4 | 17 |
| Longsword | 10 | 1D10+1 | 1H or 2H | 18 | medium | yes | yes | 13/9 | 2 | 60 |

| MISSILE WEAPONS | base chance, or starting skill points | damage done with attack | base range in yards | attacks per round | hit points | weapon class | designed to impales? | designed to parry? | minimum STR/DEX | average cost in rhand |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| Bolas | 05 | entangle +D3 | 10 | 1 | 5 | 8 | no | no | 8/13 | 10 |
| Valni Bow | 05 | 1D10+2+1/2 db | 150 | 1 | 15 | 25 | yes | no | 13/12 | 125 |

| ARMOR | attack damg deflected, helmet on | attack damg deflected, helmet off | nominal burden to wear | fits another SIZ? | chance affected, helmet on | chance affected, helmet off | rounds to put on | average cost in rhand |
|------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------|
| Tempered Leather | 2D4+1 | 2D4-2 | light | 1 | 10 | - | 2 | 65 |
| Cast Leather | 1D10 | 1D10-1 | moderate | no | 15 | 05 | 3 | 150 |



AKRAS

NEW WEAPONS

MOST OF THE WEAPONS listed in the main *Elric!* rules are available in the Unknown East; their price equivalents are given below and their statistics do not change. The Eastlanders have developed some weapons that are not found in the Young Kingdoms though, and sensibilities concerning armor are greatly different. This section concerns these differences.

HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS

AKRAS: The name given to any dagger shorter than twelve inches that has a distinctly curved, razor-sharp blade. The akras is commonly found in Okara, Valederia, S'aleem and Maidahk. Similar in style to the Ghurka kukri.

LONGSWORD: Longer than the Young Kingdoms broadsword, but with a thinner blade and a shorter reach than a greatsword, the longsword is favored by mercenaries and nobles, with finely crafted examples changing hands for hundreds of Rahnd. Found throughout the Unknown East.

RANGED WEAPONS

BOLAS: Usually three or four wooden balls attached together by hide cord. Used primarily by the Valni tribes, but adopted by many of the eastern nations, the bolas is designed to entangle the legs of an opponent and bring them down, causing incidental rather than immediate damage.

VALNI BOW: The Valni tribes have developed their own, remarkably sophisticated, bow which is superior in many respects to bows found in the civilized areas. Made

from antelope horn and strengthened with leather, the bow requires a great deal of strength and skill to use. Much sought after and favored by Maidahkian archers for its accuracy and artifice.

ARMOR

Metal armor is rarely worn in the Unknown East, the only occasion when its use is widespread being during major armed conflicts. The high temperatures make metal armor uncomfortable to wear and cumbersome to use. Instead, leather has been adapted and refined to provide maximum protection.

In the Valederian Directorate nations, armor is never worn in urban areas. Not only is it considered to be very bad manners, it is illegal, with a fine of R20 being levied immediately. In other nations armor may be tolerated in public but is generally discouraged, and only in war-torn Changshai is armor considered to be an everyday form of wear.

TYPES OF ARMOR

TEMPERED LEATHER: Usually bison or camel hide tempered in boiling wax and then lacquered. This is the most common type of armor found and is favored by mercenaries and merchants alike.

CAST LEATHER: Made from stitched plates of bison hide, and then moulded to the body of the wearer with hot waxes (fitting takes about three days and must be done by a craftsman), cast leather provides excellent protection and is almost as good as the metal armor of the Young Kingdoms. Often engraved with elaborate designs reflecting the personality of the wearer or armorer, a suit of cast leather and a fine longsword is what every well dressed mercenary is wearing these days. ☉

SELECTED PRONUNCIATIONS

THESE ARE house pronunciations, claiming no authority other than those redolent in the mind of the author. Some words have been invented specifically for this book; others occur in Michael Moorcock's stories which mention the Unknown East. Please feel free to reinterpret these pronunciations as you feel fit. Stressed syllables are in capitals; where an apostrophe follows an 's', it is generally pronounced 'sh'.

Anakhazan—An-uh-khu-ZAAN
 Anakheera—An-uh-kee-RUH
 Bas'lk—BASH-ilk
 Changshai—CHANG-shy
 Changtse—CHANG-zee
 Drei Myur—DRY Mee-URR
 Drinij Bara—Drin-EDGE BA-ruh
 Eshmir—ESH-meer
 Freyr—FRAY-er

Graghin—GRARG-in
 Guyë—GEE-yay
 Haghan'iin—Har-gun-EEN
 Her'is—HAIR-ish
 Im'lk—EEM-elk
 Ishmeer—Ish-MEER
 Kaleg Vogun—KAR-leeg VOW-gun
 Karakosë—KAR-uh-ko-zee
 Kosaio—Kuh-SIGH
 Lanth'al—Lan-FARL
 Lhasa—LASS-ay
 Maidahk—MAY-dark
 Menastrai—MEN-uh-STRIE
 Menastree—MEN-uh-STREE
 Nishvalni-Oss—Nish-VARL-nee Oh-es
 Okara—OH-ka-ruh
 'pande—PAN-dih
 Phum—FOOM

Rahnd—RAR-ned
 Rāmeer—RAY-meer
 Rhzau—Ruh-ZOW
 S'aleem—SHAR-leem
 Sadakan—SAD-uh-karn
 Shenkh—SHEN-kuh
 Sorana—SO-ra-nuh
 Tanghensi—TANG-hen-see
 Terarn Gashtek—Teh-RARN GASH-teck
 Toomoo-Kahg-Sanapet—TOO-moo KARG San-uh-pet
 Tumburu—TUM-brew
 Valed-Hal—VARL-ed Harl
 Valederia—VAL-ed-ear-ee-uh
 Valni—VARL-nee
 Yaan—YARN
 Zoshai—ZOO-shy



STRANGE SORCERIES AND UNKNOWN

MAGICS

SPHERES AND RUNES, THE SOULS OF SORCERERS,
MAGICAL EFFECTS, DRINIJ BARA'S SPELL BOOK

THE MAGIC OF THE Unknown East is very different to that practised in the Young Kingdoms. Although the two cultures share the same Melnibonéan heritage, the interpretation of sorcery has diverged considerably. Whereas the Young Kingdoms sorcerers have inherited what little magic they now possess from that left behind by Melniboné, the sorcerers of the Unknown East have a slightly different heritage: the Warrior Priests of Chaos that are unique to Phum.

In the Eastern kingdoms, magic has been outlawed in almost every nation save the small, strange country of Phum. Most of the eastern nations have adopted the ways of The Balance or have developed other societies that owe no allegiance to Law or Chaos. Phum is different. It has immersed itself in the teaching of the Dragon Lords. The Warrior Priests still maintain the old values of Melniboné and aim to preserve its mighty heritage and knowledge of sorcery. They have spent centuries scouring the lands for ancient fragments of Melnibonéan magic and brought them back to its temple Enclave. Here, the Warrior Priests study every word, ritual and incantation, dedicating themselves to the worship of Chaos and the preservation of sorcery.

The result is that only those who have studied with the Warrior Priests have any knowledge of magic. The magic they wield is of a purer, more radical form than that practised in the Young Kingdoms. Young Kingdoms sorcerers must content themselves with the handful of spells and incantations that have survived Imrryr's withdrawal from power. Not even the Melnibonéans have maintained a full understanding of sorcery and cannot manage to come to close to the powers their ancestors once held. In Phum, things are different. The slackened influence of Chaos has meant that the study of sorcery is a physically and mentally taxing process, but the rewards are great. Eastern sorcerers are not shackled to a few simple enchantments left over and then pieced back together; rather they have sought to understand the true essence of magic and have a far greater degree of control over their powers.

What follows is a description of the sorcerous knowledge learned by the wizards of the East. Some is similar to that of the Young Kingdoms, but much is different. Elric himself did not fully understand the way of magic in the Unknown East, but recognized a few threads that are common with his own ancestry.

THE SPHERES AND RUNES

THE FUNDAMENTAL NATURE of magic, as learned by the Warrior Priests revolves around two basic facts. Firstly, the recognition of the eight Spheres of Influence and secondly, the manipulation of these Spheres through knowledge of the eight Runes of Power. The Spheres and Runes are always arranged into an eight-pointed star; the diagram shows their relationship.

THE SPHERES OF INFLUENCE:

EARTH: The first of the elements. This Sphere includes all minerals and metals, be they base or precious, solid or liquid.

FLORA: The spawn of Earth. This Sphere includes all vegetation, from the lowliest fungi to the greatest of trees.

FAUNA: All beasts of subhuman intelligence, including insects, fish, birds and reptiles.

WATER: The second element, including all liquids composed mainly of water or which rely on it for their composition: lakes, rivers, streams, the sea, the rain, wine, milk and dew.

SPIRIT. The Sphere of the senses. Sight, sound, taste, smell and hearing. This Sphere also governs the soul, the base from which all senses are judged to have emerged from.

FIRE: The third element. This Sphere governs all aspects of fire; smoke, heat, and flames. It also covers the associated elements of light and darkness.

FLESH: The Sphere of Man. This Sphere covers all aspects of human intelligence and physical being. Anything that directly affects the flesh and intelligence of humans is the province of this Sphere.

AIR: The fourth element. Air governs the movement of the winds, the hurricanes and the tornadoes—elements which have the capability to soothe or to destroy.

to summon forth the inhabitants of other planes.

CREATION: The Creation rune governs the making of things from raw materials and, in some cases, the making of things where no raw materials are available.

DIRECTION: This rune masters the movement and redirection of things, either up, down, side to side or in any permutation possible within the limits of earthly physics.

ENHANCEMENT: The rune of Enhancement is the opposite of Diminution and promotes the growth or acceleration of things.

DISMISSAL: The opposite rune to Summoning, this power allows a sorcerer to dismiss from this world creatures that may have come from others.

TRANSMUTATION: The Transmutation rune allows for the changing of one thing into another—be it water into ice or steam, or flesh into stone or metal. This is the rune of ultimate Chaos and as such is the most difficult rune to master.

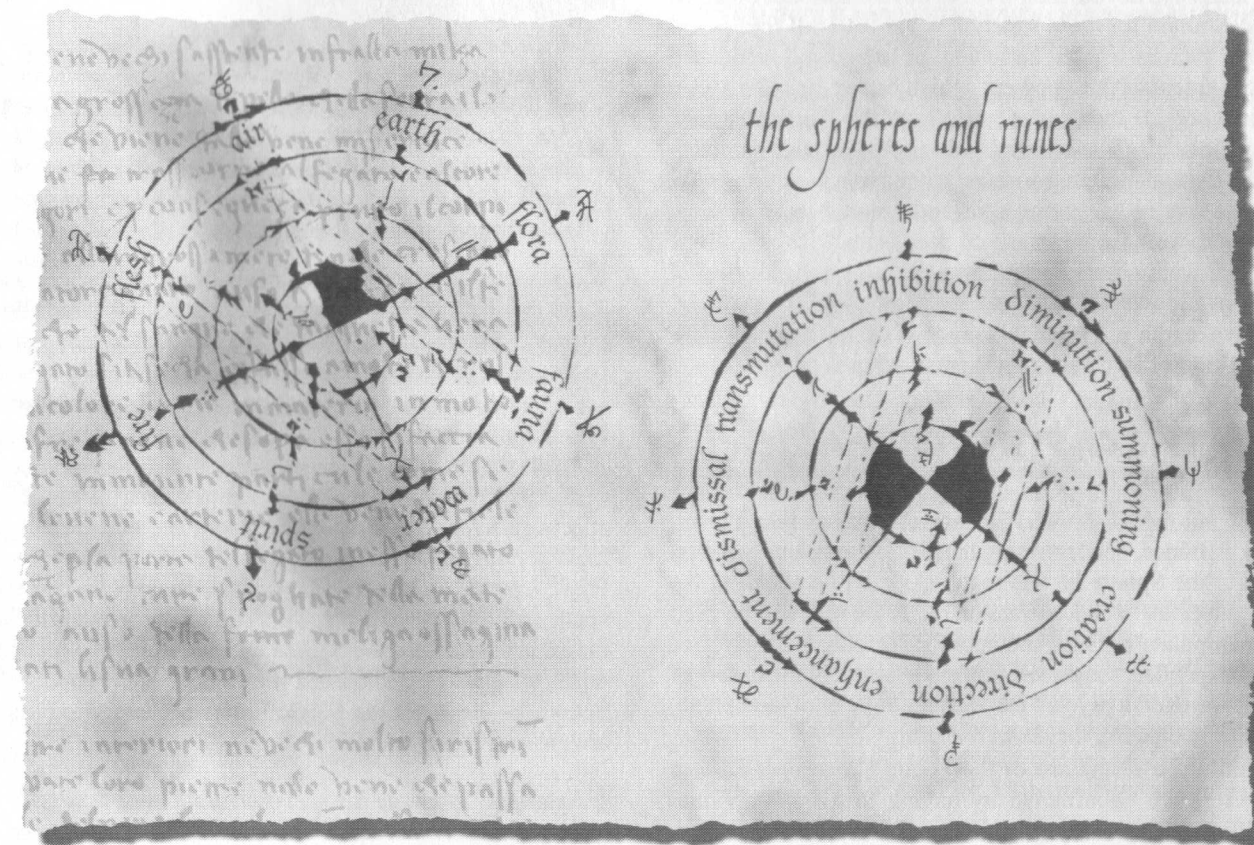
The relationship between the Spheres and the Runes are described in *The Scrolls of the Dead*, a series of ancient manuscripts originating from Melniboné's earliest times when magic was plentiful and the Dragon Lords the master of its art. The Warrior Priests study the scrolls incessantly, forever attempting to find new ways in which the Spheres and Runes might interact and to refine the interactions that are already known to exist.

THE RUNES OF POWER

INHIBITION: This enables the stopping and prevention of things.

DIMINUTION: The Diminution rune effects the reduction of things in size, shape, mass and density.

SUMMONING: The rune of Summoning allows the mind of a sorcerer to enter into the realms that are unseen and untouchable by ordinary people; it allows the sorcerer



THE TRAINING OF SORCERERS

SORCERERS ARE NOT BORN; they are trained from an early age to understand the Scrolls of the Dead and to manipulate the Spheres and Runes until they have reached a certain degree of mastery.

A sorcerer must always have a minimum POW of 16. Training begins from the age of six and continues until the sorcerer is twenty one years old. The Warrior Priests teach their acolytes the languages of 'pande and the High Speech of Melniboné—necessary to read and interpret the Scrolls of the Dead. At the age of 15 the trainee sorcerer selects one Sphere and one Rune in which to specialize and then devotes the next five years to mastering each, learning how to make the two interact and studying how that interaction might be improved and enhanced. Finally, at the age of twenty one, the acolyte make a choice: either to remain at the Enclave of Tumburu and to renounce the outside world in favor of becoming a Knight of Tumburu, a life devoted to the study of Chaos—in which case the sorcerer may never again leave the confines of the Enclave unless ordered to do so by the elders of the order. Or the acolyte can choose to leave and spend his life in wandering the world, bringing the influence of Chaos to those who are ignorant of it—in which case the sorcerer can never again return to the Enclave.

Most acolytes of the Warrior Priests choose the former option, preferring to enter Knighthood and serve Chaos. But a few decline and leave the Enclave to wander the Eastern lands and devote their lives to different modes of study. It is common for these itinerant wizards to fall foul of excesses such as women and wine, or to become maddened by the extent of their powers, which cannot be readily cultivated outside the insular confines of the Warrior Priests' sect. Since magic is scorned and rejected throughout much of the East, an itinerant sorcerer often has a hard time making his way in life, being constantly feared and ridiculed, unable to form ties of family or friendship. Many die alone and unloved; others succumb to madness and fall foul of their own powers. But a few, the careful and the cunning, survive, and it is they that manage to carve for themselves some kind of influence on the great scheme of things.

THE CASTING OF MAGIC

TO CAST MAGIC, a sorcerer lapses into a semi-trance, concentrating his or her conscious mind on the Sphere he wants to affect, while allowing his subconscious to concentrate on the Rune that will be used to manipulate it. Once the appropriate Magic Points have been expended, the arcane powers inherent in the nature of the Rune exert a psychic force on the subject of the Sphere, hopefully creating the desired effect.

Unlike the magicians of the Young Kingdoms, Eastern sorcerers are unburdened by having to learn individual spells and keep dusty grimoires full of esoteric writings.

Spells are really only pre-written examples of how a Sphere and a Rune interact; they are easy to learn are not costly in terms of the energy needed to make them work. The Eastern sorcerer's magic is wilder and more potent stuff. The sorcerer decides what effect he or she wants and then manipulates the appropriate Sphere with the appropriate Rune to achieve it. The overall cost in terms of psychic energy is far greater, but the effects are unique and more akin to the wishes of the caster.

Each sorcerer chooses one Sphere and one Rune in which he or she has specialized. The working of magic involving these two elements is relatively simple and the cost in Magic Points is low. If a sorcerer wishes to work magic using either a Sphere or a Rune that he or she has not specialized in studying, the effort is much greater and the cost in Magic Points far dearer—although again, the effect is far more likely to be what the sorcerer desires.

How much a spell costs depends on how far away on the Wheel of Spheres and the Wheel of Runes the Sphere and Rune involved in working the spell is from the Sphere and Rune specialized in by the sorcerer. For each place either clockwise or counterclockwise on each wheel—whichever is closer—from the point at which the sorcerer specializes, the spell costs 1 Magic point. The sorcerer also includes in this calculation the point of specialization, which itself costs 1 Magic Point. Thus, every spell costs at least 2 Magic Points to cast.

Example: Halath Gessyr is specialized in the Sphere of Fire and the Rune of Direction. He wants to cast a spell that will create a small spring of water from which he might drink. To do this, he needs to manipulate the Sphere of Water (2 places counterclockwise on the Wheel of Spheres from his specialization of Fire: 2MP + 1MP for = 3MP) and the Rune of Creation (1 place counterclockwise from Direction on the Wheel of Runes: 1MP + 1MP = 2MP). Thus to be successful he must expend 5 Magic Points.

If a sorcerer is working magic involving the Sphere and Rune in which he has specialized, the cost of the spell is always 2 Magic Points—1 each for the Sphere and Rune being manipulated. So, in the above example, had Halath specialized in Water and Creation, his spell would cost 2 Magic Points instead of 5.

Spells that involve a Sphere and/or Rune in which a sorcerer is NOT specialized are not guaranteed of absolute success. Before the casting the spell, the sorcerer must make a Luck roll. The Luck roll is based on the Sorcerer's POW, less the number of Magic Points needed to cast the spell, and multiplied by 5. This roll is not needed if the magic involves both the Sphere and the Rune in which he or she specializes. If the Luck roll fails, then the spell does not work—however the Magic Points necessary to cast it are not lost either.

Example: To create his spring, Halath must expend 5 Magic Points and roll less than his POW of 18, minus

the 5 points, multiplied by 5 or: (18—5) = 13 x 5 = 65%. Halath's player rolls D100 and the result is 24; Halath's stream bubbles from the red dust of the desert and Halath is saved from dying of thirst. Had Halath specialized in Water and Creation, he would not have needed to make the Luck roll although he would have still needed to expend the necessary Magic Points.

LIMITS TO MAGIC

ALTHOUGH EASTERN sorcerers are able to duplicate many of the effects described in the spells listed in the *Elric!* rules—and many that are not—there are limitations to what they can effect, how long the effect lasts and what can be achieved overall.

DURATION OF MAGIC: A spell lasts for a number of rounds equal to the current POW of the caster. It requires no further Magic Points to sustain its effect, and can be dispelled at any point by the caster with no further expenditure of Magic Points.

RESISTANCE ROLLS: If a spell is directed at a living creature that is reluctant to receive the effects of the spell, be it man, animal or demon, a Resistance Roll is needed, matching the sorcerer's current Magic Points against those of the target. Failure of the Resistance Roll for the sorcerer means that the spell has been rejected by the target and the Magic Points needed to cast the spell are lost. This only applies to spells that cause a direct effect upon the target; if a spell has been cast upon a weapon to enhance its damage, a Resistance Roll is not needed.

PREPARATION: A spell takes a number of rounds to prepare equal to half the Magic Points (round fractions up) needed to cast it and one round to actually cast. If a sorcerer is disturbed during the preparation phase of the spell, the concentration is lost and the Magic Points are expended without effect.

NUMBER OF TARGETS: As with Young Kingdoms spells, a spell can only be directed at one target; however once a spell has been prepared, it takes only 1 combat round to cast it, meaning that the same spell can be cast at different targets in subsequent combat rounds.

MAXIMUM ATTACK DAMAGE: The Enhancement Rune can be used to increase the damage of a weapon; however it cannot raise the weapon's damage to more than the maximum allowable for that weapon. But unlike the Hell spells of the Young Kingdoms, enhancing a weapon's damage always increases a weapon to its maximum damage, regardless of how many Magic Points are needed to cast the spell.

Further limitations are provided in the Spot Rules for Magic, on page 58.

THE SOULS OF THE SORCERERS

MAGIC COSTS ENERGY and this taxes the soul. It is thus the habit of most Eastern sorcerers to hide their souls in the body of a familiar. Drinij Bara hid his in the body of a cat, and the practice is widespread amongst all itinerant sorcerers for a number of very good reasons.

