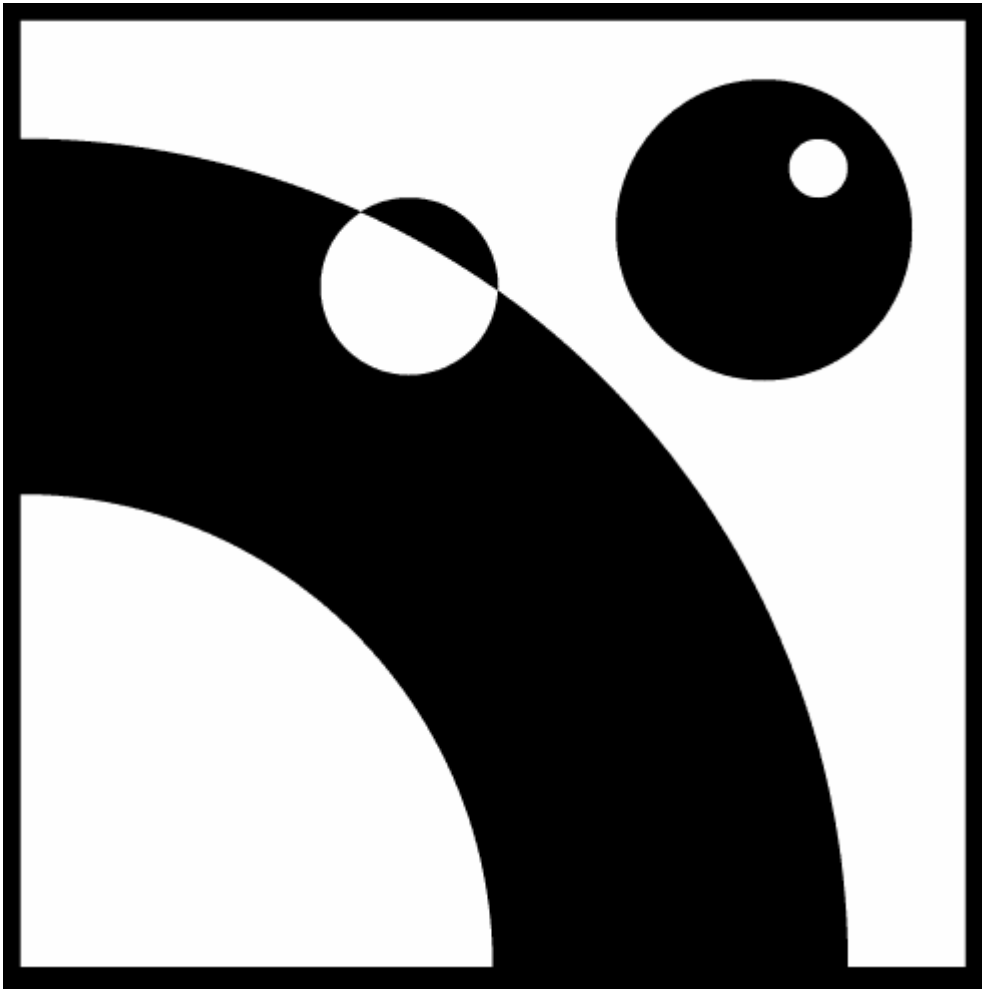


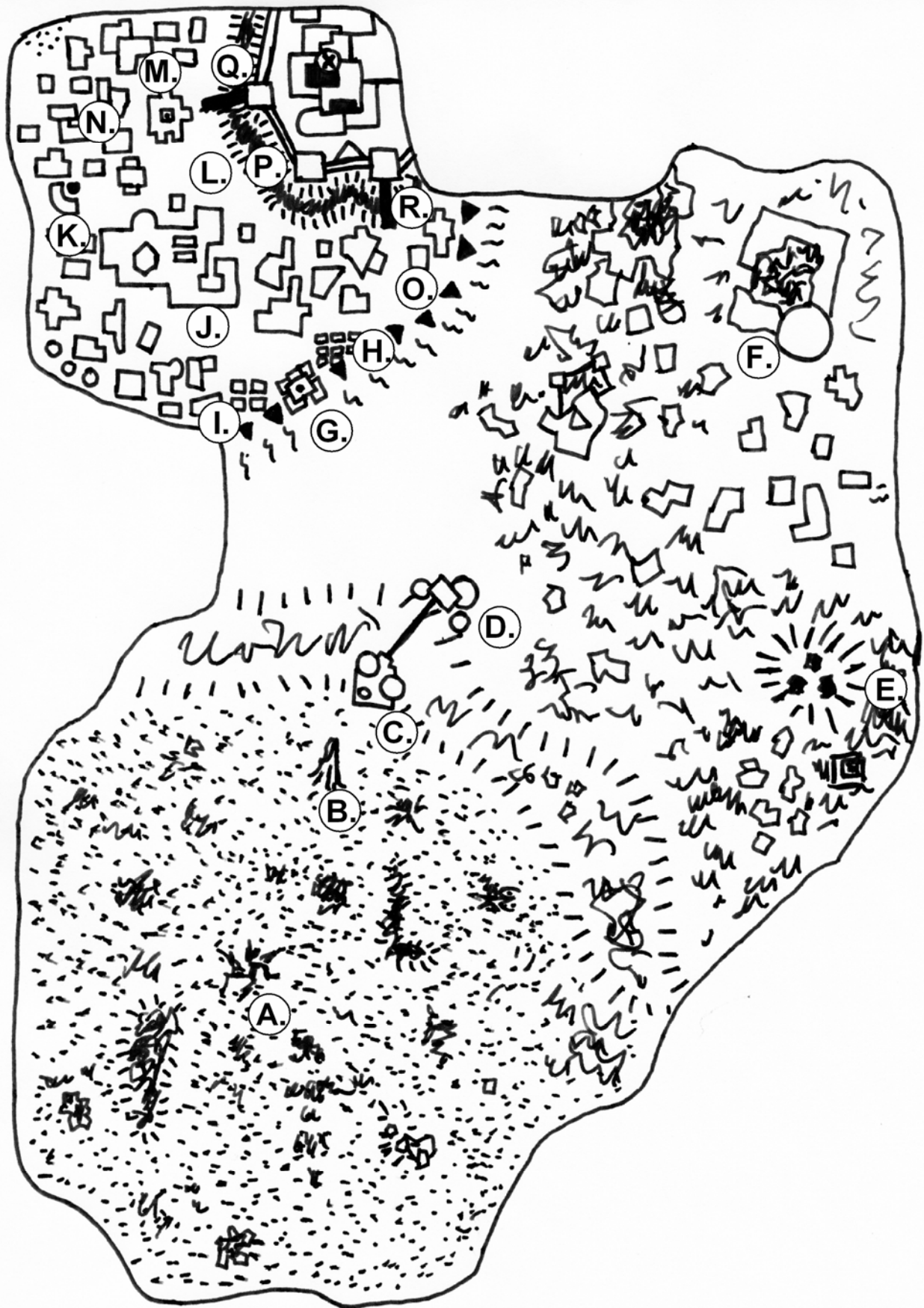
# **Systema Tartarobasis**

**by Gabor Lux**



## **Fomalhaut**

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# Systema Tartarobasis

by  
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## Introduction

Systema Tartarobasis is the name of a slowly failing computer system located in a ruined city deep beneath the surface of Fomalhaut. The city, named METAREGIO by its inhabitants, takes up in turn about a fifth of the world Exillion, a vast cavern lit by an artificial sun of the same name. Systema Tartarobasis and METAREGIO were created by scientists and philosophers as a terraforming tool and a temporary living environment until the terraforming process would be completed, respectively. There were at least 30 such cities, beneath glacial plains and frozen oceans, linked by underground transport routes and an array of geosynchronous satellites serving as a coordinating mechanism for the mostly autonomous central computers. The effort to colonise Fomalhaut, brought into being by executive order of archon Solon, took the resources of several worlds and the united will of multiple great powers of Earth. 8000 years after its initiation, there is but fleeting memory of these events, and the great Stabilisator Cities lie in ruin and abandonment, inhabited by ghosts of the past or peoples of strange customs while the lands above have sunk into barbarism and an age of squabbling city states. The intentional destruction of some cities in a cataclysmic war and the failing of others after millennia of neglect, has resulted in strange anomalies on the surface and the gradual reversal of their regulatory effects on the planet's climate. METAREGIO belongs to the group of cities which were targeted by weapons of immense destructive power. Here, however, the destruction was incomplete as a makeshift force barrier reduced the impact of the blast that reduced the rest of Exillion into a jumbled wasteland of shifting rubble and glass debris. Systema Tartarobasis and one of its associated Autonomous Production

Systems were spared from annihilation, although the communication relays linking it to the overworld and other Stabilisator Cities were not, nor were any of the outgoing underearth transport routes. Currently, Exillion's only means of communication with Outside is the URANOMETAFORA, a teleportation device next to the central hub of Systema Tartarobasis, in a heavily fortified district now named ARKHOCENTRON.

Unfortunately, the masters of Exillion, who call themselves Wandsmen, are not interested in communication beyond the satisfaction of their need of Outside goods, in exchange of which they pay with the only valuable their world can provide: precisely cut glass slabs and prisms made from glass debris and pressed into shape by the Autonomous Production System (usually referred to as the Autocreator). All except a small number of high-ranking Wandsmen and their elite associates are completely in the dark about this arrangement, or in fact the very existence of a world beyond the confines of the cavern that contains Exillion. Instead, the working population of METAREGIO labours under the belief that theirs is the only possible lot; and that unending service to Systema Tartarobasis, whose worship as God is the spiritual foundation of their society, is the only way to attain salvation and to be protected from cold, darkness, hunger and the demons of Outside. Exillion's society is in consequence extremely stratified, made up of a