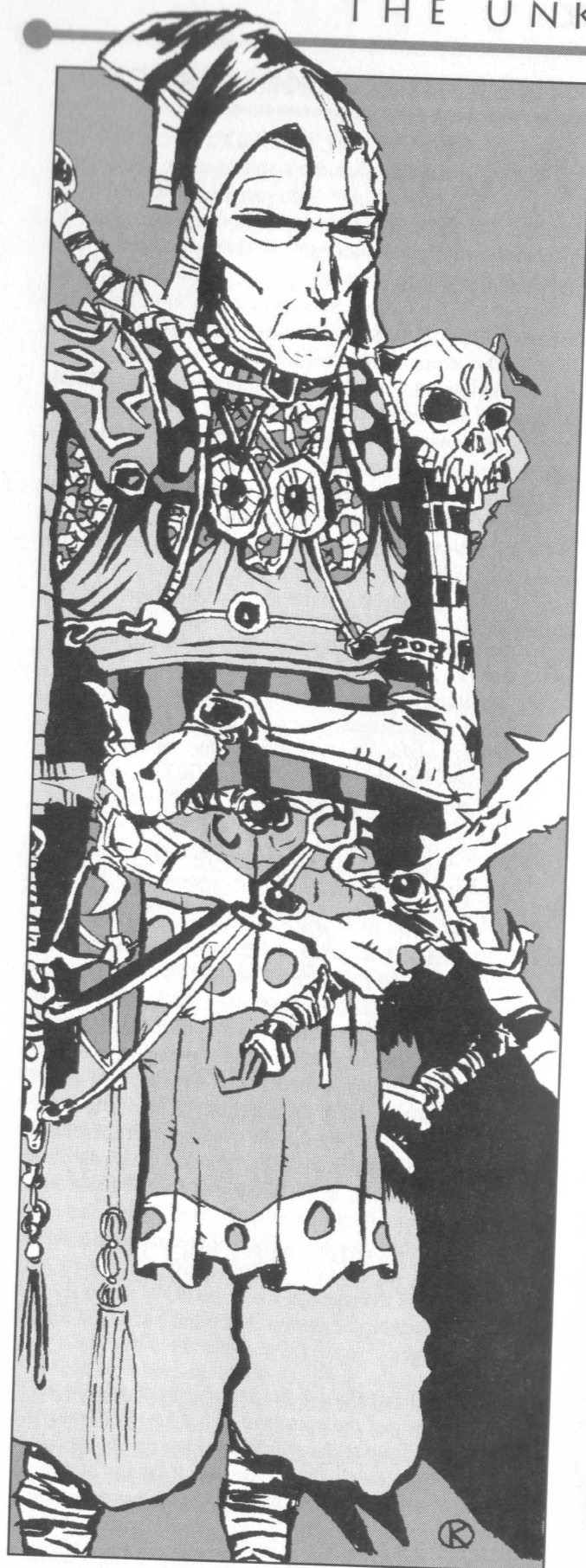
First of all, an Eastern Sorcerer cannot be killed unless his soul is slain. If the soul is resident in the sorcerer's body, then the sorcerer dies when his Hit Points fall below -2. If his soul is hidden, the sorcerer cannot die unless the body of the soul's hiding place is reduced to -2. A sorcerer with a hidden soul whose Hit Points are reduced to the point where death would normally occur does not automatically die. Instead he takes possession of the body of the creature which holds the soul, retaining his full INT and POW characteristics, but taking on the physical aspects of the host body.

Example: Drinij Bara is stabbed during the course of a drunken brawl. The blow is enough to kill him, reducing his Hit Points to -3. However, since his soul resides in the body of his trusted cat, Drinij Bara does not die. His awareness, memories and experiences flee to the body of the cat, meaning that for the time being, Drinij Bara has the STR, CON, SIZ, DEX and APP of a small black cat, but the INT, POW, skills and abilities of a 40 year-old Eshmirian sorcerer. Since cats cannot vocalize or use many of the skills common to humans, Drinij Bara is temporarily unable to resume his human form and must content himself with his new body.

If a sorcerer's body is slain, it cannot be reinhabited. The sorcerer must try to find a new host body to accommodate his displaced soul. Taking possession of a new body requires a complex magical ritual to take place, displacing the soul of the existing host and then transferring the sorcerer's soul into it. This requires the sorcerer to enter into a POW struggle with the owner of the host body; it also requires the sorcerer to exchange blood with the owner of the desired body—a task that is easier said than done. This can be accomplished by biting the host or causing some kind of wound where blood can be mixed. Once this is done, the POW struggle can then take place. If the sorcerer wins the POW struggle, the soul of the host body is swapped with the sorcerer's. If the sorcerer loses the POW struggle, then he is unable to enter the desired body and must seek another suitable target.

Example: Drinij Bara in his feline form decides to occupy the body of the man who killed him in the duel. The cat strolls up to the swordsman, who is still laughing at the sorcerer's fate, and sinks its fangs into the warrior's ankle, allowing blood from its own mouth to mingle with the blood of the swordsman. Drinij Bara then matches his POW of 51 against the swordsman

(CONTINUED)



EASTERN SORCERER

who has a POW of 10. The dice roll results in 04—success for Drinij Bara! The soul of the swordsman is transferred to the body of the cat, while Drinij Bara takes on the physical characteristics of the burly Okaran. Drinij Bara laughs heartily and promptly stamps on the cat (killing the swordsman in the process); he then turns his attention to the swordsman's drunken companions who had laughed while he was so rudely stabbed and begins to prepare a spell that will turn each of their brains into a molten jelly...

A sorcerer who wishes to hide his or her soul in a new creature must use a specific spell to accomplish the task. The spell allows the sorcerer to continue to live without his soul being physically present and to mentally remain in touch with the familiar. The spell for hiding the soul involves the Sphere of Fauna and the Rune of Transmutation. Regardless of whether or not the sorcerer is specialized in either Sphere of Rune, the spell always costs 15 Magic Points, takes a day to prepare, and requires a Resistance Roll of POW vs POW to accomplish. A Luck roll is not required. If the spell fails, then the sorcerer can attempt the soul transferal again once the Magic Points have been regenerated.

OTHER POWERS

Sorcerers with hidden souls gain a number of benefits which are outlined below.

AUXILIARY MAGIC POINTS. As well as being able to use his own Magic Points to cast spells, the sorcerer can use the Magic Points of the familiar. To do so, the sorcerer must be conscious—meaning that he must have at least IMP of his own—and his familiar must also be within a number of miles equal to the sorcerer's INT. If the requirements are fulfilled, then the sorcerer can use the Magic Points of the familiar to complement his own reserves.

Example: Halath's soul is hidden in the body of a rattlesnake that keeps itself curled around Halath's neck. Halath wants to cast a spell requiring 8 Magic Points. Since he currently has only 5 Magic Points of his own, he can use the Magic Points of his snake to supplement the spell. The snake has 8MP. Halath thus uses 3 of his own Magic Points and 5 of the snake's, ensuring that his spell succeeds and that he does not lose consciousness in the process.

EMPATHIC COMMUNION: sorcerers and their familiars maintain an Empathic link when their souls are tied. A sorcerer knows what his familiar is feeling and vice versa: it is also possible for the sorcerer to temporarily use the eyes, ears and senses of his familiar in much the same way as the Rat Vision and Buzzard Eyes spells work. It costs the sorcerer 1 Magic Point for every mile (or fraction thereof) of distance between him and his familiar to maintain the

link, although the link itself lasts for a number of rounds equal to the sorcerer's POW.

Example: A Blue Assassin breaks into Halath's home while he is away on business. In the course of doing so, the assassin disturbs Halath's snake, which naturally is extremely angry at the intrusion. Halath is immediately aware of the snake's anger by virtue of their empathic link and knows something is wrong. He decides to see through the snake's eyes exactly what the trouble is. It costs Halath 3 Magic Points since he is three miles from his home in Her'is, but by doing so he can see the assassin setting a trap for him through the snake's eyes. Halath grins and continues to finish his business. He can prepare a very nasty spell for the assassin in the hour or so it will take him to get home...

INCREASING MAGICAL STRENGTH

Initially an Eastern sorcerer is trained in only one Sphere and one Rune. But as his or her expertise with magic grows, so will his or her INT and POW and so will the ease with which spells can be cast. For every eight points of INT, a sorcerer can specialize in one sphere or one rune. Thus, a sorcerer with an INT of 16, the minimum for sorcerous knowledge, will be trained in one sphere and one rune. However a sorcerer with an INT of 24 may then specialize in either two spheres and one rune, or one sphere and two runes; at INT 32, two spheres and two runes, or one sphere and three runes etc. The effect of this is that the ease of casting spells and cost in magic points is reduced: it costs only two MP to cast a spell using a sphere and rune one is specialized in, and obviously the wider degree of specialization, the faster and less strenuous spell casting becomes.

Increasing POW raises the available magic points and the range of effect of a spell. For every four points of POW a sorcerer has, the strength or potency of a spell increases by one point. Sorcerers with a high POW characteristic can cast stronger, longer lasting spells than less experienced sorcerers and naturally have access to summoning elementals,

demons and supernatural allies. A sorcerer with a high INT and POW is a force to be reckoned with.

MULTIPLE EFFECT SPELLS

Sorcerers who have a specialization in more than one sphere and one rune can combine the effects of multiple spheres and/or runes in the same spell. To illustrate, Sejin the Sorcerer has an INT of 24 and specializes in the Sphere of Flesh and the Runes of Creation and Enhancement. Sejin can, if he so wishes, cast spells that affect the flesh sphere, but include in their matrix influences from both the creation and enhancement runes. For example, Sejin is able to cast a spell that allows him to create a pair of wings (Creation Rune) and also to enhance his eyesight to that of an eagle, all in the same spell. Because he is specialized in all three areas, the cost is 3 MP with the spell lasting for a number of rounds equal to his POW of 19.

Gamesmasters must use their own judgement to decide whether combinations will be compatible when suggested by sorcerer adventurers. Some examples of multiple-effect spells are given in the description of Drinij Bara's spells later in this section.

ALLEGIANCE POINTS AND EASTERN MAGIC

THE KNOWLEDGE OF MAGIC and its use earns the sorcerer Chaos points. The following chart summarizes the costs.

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Knowledge of a Sphere | 3 points |
| Knowledge of a Rune | 3 points |
| Keeping a Familiar | 6 points |
| Casting a Spell | earns a number of Chaos points equal to MP spent |



EASTERN MAGIC SPOT RULES

ALL THE SPOT RULES in the *Elric!* magic system apply, but there are some eventualities that these do not cover; the following spot rules should help game masters who are unsure how to deal with certain situations that might arise.

RULE OF FOUR TO ONE

SOME SPELLS ARE GIVEN a strength; healing for example, and the strength of the spell is governed by the Rule of Four to One. For every four points of POW a sorcerer has, 1 point of spell strength is gained. Any excess POW points do not contribute to the spell's strength.

AREAS OF EFFECT

A SORCERER IS LIMITED in how much of a thing he can effect, create, destroy, manipulate etc. Game masters should judge specifics, but essentially a sorcerer can effect no more than his POW x10 of: pints of liquid, pounds of solid mass, feet in radius. Thus, a sorcerer with a POW of 19 could create 190 pints of water, destroy 190 pounds of rock, cast a spell that affects a thing within 190 feet from where the sorcerer stands.

ARMOR

THE HELL'S ARMOR SPELL allows sorcerers to provide themselves with magical armor protection of between 1 and 4 points. Eastern sorcerers can do the same thing using the Flesh Sphere and Enhancement rune. By manipulating the flesh of a living creature and enhancing its protective abilities, a sorcerer can endow it with 1 point of armor for each 4 points of POW he has, the rule of Four to One applying.

CREATING

A SORCERER IS AT LIBERTY to try to create whatever he wants—which means that it is feasible to make oneself amazingly wealthy by creating say, a small mountain of gold. In circumstances such as this, the creation only works if there is small amount of what the sorcerer

is trying to create in the natural environment. For example, a large slab of precious metal could not be created in an area where it does not exist; a raging bonfire could not be created underwater etc. Also, game masters may call for heavily modified Luck rolls to see if the spell is successful or not—or even rule that the creation the sorcerer wants to accomplish is impossible.

DEMONS

SUMMONING DEMONS is no different to the method described in the *Elric!* rules. The rituals are the same, Magic Point cost is the same etc. However, the Summoning Rune can be used to summon a creature that is predefined from another plane—such as the Creatures of Matik, the Elenoin and the Grahluuk, or the Oonai. In doing so the cost in Magic Points is supplemented by a number of Magic Points equal to the creature's average POW characteristic. A Luck roll is also needed for success.

Example: Halath wants to smite his enemies by summoning forth an Elenoin. To do so requires the use of the Spirit Sphere (to achieve the correct mental state) manipulated by the Summoning Rune (to find the plane of the Elenoin and call them to the Earth): this will cost Halath 4 points + the Elenoin's average POW score of 21, which equals 25 Magic Points. He also needs to make a Luck roll to see if the Elenoin will actually heed his call.

If the spell is successful and the creature is summoned, controlling it requires the sorcerer to defeat the creature in a POW struggle. If successful the sorcerer may command the creature for a number of rounds equal to his or her current POW. This does not apply to demons since they have their own rituals for summoning, control and binding.

ELEMENTALS

THESE ARE SUMMONED in the same way as in the *Elric!* rules, except that the sorcerer does not need to know the appropriate gateway spell; instead, he must expend the Magic Points necessary to manipulate the appropriate elemental Sphere with the Summoning Rune: this is in addition to the Magic Points needed to determine the summoned ele-

mental's powers. A Luck roll is not necessary when summoning an Elemental.

HEALING

YOUNG KINGDOMS SORCERERS have the Healing spell at their disposal; Eastern sorcerers must instead manipulate the Sphere of Flesh with the Transmutation Rune, changing injured flesh back into uninjured flesh. The number of hit points that can be healed is not dependent on the number of Magic Points used in the casting of the spell; rather it is dependent on the POW of the sorcerer, the rule of Four to One applying. Sorcerers can also prevent the spread of disease or the effects of poison by using the Sphere of Flesh in conjunction with the Rune of Inhibition. A healing spell can then be used to cure the actual damage that the disease or poison has caused.

MEMORY

KNOWLEDGE of a Sphere or a Rune costs 8 points of free INT. It is therefore possible for sorcerers with high INT statistics to be able to specialize in more than one Sphere and Rune (see Increasing Magical strength, page 57) If a sorcerer's INT falls below 16, then all magical abilities are lost: the sorcerer no longer has the mental capacity to manipulate a Sphere with a Rune. If the INT score is raised back to 16 or higher, then magical abilities are restored.

RANGE

THE MAGIC OF Eastern sorcerers does not normally require physical touch to accomplish its effect. In some cases, such as the enchanting of weapons or the healing of damage, the sorcerer should be in close proximity to the subject, but does not have to 'lay on hands' to make the magic work. However a sorcerer cannot cast magic outside of a radius greater than his POW x10 in feet. Game masters are also at liberty to declare when certain magical effects must be achieved at much shorter ranges, such as within a few feet or even touching.

MAGIC



AN EASTERN SUMMONING

SPECIFIC MAGICAL EFFECTS

THIS SECTION SHOWS how certain effects can be achieved, using the spells from the *Elric!* magic rules as an example, and some of Drinij Bara's own spell permutations as a contrast. Not all Young Kingdoms spells are described, since many are variants on the same theme and it is possible to make the appropriate substitution of Spheres and Runes to achieve the desired effect.

BONDS UNBREAKABLE — Sphere Flesh, Rune Inhibition. By manipulating the Flesh sphere with the Inhibition rune, the sorcerer creates tendrils of magical energy that bind and clasp whatever the spell has been cast upon. Like the *Elric!* spell, a POW vs POW roll is needed to break the effect. If another sorcerer is affected, he or she can try to undo the spell with the Eastern equivalent of Undo Magic.

BOUNTY OF STRAASHA — Sphere: Water, Rune: Summoning. To simulate this spell, the sorcerer needs to summon water using the summoning rune. However the amount of water that appears every round for the spell's duration is equal in gallons to the caster's POW characteristic; thus a sorcerer with a POW of 17, allowing the spell to last for 17 rounds, could summon 289 gallons of water.

BRAZIER OF POWER — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Creation. Eastern sorcerers can draw POW from their familiars, if they have one, but can alternatively attempt to stockpile POW for use in larger summonings, by casting an equivalent of the Brazier of Power spell. The sorcerer needs to choose a focus in which to store the POW—it need not be a brazier—sacrificing the Magic Points needed to manipulate Spirit and Creation, and one point of POW to attune the focus. Once attuned, the focus accepts and stores Magic Points up to the maximum of the sorcerer's POW and this store can be used in the manner suggested by the spell on page 77 of the *Elric!* rules.

BREATH OF LIFE — Sphere: Air, Rune: Creation. By manipulating air with creation, the sorcerer can create a small pocket of air for use in whatever medium he or she is submerged. The air pocket lasts for a number of rounds equal to the sorcerer's POW.

CHAOS WARP — Sphere: Flesh, Rune: Transmutation. The sorcerer warps the flesh of the victim and endows it with a demon ability selected from the rules. The target must be willing and make the appropriate sacrifice as explained on page 78 of the *Elric!* rules.

CLOAK OF CRAN LIRET — Sphere: Flesh, Rune: Direction. To increase the hide skill by 20 percentiles, the sorcerer must direct the attention of any would-be pursuers away from where the caster might be hiding. The effect of using Flesh and Direction is to magically divert the attention of someone away from the object of the search.

DEMON'S EAR — Sphere Air, Rune Direction. By manipulating air currents, the sorcerer can speak to and hear in whispers, another speaker over a certain distance. The range in which the spell is effective is equal in yards to the sorcerer's POW x10. Thus a sorcerer with a POW of 17 could communicate with someone 170 yards away.

DEMON'S EYE — Sphere: Flesh, Rune: Enhancement. The sorcerer, by increasing the potency of his own eyesight, can see something twice as close as normal. The spell works by enhancing the lens of the eye and the brain's ability to perceive the image.

FURY — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Enhancement. The caster enrages the spirit of the target into wanting to fight unceasingly until the spell is either dismissed or comes to the end of its duration. A MP:MP resistance roll is necessary if the target is unwilling to accept the spell's effect. The effect is the same as described on page 78-79 of the *Elric!* rules.

GIFT OF GROME — Sphere: Earth, Rune: Summoning. Similar to Bounty of Straasha, save for the summoning of earth, dust and rubble instead of water.

HORNS OF HIONHURN — Sphere: Flesh, Rune: Enhancement. The caster increases the CON of the target by the rule of Four to One, rather than the 3 points for every MP described in the *Elric!* rules on page 79. The other effects described by this spell remain the same.

LIKEN SHAPE — Sphere Flesh, Rune Transmutation. To take on the semblance of another creature, the caster manipulates the body of the target. The caster cannot increase or decrease in SIZ and the spell is negated if the caster is touched by a true example of the same species.

MAKE FAST — Sphere Earth or Flora, depending on substance, Rune Direction. The direction rune causes the substances to flow together at subatomic levels, creating an indissoluble bond.

MAKE WHOLE — Sphere: Element appropriate to thing being mended, Rune: Creation. This spell recreates the bonds between the two parts of whatever has been broken. The spell does not work on organic tissue, although wood and other vegetable fibres can be affected.

MIDNIGHT — Sphere: Fire, Rune: Dismissal. The sphere of fire controls the element of light and by dismissing light, absolute darkness is the result.

MOONRISE — Sphere: Fire, Rune: Creation. The opposite of Midnight; by manipulating the sphere of fire, a cool ball of light can be created to provide limited illumination.

MUDDLE — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Inhibition. The inhibition rune prevents rational thought from taking place, resulting in a disorientation of the target, as described on page 80 of the *Elric!* rules.

PLASTICITY OF BALO — Sphere: Flesh, Rune: Diminution or Enhancement. Depending on whether the caster wishes to decrease or increase in size, the diminution or enhancement runes must be used to manipulate the sphere of flesh. The caster can increase or decrease the SIZ of the target by the rule of Four to One. If the adventurer requests the maximum increase or decrease that the sorcerer can provide, then the player rolls D100 to see if the shenanigans have angered the Lords of Chaos, as described on page 80 of the *Elric!* rules.

POX — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Dismissal. The caster attempts to dismiss an opponent's Magic Points by attacking the spirit. With a successful MP:MP roll on the resistance table, the target loses 1D6 MP, which regenerate in the normal way.

REFUTATION — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Enhancement. The Eastern version of Refutation works differently to the spell given in the *Elric!* rules on page 80. A sorcerer who casts Refutation upon him or herself creates a spell with a strength determined by the rule of Four to One. This strength is then matched against the strength of the Undo Magic spell, or its equivalent on the resistance table, with the effects described on page 80 of the *Elric!* rules remaining the same.

SOUL OF CHARDROS — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Enhancement. POW is increased by the rule of Four to One. Magic Points are not affected, although the benefits described on page 80 of the *Elric!* rules remain.

SPEED OF VEZHAN — Sphere: Flesh, Rune: Enhancement. The movement of the caster is increased by the rule of Four to One. The spell can be cast on a different species although Dexterity is unaffected.

SUMMON BEAST/PLANT LORD — Sphere: Flora or Fauna, Rune: Summoning. As in the *Elric!* spell described on page 82 of the *Elric!* rules, the caster must know the Beast or Plant Lord's name and summoning takes a full day. The cost in MP for the spell is calculated as normal for Eastern magic.

UNDO MAGIC — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Dismissal. Undo Magic works differently to the Young Kingdoms spell of the same name. When cast, the Undo spell has a strength determined by the rule of Four to One. Undo Magic can be directed against spells that have a strength based on the POW of the caster, with each point of the Undo Magic's potency reducing the strength of the target spell by one point. Undo Magic can be countered by the Refutation spell described above.

WITCH SIGHT — Sphere: Spirit, Rune: Direction. By sensing the direction of a target's soul, its relative POW score can be roughly determined as described on page 83 of the *Elric!* rules. The range for this spell is a number of yards equal to the sorcerer's POW x10, making it a much more potent variant than its Young Kingdoms cousin.

DRINIJ BARA'S SPECIALITY SPELL BOOK

THE FOLLOWING SECTION describes some spell effects used by Drinij Bara before being captured by Terarn Gashtek. These are included to show some examples of multiple effect spells and other types of spell not described in the section dealing with spells from the *Elric!* rules.

THE BANISHING — Sphere: Spirit, Runes: Direction and Diminution. This multiple effect spell is used to cause an area of fear, into which another human cannot readily tread. The caster can affect an area equal in cubic feet to his POW x10, lasting for a number of rounds equal to the caster's POW. The spell works by attacking the courage of the opponent when the boundary of the affected area is crossed (the Diminution rune), and then the Direction rune forces the invader to retreat. The invader is allowed a MP:MP resistance roll against the MP of the caster to try to beat the spell—if successful, he may cross into the affected area without suffering any ill effects. If the resistance roll fails, the invader is gripped by an uncontrollable fear and flees immediately, not stopping in flight until he or she is well away from the area where the Banishing has been cast.