mass of workers; the Wandsmen who operate as priest-bureaucrats and oversee their activities as agents of divine will; as well as the Bosses, a police force nominally in existence to combat demon incursions and protect METAREGIO, but in reality serving as an interior mechanism of control and repression. However, the seeds of corruption have long ago sprouted in the city, resulting in the emergence of Apostates, or those who are said to be rebels against Systema's plan. This opposition encompasses all forms of disobedience, including criminal activities such as bribery, prostitution, smuggling of extra or Outside goods, but also questioning the authority of the Wandsmen and the Bosses or denying the divinity of Systema Tartarobasis. Denouncement of either form is ever-present; meanwhile, the former has been moulded into a control mechanism to channel and release popular dissent, and therefore implicitly tolerated, while the latter is treated much more severely. Demonstrations of power, sermon-rallies and public executions followed by an orgiastic conclusion are commonplace.



### Notes on adventure

Transported underearth by sinister forces and lacking any resources but a few pieces of their equipment, the characters have only one objective: escape from the world of Exillion with their skin intact. To this end, they must first find a way out of an abandoned underground facility below Exillion. Thereafter, they must get into the city of METAREGIO and eventually to ARKHOCENTRON where the URANOMETAFORA, their only means of escape if located. Meanwhile, they must find sustenance and information, not to mention avoid capture or annihilation by those who will think them demons of Outside. Careful

negotiation, coercion where appropriate and being as discrete as possible are key to success and survival. Once the Wandsmen learn of the presence of strangers in their world, which is an inevitability, they will use all means at their disposal to stop them from reaching their objective. Mobilisation will be slow initially but rapidly gain momentum if things come down to open confrontation. Mass hysteria will also spread among the lower classes as the news travel; this will at first be kept under control through sermons and rallies, but if these measures prove ineffective, a state of high alert will come into effect while vigilante groups start to scour the

city in search of demonic intruders. A few possibilities for entanglement are mentioned in detail later.

Being an almost completely open-ended scenario, Systema Tartarobasis is very flexible where character power is concerned. It is suitable for a party of low- to lower-mid (3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup>) level characters, two characters of the same or slightly higher capabilities, or even only one PC, as long as nobody has access to excessive innate powers. Generally, while larger parties are more effective when physical conflict is inevitable, smaller ones have a much easier time melting into large crowds and avoiding attention. In theory, it is possible to successfully end the scenario without resorting to anything other than negotiation and evasion. This also has a high relevance because the PCs will have very little of their usual equipment to rely on (see **Dynamics**). Since subterfuge plays such an essential part, characters with a highly distinctive appearance, especially if it cannot be hidden, are at a great disadvantage. A Referee whose party includes multiple types of the sort should seriously reconsider running this module.

Systema Tartarobasis was designed for the **Castles&Crusades** ruleset. With small conversion, it is also suitable for use with other fantasy role-playing games, including but not limited to **OSRIC**, **Stormbringer**, **ODD**, possibly **EPT** and others, as long as the existence of the Stabilisator Cities can be justified in the Referee's milieu. Likewise, adaptation to planetary romance/sword&planet systems is possible, even if the module does lose some of its surprise in this case. Finally, it has to be noted that the scenario's open-ended nature precludes a thorough description of all areas and possibilities that may be encountered in Exillion. The Referee must familiarise

himself with the material and ideas provided herein, and be prepared to improvise additional content when the need arises. It may be useful to print extra copies of the illustrations, the alphabet and the player map of Exillion contained in the module and distribute as handouts when appropriate.

### Notes on language

While Greek was the universal language in Fomalhaut's prehistory, its use has undergone a great deal of change under the span of 8000 years; therefore, it has several differences from its original form. All phrases in the text reflect this evolution and should in no way be considered erroneous in spelling or grammar. The second matter is of pronunciation. Names used in the scenario, such as Santiscauld, Mendarfloux, Messenauxe, etc., may appear to be derived from French. This notion is incorrect. All names and terms are transliterated exactly as they should be pronounced.

The third matter is of alphabet. A copy of the standard Greek alphabet is included in the back of the module. Unlike language, the alphabet used in Exillion is identical to Greek, as it was preserved exactly on the few documents and inscriptions found among its ruins. It will be unfamiliar to outsiders unless they know ancient languages or have the ability to Read Languages (a 20% rating or equivalent makes it possible to read anything the PC may come across; otherwise, a roll may be attempted with a +40% probability). Note that the alphabet doubles as a number system. Numbers are expressed as sums of individual letters. Hence, the numerical value of ΣΛΕ (sigma-lambda-epsilon) would be 200+30+5 or 235, while ΜΧΦ (mu-kshi-phi) would be equivalent to 40+600+500 or 1140.



## Society

Exillion's society, whose total population is approximately 2600, is rigidly separated into three classes, but it is important to make some further distinctions. Thus, the groups that need to be discussed are the Wandsmen, the Bosses, workers, children and old people, and finally the Apostates. Stratification is complete and there is no inter-class mobility whatsoever once someone's status is determined. There is, however, constant movement within the hierarchies as people are demoted or elevated, based in theory on competition and merit but in practice also on intrigue, corruption and the pure whim of superiors. This is called rotation, and affects everyone with the exception of the top 20 Wandsmen and the top 15 Bosses (basically, those who have gained insight into the truth about Systema Tartarobasis and Outside; these groups are never officially rotated, although power struggles do result in executions and disappearances). The highest status Apostates, who are in hiding, are obviously also an exception. The rotation rate is 15-15% among workers and 5-5% among Bosses and Wandsmen, meaning that 5 or 15% of their total population will gain a lower assignment and another 5 or 15% a higher one. For workers, the lowest status possible is being sent to a Punishment Brigade, while the highest is to work in METAREGIO and hope for retirement. For Bosses and Wandsmen, serving in the outposts of EXTERIKO (the destroyed wasteland surrounding METAREGIO) is the least pleasant outcome, managing Work Brigades marginally better while being posted in ARKHOCENTRON with full nympharium privileges can be the highest form of distinction. In addition to such materialistic concerns, there is always the spiritual benefit of being in accordance with the will of Systema Tartarobasis and attaining salvation. Of course, gaining goods and privileges beyond one's station is ever desirable even when worldly risk and spiritual contamination are considered. This motivation has been instrumental in driving corruption and a thriving black market; small-scale smuggling of glass debris (referred to as skimming) provides its unofficial currency.

### The Wandsmen

There are a total of 200 Wandsmen, 60 in ARKHOCENTRON, 60 in METAREGIO, 30 in EXTERIKO and 10 new initiates in continuous rotation to learn all they need to know about their tasks. Of ARKHOCENTRON's Wandsmen, 20 elders and 20 co-opted brethren are the de facto decisionmakers in Exillion, although they always make their pronouncements in the name of God, Systema Tartarobasis. Although there are as many Wandsmen in METAREGIO as there are in ARKHOCENTRON, 40 work as Autocreator technicians and are in effect removed from city life. When moving about METAREGIO, Wandsmen are almost always accompanied by a detail of two to four Bosses. The Wandsmen of EXTERIKO are divided between the upper outpost (20 men) and the lower outpost (10 men). 5-5 are responsible for the correct operation of the cable transport and the rest for managing and directing the Work Brigades.

All of the Wandsmen wear a stamped metal wafer or dog tag on a chain around their neck, bearing three letters (numbers). The purpose of the tags is primarily identification, but also the control of certain devices such as the cable transport station, the generators responsible for the force fields of PERIFERIA and even the URANOMETAFORA. Tags of different ranks may be appropriate for different devices.

The clothing of Wandsmen is black felt (in stark contrast with all others who wear a synthetic material named synna), with a component of red depending on rank: a simple stripe on the cloaks of initiates, stripes on the cuffs and collar for regulars, etc. Elders wear collars, skullcaps and more elaborate cuffs as a sign of rank. High Wandsman Encellon is clothed in red from head to toe; his second, Second Wandsman Feluxis is distinguished by a black skullcap. They also carry short, light plastic rods as a sign of their station.

Wandsmen are a lot more eloquent than their subordinates, and when they aren't preaching, they treat everyone else with disgust, boredom and contempt. On the average, they are sanctimonious, officious and complacent, fond of berating workers for the slightest error or just on principle. In turn, Wandsmen from the higher echelons are inquisitive and extremely shrewd; skilled backstabbers and masters of ideology and pontification.

Being a small and close-knit group, Wandsmen know each other enough to recognise any impersonation unless care is taken not to show one's face too closely. All Bosses posted in METAREGIO and ARKHOCENTRON share this knowledge; some of those who have served too long in EXTERIKO may be fooled by clever PCs (20% probability).

### **Bosses**

The armed forces of Exillion number 400 men; 80 posted in ARKHOCENTRON, 250 in METAREGIO and 70 in EXTERIKO. Their leader is Grand Boss Pinchenden. As with Wandsmen, the elite of the Bosses are found in ARKHOCENTRON; 15 under the personal command of High Wandsman Encellon and Second Wandsman Feluxis, the other 65 manning the walls, gates and posted in the underground facilities. In an emergency, some of these can be dispatched into METAREGIO. Those who are assigned to METAREGIO live in their central headquarters or in barracks near the checkpoint of PERIFERIA (constantly manned by 40 men at full readiness). They patrol in groups of three to four, which is increased to eight to ten in case of emergency. Bosses in EXTERIKO oversee the major installations (the two cable transport stations, 20 men in each), patrol the wasteland between Work Brigades and watch for normbreakers, skimmers or (in theory) the Ashmen and other demons.