BLIND FIRE — Sphere: Fire, Rune: Enhancement. This spell creates a blinding flash of light that dazzles anyone caught in its area of effect. The caster can influence an area equal to his or her POW x10 in cubic yards, with all but the caster being temporarily blinded for a number of rounds equal to the caster's POW. The spell works even in areas of total darkness, except magical darkness caused by, for instance, the Midnight spell.

GLASS EYES — Sphere: Flesh, Flora or Earth, Rune: Dismissal. By casting Glass Eyes on a substance or person, the affected body becomes transparent, allowing the caster to see what is inside. For instance, if cast on a human or other organic tissue, the internal organs are revealed to the caster; if cast on say, a wooden box or casket, using the Flora sphere, the caster can see what it holds inside; if cast on a wall, using the Earth rune, what lies beyond becomes visible.

GRAVE ROBBER — Sphere: Flesh, Runes: Summoning and Enhancement. This spell allows the caster to grant limited life to a recently killed subject. The target must have died within a number of rounds equal to the caster's POW and is brought back to life for an equal number of rounds. The subject is allowed a resistance roll of MP:MP to resist the call from Limbo. Once restored to life, the subject must answer the questions posed to it by the caster although it does not need to answer directly. Answers can be in the form of a riddle, a poem or even in a completely different language (if known before death). Only one question can be asked and this spell can only be cast once on a subject, subsequent attempts failing immediately.

NOMAD OF THE TIMESTREAMS — Sphere: Spirit, Runes: Transformation and Direction. This spell allows the caster's spirit to travel backwards in time and to observe what has happened in the recent past in the particular location occupied by the caster. The caster can go backwards a number of minutes in time equal to his or her POW, but can remain there only for a similar number. The caster is unable to affect any of the bygone events, being nothing but a spiritual observer.

SHADOWCLOAK — Spheres: Flesh and Fire, Rune: Transformation. This spell transforms the subject into a shadow for a number of rounds equal to the caster's POW. While in this shadowy state, the subject can slip between narrow gaps, slide up walls and mimic a real shadow in almost every respect. The recipient cannot be harmed by normal weapons although magical attacks have the usual effect. The subject cannot lift any form of weight, although the senses of sight and hearing remain intact. If the subject enters an area of total darkness, magical or otherwise, the spell is automatically broken and he or she resumes normal human form.

GENERAL NOTES ON EASTERN MAGIC

THE MAGIC SYSTEM DESCRIBED here allows adventurers that are trained in Eastern magic a great deal of freedom in what effects they achieve and how the magic they cast manifests itself; but it is the gamesmaster that is the final arbiter in all cases, and some judgement on the part of both players and gamesmasters should be exercised. If a player wants to try to cast a spell that is obviously beyond the capabilities of his adventurer, then the gamesmaster is quite at liberty to disallow it. Similarly, gamesmasters should allow players to try to use their imaginations when magic is being employed by their characters, and if the magic being proposed is imaginative and in keeping with the flavor of the game, then there is no reason why it should not be allowed.

Since the magic system does not rely on fixed spell descriptions, it is more conducive to being roleplayed rather than simply being read from a rule book. The aim of the Eastern magic is to reflect the ever changing nature of Chaos and its infinite ability to mould and affect the world around it. However it does have its limits, and it is up to gamesmasters to set these limits in a context appropriate to the game. Before casting a spell, consider the following:

- What effect is desired?
- Which Sphere/Rune are most likely to be involved?
- How many Magic Points will the spell cost?
- How easy is it to cast?
- What parameters are imposed by amount of POW and natural conditions?
- How long will the spell take to cast? ☉

DIGEST

SOLDIERS AND WARRIORS, INDIVIDUALS
OF NOTE, MAJOR PERSONALITIES

PROVIDED HERE ARE grouped and individual statistics for a cross section of Eastlanders which can be used for ad-hoc encounters or to populate scenarios. Selected personalities from the Elric saga specific to the Unknown East complete this section.

SOLDIERS AND WARRIORS

EVERY EASTERN NATION maintains some form of army and every nation produces its share of mercenaries and bandits, aiming either to sell their skills to whoever will pay or to steal from lonely travellers or unprotected caravans.

MAIDAHKIAN DESERT LANCERS

The desert areas of Maidahk are constantly plagued by nomadic gangs of robbers and thieves and it is the task of the camel-riding Desert Lancers to patrol the wastelands between settlements ridding the country of the bandit scourge. Each lance comprises twenty men, led by a Lieutenant and a sergeant at arms. The Desert Lancers wear sand-colored capes over their brown lacquered armor and each carries a lance which is deployed most effectively in combat. The Lancers always provide a guard for unprotected caravans that they come across and view with great suspicion any small groups of well armed travellers.

| | STR | CON | SIZ | INT | POW | DEX | APP | HP |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| One | 13 | 14 | 14 | 12 | 10 | 15 | 10 | 14 |
| Two | 11 | 15 | 15 | 13 | 12 | 14 | 12 | 15 |
| Three | 15 | 10 | 13 | 10 | 112 | 13 | 12 | 12 |
| Four | 10 | 17 | 16 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 15 | 17 |
| Five | 17 | 17 | 16 | 10 | 14 | 10 | 15 | 17 |
| Six | 11 | 18 | 17 | 13 | 12 | 15 | 10 | 18 |
| Seven | 14 | 13 | 13 | 15 | 10 | 11 | 14 | 13 |
| Eight | 12 | 16 | 10 | 09 | 09 | 12 | 10 | 13 |

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Lance 85%, damage 1D8+1+db
Scimitar 83%, damage 1D8+1+db
Dagger 75%, damage 1D4+2+db

Armor: Cast Leather 1D10

Magic: None

Skills: Dodge 79%, Insight 59%, Jump 63%, Listen 71%, Own Language ('pande) 88%, Recognize Bandit Gang at Distance 89%, Search 86%, Ride Camel 91%

MAIDAHKIAN FENCERS

The Fencers are the elite city guard that maintains the status quo in Rameer. Noted for their flamboyance and capacity for wine, song and members of the opposite sex, the Fencers are pictured as being dashing, heroic carousers and are admired for their style, grace, wit and exceptional skill with a rapier. Recognized by their uniforms of deep purple, topped with breast plates of polished silver and helmets decorated with ostrich feathers, the Fencers present a dazzling spectacle.

| | STR | CON | SIZ | INT | POW | DEX | APP | HP |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| One | 13 | 13 | 12 | 15 | 17 | 18 | 13 | 13 |
| Two | 12 | 14 | 10 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 12 | 12 |
| Three | 10 | 18 | 18 | 14 | 12 | 17 | 13 | 18 |
| Four | 17 | 15 | 09 | 12 | 15 | 15 | 10 | 12 |
| Five | 12 | 13 | 15 | 17 | 17 | 14 | 13 | 14 |
| Six | 14 | 16 | 14 | 10 | 11 | 15 | 10 | 15 |
| Seven | 09 | 10 | 09 | 18 | 17 | 16 | 17 | 10 |
| Eight | 15 | 11 | 11 | 13 | 13 | 18 | 16 | 11 |

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Rapier 103%, damage 1D6+1+db
Dagger 94%, damage 1D4+2+db
Thrown Dagger 91%, damage 1D4+2
Sling 88%, damage 1D8+1/2 db

Armor: Half Plate 1D8 (no helmet) 1D8+1 (helmet on)

Magic: None

Skills: Bargain 90%, Carousing 100%, Dodge 93%, Insight 80%, Jump 79%, Listen 50%, Move Quietly 76%, Search 63%, Swing from Nearest Available Chandelier 65%

ANAKHAZANI NOBLE WARRIORS

Almost all the nobility of Anakhazan commit themselves to military service either with the Guyë or Freyr clan. Skilled warriors, they typically make up the cavalry units under the direct command of the clan head. Proud and relentless fighters, the nobility are more than a match for seasoned infantry or crude and ruthless brigands. The uniform worn by the nobility is always stylish—a red or green tabard bearing the family crest or coat of arms worn over finely sculptured cast leather. Helmets are usually of a closed visor design and bear plumes of white feathers.

| | STR | CON | SIZ | INT | POW | DEX | APP | HP |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| One | 14 | 15 | 14 | 16 | 13 | 12 | 13 | 15 |
| Two | 13 | 10 | 13 | 17 | 12 | 17 | 14 | 12 |
| Three | 10 | 11 | 16 | 12 | 13 | 15 | 10 | 14 |
| Four | 13 | 16 | 17 | 14 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 17 |
| Five | 09 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 17 | 18 | 11 | 15 |
| Six | 10 | 11 | 09 | 09 | 18 | 12 | 15 | 10 |
| Seven | 18 | 17 | 14 | 10 | 16 | 12 | 17 | 16 |
| Eight | 12 | 15 | 11 | 13 | 13 | 15 | 10 | 13 |

Damage bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Longsword 110%, damage 1D10+1+db
Shortsword 98%, damage 1D6+1+db
Cavalry Lance 95%, damage 1D8+1+db

Armor: Cast Leather 1D10

Magic: none

Skills: Dodge 66%, Insight 70%, Jump 51%, Own Language ('pande) 100%, Ride (camel) 103%, Swagger Impressively 100%

TANGHENSI IRREGULARS

Kaleg Vogun's supporters are fragmented groups of guerrilla fighters who have little concept of what they are fighting or why. Squads of warriors, ranging from less than ten but sometimes numbering 50 or more, prowl Changshai's vast forests, attacking and pillaging any small settlements that do not appear to support the Tanghensi cause. They care not if innocents are butchered or whether they have just killed their allies. In a protracted and brutal conflict such things are forgotten and with them the humanity that separated these people from the beasts.

| | STR | CON | SIZ | INT | POW | DEX | APP | HP |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| One | 15 | 14 | 16 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 10 | 15 |
| Two | 11 | 13 | 10 | 08 | 09 | 10 | 08 | 12 |
| Three | 17 | 18 | 08 | 08 | 12 | 15 | 09 | 13 |
| Four | 10 | 11 | 18 | 11 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 15 |
| Five | 18 | 18 | 09 | 09 | 14 | 16 | 11 | 14 |
| Six | 13 | 13 | 10 | 16 | 12 | 13 | 12 | 12 |

Seven 10 09 09 13 15 14 10 09
Eight 13 14 16 09 11 12 13 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Broadsword 70%, 1D8+1+db
Morningstar 63%, 1D10+1+db
Battle Axe 68%, 1D8+2+db
Hunting Bow 76%, 1D6+1+1/2 db

Armor: Soft Leather 1D6-1

Magic: none

Skills: Climb 63%, Disguise 61%, Dodge 59%, Hide 72%, Listen 59%, Move Quietly 85%, Own Language ('pande) 70%, Repair/Devise 56%, Search 70%, Track 40%, Trap 52%

ESHMIRIAN MERCENARY BAND

Some Eshmirians love to fight and those that haven't the patience to join Eshmir's retained army join a mercenary band, the aim being to see the world, have a girl/boy in every town, and to Have A Good Time—this being the general raison d'être of most Eshmirians. Jolly even in the face of adversity, the Eshmirian mercenary rarely complains about circumstances but is all too ready to shout the joys of life when in the midst of battle. Part of Moonglum's formative training was in such a group, many of which took part in the Battle of the Eshmir Valley.

| | STR | CON | SIZ | INT | POW | DEX | APP | HP |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| One | 13 | 15 | 14 | 10 | 13 | 16 | 13 | 15 |
| Two | 10 | 13 | 10 | 15 | 09 | 13 | 08 | 12 |
| Three | 17 | 11 | 18 | 08 | 16 | 14 | 09 | 15 |
| Four | 10 | 11 | 18 | 11 | 13 | 12 | 10 | 15 |
| Five | 16 | 18 | 09 | 7 | 11 | 18 | 15 | 14 |
| Six | 12 | 13 | 12 | 16 | 15 | 10 | 12 | 13 |
| Seven | 10 | 16 | 18 | 13 | 08 | 08 | 10 | 17 |
| Eight | 13 | 14 | 16 | 09 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 15 |

Damage bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Longsword 90%, 1D10+1+db
Scimitar 83%, 1D8+1+db
Battle Axe 81%, 1D8+2+db
Hunting Bow 86%, 1D6+1+1/2 db
Full Shield 79%, kb+1D3+db, 22 points

Armor: Tempered Leather 2D4-1

Magic: none

Skills: Dodge 80%, Hide 86%, Move Quietly 79%, Own Language ('pande) 75%, Physik 66%, Repair/Devise 63%, Ride (camel) 81%, Throw 59%

VALNI HUNTING PARTY

Encountered in the savannas of Bas'lk or the arid stone deserts of Nishvalni-Oss, the Valni hunting party might be from a tribe hostile to civilized people, or eager to trade with them. Their totem is displayed proudly in the tattoos covering their body, and their war cry uncannily mimics the sound of the animal spirit that watches over their tribe. Fast and

furious if enraged, civil and curious if friendly, Valni are warriors to be wary of.

| | STR | CON | SIZ | INT | POW | DEX | APP | HP |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| One | 10 | 14 | 09 | 10 | 11 | 18 | 10 | 12 |
| Two | 14 | 18 | 10 | 13 | 15 | 13 | 15 | 14 |
| Three | 17 | 15 | 11 | 08 | 16 | 17 | 09 | 13 |
| Four | 10 | 09 | 11 | 18 | 13 | 14 | 10 | 10 |
| Five | 16 | 18 | 09 | 17 | 11 | 18 | 15 | 14 |
| Six | 13 | 12 | 16 | 15 | 10 | 12 | 12 | 14 |

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Longspear 83%, 1D10+1+db
Valni Bow 90%, 1D10+1+1/2 db
Bolas 88%, Entangle +1D3

Armor: animal hides for 1D3-1 protection

Magic: none

Skills: Craft (ambush creature) 78%, Disguise 56%, Dodge 60%, Hide 93%, Move Quietly 89%, Natural World 66%, Other Language ('pande) 20%, Own Language (Ulish) 73%, Throw 59%, Track 96%, Trap 84%

OKARAN BANDIT CLAN

From this scum, Terarn Gashtek created an army that almost destroyed the world. Without scruples, the bandit clan waits in readiness for lone travellers or poorly protected caravans, suddenly breaking from their hiding places in the hills to fall upon the hapless victims like half-starved vultures. Rape and pillage is a way of life. Murder is so common an occurrence, the bandits cannot understand why some people class it as a crime. They will cut your throat for simply looking at them; they will do much worse if you get in their way.

| | STR | CON | SIZ | INT | POW | DEX | APP | HP |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----|
| One | 15 | 14 | 16 | 11 | 12 | 14 | 10 | 15 |
| Two | 12 | 14 | 10 | 16 | 18 | 16 | 12 | 12 |
| Three | 18 | 17 | 15 | 07 | 08 | 08 | 05 | 16 |
| Four | 13 | 18 | 18 | 12 | 12 | 16 | 12 | 18 |
| Five | 10 | 15 | 11 | 11 | 17 | 17 | 06 | 13 |
| Six | 12 | 18 | 07 | 13 | 10 | 12 | 11 | 13 |
| Seven | 09 | 18 | 14 | 14 | 07 | 18 | 07 | 16 |
| Eight | 18 | 07 | 18 | 06 | 09 | 10 | 10 | 13 |
| Nine | 11 | 11 | 17 | 15 | 18 | 10 | 06 | 14 |
| Ten | 09 | 16 | 09 | 17 | 10 | 16 | 12 | 13 |

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Battle Axe 65%, 1D8+1+db
Morning star flail 59%, 1D10+1+db
Akras 71%, 1D3+3 +db
Hunting bow 42%, 1D6+1=1/2 db

Armor: Tempered leather 2D\$+1/2D4-2

Magic: None—Leader may have a magical weapon plundered from some unfortunate sorcerer in the past.

Skills: Craft (ambush) 75%, Dodge 61%, Hide 70%, Move Quietly 81%, Other Language (Bandit Patois) 88%, Own Language ('pande) 59%, Ride (camel) 74%, Trap 51%

ASSORTED INDIVIDUALS

HERE IS A CROSS SECTION of individual Eastlanders that might help adventurers, hinder them, or engage their services in some escapade. Many are wanderers, but all can be encountered anywhere in the Unknown East, be it wilds or city.

MELANCHOLY SORCERER

Sad-eyed and pale, this raggedy man trudges aimlessly, muttering to himself occasionally and casting forlorn glances to the heavens. He has left the sanctuary of Tumburu far behind, and, classed as an outcast by most civilized societies, wanders from place to place, hoping to sell his magical skills to anyone who will pay. His last contract was a scheming merchant who tricked him out of his last half-rahnd with potent booze and a pretty wench. The sorcerer, for all his power, is unable to find a niche in the real world.

STR 15 CON 09 SIZ 13 INT 18 POW 19
DEX 16 APP 12 Hit Points 11

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Akras 40%, 1D3+3+db
Falchion 38%, 1D6+1+db

Armor: None

Magic: Sphere, Earth; Rune, Enhancement The sorcerer has a Gnome bound into a copper ring worn on his left index finger. He has forgotten the binding, but might remember it in an emergency.

Skills: Bargain 31%, Evaluate 56%, Fast Talk 29%, Insight 63%, Million Spheres 28%, Other Language (High Speech) 38%, Own Language ('pande) 97%, Potions 52%, Unknown Kingdoms 56%, Young Kingdoms 08%

AGEING MERCENARY

Grey bearded and getting on in years, this S'aleemite warrior is a seasoned veteran but has been unable to find work for some time. Despite his advancing age he is still able to fight with the best of them. He eagerly seeks employment, scouring taverns and villages, vainly trying to hire out his skills. Without a rahnd to his name he is willing to take whatever is offered, only too keen to prove his skills as a fighter.

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 16 INT 11
POW 13 DEX 14 APP 13 Hit Points 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Longsword 75%,
1D10+1+db Scimitar 63%, 1D8+1+db
Short spear (thrown) 72%, 1D6+1+1/2 db

Armor: Tempered Leather 2D4+1/2D4-2

Magic: none

Skills: Climb 36%, Dodge 59%, Fast Talk 63%, Jump 51%, Own Language ('pande) 72%, Repair/Devise 73%, Ride (camel) 86%, Search 79%, Throw 64%, Unknown Kingdoms 52%



UNCTUOUS SCRUTINEER

Clad in fine robes and with slicked-back hair, this scrutineer from Her'is believes himself charming and personable but is exactly the opposite. His predictions are designed to please whoever has asked for his advice, rather than being an accurate reading of the stars, and his fawning delivery becomes tedious after only a few minutes. He thinks he has many friends; he is sadly mistaken.

STR 08 CON 10 SIZ 09 INT 17
POW 14 DEX 12 APP 09 Hit Points 10

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Quarterstaff 41%, 1D8

Armor: none

Magic: none

Skills: Art (astrology) 66%, Art (astronomy) 44%, Fast Talk 53%, Own Language ('pande) 79%, Oratory 21%, Unknown Kingdoms 48%

CHANGTSE BLACK MARKETEER

If you want it, she can get it. With her nondescript looks, no-one gives her a second glance, but she can procure almost any item you need if the price is right. In war-torn Changshai she has made a healthy profit from running illegal or hard-to-get goods, and she numbers royalty, Tanghensi and Myur supporters amongst her clients. For all this she is excellent company and a useful ally. Her knowledge of the country and current markets is unparalleled, and years of living on her wits has made her street-wise and canny.

STR 10 CON 14 SIZ 08 INT 17
POW 13 DEX 15 APP 10 Hit Points 11

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Falchion 52%, 1D6+2
Akras 74%, 1D3+3

Armor: Soft leather 1D6-1

Magic: none

Skills: Bargain 103%, Conceal Object 88%, Disguise 49%, Evaluate 86%, Fast Talk 92%, Insight 57%, Listen 68%, Other Language (Black Market Patois) 100%, Own Language ('pande) 81%, Unknown Kingdoms 48%

OKARAN BANDIT CHIEF

Filthy and bloodstained, the flea-ridden bandit chief lords over his band of cut throats with joyous abandon. He has fought his way to his current position and isn't about to let anyone take away his power. He knew Terarn Gashtek when the Flamebringer was unable to sit straight on a camel, but he recognizes his ambition and insight into power. This bandit seeks only what opportunities present themselves with the next wealthy caravan, and he instinctively hates those of the Valedarian Directorates.

STR 16 CON 18 SIZ 14 INT 15
POW 12 DEX 13 APP 07 Hit Points 16

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Broadsword 96%, 1D8+2+db
Longspear 91%, 1D10+1+db
Desert Recurve Bow 84%, 1D8+2+1/2 db

Armor: Cast Leather 1D10/1D10-1

Magic: His longspear, taken from a merchant who begged for his life, has a Salamander bound into its iron point. The bandit chief uses it sparingly, but its effect can be devastating.

Skills: Dodge 85%, Hide 96%, Jump 59%, Listen 73%, Move Quietly 67%, Natural World 56%, Other Language (bandit patois) 102%, Own Language ('pande) 60%, Ride (camel) 94%, Search 81%

HARDY PIONEER

Leaving Maidahk behind, this lone young woman yearns to carve out a piece of territory that she can call her own. She has seen it all: terrible dust storms, bandit raids, the grinding teeth of sand dragons, and still she persists. She seeks a fertile valley where she can build a cabin, plant some crops, and rear some livestock. No setback can deter her from her course, and she believes that she needs the help of no-one else. Feisty and independent, her dream of a perfect world keeps her going through all adversities.

STR 12 CON 16 SIZ 09 INT 14
POW 16 DEX 13 APP 14 Hit Points 13

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Rapier 39%, 1D6+1+db
Akras 50%, 1D3+3+db
Hunting Bow 53%, 1D6+1+1/2 db

Armor: Tempered Leather, no helmet 2D4-2

Magic: none

Skills: Bargain 42%, Climb 48%, Craft (weaving 68%) (animal husbandry 71%) (horticulture 83%), Insight 29%, Natural World 59%, Own Language (pande) 65%, Physik 74%, Ride (camel) 49%, Scent/Taste 23%, Search 58%, Track 67%, Trap 69%



SELF-PROCLAIMED KNIGHT OF THE BALANCE

SELF-PROCLAIMED KNIGHT OF THE BALANCE

With self deprecating good humor, and saddled precariously on his flea-bitten mule, this idealistic young soul believes that he holds true to all the virtues of the Cosmic Balance. His aim is to fight the extremes of Law and Chaos wherever he finds them, and unfortunately, he finds them everywhere—whether present or not. He challenges all to proclaim their allegiance, and, if they do not claim to follow the Balance he challenges them physically. His body bears the scars of the many kickings he has received as a result of his ill-made attempts to be a righter of wrongs.