Like most others in Exillion, the clothing of Bosses is made of synna (from „synthetic manna”), a byproduct of the Autocreator's manufacturing process. This substance (essentially reprocessed slag), which resembles bars of greyish green soap stamped

with the ΣYNNA sign, is used for food, an alcoholic drink when fermented, or clothing when vulcanised, stretched and rolled. Synna-based clothing looks and smells like cheap plastic bags. The kind Bosses wear is a black shade, although still distinctly greenish. Their appearance is also accented by their insignia, an encircled lightning bolt. Elites in ARKHOCENTRON wear black felt with a golden trim, including the lightning sign. Grand Boss Pinchenden's symbol is made of pure gold.

The lesser Bosses are armed with an assortment of crude short swords and spears (essentially sharpened metal skewers), sometimes metal javelins. Elites, as well as those posted at key locations, have better short swords and Divine Light (laser pistols) at their disposal. Fixed weaponry, always mounted in key locations, includes tri-beam lasers and flamethrowers. Additionally, the SCORPITRON, a metallic juggernaut of destruction may be activated to protect ARKHOCENTRON.

Bosses are thuggish: brutal, stupid and even more corrupt than their Wandsmen superiors. They are differentiated from the workers by their insignia and weaponry, and from criminals by their higher level of organisation and a sense of legitimacy imparted by the Wandsmen. Since Bosses are none too bright, it is reasonably easy to manipulate, fool or impersonate them. Also, aside from the Apostates, they are the group whose members are the easiest to bribe.

### **Workers**

There are approximately 1600 adult workers in Exillion, all of whom work in EXTERIKO or METAREGIO. It is very rare for one of them to even set foot in ARKHOCENTRON, and completely unknown to actually live there. Workers are organised into 32 Work Brigades of 50–60 people whose exact composition is in a constant flux due to rotation and ad hoc reassignments. This is by design so that no group cohesion will emerge; competition for upwards mobility, exceeding norms and beating other brigades fosters some temporary solidarity, but no long-lasting loyalty is established. There are two

exceptions, as discussed below.

The main task of Work Brigades is to mine EXTERIKO's wasteland for glass debris and transport it to METAREGIO for processing by the Autocreator's Autonomous Production System. 16 to 20 brigades, or 800 to 1200 men are out in the field every day; 7 to 11 are resting (that is, undertaking lighter labour in the city) while the five Punishment Brigades, who are also sent to EXTERIKO's most inhospitable parts, are only given reprieve for one day out of two five-day cycles. In theory, a Wandsman oversees every group in operation to ensure maximum efficiency. In practice, since there are regularly only 20 free Wandsmen in Exteriko, certain more trustworthy brigades are left to their own devices. On the other hand, there is also an incentive to personally direct an efficient group, since delivering high glass yields is the straight road to upwards rotation.

The standard operating procedure of a Work Brigade is as follows: at dawn (that is, when Exillion's light starts to intensify), the brigade assembles before its designated communal barrack and proceeds through the checkpoint on PERIFERIA to EXTERIKO. Along the way, they bring four to five mine cars, one of which serves as a supply wagon and carries the brigade's food (synna slabs), water (in large round earthenware bottles and synna wineskins) and a narrow selection of other supplies (sacks, three or four spare sets of work clothes for replacement, one to two coils of rope, crowbars, tarpaulins and metal levers). Every worker brings his or her own tools; collection sacks made of synna are provided on-site. Since mining in Exteriko takes place in the depression of Lower Basin instead of the low-yield and hazardous Dead Zone, workers and mine cars alike board the cable transport. Once in Lower Basin, they bring the cars to their designated mine sites and spend the day excavating rubble for chunks of glass debris. Depending on terrain and yield, operations may be dispersed or concentrated. The discovery of underground cavities is always followed by investigation by a Wandsman and possibly Bosses if available nearby, as these places may hide Ashmen or other demons. In all cases, such places are resealed after a ritual exorcism in

the name of Systema without exploration. A one-hour lunch and rest period is allowed around noon. When dusk approaches, workers return to METAREGIO the same way they came. Hiding a few select chunks of glass, or skimming (sometimes used as „quota skimming”), is common and implicitly tolerated; nevertheless, it is not without risk since searches happen on reasons of suspicion, but also on no specific reason at all. Normbreaking; performance under projected indicators, is looked upon much more unfavourably, and is grounds for downwards rotation. Thus, „normbreaker” is also a common epithet, usually used by authorities to reference anyone below their station.

Five of the Work Brigades are Punishment Brigades. Punishment Brigades are assigned hard labour: locations with a low yield, distant from the cable transport station, dangerous working conditions, etc. They are subject to stricter searches, and may not leave their designated tent camp just inside PERIFERIA without permission. They have their own internal hierarchy: common criminals (serving time for murder, smuggling, rape and similar offences) are on the top, featherweights (skimming, normbreaking or just not liked by someone important) in the middle and people sentenced for Apostasy (discovered buying Outside goods/services, insubordination to Wandsmen or Bosses, ideological crimes) right on the bottom; the latter rarely last long. #6, #9, #17, #25 and #29 are the numbers for Punishment Brigades.

Brigade Nine (also known as „Niners” or „little bosses”) occupies a peculiar position of privilege: a cohesive bunch of hardened thugs theoretically on the lowest rung of Exillion's society; their role in organised crime and co-operation with the Wandsmen nevertheless guarantees a higher position. Niners work very little, mercilessly exploit and snitch on other groups and are occasionally used to disperse other unruly brigades. As a reward, they are occasionally thrown an unfortunate woman or two, who don't last long either.

On the opposite end of the scale is Brigade Number One. They are deployed in METAREGIO, undertake lighter and more



sophisticated labour and have occasional nympharium access. This coveted status, with the possibility of retirement in ARKHOCENTRON, makes them subject to boundless envy and intrigue; the members of the brigade have in consequence been the most pious members of society with a strong sense of pride and mutual solidarity.

So much for the Work Brigades. Workers wear worn synna garments. Since black shades are restricted to Bosses, these come in two colours: greenish grey and greenish brown. Depending on the caprices of the production process, rare batches come out without the greenish element; the average woman is prepared to go quite far in pursuit of one. Wearing these is still like dressing in plastic bags, and just as vulnerable to tears as the others.

The quarters of workers are large communal buildings in METAREGIO. These are typically concrete blocks' with broken windows, mattresses and a few personal effects. Workers have low standards, aren't very class conscious and completely lack any fighting spirit, even though quite a lot are rather cynical about authorities. Indoctrination and superstitious sentiment makes them prone to hysteria if they suspect the PCs to be demons from Outside; although unable to pose a direct physical threat, they may inform superiors or form dangerous mobs.

It has to be noted that all women in Exillion belong to the worker class, and except for the childbearing period when they remain in METAREGIO, they must collect glass like everyone else. The doxies of the Wandsmen in the nympharium are an exception, who are selected for greater beauty and have no work outside their usual tasks, but aren't permitted to leave ARKHOCENTRON. Another nympharium operated by Apostates exists in METAREGIO. Since nympharium privileges are among the highest boons one may gain from Systema Tartarobasis, using the services of this establishment is counted among the highest forms of Apostasy and it is punishable by public execution. Nympharium privileges are first and foremost for Wandsmen, followed in precedence by Bosses, eminent workers and the most exemplary youths upon reaching adulthood. The latter two groups are

brought into ARKHOCENTRON in a drunken state and led to believe they are granted their boon by the direct order of Systema.

### **Children and old people**

In consideration for their inability to undertake hard physical labour, children and old people do their useful work inside METAREGIO, while distinguished Heroes of Work who have been exemplary in exceeding quotas may be selected to retire to ARKHOCENTRON and forevermore only do the lightest of labours. What is more, the chosen are permitted to physically come before Systema Tartarobasis and partake of His plentiful rewards if they grow tired of toils (more correctly, they are disposed of in the Radiation Pits below ARKHOCENTRON).

Exillion doesn't know the institution of family. Instead, children who have stopped breastfeeding are separated from their mothers and brought up in communal groups where they learn the values of hard work, belief in Systema Tartarobasis and everything else a proper and proud citizen of Exillion needs to know. Their tasks include small repairs, making textile from blocks of synna and other light activities.

### **Apostates**

Apostates, although lumped under one label by Wandsmen propaganda (being considered allies to the demons of Outside or demons themselves – the distinction is rather nebulous), can be separated into two different groups who have little in common except for being a target of official sanctions.

The first group is made up of the criminal element, those who have committed the lesser crime of Disobedience. Most of them belong to one organisation lead by a man named Santiscauld. Santiscauld, whose role will be discussed in more detail later, is the personal agent of Second Wandsmen Feluxis who knows as much about the surface world as any of the senior Wandsmen; moreover, he has a direct hand in the smuggling activities which bring Outside (or „divine“) products,

mostly foodstuffs and clothing, to the black market of METAREGIO.

The black market is well known to all inhabitants, and clandestinely visited by all three social classes (Wandsmen and Bosses are given preferential prices and treatment to keep them on the Apostates' good side). A nympharium is also available for customers who can afford its services; being an unpleasant cellar stinking of sweat and other odours where unfortunate captives receive their guests in appalling conditions.

The second group of Apostates are dissenters who are in fact opposed to the social order for ideological reasons, and therefore guilty of the greater crime of Doubt. Accordingly, belonging to any such group is high Apostasy; whenever opposition cells are squashed, their members invariably face rotation to a Punishment Brigade, torture and/or public execution. Executions are huge events resembling sermons or rallies, their hysteria predictably ending in free-for-all orgies.

While dissenters are the strongest in their rejection of whatever Systema Tartarobasis stands for (even though most don't debate His existence), they are entirely inconsequential. These types, whose actions tend to involve agitation, random murder of authority figures and constantly snitching on other, rival Apostate groups, are basically losers who come convenient when the Wandsmen need to fill their execution quota. Currently, there are two opposition groups of note in METAREGIO, respectively lead by men named Targammaux and Orimaxxald who probably hate each other more than they do the Wandsmen.

Dealing with criminals can be hazardous for the characters: they can go far with their assistance, but Santiscauld's alliance with Feluxis makes this method's outcomes completely unpredictable. On the other side of the coin, dissenters are completely useless, but they can – and inevitably will – do major damage if trusted.



## Exillion

### UNDEREARTH

This is an abandoned and empty facility below the wasteland of EXTERIKO and Lower Basin. Its purpose is indeterminate. Only the areas the PCs are likely to pass through are outlined here. If play goes beyond these boundaries, the Referee should make it up as he goes. In this case, the duration of light sources should be emphasised and new routes leading to the surface provided. Technological infrastructure encountered should be described with precision, but without any hints regarding their purpose; the aim of this section is to create a feeling of incomprehension, isolation and being lost. There should be no useful items here, except probably a temporary light source if the party

becomes lost – probably a coiled rod with faintly glowing light that lasts about as long as the party needs to get close to the surface.

1. The characters arrive in total darkness, and are scattered about the chamber, facing random directions. It is cold, damp, and a *silence* spell is in effect for 6 rounds. Until light is made, characters must find their way by touch, and the Referee must keep careful track of where they are going (a separate map is provided for this among the illustrations). Keep in mind that the PCs will be missing most of their equipment as described under **Dynamics**. Note carefully if a PC takes out an item; this will be one of the few that they

have managed to keep. If someone falls in the shaft to the south, he is caught among the crossed pipes and will only suffer 1d6 damage.

The chamber is large, probably 80'X60'. Its walls are made of smooth, grey stone with a rough texture (concrete). The 30' ceiling is supported by thick, rusting iron girders. The following are found once the characters can see:

a) Two heavy blast doors set in a trapezoidal opening. They are made of rusty iron and weigh several tons each. They are impossible to move.

b) A 20' hexagonal tank. It is possible to climb up on a rusted ladder (the rungs will collapse under a heavy weight, but will still be climbable). Inside, the tank is empty, but there is a grate and a crawlway underneath. Its sides are lined with corroded metal panels; it leads to one of the funnel-like passages at 5.

c) Three 5'X10'X10' metal cabinets. They are heavily corroded, and have sliding levers that are ruined if someone handles them. The machinery under their metal casing is a mess of rust and bits that fall apart if the cabinets are opened.

d) A larger, 30'X10'X20' machine. It is harder to take apart and has more integrity inside. Its surface is full of dials, levers, knobs and indicators that are all defunct.

e) A bottomless shaft descending into the depths of the earth. It is randomly crossed by rusty pipes. Descending into the shaft is without risk, although the pipes start to crack under heavy weight. 30' down, there is a service tunnel going north.