STR 09 CON 11 SIZ 16 INT 10
POW 14 DEX 12 APP 13 Hit Points 14

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Rusty old Broadsword 31%, 1D6+1
Lance (repaired with old rope) 29%, 1D8

Armor: Battered tempered leather with no helmet 2D4-2

Magic: none

Skills: Art (recite stories of heroism) 104%, Dodge 22%, Fast Talk 18%, Misinterpret Motives 98%, Own Language ('pande) 67%, Ride (mule) 40%

DRUNKEN ESHMIRIAN STORYTELLER

He's got a bottle in one hand, a goblet in the other, a story on his lips and badly needs a shave. Charismatic and jovial, the storyteller can give you a perfect rendition of any legend or fable, complete with accents, or improvise a story to suit. He drinks as he talks, growing more inebriated by the hour. Eventually he falls over, but never before ending a tale, and always with a smile on his face. That twinkle in his eye is

genuine, and with chutzpah oozing from every pore, it is hard to dislike the man.

STR 12 CON 09 SIZ 13 INT 17
POW 14 DEX 10 APP 16 Hit Points 11

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Akras 39%, 1D3+3+db
Quarterstaff 35%, 1D8+db

Armor: Soft leather 1D6-1

Magic: none

Skills: Art (storytelling 105%) (poetry 98%) (singing 62%) (mimicry 87%), Fast Talk 77%, Insight 61%, Legends and Lore 94%, Listen 59%, Million Spheres 13%, Other Language (Ulish) 24%, Own Language ('pande) 105%, Scribe 58%, Unknown Kingdoms 87%, Young Kingdoms 13%

OVERZEALOUS VALEDERIAN BUREAUCRAT

This middle aged, severe-looking woman believes firmly in The Rules. She knows them by heart, backwards, and in Ulish. If it's against the rules, you can't do it. If it's in the rules, you can do it if you have the right licence. She is unbribable; every 'i' is dotted and every 't' crossed, twice and underlined for good measure. She claims she invented the rubber stamp, and from her deftness with it she might be right. Even mercenaries fear her—her tongue is sharper than any sword, and her wit quicker than any arrow. One look from her steely eye can wither a man faster than any sorcerer's spell. Be brave. Beware.

STR 07 CON 08 SIZ 11 INT 17
POW 14 DEX 16 APP 08 Hit Points 10

Damage Bonus: -1D4

Weapons: Pen and Quill 150%, no physical damage but she can ruin a reputation instantly.
Rubber stamp and ink 102%, no damage, but you can't get the ink off unless you use falian oil.

Armor: none

Magic: none. Praise be to Shenhk.

Skills: Art (know the rules) 180%, Bargain 96%, Craft (complete complicated documents) 104%, Evaluate 83%, Insight 61%, Other Language (Ulish) 71%, Own Language ('pande) 114%, Scribe 115%

SNOBBISH ANAKHAZANI NOBLE

He wears the finest robes of samite and silk, braids of cloth-of-gold woven into his hair. He gazes down his aquiline nose at all and sundry; his narrow, arrogant eyes reflecting disdain whenever he comes across anything that does not share his own wealth or upbringing. It is as if there is something inherently repellent in common folk, some taint which means they should be ignored, scorned or treated like dirt. Regardless of the background of a person, if they do not display opulence, they are not worthy of his regard.

STR 14 CON 12 SIZ 11 INT 15
POW 13 DEX 09 APP 13 Hit Points 12

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Bejeweled dagger 48%, 1D4+2
Scimitar 56%, 1D8+2

Armor: none

Magic: none

Skills: Art (etiquette) 76%, Evaluate 79%, Oratory 51%, Own Language ('pande) 83%, Ride (camel) 31%, Ride (horse) 56%

INSISTENT STREET TRADER

From Her'is to Rāmeer, Kosaio to Lhasa, in every city there is someone like this grubby entrepreneur. If it's saleable, he sells it: tacky tin scales in Valed-Hal; souvenirs of Tanghensi in the courtyards of the Sadakan; disgusting sweetmeats that may still be alive, displayed on a wicker tray draped around his neck. Whatever he sells is a bargain, or at least, that is what he claims, and the size of the family he has to support grows hourly. His sick grandmother has been that way for at least twenty years, and last week she died. Twice. If you display even the remotest interest in what he has on offer, he'll pursue you until you pay him to go away. But don't dismiss him too easily; he knows what's happening on the street, in the boudoirs and in the highest halls of office. What he knows, you can know—but at a price. And it's still a bargain.

STR 09 CON 11 SIZ 08 INT 15
POW 12 DEX 17 APP 07 Hit Points 10

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Magic: none

Skills: Craft (sell any old junk) 88%, Dodge 71%, Evaluate 63%, Fast Talk 97%, Listen 69%, Local Knowledge 85%, Unknown Kingdoms 31%

RENEGADE VALNI WARRIOR

This short, tenacious Valni tribesman has gone rogue—why, he won't say, but it's clear that no-one knows the lay of the land like he does. He can track an animal over hundreds of miles of the roughest terrain, tell you its species, its weight, and even its age. With his horn bow he can drop an antelope running at full speed from a hundred yards, and even though he is displaced from his tribe, his belief in the spirit and in Shenhk is still strong.

STR 17 CON 16 SIZ 08 INT 13
POW 16 DEX 18 APP 10 Hit Points 12

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Longspear 102%, 1D10+1+db
Bolas 98%, Entangle+1D3
Valni Bow 113%, 1D10+1+1/2 db

Armor: scraps of strategically placed animal hide 1D3-1

Magic: none

Skills: Climb 76%, Dodge 83%, Hide 79%, Jump 65%, Move Quietly 89%, Natural World 77%, Other Language ('pande) 19%, Own Language (Ulish) 64%, Repair/Devise 51%, Ride (camel) 29%, Scent/Taste 64%, Search 81%, Throw 75%, Track 118%, Trap 99%

CUNNING MAIDAHKI ENGINEER

She served with Loheb Bakra's Brigand Engineers, fighting against the Knights of Tumbru in the battle of Ylad Valley. She is clever and resourceful; a student of architecture, building and artifice, finding beauty in all structures, no matter how dilapidated they might be. Elaborate machines can be constructed from the most humble of components, and she always seems to have nails, a file and a penknife secreted somewhere about her person. Need to fix that broken cartwheel? Simple—all you need is a few blades of grass and some good honest spit. No job is too tough, no screw too tight, and who needs magic when you've got a ball of string and a few rusty tin-tacks...

STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 11 INT 15
POW 09 DEX 13 APP 12 Hit Points 12

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Shortsword 49%, 1D6+1
Pliers 51%, 1d3
Boltcutters 31%, 1D8
Bellows and nails 29%, 1D4+1 (range 15 yards)

Armor: Soft leather 1D6-1

Magic: none

(CONTINUED)

Skills: Craft (structural engineering) 85%, Evaluate 59%, Insight 46%, Other Language (impressive technical jargon) 88%, Own Language ('pande) 74%, Repair/Devise 103%

COVERT BLUE ASSASSIN

This willowy young woman looks like any other peasant girl found in the farms and hamlets scattered throughout S'aleem, and this is just the kind of impression she wishes to convey. In reality she is a member of the Blue Assassins, trained in the art of killing, and awaiting the call from the elders of the clan. Until that call comes, she is just one more pauper eking a living from the fragile earth, but no-one can predict when she might be summoned to bring her skills to bear: perhaps it will be against the adventurers, if any of them demonstrate an allegiance with Chaos. Her attack will be short and sharp, leaving behind her only a corpse, its skin stained blue by the lethal poison that is the trade mark of the Blue Assassins.

STR 10 CON 12 SIZ 08 INT 14
POW 15 DEX 18 APP 14 Hit Points 10

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Akras 97%, 1D3+3 plus blade venom of POT13 Scimitar 86%, 1D8+1
Garrote 79%, strangulation

Armor: none usually; when called to kill, cast leather 1D10-1

Magic: none

Skills: Acrobatics 79%, Climb 91%, Hide 83%, Jump 66%, Listen 85%, Move Quietly 96%, Other Language (Assassin Sign Code) 79%, Own Language ('pande) 56%, Pick Lock 64%, Potions 59%, Throw 73%, Trap 71%



PERSONALITIES

COUNTESS GUYE

She has an incomparable beauty. Flame-like hair and the elegant features of one born to rule. Her expertise with people and politics is as adept as her skill with a sword, and clearly her people love her. This olive-skinned gift from the heavens inspires great loyalty in all who meet her, and even I, who occupy a similar level of status in my own lands, have pledged her my service. — From the Journal of Duke Avan Astran.

Tall and proud, with a mane of fiery red hair and skin tanned to a burnished hue, Countess Anathaym Guye rules the western half of Anakhazan with a gentle hand, cooperating with her cousin and counterpart, Count Freyr, but gently chiding him for his puritan ways. Guye has been trained in the martial tradition and is the match for any man when it comes to battle. In politics and diplomacy she surpasses all her peers, with the exception of Count Freyr, and it is through her efforts and personal charm that Anakhazan has become such a prosperous nation.



Elric, during his travels across the Unknown East, seeks refuge in Guye's home during his flight from the Haghan'iin Host and becomes her lover for a time. When the Host invades Anakhazan, seeking Elric's blood for destroying its womenfolk, Guye marshals her army of nobles, allying with Count Freyr and Elric, and takes the fight to the Haghan'iin, a battle which results in their destruction.

Countess Guye survives Terarn Gashtek's onslaught and helps to rebuild the east after the Flamebringer's death. Eventually she joins the war council of the Eastern nations that convenes at Karlaak prior to the End of the World.

Chaos 13 Balance 89 Law 23

STR 12 CON 14 SIZ 12 INT 18
POW 17 DEX 17 APP 19 Hit Points 13

Damage Bonus: none

Longsword 121%, 1D10+1
Broadsword 103%, 1D8+1
Akras 102%, 1D3+3
Hunting Bow 115%, 1D6+1
Full shield 98%, kb+1D4, 22 points

Armor: When in battle, Cast Leather 1D10/1D10-1, otherwise none

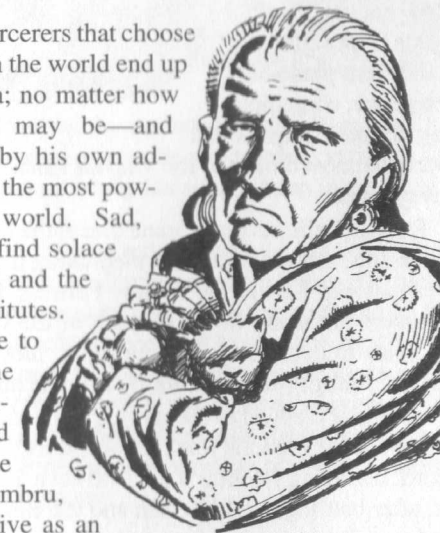
Magic: none

Skills: Art (poetry) 96%, Bargain 93%, Conceal Object 59%, Craft (tapestry) 83%, Diplomacy 87%, Dodge 87%, Evaluate 78%, Fast Talk 61%, Insight 73%, Listen 81%, Natural World 66%, Oratory 79%, Other Language (Ulish) 21%, Own Language ('pande) 126%, Ride (camel) 103%, Ride (horse) 71%, Scribe 79%, Unknown Kingdoms 84%, Young Kingdoms 10%

DRINIJ BARA

"Grinning warriors dragged a morose-faced man close to the fire and forced him to kneel before the barbarian chief. He was a lean man and he glowered at Terarn Gashtek and the little cat. Then his eyes saw the iron blade and his gaze faltered." — "The Flamebringers" The Stealer of Souls

Most Eastern sorcerers that choose to roam alone in the world end up like Drinij Bara; no matter how powerful they may be—and Drinij Bara is, by his own admission, one of the most powerful in the world. Sad, lonely, able to find solace only in alcohol and the arms of prostitutes. Unable to come to terms with the terrible knowledge conferred upon him by the Enclave of Tumburu, and forced to live as an outcast from society, Drinij Bara is vulnerable and prone to long bouts of melancholy and self-loathing, despite his ability to summon great and powerful demons.



As is the habit of many itinerant sorcerers, Drinij Bara hides his soul in the body of a familiar—in this case a cat. Caught in Terarn Gashtek's sacking of Kosaio, too drunk to try to escape, Drinij Bara is easily made a pawn of the Flamebringer's great plan—especially when his familiar is captured and held to ransom. It is thus his weird to aid Gashtek in laying waste to the Unknown East, calling upon Dag-Gadden the Destroyer—a powerful demon linked closely with the Knights of Tumburu—to aid the Flamebringer.

Drinij Bara dies at the hands of Terarn Gashtek, pierced through the eye by one of the Flamebringer's arrows.

Chaos 263 Balance 09 Law 03

STR 08 CON 11 SIZ 11 INT 36
POW 51 DEX 13 APP 10 Hit Points 11

Damage Bonus: none

Falchion 63%, 1D6+2
Akras 61%, 1D3+3
Sling 39%, 1D8

Armor: none

Magic: Spheres Fire, Spirit; Runes Summoning, Direction
Drinij Bara can summon Dag-Gadden, a unique major demon allied closely with the Warrior Priests of Phum. Its powers are never made clear in the story in which it appears, but it is suggested that it has a POW of at least 8D8 and totals about 35 D8 in other characteristics. It has the following abilities: Burn, Dazzle, Explode, and Gout Fire. If Dag-Gadden is ever used in the course of play, game masters may invent new abilities that reflect its extremely powerful nature.

Skills: Bargain 81%, Conceal Object 59%, Consume Alcohol 65%, Insight 94%, Million Spheres 93%, Natural World 97%, Physik 76%, Potions 81%, Unknown Kingdoms 79%, Young Kingdoms 31%

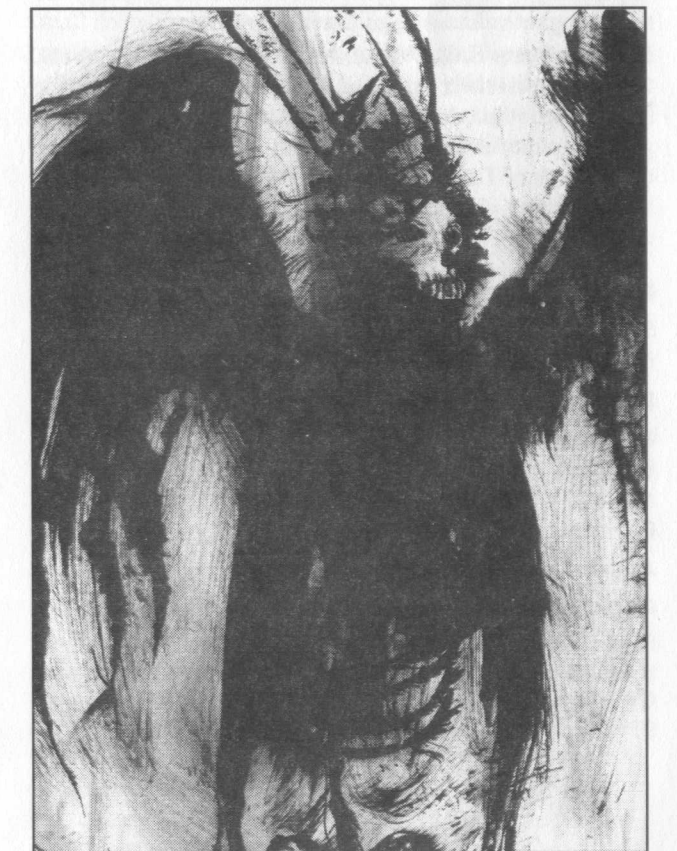
Drinij Bara's soul is hidden in the body of a cat. The cat has the following characteristics:

STR 02 CON 09 SIZ 03 INT 03
POW 13 DEX 19 Hit Points 06

Damage Bonus: -1D6

Armor: none

Skills: Climb 110%, Dodge 106%, Hide 98%



DAG-GADDEN THE DESTROYER

KALEG VOGUN
Usurper prince of the Tanghensi, half-brother of Changshai's rightful king, Drei Myur

Referred to only once in the Elric saga, Kaleg Vogun is, like Terarn Gashtek, an opportunist with imperialistic designs. Unlike Gashtek, Vogun lacks the charisma and military skill to realize his dreams. Thus his war mongering is, and always has been, confined to his home country of Changshai, which he has successfully torn apart.

Short and arrogant, Vogun walks with a swagger that he believes is fit for an emperor. He despises the old ways of Changshai, seeking to replace it with a new order based around his own, misguided ideals that place personal power before cooperation and trust. He sees power as the only means of personal and spiritual fulfillment, ignoring the more elegant values of tradition and learning.

In recent years Kaleg Vogun has been courting sorcerers, trying to enlist their aid in the fight against Drei Myur. He has had little success: most sorcerers recognize Kaleg Vogun's stupidity and steer clear of him, although it is said that the Knights of Tumbro have been taking an ever keener interest in the civil war of Changshai—and who knows for what reason?

Chaos 84 Balance 06 Law 17

STR 13 CON 16 SIZ 09 INT 13
POW 17 DEX 16 APP 08 Hit Points 13

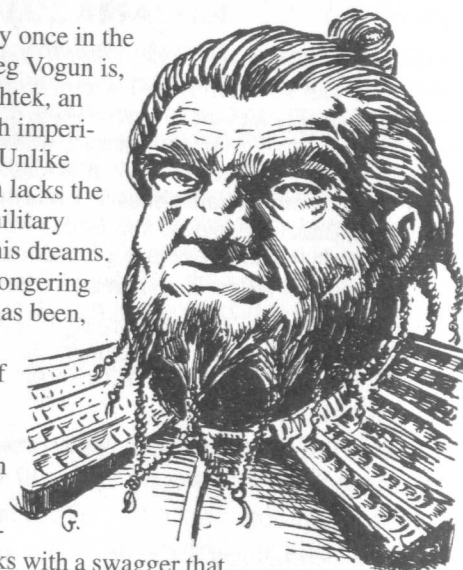
Damage Bonus: none

Longsword 97%, 1D10+1
Scimitar 96%, 1D8+1
Akras 93%, 1D3+3
Full shield 88%, kb+1D4, 22 points

Armor: Cast leather 1D10/1D10-1

Magic: none, but always interested in anyone who has it.

Skills: Art (conversation) 51%, Bargain 79%, Dodge 83%, Evaluate 62%, Hide 58%, Listen 59%, Natural World 66%, Own Language ('pande) 114%, Physik 75%, Ride (camel) 97%, Ride (horse) 89%, Unknown Kingdoms 73%



SORANA

She stopped as they came closer to her. She was dressed in loose black robes which flowed about her as if in a wind, but there was no wind. Her face was pale and pointed, her black eyes large and enigmatic. At her throat was a jewel. "Sorana," said Rackhir thickly, "you died." – 'To Rescue Tanelorn' The Singing Citadel.

This powerful sorceress and warrior-priest of Chaos was once a member of the Enclave of Tumbro and was, for a while, lover of Rackhir the Red Archer. Little is known about this beautiful and mysterious enchantress; it is said that she spent much of her time on a different plane of existence, contemplating insane mysteries that even the most daring of the Warrior Priests would shy away from.

Rackhir believes that Sorana dies at the hands of the Blue Assassins, slaughtered while meditating in the chambers of Yeshpotoom-Kahlai, the Unholy Fortress. But when he encounters her again in the domain of the Grey Lords, she explains to him that she disappeared, moving to the Grey Lords' strange plane seemingly at some higher bidding.

Sorana is pledged to the service of Eequor of Chaos, and despite what she tells Rackhir, she stills serves this Chaos Lord, betraying Rackhir's plans to save Tanelorn. However, after battling Lord Narjhan and the Beggar Horde in its defense, Rackhir takes Sorana back to Tanelorn with him, there to learn true peace.

Chaos 216 Balance 03 Law 06

STR 11 CON 14 SIZ 09 INT 40
POW 57 DEX 16 APP 17 Hit Points 12

Damage Bonus: none

Akras 79%, 1D3+3

Magic: Spheres Spirit, Flesh, Air; Runes Enhancement, Summoning

Sorana seems to be able to move through the planes of existence with great ease; this might be due to magic or some innate ability conferred upon her by her patron demon, Eequor of Chaos.

Skills: Art (singing) 79%, Conceal Object 61%, Dodge 49%, Hide 63%, Insight 79%, Listen 58%, Million Spheres 94%, Other Language (High Speech) 67%, Other Language (Low Melnibonéan) 84%, Own Language ('pande) 153%, Potions 81%, Scent/Taste 67%, Unknown Kingdoms 59%, Young Kingdoms 15%



TERARN GASHTEK

'Outside Terarn Gashtek's tasteless dwelling was his great war-lance decorated with more trophies of his conquests—the skulls and bones of Eastern princes and kings'. – 'The Flamebringers' The Stealer of Souls.

Once no more than a bandit leader in an impoverished country, Terarn Gashtek is that most dangerous of men—an insane opportunist. Seeing that his home country of Okara was in decay, he seized his chance and sacked its capital, Kosaio, thereby winning support from the disparate gangs littering Okara's depleted wastelands. His power was further consolidated by the capture of Drinij Bara, the drunken sorcerer who was in the wrong place at the wrong time, and specifically his soul, hidden in the body of a cat.

Without morals or fear, Gashtek commands a cruel army. He leads by example, leading his raggedy forces into battle with a ferocity unseen and unmatched at any time in the Unknown East since Melniboné left to war with the Dharzi. He relishes pain and suffering, enjoying the destruction brought about by his army and the demons summoned for him by Drinij Bara. Gashtek eventually meets his death at Elric's hand after foolishly attempting to expand his empire into the Young Kingdoms.

Chaos 99 Balance 13 Law 10

STR 16 CON 17 SIZ 13 INT 14
POW 14 DEX 15 APP 12 Hit Points 15

Damage Bonus: +1D6

Longsword 103%, 1D10+1+db
Broadsword 101%, 1D8+1+db
Lance 94%, 1D8+1+db
Desert recurved bow 102%, 1D8+2+1/2 db

Armor: Cast Leather 1D10/1D10-1

Magic: none (but see entry for Drinij Bara)

Skills: Bargain 41%, Climb 63%, Dodge 88%, Evaluate 65%, Hide 58%, Insight 71%, Military Tactics 98%, Move Quietly 67%, Navigate 76%, Other Language (Ulish) 51%, Own Language ('pande) 99%, Ride (Camel) 94%, Ride (Horse) 66%, Search 83%, Throw 72%, Track 51%



WHELDRAKE

His face, adorned by an almost diseased-looking beard, was freckled and pale, from which glared blue eyes as sharp and busy as a bird's, above a pointed beak which gave him the appearance of an enormous finch, enormously serious...The Revenge of the Rose, I, I

Elric first encounters Wheldrake the Poet in the plains of Valederia, not far from the temple of Toomoo-Kag-Sanapet. Short and good natured, he is neither from the Young Kingdoms nor the Unknown East. He is a wanderer of the time-streams, thrown about through the multiverse seemingly at random and is probably an incarnation of the companion to the Eternal Champion. Wheldrake can communicate fluently in whatever language is being used, regardless of where he appears in the multiverse.

His true home is the London of our own world and the small riverside district of Putney, a place he longs for and reminisces about at some length, prone to lapsing into appalling and lengthy verse at the slightest opportunity. Wheldrake is a cheerful companion and might be encountered by adventurers anywhere and at any time.

STR 08 CON 12 SIZ 08 INT 15
POW 16 DEX 11 APP 13 Hit Points 10

Damage Bonus: -1D4

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Magic: none

Skills: Art (terrible poetry) 99%, Bargain 63%, Conceal Object 58%, Evaluate 41%, Fast Talk 63%, Million Spheres 24%, Oratory 36%, Reminisce about Putney 103%, Scribe 87%



INVITATION TO THE EASTLANDS

MINI-SCENARIOS

WHEREIN THE ADVENTURERS SAVE A BABE, SEEK A GLOBE, INVESTIGATE A MURDER, TRACK AN EXPLORER AND, POSSIBLY, CONFRONT THEMSELVES

IN THIS SECTION, the germ of scenario ideas are presented for development by game masters. These cameos obviously need expanding, but backgrounds and rationales are complete. Unless stated, the scenarios can take place anywhere in the Unknown East.

DAY OF THE RECKONING

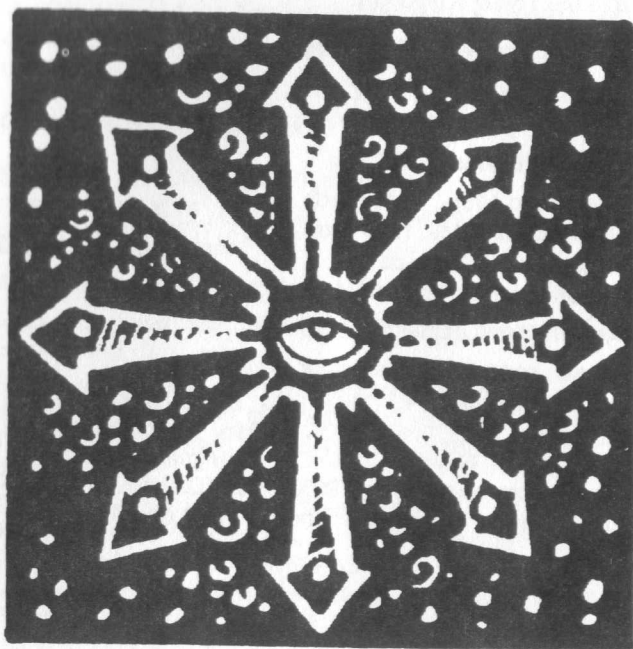
ONE EVENING, while going about their business, the adventurers come across a disturbance in a quiet section of town. A young woman is being confronted by a small group of armed men; she cries and clutches of bundle of rags to her bosom, trying to avoid the blows of the gang. The adventurers' intervention causes the gang to flee, but only after a fight—and, although the adventurers save the life of the young woman, the gang manage to tear the bundle of rags away from her. The adventurers find that the woman is no more than sixteen or seventeen years old, and is clad in faded clothes that indicate some kind of grandeur; Unknown Kingdoms rolls determine that she is probably from Phum. The bundle of rags she was fiercely protecting was her son, less than two years of age.

The woman is called Eskrell and is the wife of a member of Phum's high caste. Her child has been chosen to be presented to the Enclave of Tumbru at The Reckoning. Eskrell is no lover of Chaos, her first child having been taken from her arms the year before. Rather than have this child taken into the Enclave of Tumbru, Eskrell fled Lhasa, wanting to get as far away from Phum as possible and to lead a normal life away from the tyranny of her husband.

Eskrell offers the adventurers her entire wealth, the princely sum of 69 Rahnd, to get her child back. This involves trying to find the gang of men—her husband's brothers—before they get back to Lhasa and stealing back the baby. However the Phumites are cunning, and the ad-

venturers find themselves following them to Lhasa and having to negotiate its depressing, disease-infested streets, before attempting to rescue Eskrell's baby on the very day that The Reckoning takes place.

The ceremony for The Reckoning always occurs in the outer courtyard of Castle Tumbru, overlooking Lhasa, since it is the only place in the castle that non-Warrior Priests are allowed to enter. To successfully pull off the rescue the adventurers must avoid the high caste of Phum who have brought their own children to The Reckoning and, of course, the Knights of Tumbru themselves. It is likely that security surrounding The Reckoning is weak—the Knights do not expect anyone to assault the ceremony—and if the adventurers have prepared adequately and have surprise on their side, they should be able to rescue the baby.



A PRAYER FOR THE DYING

ISHALEEM OF ANAKHEERA is dying. Cancer rots his body and he knows he has no more than a few months to live. His dying wish is to gaze upon the Globe of Future Nations, fiercely guarded by the ruling families of Anakheera. The adventurers are approached by Ishaleem's wife, she offers them a substantial reward for first of all locating the shrine where the Globe is held and then taking her husband inside to see it before he dies. The final happiness of her husband is all she cares about; money is no object.

Locating the Globe is an entire task in itself. Its location is a closely guarded secret, and the adventurers need to use more than their sword-arms to discover its whereabouts. High ranking members of the Guyë and Freyr families know—or can find out—where the shrine is and what its defenses are like, but the adventurers must find some way of persuading such a high placed source to reveal what he or she knows. This might involve the construction of an elaborate deceit, blackmail perhaps, or some other kind of persuasive threat, to get the Important Person to talk. Constructing such a plan may take many days of preparation and be a scenario in its own right.

Gaining access to the shrine is far more difficult. The guards defending it are well trained and heavily armed. Soul-stealing wyrms are used like watchdogs and both magical and mechanical traps are employed to guard the maze-like passages leading into the huge underground room where the Globe resides. It is said that no-one save the inner circle of the Guyë and Freyr families have ever managed to reach the Globe. Accompanied by the ailing Ishaleem, the adventurers have their work cut out in getting to the globe, and when they finally reach it, do they really want to know how the world will one day look? Will it be an anticlimax? Will Ishaleem survive the journey? With each day he deteriorates, seemingly kept alive by sheer power of will. And if the adventurers are caught, how will the Guyë and Freyr clans look upon this mission of mercy? With clemency or deep suspicion? Are the financial rewards worth the risk? Only the adventurers can decide.

THE IOTAI CONNECTION

THIS SCENARIO IS A MURDER mystery and requires careful plotting if it is to be used successfully. While in Kosaio, Okara's capital, the adventurers make the acquaintance of Hakim Sedriish, a friendly, but somewhat arrogant, merchant who employs the adventurers to act as hired muscle for one of his caravans, taking Okaran spices to Valed-Hal. The night before the caravan is due to leave Kosaio, the adventurers find Hakim dead in his study, a knife thrust deeply into his chest.

The Kosaio authorities are disinclined to investigate, but Hakim's family have other ideas and ask the adventurers, offering excellent payment, to find the murderer.

There are plenty of suspects:

She'then Mehari, Hakim's old partner who is now a rival in the spice trade. She fell out with Hakim some years ago following an argument about the splitting of profits. A bitter feud developed and She'then has no adequate alibi to explain her whereabouts on the night of the murder.

Kooreen, Queen of the Night, a high-class prostitute who regularly met with Hakim at his home and who was with him on the night of the murder. She is pregnant, and the word on the street is that Hakim is the father. Kooreen clearly loved Hakim and wanted marriage—they argued when he refused, wanting nothing more than a professional relationship with her. Perhaps she killed him in a fit of rage at being treated so badly.

Maurel Kethen, head of Hakim's caravan. Hakim had promised him a partnership in the business but had subsequently changed his mind, probably as a result of his feud with She'then. Although Maurel tries hard to disguise his anger, he has a history of violence and is quite capable of taking revenge by murdering the merchant.

Curil Meer'ol, owner of one of the Kosaio gambling dens. Hakim had worked up a significant gambling debt, which he intended to payoff with the profits from the shipment of spices the adventurers were meant to guard. Curil had learned that Hakim had no intention of repaying the money and was intending to leave Kosaio and set up business somewhere in Valederia. He has a lot of muscle behind him and could easily have employed someone to commit the murder.

There are several clues the adventurers can use to help solve the crime: all the above suspects had met with Hakim in the few days prior to his death and rows of one kind or another had broken out. The murderer had not needed to break into Hakim's house—he had obviously allowed them entry; additionally, no struggle took place before the murder, Hakim was stabbed quickly and taken completely by surprise. Nothing is missing from Hakim's house—the murder was not a result of any attempt at burglary. The dagger used to kill Hakim is a finely crafted specimen and made by only one weaponsmith in Kosaio. The weaponsmith can identify the dagger and provide a general description of who bought it and thus, who committed the murder.

The game master should choose who committed the crime and decide on the attitude of each suspect towards the adventurers as they go about their investigations. The motive for killing Hakim is not what it appears though. One of the suspects is an agent of the Iotai, King Usheri's secret police that keeps watch on Kosaio's inhabitants. Hakim himself was an Iotai agent, something he kept secret from his friends and family, but which the adventurers discover as they make discreet enquiries around the city (perhaps an informer manages to unearth this fact for them). He was killed because the Iotai discovered that Hakim had secretly been taking bribes from Kosaioan citizens under investigation, thus hampering the Iotai's work. His death was an execution, one of the standard methods used by the Iotai to punish those who betray them. A surgeon's report or study

of the killing reveals that it was the work of someone handy with a knife and with extremely quick reactions.

The adventurers are closely watched by the Iotai as they make their enquiries—attempts on their lives occur, although the adventurers should have the guile to survive them. There may also be mysterious warnings for the party to drop the investigation and get out of Kosaio before they share Hakim's fate. When they realize who they are dealing with the adventurers should have the sense to get out quickly—tackling the might of the Iotai is not recommended, and this is ultimately one battle they cannot adequately fight and hope to win.

SHAKING THE TREE

MEDAQUIR GUYĚ, a minor noble of Anakhazan's GuyĚ clan has disappeared. Engaged by his distraught family, the adventurers are asked to help find him. Medaquir has a reputation for foolish and dangerous endeavors, and after investigating his home they find plans relating to an expedition into the Haghan'in Forest. Clearly he would have been deterred if he'd made his intentions public, and Countess GuyĚ herself would have intervened if necessary.

A handsome reward is offered to the adventurers if they will go into the forest and try to find the impetuous would-be explorer: maybe the adventurers are forced to go as punishment for their involvement in the scenario "A Prayer for the Dying", outlined earlier in this section.

A PICTURE FRAMED

WHILE EXPLORING A CITY of the Unknown East, the adventurers happen upon a street artist who draws exquisite pictures on the paving stones of the market square. The artist, Bedrassin, has attracted quite a crowd and the adventurers stop to watch the bewitching street-sketcher at work. When he has finished Bedrassin calls to the adventurers, telling them that are just what he has been looking for; he has a private commission from a wealthy citizen to paint a picture that embodies the heroic spirit of Menastree. The adventurers fit the bill and Bedrassin wants them to pose for preliminary sketches and then the painting of the portrait itself. The payment is poor, but the artist is excellent and his enthusiasm endearing. At his attic studio the adventurers pose for several days while Bedrassin goes about his work, producing an impressive portrait that is indeed a work of art.

A few days later the adventurers are arrested by the city militia. They are forced to take part in an identity parade and are picked out by a small, terrified old woman. It transpires that she is the only survivor of a ruthless attack on the family of Jedrin Kurtesz, an influential citizen, and she identifies the adventurers as the murderers. Only by proving where they were on the night of the attack can the ad-

venturers convince the militia of their innocence. Yet someone has framed them for a brutal murder, and the adventurers must somehow find the real killer to fully clear their names.

Bedrassin is responsible. In fact he isn't an artist at all, but a rogue sorcerer seeking revenge on the man who stole his love. Several years ago the sorcerer was deeply in love with a beautiful woman who had posed for several of his pictures. Shessella did not reciprocate, and when she announced that she was to be married to Jedrin Kurtesz, Bedrassin fled the city in a jealous fit and began to plan how he might be revenged on her and the man she had preferred to him.

Bedrassin decided to have both murdered. Using a complex series of spells, he has perfected a way of bringing painted pictures to life. To do so requires a willing subject to pose for a painting. As he works, the sorcerer slowly steals Magic Points from the subject, working them into the painting. The subject is unaware of the spell since it is done over several days while the sorcerer completes the picture.

The portrait 'commissioned' for Kurtesz was enchanted in this manner. Kurtesz was an art collector, and he received the portrait on the morning of his death, delivered by a courier and with no message attached. He took the portrait into his home and left it, unstudied, in the hall way. That night, while Kurtesz and Shessella slept, the spell kicked into action. The painted likenesses of the adventurers took on physical form, emerging from the painting and stalking through the house to Kurtesz's bedroom. They killed the couple in a brutal, frenzied attack, directed by Bedrassin's jealous rage. The old housekeeper, hearing the dreadful commotion, went to investigate and saw the painted figures murdering her master and mistress. She fainted, and so escaped the same fate.

Bedrassin is still in the city. He wants to get into Kurtesz's house to retrieve the painting of the adventurers and also a portrait of Shessella he completed before she chose Kurtesz. He intends to enchant her portrait and bring to life a painted version of her, a version that will be completely faithful. When confronted by the adventurers Bedrassin animates their painted versions to protect him. The adventurers thus find that they are fighting themselves: the painted demons have exactly the same statistics as the real thing but feel no pain and fight with a ferocity even the adventurers are not capable of.

During this confrontation Bedrassin escapes, taking his portrait of Shessella with him. His attempts to animate her painted version fail, and instead Bedrassin works a variant of his spell. When the adventurers find where he has been hiding, if at all, there is no sign of Bedrassin. The room contains only a large oil painting, a portrait of Bedrassin and Shessella. Bedrassin smiles, and Shessella has a strange, haunted expression on her face. If the adventurers examine the painting closely, they can see that her painted image is weeping real tears. Bedrassin is no threat to anyone anymore, and his soul now resides in the picture of he and Shessella, all that he has ever wanted. ☉

THE FUTURE TENSED

THIS BOOK COVERS the Unknown East in the decade or so before it is sacked by the Flamebringer. Following Elric's coronation, the albino becomes involved in the Unknown East's fate, and its future is described below.

THREE YEARS AFTER ELRIC'S CORONATION

ELRIC TRAVELS to the Unknown East in search of Eshmir. He strays into the Haghan'in forest where he is captured and tortured by the Haghan'in Host, but escapes and flees to Anakhazan, where he is given refuge by Countess Anathaym GuyĚ. When the Haghan'in Host invades Anakhazan, intent on revenge, it is met by the army of the combined GuyĚ and Freyr clans, Elric riding at its head. The battle is swift and bitter, and results in the destruction of the male Haghan'in, leaving only the non-sentient females of species back in the tree cities of the forest. After this Elric makes his way across the Unknown East and reaches the ruined town and temple dedicated to Toomoo-Kag-Senapet, a forgotten Lord of Chaos once worshipped by the inhabitants of Phum. Not far from here, in the foothills of the Shenkh mountains, he encounters the poet Wheldrake who has become a nomad of the Million Spheres and is trying to return to his beloved Putney. After this, Elric is summoned back to Imrry and embarks on the quest to save his father's soul as described in *The Revenge of the Rose*.

FOUR YEARS AFTER ELRIC'S CORONATION

TERARN GASHTEK, the Flamebringer, unifies the Okaran bandit clans and mounts an assault on Kosaio, capturing in the process the sorcerer Drinij Bara, whom he finds drunk in a seedy Kosaio tavern. Terarn Gashtek spends almost a year gathering his forces and planning his strategy to conquer the eastern kingdoms.

FIVE YEARS AFTER ELRIC'S CORONATION

THE FLAMEBRINGER crosses the Shenkh Mountains and marches across Changshai, taking by surprise the forces of Kaleg Vogun's Tanghensi. Drinij Bara summons Dag-Gadden the Destroyer and levels the city. Unstoppable, and aided by the Tanghensi who have surrendered to him, Gashtek marches north and manages to lay siege to Elwher. Despite the valiant efforts of the Eshmirians, Elwher is all but razed to the ground by Gashtek's tame sorcerer and his demon. Heris falls soon after and Eshmir is left a smouldering ruin as Gashtek marches west, taking Anakhazan and Maidahk in the process.



SIX YEARS AFTER ELRIC'S CORONATION

TERARN GASHTEK crosses the Ragged Pillars and presses down towards the Young Kingdoms, intending to take Karlaak and then the rest of Ilmiora. Moonglum, riding ahead of the Flamebringer's army, reaches Elric and warns him of Gashtek's plans. Together they penetrate Gashtek's camp in the Weeping Waste and attempt to free Drinij Bara as described in the story *The Flamebringer*. Terarn Gashtek is eventually defeated and his brief reign of conquest and destruction ends in the harsh winds and rain of the Weeping Waste.

SEVEN YEARS AFTER ELRIC'S CORONATION

THE EASTERN KINGDOMS begin to rebuild. Eshmir, despite being almost destroyed, manages to restore its cities to their former glory. Anakhazan's two provinces are united together when the GuyĚ clan seize control from the Freyr clan, the latter having been all but destroyed by the Flamebringer. In Changshai, the Drei Myur comes out of exile and returns to Tanghensi. Kaleg Vogun is dead and the civil war is at an end. Pooling resources with Eshmir, Changshai begins to rebuild and lends as much aid as it can to Eshmir. After a year of intense activity, Eshmir and Changshai sign an accord of trade and military support which is later joined by what remains of Okara—a new, less ambitious government having arisen in Terarn Gashtek's wake.

The Valederian Directorates fare less well. The treaty which had bound the Directorate nations together remains shattered after Terarn Gashtek's destruction. Towards the beginning of the eighth year after Elric's coronation, Pan Tang begins its bid to control the Young Kingdoms. In the Unknown East, the Knights of Tumbru heed the call to arms and begin their own sorceries which bring a number of Chaos Lords to Menastree, among them Eequor. From the Enclave of Tumbru, demon warriors ride, attacking Valederia and Maidahk. The Knights attack Anakhazan and Countess GuyĚ flees to Eshmir, uniting with the governments of Changshai and Okara. It is soon realized that this is a battle for the control of the world, and the war council opts to fight on the side of Law. The council undertakes a journey west, using the ancient tunnel beneath the Ragged Pillars, and meets with the forces of the Young Kingdoms, pledging whatever aid it can. Their actions are worthy but futile. The Knights of Tumbru, aided by Eequor of Chaos and his demon legions waste the Unknown East completely, turning it into a seething mess of Chaos mutation. Eventually the world ends as described in the book *Stormbringer*.

THE EASTWARD URGE

THE EASTWARD URGE is an introductory scenario designed to bring Young Kingdoms adventurers into the Unknown East. It begins in Old Hrolmar where the adventurers save the life of a lusty explorer and join the expedition assembled by Duke Avan Astran to travel to the Unknown East. In the course of their travels, the adventurers encounter a mad scrutineer from Eshmir, his tame sorcerer, and a Valni tribe. Their dealings with all three will be governed as much by their diplomacy as by their combat skills. The aim of the scenario is to establish a campaign set in the Unknown East and is therefore left open-ended. Many possibilities for further adventures exist and some suggestions are provided at the end of the scenario.

To begin this adventure, the party should already be in Old Hrolmar—perhaps resting there after a previous job, or simply looking for work. With a little adaptation there is no reason why this scenario cannot begin in a different town or city.

THE LOVE-LIFE OF ROTARI QUICKKLOINS

IT IS A WARM AND CLOUDLESS night as the adventurers wander through the streets of Old Hrolmar back to their lodgings or homes. Perhaps they've been drinking at a tavern in the old quarter of the city, or even simply out taking the salt-heavy air that washes in from the Oldest Ocean. Whatever the reason, the quickest way for them to reach their place of dwelling is to cut along New Man's Stave, a wide, well-lit street nestling in the shadow of the City Watch Barracks. The Stave is flanked on either side by large, ornate houses, the homes of wealthy merchants and church bureaucrats. The sounds of revelry emit from some of the grand buildings and candlelight mingles with the thin glow of the crescent moon hanging wearily overhead. It is peaceful and dreamy; a perfect summer's night for a leisurely walk home.

The peace is suddenly shattered by the sound of cartwheels rattling at some speed further New Man's Stave. The adventurers see that a carriage has rounded the corner of Pontine Street and has come to a noisy halt outside a tall, unlit house about a hundred yards away. Three figures pile out of the carriage and even at this distance the adventurers see that they are brandishing weapons—clubs of some sort. The three then break through the door of the house and almost fall inside.