2. This trapezoidal service tunnel has a low (6') ceiling. All walls, ceiling and floor are corroded iron panels reinforced with metal ribs; occasionally, there are also half-open, stuck sliding doors which are hard to squeeze through, as well as several pipes that can be problematic to circumnavigate. A groove runs in the middle of the floor. As the party approaches the cross-intersection, they hear irregular grinding sounds from the north.

3. The crawlway from the hexagonal tank to a larger funnel-like passage.

4. The tunnel is blocked here by several sturdy metal pipes. No further progress is possible.

5. A huge, approximately 60' diameter circular shaft with concrete walls. The western service tunnel emerges onto a metal walkway running along the edge. The hemispherical, metal-covered top of the shaft is 40' above. Three funnels feed into the shaft, being 15' above the walkway. It is possible to climb up into them, but it soon becomes impossible to progress any further as the incline becomes steeper. In the northern fork, there is a metal door set into the side of the funnel which opens without trouble. Downwards, the shaft descends at least 300'. Even with a *light* spell, the only thing that is revealed is more walkways and openings. The silence is broken by the echoing sounds of heavy machinery passing underneath (an automated cargo train heading for parts unknown; the Referee should describe or imitate its sounds, but shouldn't reveal what it is exactly).

6. A series of small interconnected rooms with a 10' ceiling. The walls are all full of control panels, indicators and other machines, too decayed to be useful. Brass coils stand in wall niches; these are electrical and produce weak sparks and crackling sounds (also, 1d4 damage if handled). They are surrounded by an eldritch yellowish blue glow that gives off little light. Smaller blast doors to the east do not budge to any human force.

7. A hemispherical room, approximately 50' diameter and 25' high. The floor is covered in black gravel, slag that has fallen through a grate in the ceiling. There is also a bent metal ladder climbing up to the grate, which may be pushed aside to reveal a shaft climbing further upwards. Ladder climbs are punctuated by wall niches where wide openings are covered by heavy, welded metal grates. The sound of rolling machinery can be heard from the south. The ladders emerge into the furnace room at 13.

8. A 20'X20'X15' pyramidal room with metal walls and ventilation grilles. There is a

bottomless rectangular shaft going down. This is the source of the grinding noise that was audible before: two heavy metal wheels are turning 20' below the room. They are not completely circular, and a gap is revealed between periodically. It looks very hard to squeeze through them, and if anyone is foolish enough to try, he will be crushed.

**9.** A very narrow spiral staircase in a rectangular shaft climbing up and down. The steps, which are made of grooved metal plates, are set into a central column on round axles. They hold well, but some have become loose and rotate when stepped on. In fact, the stairs end 40' down, all steps below that point having been removed from their place with only the occasional one remaining in place.

A rusted iron plate has been set into the central column. The following characters are pressed into it: ΣT-H. If the sign is deciphered, draw attention to its ancient nature, and also to the fact that the characters may equally represent letters and numericals. If someone is fluent in ancient languages as per **Notes on language**, just give out a copy of the alphabet in the back of the module.

**10.** The spiral stairs emerge into a 20' diameter hemispherical room. The walls are concrete; faded horizontal colour lines are painted onto it and lead into the domed corridor and the room complex to the northeast, each disappearing through various door openings (like a kind of trail) but eventually leading nowhere special. A crawlway behind a metal grate goes west.

**11.** A hexagonal room with corroded metal walls reinforced by metal ribs. There is a weird contraption set into the floor: a short cylinder with bent copper „claws” emerging. There are brass coils in the middle of the claws. All is silent and there is no other exit.

**12.** The domed tunnel progresses through a large room complex, continuing into the gigantic bay at 16. The rooms are small, rectangular and form a chaotic but fairly easy to navigate maze. Most rooms are empty but for a few huge metal crates. The crates are incredibly sturdy, the tops are bolted down

and there are only useless machine parts inside.

**13.** This room is separated from the north-western room complex by a heavy door whose hinges are so thoroughly rusted that they take a great effort of strength to push open. Inside, the walls are rusty iron and black from soot around the top. The ceiling is 50' above the floor. There is a huge metal implement in the middle – some sort of dome standing on four massive legs, with pipes and vents leading off into various directions. As evident from the slag in its central depression and the metal grate leading to a shaft underneath, it once functioned as a furnace or similar device.

**14.** A concrete-walled cable shaft with metal rungs climbing 60' upwards into the upper room complex.

**15.** More rooms with even more metal crates and discarded metal girders, as well as exits to the great bay.

**16.** A vast hall or factory bay whose entirety is lost in darkness even if the PCs have strong light available. Its dimensions exceed 200'X200'; the ceiling is 80' from the ground floor and 20' from the upper ledge. It is a network of massive girders, pipes, support beams, cranes and other indeterminate industrial equipment. The following features are notable:

a) The ground floor of the bay, accessible from the passage to the southwest. There are four gigantic (50' diameter, 50' tall) metal tanks like the one in the starting room, but they cannot be climbed without proper equipment. There is also a wide groove with strange tracks running around the bay, used by a now defunct cogwheel train. Rungs climb up to the ledge at c).

b) Two trapezoidal blast doors to the northwest. Both are at least 30' tall, weigh several tons, and will not move to any force less divine intercession. They are marked, respectively, ΣT-H-B and ΣT-H-BB.

c) A ledge 60' above the main bay floor. Six hexagonal tanks with heavy lids stand on its edge. They are corroded and empty, but

pushing the lids aside produces a lot of noise. Each has a metal plate with a glyph; in order: A, B, Γ, Δ, E, F, which is either alpha–beta–gamma–delta–epsilon–digamma or 1–2–3–4–5–6.

d) The exit from the factory bay is a 20' trapezoidal blast door which is ajar, enough for a person to slide through.

**17.** A 20' wide and tall passage with a semicircular vault, curving gently upwards. Crawlways with metal panelling break off at various angles. They form a dense and chaotic network with exits to further sections.

**18.** A long, 120'X20' hall. The ceiling is trapeze with metal girders serving as crossbeams. This part must have once been above ground, since there are openings above with jagged glass in them. All of it is buried under a layer of rocks now. The floor is littered with debris and shattered glass crunching underfoot. Passages to the north and south are blocked by either heavy blast doors or collapsed rocks. There are two exits, both through 10' passages to the east.

**19.** Spiral stairs like those found at 9. Here, destructive forces have shifted the rocks so that the whole thing is tilted 30° and the steps are hazardous to tread. The shaft leads downwards to unknown depths.

**20.** These rooms are half collapsed. There are multiple blockages where PCs must climb or push rocks aside to progress. The air is dry and warmer than elsewhere, and there is a definite although faint draft coming from the direction of 21.

**21.** Another of the half-collapsed rooms; its dimensions are 20'X40' and all exits are choked with debris. As the PCs enter, they start hearing sounds of excavation from above and even see beams of light filtering in. These sounds come from Work Brigade Number Five, whose members are working in a deep crater and who will create an opening in approximately five minutes unless interrupted. Calls for help or the emergence of PCs will immediately result in an outbreak of panic. The workers in the crater scatter to the

four winds, crying about the demons of Outside and calling out for help to Systema Tartarobasis. A few brave souls immediately send a dispatch to the Wandsman Insellanox while four others stand their ground with tools in hand to smite the demons... but reconsider and bolt as soon as they spot one of them.

On the other hand, if the characters stay silent, they can easily eavesdrop on the labourers. After calls such as „*Heave-ho! Heave-ho!*“, „*Move faster, normbreakers! We are behind quota and the Wandsmen will send us to rotation! I don't want to be sent to Brigade Seventeen for sabotage, do you?*“ and „*Move these to the transport, I expect higher yields on the bottom.*“, the ceiling is broken through in a small avalanche of debris. This causes a moment of silence; thereafter, someone who acts as a foreman sends for Insellanox and warns anyone of disturbing the cavity, mentioning the demons of Outside. Nevertheless, lighter work is soon resumed around the edges despite some protestation about the demons and whether working on demon-infested ground can be considered Apostasy.

Once called for, Insellanox arrives in perhaps 10 minutes. He is a heavy-set man; less used to physical exertion than the miners and sweating in his black uniform. He proceeds to deliver a sermon centred around demons, Systema Tartarobasis (always returning to the Wandsmen as executors of God's will) and work quotas. The Referee may use this speech as an opportunity to pass on some more information on Exillion and its enlightened ideology (mentioning elements of the basic work process may be a good idea here). The more pompous and sanctimonious the speech, the better. This finished, he forbids workers from further investigation (E.g. „*Having considered and weighed the hallowed doctrines of GOD, Systema Tartarobasis, I hereby declare this Opening anathema and interdicted. As it is written, it is the demons of Outside who lair within such darkness, being a Peril to our spiritual integrity and bringers of cold, hunger, darkness and other consequences of Apostasy. Let it not be bothered until the executors of GOD's will cleanse its depths and forevermore bury it back as prescribed by High Wandsman*

*Encellon, GOD's chosen second in this world. May Systema Tartarobasis deliver us from what lies Outside."*)

With the exorcism finished, Insellanox and the workers depart; the former to call a patrol of bosses (6 men) and the latter to resume work elsewhere. One guard is posted, nominally to watch the opening (Insellanox

hopes that if there are indeed demons, they will be satisfied with this offering). The guard, Sennex, soon loses interest and starts to look for glassy chunks of debris in the crater's side. From here on, the PCs are free to explore this strange new world as they desire.

## THUS CONCLUDE THE DESCRIPTIONS TO THE DEEPS BENEATH EXILLION



### EXTERIKO

EXTERIKO (literally „Outside“) encompasses the blasted wastelands surrounding METAREGIO and ARKHOCENTRON. It is an inhospitable place of dust, debris heaps and merciless heat. EXTERIKO can be divided into two general areas. In Lower Basin, a deep depression to the south and southwest, the destruction was so thorough that no building was left standing and the very ground shifted. Everything is choked with reddish yellow rocks and rough dust. Buried here and there are bits of construction that remain recognisable as building parts. There are also chunks of debris which have been melted into glass by the powers of the explosion. This is the resource the workers spend their days searching for.

In turn, Dead Zone, 600' above the level of Lower Basin, has retained the form of a ruined city; less and less dilapidated as one goes further from the explosion's epicentre. Unlike cities on the surface of Fomalhaut, this one shows signs of having been carefully planned, not to mention being grandiose in size and construction. There are tumbled buildings that once reached 10 to 30 stories; vast domes, broken and collapsed communication arrays, etc. Since Dead Zone has a very low yield rate and there are still demons lurking inside some buildings, it is

left alone.

The following aspects of the unforgiving environment are notable:

- The sun, also named Exillion, is an unmoving white sphere in the sky. One can observe a subtle pattern of darker hexagonal spots on its glowing surface, even more prominent during sunset. These spots are artifacts projected by failing coolant rods in Exillion's reactor core. Since there is no celestial movement, dawn and dusk are marked simply by intensifying or dimming light. The sky is dirty white with light grey spots: the reflective surface in the upper reaches of the cavern has suffered from tarnish and no longer works as it once did. Sky and cavern walls meet midway in the air, so there is a degree of crossfading going on.
- No plant or animal life exists in EXTERIKO (or, for that matter, elsewhere in EXILLION). The sole exception to this are the Ashmen, who are found in Dead Zone and don't emerge during the day.
- There is little movement of air, as the artificial winds in Exillion are very weak. It is, however, enough to stir up the dust in Lower Basin.

- There are few landmarks save Triangle Point (B.). The entire terrain is uneven, with craters, piles of debris, shallow ravines and hidden crevasses. It is very easy to move through relatively undetected and perfect for setting up ambushes. Boss patrols (6 to 8 men with spears, short swords and metal javelins) will not see them coming at first, but if a state of alert is declared, they will be doubled and be much more careful.
- During the day, Work Brigades and Boss patrols are encountered in Lower Basin while Dead Zone is empty of life. During the night, Lower Basin is completely abandoned but there is a 1:3 probability of Ashmen encounters in Dead Zone. Once there is an encounter, the probability goes up to 1:2 and is rechecked every hour until morning to simulate convergence.