A few seconds later, there is a crash from the upper-floor window overlooking the street. A shape hurtles through the air, trailing shreds of cloth, and lands on the cobbles with a painful thud. The shape shudders slightly and forms itself into a man who begins to hobble towards the adventurers, waving his arms and calling to them frantically. As he moves into a narrow patch of moonlight, they can see that he is only partially clothed. His trousers sag around his knees and he unsuccessfully attempts to wriggle into his shirt as he runs, his boots slung on laces around his neck. He grins mischievously as he nears the adventurers, but is in some pain and limping to the left.

ROTARI QUICKKLOINS

Tall and fine featured, with a shock of black hair and a square, handsome face, Rotari of the Quickcloins is a lothario of the highest order. His rapid exit from the house was on account of the fact that he has just been caught in bed with the wife of an influential and insanely jealous merchant called Wimslade. Wimslade suspected his wife's infidelity some days ago; and so, supposedly away on business for the evening, he decided to send his three large brothers to the house in the hope of catching his wife and her lover. He was correct in his assumptions, and Rotari took the quickest way out of the bedroom—this being the window—rather than risk the wrath of Wimslade's siblings.

When not indulging his hedonistic cravings, Rotari is a merchant venturer and a friend of Duke Avan Astran, Old



ROTARI QUICKKLOINS

Hrolmar's governor and a noted adventurer. Rotari is wealthy and influential but bores easily and craves excitement, taking whatever risks this pursuit entails. Friendly, extrovert and generous, he is also reckless, fickle, and prone to errors of judgement which have cost him dearly in the past. Yet this does not deter him. Where there is excitement there is danger, and for Rotari Quickcloins, danger is the greatest drug in the world.

Chaos: 37 Balance: 21 Law: 23

STR 10 CON 17 SIZ 14 INT 14
POW 16 DEX 17 APP 15 Hit Points 16

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: Soft Leather 1D6-1

Weapons: Rapier 105%, damage 1D6+1+1D4
Broadsword 99%, damage 1D8+1+1D4
Hunting Bow 89%, damage 1D6+1+1/2 db

Skills: Climb 94%, Dodge 63%, Evaluate 73%, Fast Talk 96%, Insight 51%, Jump 63%, Move Quietly 36%, Navigate 102%, Physik 31%, Repair 78%, Sailing 103%, Seduction 79%, Swim 88%, Throw 64%, Young Kingdoms 49%

Although he has escaped from the house of Wimslade, Rotari isn't out of trouble yet. As he reaches the adventurers, he holds out a hand and requests their assistance.

"That old rascal Wimslade will kill me," he hisses. "Please, you've got to help me get away..." Rotari is most persuasive, and even when out of breath, he manages to make the adventurers want to help him. Suddenly, they hear shouts coming from the house and see three large, angry

men running at them down the street. They are fixed on Rotari, who manages a smile and hurriedly whispers to the adventurers to help him. The three assailants are Wimslade's brothers and they are intent on beating Rotari to a pulp.

There are three courses of action. Either the adventurers can try to reason with the brothers, try to shield Rotari, or they can fight. The first two courses of action are out of the question: in their furious bloodlust, Wimslade's brothers see the adventurers as Rotari's friends who have been aiding him in this and other infidelities. They are therefore as bad as he is. Also, they want Rotari's blood and reasoning simply won't work. If the adventurers are going to get in the way, the brothers will have their blood as well. A fight is the only option.

THE WIMSLADE TRIPLETS

The three brothers are triplets. Large, balding foreheads, bulging muscles and mean expressions, they resemble a family of insane gorillas and have tempers to match. Wimslade is their youngest brother and the one with the brains and hence, the money. They protect his interests to secure their own and anyone who crosses Wimslade crosses this trio. But they are not killers. They aim to break limbs and use their fists, feet and clubs to do the damage. The fight should be relatively easy for the adventurers—especially if they outnumber the three thugs. The trio fights for three rounds, fleeing if the battle isn't going their way, hurling insults as they depart, swearing revenge.

STR 17 CON 16 SIZ 17 INT 08
POW 10 DEX 13 APP 10 Hit Points 17

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: Padded aprons of leather for 1D3-1 protection

Weapons: Brawl 66%, damage 1D3+1D4
Wrestle 73%, damage special
Club 68%, damage 1D6+1D4

Skills: Dodge 38%, Gesticulate in a Threatening Manner 81%

If things go badly the adventurers can try to break away from the fight and use the triplet's carriage as a getaway vehicle. It takes a Ride roll to control the team of horses, but the triplets aren't expecting such a cunning plan and will be left cursing and swearing as the adventurers make a break for it.

The adventurers should manage to escape, keeping Rotari intact. If they win the fight, Rotari leaps into the carriage parked outside Wimslade's house and beckons to the adventurers to join him. He seems to have enjoyed the fight enormously and he invites the adventurers to join him in a victory drink—even if they have little to celebrate. Again, the irrepressible charm persuades the adventurers to take up the invitation.

As Rotari steers the carriage through the streets of Old Hrolmar he introduces himself and tells the adventurers

how he came to hurtle through the window and be set upon by three identical thugs. Rotari has no shame and he jokes about the conquest of Wimslade's wife, boasting that he brought her all the pleasures her husband's substantial riches could never offer. He hardly stops boasting of his conquests until they reach a large, sprawling house in its own grounds close to the city wall. Rotari jumps down, wincing as he lands on his twisted ankle, and ushers the adventurers indoors, promising whatever entertainments his new friends desire.

Rotari's house is furnished in a style that utterly reflects his personality. Outrageous works of art from all over the Young Kingdoms adorn the walls, floors and ceilings of the vast entrance hall and enormous sitting room. A small army of servants bring wine, sweetmeats and fruit as Rotari and the adventurers sprawl on large, Tarkeshite sleeping cushions, watching a troupe of Dharijorian dancing girls perform a private show. As the dancers whirl suggestively through their routine, Rotari explains that he is a merchant by profession, as was his father and grandfather. He trades in the kind of cargoes most merchant crews won't touch, and has no qualms about trading with either Pan Tang or Melniboné.

"But it's my next voyage that'll make me really rich." He says between mouthfuls of grape. "I'm taking part in an expedition with Duke Avan Astran in a few days. We're going where no-one else has ever been: overland to the east and into the Unknown Kingdoms."

Rotari explains that about two years ago, Astran came into possession of documents detailing the Unknown East, or Menastree as it is known by its inhabitants. The documents are Melnibonéan in origin, compiled at the behest of Emperor Sadric the eighty-sixth, for his son Elric, a keen scholar who is, uncharacteristically for a Melnibonéan, interested in the study of other cultures. The documents include a map and lexicon of Menastree's language. Astran has studied these intently and has now decided that the time is ripe for an expedition into the Unknown East. No Young Kingdoms explorers have ever been there and Astran is eager to be the first.

Rotari was intrigued and has invested a substantial sum in the project. He tells the adventurers that they are still looking for resourceful people to accompany the expedition and invites them to join. "We could all become very rich from just one trip there and back. You'll be paid a retainer of course, but also a one percent share in the profits. Think about it: you'd be making history."

Rotari offers a retainer of 1000 bronze to each adventurer and by his reckoning one percent of the profit made on the trip could be ten times as much. If the adventurers need persuading further, let them try to bargain for more. Rotari is prepared to increase the retainer to 1,750 bronzes per adventurer but cannot increase the percentage in the profits. He can also hand over the money that evening if necessary, but prefers to have solid promises that the adventurers will accompany the expedition before doing so.

Assuming that the adventurers agree and that suitable remuneration is decided upon, Rotari calls for a celebration and demands more wine and food for his friends. Tomorrow they will be introduced to Duke Avan Astran and the final preparations for the expedition will be made. But tonight is for merriment, and in the house of Rotari Quickloins, this is not in short supply.

A MEETING WITH THE DUKE

With or without hangovers, the adventurers are woken early by Rotari's servants and provided with a breakfast of exotic fruits. He is in an ebullient mood, and once breakfast is finished, his carriage is brought to the front of the house, ready to take him and the adventurers to Astran's mansion in the centre of the city.

Astran's house is bigger than Rotari's, and no less ostentatious. Servants greet the coach and usher the party inside, courteously asking the adventurers to leave any weapons larger than daggers in the carriage. Rotari leads the way through the winding corridors of the mansion and up to the second story where Astran has his study and library. Astran stands over a large table, pouring over a map. Rotari introduces the adventurers and explains how they helped save his life. Astran good-naturedly chides Rotari for his indiscretions, and then shakes hands with the adventurers and says that he's happy to welcome friends of Rotari to the crew. Astran outlines the form of the expedition and the roles the adventurers will be required to take. He has learned that the Unknown East does not have many horses. Camels, unheard of in the Young Kingdoms, are the main beast of burden, but are difficult to train and prone to obstinate outbursts. Astran intends to take 25 stallions and 25 mares to the Unknown East, selling them as breeding pairs for less than they would cost in the east, but for considerably more than they would fetch in the Young Kingdoms. If his hunch is correct, a supply of horses to the Unknown East will bring larger markets and secure great riches for those involved. But more importantly, Astran wants to be the first Young Kingdoms citizen to reach a continent that has been isolated ever since Melnibonéan influence began to decline.

The Unknown East is separated from the Young Kingdoms by a range of mountains the Eastlanders call the Ragged Pillars. It was thought that this was impassable, but Astran has learned from the Melnibonéan texts that an ancient supply road leads through the lowest peaks and can be navigated. Attempting to reach the east by sea is extremely hazardous and Astran knows of more than one attempt that has failed. So, he has decided to go over land and through the Ragged Pillars.

Astran needs to ensure the safety of the horses. Wagons will take the expedition through the Weeping Waste and into the foothills of the Ragged Pillars, a journey taking about twenty days. From there, the expedition must continue on foot, climbing through the mountains and following

a long forgotten road built by Melniboné thousands of years before. In the summer months the road is likely to be hazardous but not impassable: in the winter, it is almost certainly blocked by snow and other dangers. It will be the adventurers' task to tend to the horses during the journey to the Ragged Pillars and then to act as scouts as they embark on the road leading through the mountains. He stresses that it is risky, but if his charts prove accurate, the expedition should be able to negotiate the road without catastrophe. Once in the Unknown East, the expedition will proceed to a country called Anakhazan. Astran understands this to be the closest of the eastern nations to the Ragged Pillars and intends to make it the first port of call, establishing his market in the most accessible place.



DUKE AVAN ASTRAN

Astran is handsome and chiselled in appearance, his skin bronzed by many adventures. He exudes an air of quiet power and controlled passion, but in essence cannot wait for the next challenge to prevent itself. This causes him to sometimes act on impulse and he is prone to making rash decisions. Those who know him well or work for him love him like a brother or a father: he is loyal, caring and elicits respect from those he chooses as his friends or employees.

The following statistics are derived from the *Elric!* Personalities Section and are presented here for convenience.

Chaos 12, Balance 38, Law 62

STR 15 CON 16 SIZ 14 INT 13
POW 13 DEX 14 APP 12 Hit Points 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Great Sword 120%, damage 2D8+1D4

Broadsword 97%, damage 1D8+1+1D4

Spear 76%, damage 1D6+1+1D4

Full Shield 85%, damage kb+1D4+1D4, 22 Hit Points

Armor: Half-plate for 1D8-1

Magic: none

Skills: Bargain 67%, Climb 35%, Common Tongue 80%, Dodge 66%, Evaluate 52%, Insight 39%, Jump 87%, Lesh 15%, Melnibonéan 40%, Mong 14%, Move Quietly 45%, Natural World 67%, Navigate 73%, Oratory 82%, 'pande 21%, Physik 62%, Ride (horse) 87%, Sailing 32%, Swim 49%, Throw 61%, Track 52%, Unknown Kingdoms 15%, Young Kingdoms 77%

THE JOURNEY

OLD HROLMAR TO THE RAGGED PILLARS

THE ADVENTURERS HAVE two days in which to prepare whatever they need for the journey. Astran supplies suitable mounts and trail gear; anything else is up to the adventurers.

The expedition convenes in the courtyard of Astran's magnificent home. A high-ranking priest of Goldar is on hand to bless the company and a sizeable gathering of people cheers and waves as Astran explains the purpose of the expedition to an eager public. Each member of the expedition is treated like a hero and the adventurers should enjoy the adulation: handshakes fuelled by pride, kisses from tearful women who fear that these dashing explorers might never return. Rotari enjoys the attention of an attractive Vilmirian noblewoman who presents him with one of her garters, freshly plucked from her leg, as a good-luck charm. He smiles broadly at the adventurers as they go about their preparations.

There are a few more members of the expeditionary force the adventurers have not yet met. Radock, the Master of Horses, Elgin, a skilled metal worker, and Lockliss, Astran's personal scribe. The horses are being transported in large wagons, designed by Elgin, each capable of holding five horses without too much discomfort. The ten wagons are to be controlled by all the expeditionary members on a rota basis. When not controlling a wagon, the explorers may ride alone on a horse supplied by Astran, acting as scouts.

RADOCK

Short and smiling, Radock has spent so much time with horses that he has somehow come to resemble one. His large front teeth jut out above his thick, malleable lips, and he snorts whenever he laughs. He is of a jovial disposition and talks at length about horses whenever he is permitted, or drunk.

STR 11 CON 13 SIZ 08 INT 13
POW 12 DEX 12 APP 09 Hit Points 11

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: Soft leather 1D6-1

Weapons: Horsewhip 63%, damage 1D3-1 + entangle
Shortsword 51%, damage 1D6+1

Skills: Craft (equine husbandry) 110%, Dodge 31%, Evaluate 56%, Natural World 78%, Repair/Devise 65%, Ride 117%

ELGIN

Elgin is a master smithy and engineer, specializing in elaborate forms of horse-drawn transportation. He is a stern looking man in his late forties and sports an unkempt beard of matted red hair. His pate is bald and tanned from many years working in the open air. A man of few words, he works quickly and silently, preferring not to be disturbed or to disturb others through socializing. He is a loyal companion however, and utterly trustworthy.

STR 17 CON 16 SIZ 16 INT 15
POW 13 DEX 16 APP 12 Hit Points 16

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Armor: Soft leather 1D6-1

Weapons: Cestus 68%, damage 1D3+2+1D4

Battle Axe 72%, damage 1D8+2+1D4

Small shield 56%, Hit Points 20

Skills: Bargain 49%, Craft (smithing) 119%, Dodge 52%, Evaluate 66%, Insight 59%, Listen 71%, Physik 39%, Pick Lock 55%, Repair/Devise 98%

LOCKLISS

Tall, moon-faced and perpetually smiling, Lockliss is Astran's manservant and is to record Astran's thoughts, feelings and exploits during the expedition. He is fond of terrible jokes and puns, sparing no lurid detail when cracking yet another rude jest, usually involving bodily functions. Lockliss has the capacity to be exceedingly irritating, especially in his constant fawning after his master. Elgin has already taken a dislike to the man, following a crude joke about a blacksmith, a branding iron and a discreet area of the human body.

STR 10 CON 10 SIZ 14 INT 13
POW 12 DEX 13 APP 11 Hit Points 12

Damage Bonus: None

Armor: Soft Leather 1D6-1

Weapons: Dagger 31%, 1D4+2

Skills: Art (sketching) 79%, Climb 46%, Fast Talk 36%, Listen 42%, Recite Dirty Joke 88%

Food for the trail is kept in lockers slung under the wagons, although once the Ragged Pillars are reached, each member of the team will have to carry their own rations and water. Radock is responsible for the welfare of the horses during the journey, but the adventurers are expected to help in keeping the wagons clean and horses comfortable. He goes through the basic feeding and watering routine with the adventurers while Astran plays to the crowd; it soon becomes apparent that they will be spending a lot of time shovelling horse manure and keeping the animals happy.

Eventually the expedition is ready to leave; blessing complete, eulogies spoken and the wagons fully loaded and checked. To the sound of a cheering crowd, the caravan rumbles through the gates of Astran's mansion and onto the Great North Road, its destination the Unknown East.

THE FIRST STAGE

THE FIRST LEG of the journey takes the caravan north through Vilmir and Ilmiora and then east into the Weeping Waste, twenty or so days in total. For the most part the travelling is without event, and once the caravan begins its trek through the Weeping Waste, the country side becomes bleak and depressing, harsh winds and a seemingly incessant rain lashing at the travellers as they steadily make their way towards the Ragged Pillars which rear in the distance.

Every evening, once camp has been made, Astran insists that each member of the company attends a lesson in 'pande. Astran has spent two years studying the language and believes that he has a reasonable grasp of its structure. The intention is that by the time they reach Anakhazan, everyone will be able to hold a rudimentary conversation in 'pande and at least get the gist of what is being said to them.

By the time the adventurers reach Anakhazan, they will have acquired 1 point of 'pande for every point of INT. In addition to this, adventurers who have knowledge of the Melnibonéan Low Tongue gain an additional point of 'pande for every 5 points of Low Melnibonéan. The two languages share a common base and some words and expressions are similar, meaning that individuals schooled in Low Melnibonéan find 'pande easier to grasp.

No encounters have been set for the journey to the Ragged Pillars although gamesmasters might wish to enliven proceedings by perhaps including fierce sand storms or an attack by Weeping Waste barbarians, eager to get their hands on the horses forming the caravan's cargo. Such encounters should be used to add color and not to tax the adventurers too much: the journey through the Ragged Pillars will be quite enough for them to suffer.

Twenty days after leaving Vilmir, the caravan reaches the small town of Kildarium, the place where the wagons will be left behind and the expedition continuing on foot. Kildarium is a tiny settlement consisting of no more than ten buildings, one of which is a tavern of the most basic sort. It was thought that the hills surrounding Kildarium once contained gold, and prospectors rushed here in eager anticipation of becoming rich overnight. However the rumors proved to be untrue, and so the prospectors fled, leaving behind a ghost town.

No one lives in Kildarium any longer, and it is so far from the any other large settlements that no-one ever ventures here. Astran feels that Kildarium's fortunes could be revived if trade routes are established; he envisages a thriving city built on taxes gained from Eastern goods imported by Young Kingdoms merchants. Naturally he sees himself as its governor, and as the expedition makes camp, he describes his grand plans for the place. The expedition rests in Kildarium for a day, before continuing on foot into the foothills of the Ragged Pillars. During this time the wagons are unloaded, provisions transferred to the draft horses for transportation through the mountains, and warm-weather clothing (large, woolly ponchos and sheepskin leggings)

issued to each member of the team. Radock spends his time making sure that all the horses have firm shoes and are sturdy enough to make this most difficult stage of the journey.

The adventurers have some free time to explore Kildarium, or simply to rest if they wish. The town has ten buildings, each no more than a ruined shell except for the old inn, which still has stables (where the wagons will be hidden) and a few serviceable rooms that can be used for sleeping. Astran prefers to stay outside, and has ordered tents to be pitched, but Rotari, obviously bored of the hard days on the road, has produced a crate of Vilmirian wine and sets up an impromptu bar in the old inn, with himself as inn keeper. For the rest of the day a fair amount of drinking takes place, with only Lockliss refraining from the merriment.

THE RAGGED PILLARS

EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, the caravan begins to make its way into the foothills of the Ragged Pillars. After a few hours of pleasant walking through the forests of pine and spruce, Astran announces that a mile away is the start of the road built by the Melnibonéans. This road leads through the mountains and into the Unknown East. Astran smiles and Rotari stops complaining about his feet as the expedition turns in the direction Astran has indicated—and, sure enough, the road begins where the charts predict.

Melniboné built many roads during its centuries of empire and this little known road is an excellent example. Its surface is almost smooth, the work of earth elementals, and is gently cambered to allow rainwater to drain away. For the first ten miles the road winds sedately through the foothills; however as the expedition stops to make camp for the evening, the adventurers see that it soon begins to climb steeply and curves in an erratic fashion, following the contours of the hillsides before disappearing into the lower peaks and crevasses of the Ragged Pillars. The snowline in these parts is quite low, and the adventurers have already noticed a distinct chill in the air. Tomorrow they will be climbing into ice and snow.

It is not necessary to describe every day of the trek. Instead, it is enough for gamesmasters to inform the adventurers that the progress is slow, laborious and cold. After a day's walking, they reach the snowline, and by the end of the second day, the snow is knee-deep in places. Sometimes it is almost impossible to see the road, and as the expedition winds its way higher into the Ragged Pillars, the adventurers need to help in clearing the path ahead, using the shovels previously employed in clearing the dung from the horse wagons.

Getting through the worst section of the Ragged Pillars takes ten days, with the adventurers needing to endure the hardships of driving winds, frequent snow falls and the slipperiness of the road underfoot. Fortunately the expedition avoids the treacherous ravines of the Ragged Pillars, but this does not mean that there are not dangers.

FATIGUE AND COLD

Climbing at this altitude and in subzero temperatures takes its toll on each member of the expedition. For each of the ten days spent crossing the Ragged Pillars, every member of the party must make a CON x5 roll to resist the effects of fatigue. If the roll is successful no ill effects are experienced. If the roll is failed, then the individual loses 1 point of CON and all skills are reduced by 5%. These losses are cumulative, and lost CON and skill points cannot be regained until the party reaches warmer climes and rest for at least three days. If rations are cut for any reason (see below table for one such reason), then the effects of fatigue are enhanced: individuals must roll CON x3 to avoid fatigue for that day.

In addition to the effects of fatigue, frost bite is also a problem. Any individual failing to make the CON roll that day stands a 40% chance that frost bite also sets in. Frost bite affects the extremities, and to see what areas of the body are affected, consult the following table:

FROST BITE TABLE

| Roll 1D8 | |
|----------|------------------------|
| 1 | Fingers |
| 2 | Toes |
| 3 | Ears |
| 4 | Fingers and toes |
| 5 | Ears and fingers |
| 6 | Ears and toes |
| 7-8 | Ears, fingers and toes |

For each area affected by frost bite, the individual loses 1 hit point and 1 point of DEX, in addition to any effects of fatigue. Skills are also affected:

Fingers: Manipulation skills drop by 5%

Toes: Agility skills drop by 5%

Ears: Listen skill drops by 5%

The effects of frost bite are cumulative. For example, if an adventurer fails his daily CON roll two days in a row, there is a 40% chance each day that he or she is stricken by frost bite. If it strikes on both days, 2 hit points are lost and the table above must be consulted to determine the extremities affected.

Physik rolls cannot cure the damage caused by frost bite—only shelter in a warm, secure place can do this. Physik rolls can limit the amount of damage. If the roll is successfully made frost bite will not attack that character on the following day, even if the CON roll is failed. Any existing damage due to frost bite is not healed; such healing must take place in a warm, comfortable environment. Healing spells are as effective as usual.

HAZARDS IN THE PILLARS

THERE IS A 15% chance each day that a major hazard strikes the expedition. The following table provides some suggestions for hazards although game masters are encouraged to add to this list.

ROLL 1D6

1. BLIZZARD. Powerful winds throw up blinding sheets of snow, making movement almost impossible. This panics some of the horses and there is a 40% chance that 1D6 animals stray from the path and tumble down a nearby ravine. A critical Ride roll is needed to calm the horses and prevent them from falling from the road. If this fails, the panicked horses are lost forever as they tumble into the depths of the Ragged Pillars.

2. ELGIN LOSES HIS FOOTING and falls, sliding over the edge of the road and into a ravine. The nearest adventurer must make a Dexterity roll to catch hold of the unfortunate fellow before he tumbles to his death. If the roll succeeds, the adventurer must then try to haul Elgin back onto the road: match the adventurer's STR against Elgin's SIZ on the resistance table. If successful, Elgin is pulled to safety. If the roll fails, Elgin falls to his death. If fumbled, then the adventurer must make another Dexterity roll to avoid being dragged with Elgin. If this Dexterity roll fails, the adventurer falls to his or her death. If it succeeds, only Elgin falls.

3. AN ADVENTURER LOSES his or her footing and must be saved by the nearest companion. Determine randomly or choose the unfortunate. The same rules apply as above.

4. DURING THE NIGHT, have the adventurers check for Listen rolls. If successful they hear a low, low screeching noise from somewhere high up in the farthest peaks. Next day, after about four hours of walking, a huge, black shape appears over the summit of a nearby peak and hurtles down towards the expedition. The creature is one of the Wyrms that inhabit the Withered Peak mountains in the far north of the Unknown East. This particular creature has strayed far from its mountain nest and is hungry for souls. It swoops down on the party, snatching one of the horses in its first pass and disappearing high into the mountains. The remaining horses are panicked—see the Blizzard entry for possible effects. Attacking the wyrm causes it to drop the horse (to its death, unfortunately) and turn its attentions to the party, attacking a randomly selected adventurer and continuing until either it has captured that adventurer, is reduced to less than half hit points (in which case it flees) or is killed. The wyrm takes a captured adventurer back to its temporary nest high in the mountains, draining the adventurer's soul as it flies. It then devours the body over a number of days. A captured adventurer may try to escape, although it should be pointed out that he or she is likely to fall to his or her doom if the wyrm is forced to let go.

WYRM

STR 26 CON 19 SIZ 26 INT 08 POW 19

DEX 23 Hit Points 23

Damage Bonus: +2D6

Armor: 7 points for thick, blue-green scales

Weapons: 2 xClaw 40%, damage: Wyrms drain 1D3 points of POW each round that the target is held in its claws—when zero POW is reached, target is dead. Target must roll STR vs STR on resistance table to escape

Bite 38%, Damage 1D10+3+2D6

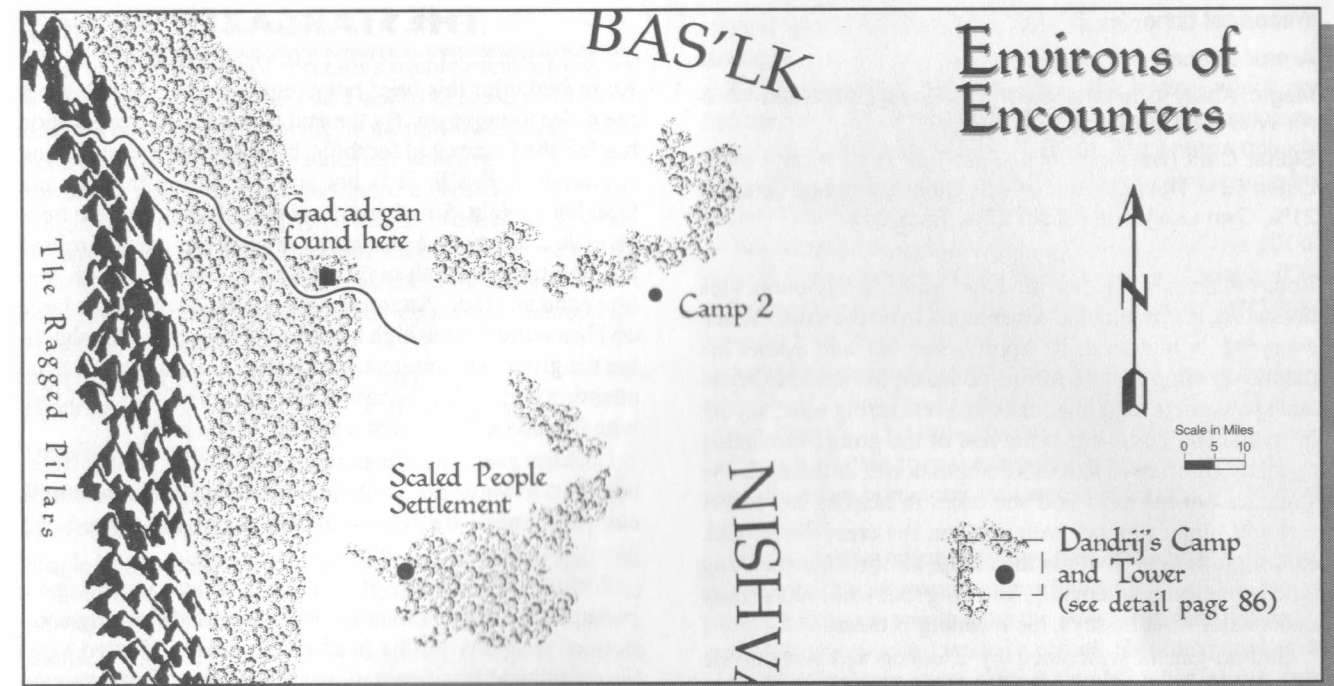
Magic: none

Skills: Dodge 46%, Screech in a blood curdling manner 79%

5. A SUDDEN NOISE (horses whinnying, a wyrm screeching as it makes an attack) causes an avalanche in the peaks directly above the road. The massive amount of snow, ice and rock that dislodges and tumbles towards the expedition takes two rounds before it strikes, allowing the human members of the party time to try to get themselves and the horses into the shelter of a nearby overhang of rock. It's impossible to get all the horses to safety, and 1D10 are swept away in the avalanche. Each individual must make a Dexterity roll to get into safety. Those caught in the open suffer 2D10 points of damage when the avalanche hits and must make a DEX x1 roll to avoid being swept down the mountain side. If swept away, an adventurer is carried for 1D10 x10 feet, sustaining 1D3 points of damage for every 10 feet carried, eventually being buried under 2D3 feet of snow. It takes a buried adventurer 2 rounds for every foot of snow to dig out, and free adventurers 1 round for every foot of snow to dig down to the buried individual. Unconscious adventurers cannot dig out, and neither can they alert free adventurers to their location. Buried adventurers who cannot dig out lose 1 hit point for every two rounds they are buried due to the cold and weight of snow above them. Free adventurers need to make Search rolls to locate a buried companion and then dig down to save them.

In addition, there is a 20% chance that food rations carried by the expedition will be lost in the avalanche. Roll 1D100 to determine the percentage amount of food lost; remaining rations must then be allocated sparingly with the effects mentioned in the section on Fatigue and Cold coming into play.

6. ROTARI, SUFFERING FROM FATIGUE and frost bite, begins to panic as the expedition climbs up a particularly narrow section of the road with a sheer drop on one side. He begins to shout (possibly instigating an avalanche) and demands that the expedition turn back. He needs to be restrained somehow, and uses violent force if physical means are attempted, striking with weapons and aiming to hurt anyone who approaches him. The best way to calm Rotari down is by using reasoned discussion: an Insight roll identifies this method, and a successful Charisma roll convinces him that the best way of surviving the Ragged Pillars is to carry on—because soon they will be going down the other side.



During the ten day crossing of the Ragged Pillars, emphasize the biting cold, the driving winds and the general all round misery of making a trip through the inhospitable mountains. With luck, all the members of the expedition and its cargo survive; at worst, some of the horses are lost to the mountains. Towards the end of the tenth day the adventurers leave the snow line of the Ragged Pillars on the eastern side of the mountains and descend into a distinctly warmer environment in the relative safety of the Unknown East.

THE SHAMAN

After the cold hostility of the Ragged Pillars, the warm, humid forests of the Bas'lk foothills on the eastern side of the mountains are comforting and peaceful. Astran recommends that the expedition rests for a couple of days so that the horses can be tended and wounds sustained in passing through the mountains patched up. Camp is made in a large clearing close by a crystal clear stream of mountain meltwater; birdsong echoes through the trees and Elgin sets snares, catching rabbits and a few flightless birds which supplement the dwindling stocks of food.

The peace is soon disturbed. A cry shatters the still of the evening and Astran orders two of the adventurers to investigate.

They find that one of Elgin's snares has caught something larger than a bird. An elderly woman lies on her back, her left leg held fast by a rope noose Elgin has rigged to a sprung branch. Her skin is almost black in color, and her hair is set into a thatch of twisted dreadlocks. She's hurt, and not by Elgin's trap; dried blood covers her face and hands, a deep cut running across her forehead. She makes

no sound as the adventurers approach but watches them with alert brown eyes. Her breathing is labored and she is in some pain. She wears only stitched animal hides, and is unarmed.

If the adventurers cut her free, she scrambles to her feet and tries to run. Catching her is easy—her left ankle has been twisted by the snare and she stumbles and falls within a few yards. Only if the adventurers touch her does she cry out again—her voice is a series of whistles and clicks, and is definitely not 'pande. If the adventurers do not try to restrain her she cowers in the long grass, edging backwards slightly but always keeping the adventurers in sight. If they leave her strung up and get help, she begins to cry, quiet but wracking sobs, tears of red running down her cheeks.

GAD-AD-GAN, VALNI SHAMAN

THE OLD WOMAN IS Gag-ad-gan, shaman of the Owl tribe of the Bas'lk Valni. The Owl tribe is peaceful enough, and Gag-ad-gan is all that remains of it. The rest of her kin are either dead or taken into slavery, and she believes that she is about to join them. She is normally straight-talking and forthright, but is presently terrified and in pain. Gag-ad-gan distrusts all non-Valni, believing pale-skins to be devils sent by Shenkh for some crime her people may have committed in the past. But, with gentle treatment and the respect her age and position accords, she can be persuaded to speak, and when she does, she speaks at length and in detail.

STR 06 CON 09 SIZ 08 INT 17
POW 17 DEX 07 APP 10 Hit Points 08

Damage Bonus: -1D6

Weapons: none

Armor: none

Magic: Ability to commune with Owl Beast Lord Whoo-Whit-Ah-Who-Whit, ability to read omens

Skills: Craft (weaving) 74%, Fast Talk 76%, Insight 94%, Listen 89%, Natural World 104%, Other Language ('pande) 21%, Own Language (Ulish) 97%, Track 64%

Rotari realizes she is petrified and immediately unbuckles his sword, instructing the adventurers to do the same. When everyone is unarmed, he approaches her and opens his palms, showing that he means no harm; his smile is broad and sympathetic and he speaks in a reassuring tone, saying his name and gesturing to the rest of the group, indicating that they are friends. Rotari's compassion does the trick. He stretches out his hand and she takes it, helping her to her feet and supporting her weight when she cries out in pain. Rotari guides her towards the camp, all the time speaking quietly and sympathetically, knowing that while she cannot understand what he says, his meaning is clear.

Gad-ad-gan is welcomed by a concerned Astran. He looks at her wound, announcing that it was the result of a glancing sword-cut. Elgin gives her food, although she refuses to eat the small birds he has caught, and Rotari makes her a gift of his cloak. If the adventurers follow suit, she begins to warm to the party and her fears subside. After a while, and a mug of Astran's brandy, she begins to talk. Understanding what she says is difficult; she mixes 'pande with Ulish, but with successful 'pande and Idea rolls the adventurers learn the following.

Her tribe and village has been destroyed. Seven moons ago, riders came into the forests and approached the Owl tribe's Sa, requesting manual labor to help in building a great temple. The Sa declined and the riders left. They returned the next day, tenfold in number and rode through the settlement burning and killing the old, sick and very young. The men-folk were rounded up by sorcery and dragged away. The leader of the riders, one she calls The Stargazer, sat on his camel and laughed at the carnage—it was he who struck her with the flat of his sword as she implored him to spare a peaceful people. Gad-ad-gan doesn't know what happened next—all she recalls is being hauled into the air by Elgin's bird-trap and meeting the pale-skins. Clearly she has wandered in a delirium for some days.

Astran offers Gad-ad-gan his protection and tells her that the expedition is going to Anakhazan—she is welcome to go with them. She declines but implores him to help. Astran makes it clear that he is not equipped to go against such a large force of warriors, but will see if he can get help when he reaches Anakhazan.

Eventually the expedition settles down to sleep. In the morning Gad-ad-gan has gone. Even if a watch was posted during the night, no one saw her leave, although one of the adventurers may recall the distant hooting of owls shortly before dawn. Searching for her is in vain; the old shaman has completely disappeared.

THE STARGAZER

Refreshed after this brief but eventful pause, Astran gives the order to move on. By the end of the day the expedition has left the forests and foothills, breaking into the sweeping savannah of Bas'lk. It is hot and dry during the day and freezing at night. Small groups of thick-boled, leafless trees provide shelter, insects swarm around the camp fire and through the savannah night the howls and shrieks of coyotes echo and fade. Attentive adventurers notice that a large owl has settled in the high branches of a nearby tree, watching the group with interest. Suddenly, something attracts its attention and its head snaps sharply around. Then Lockliss, who has taken first watch, calls out to the party.

Lockliss gazes into the darkness. When the group arrives he points towards the south: in the distance the adventurers can see flames—torches—and they're moving towards the camp at speed.

Within a few minutes it is possible to make out shapes: perhaps fifty riders, mounted on camels, and carrying a variety of weapons. At the head of the group ride two men. One is tall and fine featured, a red and green scarf wrapped around his head and secured with a gold brooch. The other is wiry and intense, his eyes flick nervously around and his hands twitch constantly. The leader is Dandrij, an insane scrutineer of Eshmir; the nervous man is Gorjin, a wandering sorcerer who has attached himself to Dandrij's group of apostles and acts as an advisor.

DANDRIJ

Sharp and alert, Dandrij has a keen but twisted mind. Expelled from Eshmir for his heretical ramblings, he believes himself to be the chosen voice of Methanwyr and rightful ruler of Eshmir. In his exile he has gathered around him a motley rabble who believe in his divine status, convinced and terrified by Gorjin's magic into thinking that Dandrij is truly sent by the Elithior. Dandrij is building a huge tower dedicated to Methanwyr and is using slave labor to aid in its construction, the peaceful Bas'lk Valni providing most of the muscle. His ultimate aim is to rally together an army with which to take Eshmir by force. This mad idea is doomed to fail, but for now, backed by his raggedy clan of disciples, Dandrij is a very real threat to both the Valni and Astran's expedition.

STR 15 CON 14 SIZ 13 INT 13
POW 15 DEX 13 APP 15 Hit Points 14

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Akras 60%, 1D3+3 Scimitar 57%, 1D8+1

Armor: Tempered Leather 2D4-2

Magic: None

Skills: Art (astrology) 78%, Art (astronomy) 63%, Dodge 42%, Insane Insight 51%, Navigate 67%, Oratory 87%, Other Language (Ulish) 33%, Own Language ('pande) 91%, Ride (camel) 60%, Unknown Kingdoms 53%

GORJIN

A nervous specimen of sorcerous training and a paranoid wreck, Gorjin has joined with Dandrij because he believes that the powers of Chaos are working through the scrutineer. He finds Dandrij's madness fascinating and he enjoys the power acting as sorcerous muscle provides. As sorcerers go, he is not particularly powerful, but amongst Dandrij's small army, he holds a godlike status, second only to the scrutineer. Gorjin regularly keeps the rank and file in line with demonstrations of his power, explaining them as examples of Methanwyr's wrath.

STR 10 CON 10 SIZ 08 INT 19
POW 16 DEX 12 APP 12 Hit Points 09

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: Akras 42%, 1D3+3

Armor: soft leather 1D6-1

Magic: Sphere Fire, Rune Creation. Gorjin rarely uses other spheres or runes, enjoying the chaos his command of fire provides.

Skills: Dodge 22%, Hide 43%, Insight 62%, Million Spheres 36%, Natural World 58%, Other Language (High Speech) 29%, Own Language ('pande) 102%, Ride 38%, Unknown Kingdoms 47%, Young Kingdoms 06%

DANDRIJ'S DISCIPLES

This unholy crew believe in Dandrij's insane mutterings because they have little else in their lives. It is an army of forty eight, gathered from all over Menastree, and not particularly competent as warriors go. But mob-handed they can achieve their aims. If Dandrij is exposed for the madman that he is, their faith can be shaken. If he is killed, they seek to avenge the death of their messiah, whipping themselves into a berserk fury. Use the statistics for the Okaran Bandit Clan in the Digest section, reducing all weapons skills by 10 percentiles.

When the group is within twenty yards of the camp, Dandrij signals for his riders to halt. He calls out for the leader to step forward—Astran obliges, his hand resting on the pommel of his sword.

The leader of the riders begins to speak and 'pande rolls are necessary to understand the quick accent and soft dialect. Dandrij announces who he is, adding that he is also messiah of Methanwyr, chosen of the Elithior and true ruler of Mighty Eshmir. He and his apostles are building a great temple to Methanwyr's glory, and mighty Methanwyr has proclaimed that all resident in Bas'lk will help in this endeavor. Dandrij tells Astran that he wants five of his strongest men to join his builders. When Astran asks what will happen if he refuses, Dandrij grins and jabbars something to the nervous-looking man next to him.

Gorjin lifts his head and spreads his hands. He opens his mouth and emits a single high-pitched shriek. One of the trees close by explodes. Have the adventurers make Dexterity rolls to avoid the burning debris that rains down

around them. Anyone who fails sustains 1D4 points of damage.

The explosion of the tree causes the horses, which are hidden from view, to whinny. Dandrij hears this and commands two of his riders to investigate. They return quickly and jabber excitedly; Dandrij grins broadly and returns his attention to Astran.

"Methanwyr would be most pleased to receive a gift of horses. Instead of taking a gift of men I will take half of your beasts. Methanwyr be praised and may the stars gaze favorably on your futures."

Astran protests and drags his sword from its scabbard—only Rotari's hand on his shoulder prevents him from leaping at Dandrij. The little sorcerer flexes his fingers again, as though waiting to make something else explode; behind him, the riders bring their own arms to bear, ready and willing to fight.

It is Radock who ruins things. The thought of giving up his beloved horses to a common bandit is too much for the man. He runs screaming from the trees, shortsword in hand, and charges towards Dandrij's camel. He almost makes it: an arrow from the ranks behind Dandrij whistles out, taking Radock cleanly through the head. He falls to the floor only a foot from Dandrij, his hand still wrapped tightly around his sword.

The scrutineer barks an order and eight of his disciples break away from the group, heading to where the horses are tethered. The rest form a line behind Dandrij and Gorjin, weapons ready and leers of murderous intent etched on their faces. "It needn't be like this," Dandrij says, "Give me your horses and you may go free. Resist and you will die."

Rotari councils Astran to do as Dandrij says, and reluctantly he agrees. If the adventurers try to attack the scrutineer, sorcerer or any of his small gang, then a fight breaks out. Gorjin stays well to the back, sending forth goutts of flame into the centre of the battle. Dandrij is protected by a wall of five of his warriors, and these fight feverishly to protect their messiah. The expedition is severely outnumbered and a battle is likely to go against the adventurers.

Whether or not a pitched fight takes place, Dandrij's men seize all the horses. Dandrij leaves behind the expedition's personal mounts, perhaps as a gesture of Methanwyr's providence. Astran stands and watches his precious cargo disappear into the darkness, fists clenching and unclenching with barely contained rage. Rotari and Elgin collect Radock's body and bind it in his cloak, laying a horseshoe across his chest.

No one else gets much rest. Astran paces restlessly until dawn breaks. He confers with Rotari, and before the sun has barely climbed into the clear blue sky, he announces his plan.

He, Elgin and Lockliss will go to Anakhazan and there try to get help to retrieve the horses. Rotari and the adventurers should track Dandrij and assess the strength of his following. They should work out the weak points of his camp, find out where the horses are being held and what

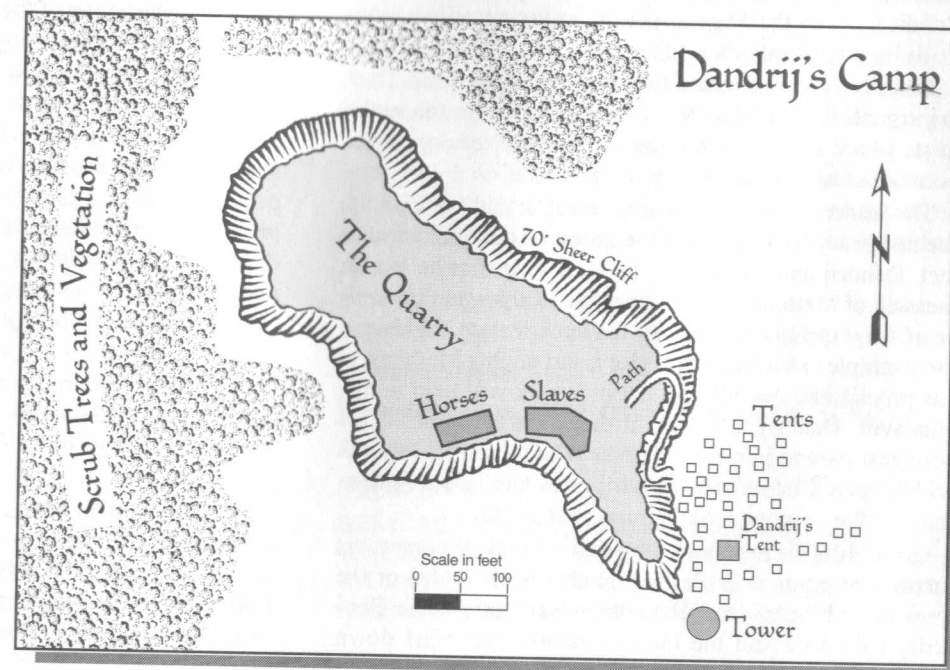
has happened to Gad-ad-gan's people. If they can liberate the captives without significant risk to themselves, they should do so. If they can kill Dandrij, again they should do so, but at all times making the safety of the horses a priority. He will return as soon as he can, and, as a final incentive, he offers to double the adventurers' share of the profits if the horses are safely retrieved. After burying Radock in the parched savannah soil, Astran, Elgin and Lockliss gather together their equipment, and without a further word they off towards the rising sun.

TRACKING DANDRIJ

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT to see where the scrutineer has headed. His gang has left more than enough tracks to make following an easy task. It takes most of the day to reach the valley where he has made his base, and the powerful sun makes the going extremely tough. The adventurers must also be on the look out for scouts; Dandrij usually has four or five riders patrolling the area within two miles of the camp. If these scouts see the adventurers, they head back to get reinforcements. However they are not vigilant, believing that Methanwyr himself protects the camp and that a divine signal will warn them of any intruders.

A diagram of the camp is provided. The adventurers can find a sheltered vantage point amongst the clusters of trees overlooking the quarry. The tower Dandrij is constructing rears threateningly into the sky on the southern ridge. It is half-complete, and the adventurers can see that rock is being quarried and hauled up the steep slopes to be cut into rough blocks for the tower. It is an ugly creation. Uneven and in danger of collapse, it is evident that Dandrij is no architect. The tower represents his twisted mind, but in the Bas'lk wastes it is imposing and impressive, being the only man-made structure as far as the eye can see.

The diagram marks where the slaves and horses are held. There are two hundred slaves kept in a corral in the base of the quarry. There is no fresh water and a constant guard of fifteen disciples which changes every four hours. For fun, the guards stage fights between the slaves, goading them into a boxing match and betting on the outcome. The slaves are dehydrated and exhausted, lacking the strength to stand, let alone fight. When they are not working, cutting slabs of rock and dragging them up the dirt path to the construction site, they huddle in small groups, eyes down-



cast, parched lips cracked and bleeding. Many have sustained injuries during the construction work: broken limbs are common and some have fingers and toes missing, the wounds having healed badly. Flies swarm around the corral, and the stench of sweat, excrement and suffering is almost unbearable.

The horses are kept nearby, the same fifteen guards that watch the slaves being responsible for watching the horses. Dandrij intends to keep half and sell half in one of the Maidahkian towns on the border of Bas'lk. For now they are just another possession, and he intends to use them as draft horses for dragging rock up the side of the valley.

The disciples, Dandrij and Gorjin have their encampment at the top of the quarry, gathered around a well that Gorjin has sunk down to the water table some thirty feet below the ground. This is their only water supply, but is plentiful and fresh. Water is used sparingly, although Dandrij and Gorjin help themselves whenever they want.

The disciples live in a shanty-town of squalid tents which encircle Dandrij's own, more impressive affair. By day they oversee the slaves in the building work, patrol the outlying areas, and go hunting for food. Herds of antelope graze a few miles to the west, and provide enough food for the disciples and meagre rations for the slaves, just sufficient to keep them alive and able to work. The building starts at dawn and continues until dusk. In the cool evening Dandrij makes his daily proclamation, telling his disciples what Methanwyr has planned for him and those who follow him. Occasionally Gorjin provides a simple display of magic which awes the susceptible disciples. When his preaching is finished, Dandrij retires to his tent, usually accompanied by two or three female disciples. The rest cavort around the bonfires, drinking strong but life-threatening wine bought from a merchant caravan. They sing bawdy songs and break out into petty squabbles when the drink has taken

effect. In all they are poorly organized, but they considerably outnumber the adventurers, and in a straight battle would easily overwhelm them.

It is up to the adventurers to decide what they'll do and how they'll do it. By using stealth and ingenuity, it is possible to get down to the corral without being seen. Releasing the slaves will attract the attention of the guards and the slaves are too weak to rise to a fight. Releasing the horses creates similar problems, and getting them or the slaves up the steep-sided valley compounds matters. The only track winds right into the middle of the disciples' camp making it a hazardous route to take.

If the camp is attacked, the disciples quickly gather themselves together and begin to take defensive positions. Gorjin uses sorcery to locate the attackers and Dandrij sends at least seven riders out to tackle them.

Rotari advises against just waiting for help. Anakhazan is many days' ride away and there is no telling how long it will take for Astran to return with help—if he can raise any at all. He believes that they should try their best to get the horses and the slaves out of the camp and somehow slay Dandrij. If the adventurers cannot decide on a reasonable course of action, help comes in a most unusual form.

The adventurers notice an owl in one of the trees, very similar to the owl they saw on the night that Dandrij seized the horses. It watches the for a while and then takes to the wing, flying a little way and then hovering. Either an Insight, Idea or Natural World roll gives the adventurers the impression that the owl wants them to follow it. The owl flies a little way and waits for the adventurers to catch up before soaring off again, always remaining in sight.

The adventurers follow the owl for a day and it leads them into the foothills of the mountains and some distance into the forest. By the middle of the second day it alights in some trees and turns its head towards the north. A hundred yards or so from where the owl sits, the adventurers can see a large clearing, and in the clearing is a settlement. This is another Valni tribe, one that has recently moved into Bas'lk from Nishvalni-Oss.

THE SCALED PEOPLE

The Scaled People's totem is the adder, common to Nishvalni-Oss. In the summer the tribe moves into the forests of Bas'lk where it is cooler, and they know nothing of Dandrij's enslavement of the other tribes in this area. The Scaled People have short, tightly curled hair and their bodies are ritually scarred into a pattern resembling snake scales. They are suspicious of pale-skins, but not immediately hostile unless provoked. The Si of the tribe has a name the adventurers find unpronounceable in Ulish, but which in 'pande translates to He-Who-Slithers-Carefully. The Scaled People number one hundred and fifty, three times the size of Dandrij's mob. If the adventurers can convince He-Who-Slithers-Carefully, and his shaman, Eye-Open-Wide, that the Valni are being exploited, he will agree to help attack Dandrij's camp. But there is a price: in return he wants ten

horses. This is not open to negotiation, refusal means that he retracts his help and may even turn on the adventurers, such is the way of the adder.

HE-WHO-SLITHERS-CAREFULLY

He is stocky for a Valni, but is shrewd and has led his people for many years. He listens to reasoned argument and has a small command of 'pande, although it is a language he finds difficult. He-Who-Slithers-Carefully is not a man to be crossed. His tribe is loyal and trust to his judgement. If the adventurers anger him or offend in any way, a single command brings the full might of the Scaled People down on them with the speed of a striking viper.

STR 14 CON 15 SIZ 14 INT 12
POW 13 DEX 15 APP 10 Hit Points 15

Damage Bonus: +1D4

Weapons: Longspear 75%, 1D10+1+db Valni Bow 79%, 1D10+1+1/2 db

Armor: animal hides for 1D4

Magic: none

Skills: Dodge 73%, Insight 81%, Move Quietly 72%, Natural World 56%, Oratory 73%, Other Language ('pande) 13%, Own Language (Ulish) 87%, Snake Lore 79%.

EYE-OPEN-WIDE

The shaman is cunning: he suggests to He-Who-Slithers-Carefully the price of ten horses. He listens to reasoned argument and then consults the snake spirit, asking for a sign. If the adventurers have acted well, then the omen is good and he advises the Si to help the pale-skins but to act with caution. If the adventurers lack respect, the omen is bad and Eye-Open-Wide advises against helping them.

STR 09 CON 15 SIZ 10 INT 14
POW 17 DEX 14 APP 12 Hit Points 13

Damage Bonus: none

Weapons: none

Armor: animal hides for 1D3

Magic: Commune with the Beast Lord of Snakes

Skills: Evaluate 32%, Insight 79%, Listen 64%, Natural World 88%, Other Language ('pande) 09%, Own Language (Ulish) 85%, Scent/Taste 75%, Snake Lore 105%

Communication is difficult; neither side speaks 'pande fluently and the adventurers cannot speak Ulish. 'Pande rolls must be used to govern what each side can say and make understood. Where words fail, sign language can be employed, and Idea rolls help determine the meaning of each sign. He-Who-Slithers-Carefully asks the following questions, at the prompting of Eye-Open-Wide:

Where do you come from? Where is the camp? Why do you want to help Valni? Why have you come to the Scaled People for help? What can you offer in return for our help? Have you ever killed a snake?



DANDRIJ BESIEGED

Gamesmasters should decide whether or not the adventurers have given the right kind of answer. When the questions have been answered, Eye-Open-Wide goes off to consult with his spirit. If four or more of the answers they give are inappropriate, the omen is bad and help is refused. If they answer four or more of the questions appropriately, the omen is good and He-Who-Slithers-Carefully agrees to help, but in return for ten horses. If the adventurers disagree, the Si immediately retracts his offer and commands the adventurers to leave and never return. If He-Who-Slithers-Carefully is threatened or directly insulted, at least thirty Valni warriors are set upon the adventurers, aiming to kill them. Use the statistics for the Valni Hunting Party in the Digest section if this becomes necessary.

A NEST OF VIPERS

WITH DIPLOMACY, the adventurers enlist the Scaled People's help. He-Who-Slithers-Carefully orders a hundred of his warriors to accompany him and the adventurers to Dandrij's encampment. After seeing for himself the conditions of the slaves, he orders half his warriors to attack the disciple's camp and the other half to rescue the slaves. The adventurers are left to rescue the horses and Rotari insists that they also be allowed to go after Dandrij and Gorjin.

The ensuing battle should be climactic. Although disorganized, the disciples are ready for a fight—Gorjin has determined the threat in advance. The Scaled People warriors are tenacious fighters and soon overrun the disciples. In try-

ing to release the horses, have the adventurers combat several of the disciples, protecting what they have stolen. If the fight goes against the adventurers, Scaled People warriors help out.

The disciples cannot hope to win, but aim to take as many with them as they can. Dandrij heads for the half-built tower and climbs to the top. There he begins to lever boulders onto the Valni that swarm after him, killing a number in the process. Gorjin tries to create as much mayhem for the adventurers and the Valni as possible. He breaks from the encampment and runs over to the ridge of the valley and there casts a spell designed to keep the adventurers inside the quarry. He creates a wall of fire that sweeps around the ridge of the valley, blocking the way out for the horses and slaves. Trying to get through the wall of flames is risky: leaping or running through them requires a Luck roll of POW x3, if it fails, inflammable parts of the adventurers' clothing catches light. The flames are ferocious and burn with an intensity that inflicts 1D6+2 points of damage each round until the flames are extinguished, either by being doused in water or rolled in dust. The horses won't attempt to get through the flames, and panicked, stampede back into the quarry. Slaves are trampled underfoot as the horses rear and stumble around the enclosed space. Anyone caught in the quarry when the wall of fire blazes up must make a Luck roll to avoid being caught in the stampede.

The fire burns for 16 rounds or until Gorjin is killed, whereupon the flames cease abruptly. The sorcerer has to stand his ground, concentrating on the ferocity of the fire in order to maintain the spell—thus, if an adventurer breaks through and suffers no damage, Gorjin is vulnerable.

SAVING ROTARI

ROTARI IS ENGAGED in combat with a spear-wielding disciple; all around him Valni surge, swarming over the disciples like wasps over a honey jar. Rotari laughs as he parries another blow aimed at his head, and he stabs back only to find his attack deflected. The adventurers notice that one of the disciples has killed his Valni foe and has turned to attack Rotari, who is unaware of the sword being aimed at the back of his head. To save Rotari from decapitation, the adventurers must act quickly. Rotari is about eighty feet away—it would take two combat rounds to close with the disciple readying the attack. Two options exist: try to attract his attention by shouting—in which case the adventurers need to make a Luck roll to make themselves heard and Rotari needs to make a Listen roll to hear them over the commotion of the battle. If successful, Rotari ducks the sword-swing and stabs backwards with his own weapon. The second is to hit the disciple with a ranged weapon. Bodies keep interspersing themselves with the adventurer's line of fire, reducing the chance to hit by 20 percentiles. If the adventurers hit the Valni attacking Rotari from behind, they kill him. If they miss or fail to attract Rotari's attention, their friend dies.

MAN IN A HIGH TOWER

DANDRIJ CROUCHES at the top of his tower, screaming to the heavens in the vain hope that Methanwyr will save this most beloved of his servants. The Valni are occupied in mopping up the few disciples still left, and this leaves Dandrij open for an attack by the adventurers. The tower is eighty feet high and requires two successful Climb rolls to negotiate. It is far from stable, and if the roll fails, the adventurer dislodges a crucial piece of the structure, bringing down 1D4 large chunks of rock as he or she falls. Falling damage is minimal—1D4 points—but each rock that follows inflicts 1D6 points if it strikes the adventurer. A Dexterity roll is needed to tumble out of the path of falling boulders.

Dandrij draws his scimitar and slashes wildly at his attacker. His eyes are filled with madness, and he is fighting more out of desperation than self-preservation. Combat at the top of the tower is made even more dangerous by the limited amount of space available for maneuver. If an adventurer fumbles an attack roll, a Dexterity roll is needed to avoid falling and plummeting the eighty feet to the ground below. If Dandrij receives a major wound, a change comes over him. He drops his scimitar and gazes at the blood seeping through his robes. Then, with a final cry to Methanwyr he throws himself from the tower, his body cracking against the uneven stones as it tumbles. Committing suicide is a tactic Dandrij uses anyway, once he realizes that the battle is over, and to fall from the tower he so lovingly created is his doom, as prescribed by fate itself.

The battle is over within an hour, and none of the disciples remain alive. The Valni are victorious, although thirty of the Scaled People have died. The horses can be rounded up and the slaves helped to safety. If Gorjin has not been killed by any of the adventurers, he uses magic to make himself invisible and takes one of the camels tethered outside the remains of the encampment, fleeing into the savannah. He now bears a deep grudge against the adventurers and may plan to take revenge upon them at some later stage.

The Scaled People begin to search the encampment, taking anything and everything that looks valuable. They'll use whatever they find to trade with pale-skins at the border town of Im'lk. Adventurers may search as well. Search rolls locate one item per adventurer from the following list. Most items are found in the vicinity of Dandrij's and Gorjin's tents.

- A small leather purse containing 31 Rahnd.
- A finely crafted longsword worth 350 Rahnd.
- A suit of cast leather armor to fit SIZ 15.
- A wrist band fashioned from wyrm scale. This was Gorjin's and acts as a Magic Point focus. It has 10 Magic Points stored. Adventurers who have sorcerous training can determine its nature with Witch Sight and roughly how to tap the stored MP. If the adventurer wants to use the stored MP, he or she must make a Luck roll at POW x3. Failure indicates that the Magic Points cannot be retrieved that round.
- A set of ivory-carved chessmen, worth 59 Rahnd.
- A scroll case containing hand written bearer-bonds for use in the Valedorian Directorates. The bearer-bonds can be exchanged at the Guild of Merchant-Venturers in any Directorates nation for goods equivalent to each bond's value. There are four bonds, valued at 25, 50, 100 and 150 Rahnd. They cannot be exchanged for cash.
- Dandrij's atlas. This weighty tome could easily be mistaken for a grimoire, and the arcane scribbles inside, some done in Dandrij's own blood, resemble spells. In fact, it contains Dandrij's astrological readings and lunatic predictions. If studied in some detail, one can learn how Dandrij believed that Methanwyr had chosen him to be the saviour of Eshmir. All the visions Dandrij claims to have had are listed in explicit detail, including how he was told to raise an army against Eshmir and build a temple-tower deep in the wastes of Bas'lk. None of the astrological predictions are accurate, although the charts of how the various constellations influence the zodiac are reasonably correct. The book is worth nothing to a non-scrutineer. A scrutineer might pay up to 20 Rahnd for it, just for the curiosity value.

► An ivory scroll case (worth 10 Rahnd) which contains a chart of Menastree (worth 3 Rahnd)—two rings, both gold, one set with diamonds in a half-moon cluster, the other set with three rubies in a straight line. The former is worth 500 Rahnd, the latter 350 Rahnd.

He-Who-Slithers-Carefully is most pleased at the outcome. He has had the opportunity to slay pale-skins who had wronged the Valni, and his estimation of the adventurers has increased enormously. Had it not been for them, his people might have been the next to suffer at Dandrij's hands. He still demands his price of ten horses, and Rotari, if he still lives, concedes that it is a small price to pay. He-Who-Slithers-Carefully says that the adventurers will become Honored Warriors in the stories and legends of the Valni, and in doing so are also honorary members of the Scaled People. He seals this pact with the ritual cutting of palms and exchanging of blood. If any adventurers refuse, the Si smiles and shakes his head in bewilderment at the squeamishness of the pale-skins.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The adventurers need to rejoin with Astran somehow. If they found the map of Menastree they can see that Anakhazan is some distance from Dandrij's encampment and

Astran may not have even got there yet. The adventurers must guide the horses safely through the wilderness, trying to pick up Astran's trail and maybe they will need to make it all the way to Anakheera before this is possible.

What happens next to is up to the gamesmaster. Maybe the adventurers never meet-up with Astran. Slavers from all around the Unknown East prowl the wastes of Bas'lk, looking for lonely travellers, and it is possible that he, Elgin and Lockliss have been seized. Some clues as to their fate could send the adventurers on a quest to find Astran and free him, ensuring the well-being of the horses at the same time. Alternatively, Astran might have strayed on his journey and somehow stumbled into the Haghan'iin forest, falling foul of the Haghan'iin Host. The adventurers must then find some way of rescuing Astran, Lockliss and Elgin.

If the adventurers do rejoin with Astran, a campaign can be based around the attempts to establish trading deals with some of the Eastern nations. Anakhazan cannot immediately enter into trade agreements with Astran because all such deals must be ratified by the High Senate of the Valederian Directorates in Valed-Hal. This could take months to arrange, and in his impatience Astran decides to set out for Eshmir where the markets are likely to be better. Many adventures befall the expedition as it makes its way to Elwher, and the scenario hooks provided earlier in this book could be used as the basis for a campaign. In deciding how things progress, gamesmasters are bounded only by imagination. ☉



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EASTLANDER SHEET

Player's Name _____
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ALLEGIANCE

CHAOS BALANCE LAW

SYMBOL / PORTRAIT

CHARACTERISTICS

STR _____ CON _____ SIZ _____ INT _____ x5- POW _____ x5- DEX _____ x5- APP _____ x5- **DAMAGE BONUS** _____

Idea _____ %
 Luck _____ %
 Dexterity _____ %
 Charisma _____ %

Name _____
 Birthplace _____ Sex _____ Age _____
 Family/Tribe _____
 Title/Nickname _____
 Looks, Attitude _____

SKILLS

Art (05%): _____ _____ _____

Bargain (15%) _____
 Climb (40%) _____
 Conceal Object (25%) _____
 Craft (05%): _____ _____

Disguise (15%) _____
 Dodge (DEX x2%) _____
 Evaluate (15%) _____
 Fast Talk (15%) _____
 Hide (20%) _____
 Insight (15%) _____

Jump (25%) _____
 Listen (25%) _____
 Million Spheres (00) _____
 Move Quietly (20%) _____
 Natural World (25%) _____
 Navigate (10%) _____
 Oratory (05%) _____
 Other Language (00): _____ _____

Ride (35%) _____
 Sailing (05%) _____
 Scent/Taste (15%) _____
 Scribe (00) _____
 Search (20%) _____
 Swim (15%) _____
 Throw (25%) _____
 Track (10%) _____
 Trap (15%) _____
 Unknown Kingdoms (15%) _____
 Young Kingdoms (00%) _____

HIT POINTS

| UNCONSCIOUS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|----|----|---|----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Dead | -2 | -1 | 0 | +1 | +2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 |

MAGIC POINTS

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Unconscious | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50 | 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60 | 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70 | 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80 | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|

MAGIC IN MEMORY

| Sphere | Rune | | | | |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

HAND-TO-HAND WEAPONS

| Attack or Weapon | Current Skill % | Attack Damage | Hit Points | Length | Handed |
|--|-----------------|---------------|------------|--------|--------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brawl (50%) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wrestle (25%) | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

ARMOR, SHIELD

Armor Type _____ Helmet On: Dmg Deflect / % Affect _____
 Helmet Off: Dmg Deflect / % Affect _____ Nom. Burden _____ Rounds to Put On _____

SHIELD _____ % Attack Damage _____
 H S F L HP _____

MISSILE WEAPONS

| Weapon | Current Skill % | Attack Damage | Base Range | Attacks/ Round | Hit Points |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

BACKGROUND

Full Name, Titles, Aliases
Residence
Family & Friends
Enemies

TRAVEL GEAR

Equipment
Camel
Color/Kind
STR CON SIZ INT POW DEX MOV
Armor Dam. Bonus HP
Skills

NOTES

Notes section with multiple lines for text entry.

WEALTH

Rahnd on Person
Income
Property
Land
Treasure

BOUND DEMONS & ELEMENTALS

Name
Breed / Type
STR CON SIZ INT POW DEX MOV
DAMAGE BONUS
Idea Luck Dexterity
Armor
Need
Abilities
Weapons
Skills
Magic Points to Summon:

Name
Breed / Type
STR CON SIZ INT POW DEX MOV
DAMAGE BONUS
Idea Luck Dexterity
Armor
Need
Abilities
Weapons
Skills
Magic Points to Summon:

Name
Breed / Type
STR CON SIZ INT POW DEX MOV
DAMAGE BONUS
Idea Luck Dexterity
Armor
Need
Abilities
Weapons
Skills
Magic Points to Summon:

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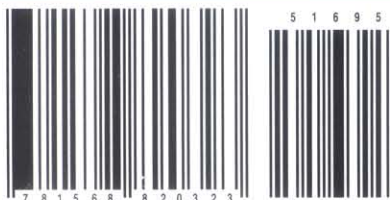
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