Note that there are going to be between 16 and 20 Work Brigades on the field in Lower Basin, and four of the five Punishment Brigades will also have been deployed. These groups are scattered all over the Lower Basin area, and they are generally separated by at least half an hour of walking distance. Punishment Brigades occupy positions closer to the cavern walls, while the rest concentrate as one gets near Triangle Point and the cable transport station. They pay no attention to anyone dressed in synna or clothing which is indistinguishable from it. Bosses and especially Wandsmen are not so careless, and will investigate if there is an opportunity. Unless alert has been raised, however, characters who are dressed as locals will just receive a bit of abuse, be questioned regarding the Work Brigade they were assigned to and sent on their way with a stern warning about normbreaking. Stealing supplies or behaving suspiciously in plain sight will be punished and there is going to be a higher risk of discovery.

**A.** This site is where the characters emerge from the underground facility. If there was no time for Work Brigade Five to take their mine cars with them, they will be here along with a supply wagon. All around, there is nothing but a featureless expanse stretching to impossibly high cavern walls and sheer cliffs.

The silver metal domes of the lower cable transport station will be visible through a veil of ochre dust.

**B.** Triangle Point, a steep 100' cliff stands in the wasteland, being the only distinct landmark in Lower Basin. It may not be climbed, but the ravines around its base make it a perfect hiding place. There are always at least two Work Brigades in the general area during the day, as its proximity to the cable transport makes it a choice excavation site. These brigades are always accompanied by Wandsmen, and Bosses from the transport station are also in close proximity (20 min to ½ hour). Close to sunset, several brigades converge on Triangle Point as they are returning to METAREGIO.

**C.-D.** The two cable transport stations are clusters of rectangular buildings topped by tarnished aluminium domes, still glinting in the sunlight. They are connected by two pairs of cables mounted on a series of metal support pillars, allowing simultaneous upwards and downwards transport with an approximately 20 minute travel time. Mine cars are affixed to a suspension frame of four thick steel cables, while gondolas are used for the needs of personal transportation.

The transport procedure is as follows: loaded cars enter through a large bay entrance, and are hoisted onto their support frames by station technicians. Meanwhile, workers stand in queue before stairs leading to a smaller door, passing in double file before a Wandsman. The wait is long and those who come late have to wait even longer, as the transport is slow, experiences frequent delays and breakdowns, and the queues line up fast. Thus, the presence of the Wandsmen and the Boss contingent is primarily to prevent fights from breaking out. There are no checks and searches at this location, although there is a lot of verbal abuse, both by Wandsmen and other workers. Once the wait is over, personnel are squeezed into gondolas in groups of 30, leaving hardly enough place to shift. Thus, the ride is tense, with scuffles and back-and-forth insults, but also relaxation and anticipation. At the upper station, each Work Brigade reassembles and proceeds to the

checkpoint on PERIFERIA with its mine cars. Note that Wandsmen who otherwise watch Brigades stay in Lower Basin until all others are gone and never ride during the same time as workers.

The lower cable transport station is manned by 5+5 Wandsmen, 20 Bosses and 10 worker-technicians (like their companions in the Autocreator, these are outside normal hierarchies and do not mix with other workers whom they consider their inferiors), while there are 15+5 Wandsmen, 20 Bosses and 10 technicians in the upper station on the edges of Dead Zone. These groups are in bitter rivalry for advantageous rotation, and cross each other whenever possible to make the other side look bad. The commander of the lower station is Wandsmen Sigsigamma, while the commander of the upper station is Wandsmen Ustinsylis. Both have been in their current position for years despite countless petitions for reassignment, and consequently greatly detest their lot and support staff. Both hope to discover some dirt on the other. This attitude has rubbed off on all others at the stations as well.

Garrisons at both stations are generously stocked with provisions and weapons. The standard issue is spears, short swords and five javelins per man. Sigsigamma and Ustinsylis are armed with lasers with three spare cartridges each. A tri-beam laser is mounted on the upper station, and it is set so it can fire volleys at the vulnerable cable transport without effort. If a last ditch defence is needed for whatever reason, the cables can be blasted off the support columns, sending anyone in transit to their doom and effectively isolating Lower Basin from the rest of Exillion until repairs are completed (this takes several weeks). If things come this far, there may still be a way into Dead Zone through the network of underground facilities, but once the PCs emerge, things will rapidly become PAINFUL, as High Wandsmen Encellon will stop at nothing to annihilate them. Scaling the cliffs is generally impossible for all but the most skilled climbers.

**E.** This is the location of Exillion's destroyed communication array: a huge ruined pile of debris from which a cluster of half-toppled

metal poles thrust skywards. The array is non-functional, having been bombed along with the rest of EXTERIKO thousands of years previous. The immense antennae are visible from a great distance; Wandsmen propaganda refers to it as a seat of demons. Such tales aren't entirely free of truth, for this is a place of high Ashman activity. Another legend, yet also a fabrication of the Wandsmen, tells of a cache of the highest grade glass buried under these ruins. Such riches will not be found if entry is gained, but Ashmen certainly will, as many careless souls have found to their detriment.

**F.** This is a vast building with a huge half-intact dome, and three half-tumbled wings surrounding a rubble-strewn courtyard. Guarding this installation (a former command centre) is a SCORPITRON, a living weapon equipped with a high-powered laser cannon. The SCORPITRON fires at everything it gets a visual on. Unlike its companion in ARKHOCENTRON, this one is linked to a mid-range fixed power supply allowing unlimited shots. There is nothing else of note here.

**G.** PERIFERIA, METAREGIO's primary line of defence is a force barrier that has only one entry point, through a heavily fortified checkpoint close to the upper cable transport station. It operates at greatly reduced efficiency, yet it is still potent enough to repel human intruders. From afar, PERIFERIA appears as a row of tall corner-apex pyramids made of black metal. Each pyramid has a triangular base and a sort of stooped "beak" on the top. Looking between the pyramids, there is a very faint opalescent shimmering. Anyone approaching within 10 m of the barrier experiences a weak tingling sensation, hairs standing, goosebumps, etc. Getting closer than 5 m results in an invisible electric bolt striking for 5d6 damage (save vs. petrification or there is also paralysis for 2d4 minutes). Anyone passing through, or flying less than 5 m over the barrier will be struck dead. Only a great explosive force would be able to blast a pyramid from its place, resulting in the entire line's instant deactivation. Finding such devices and getting



them close enough to the barrier to have the desired effect will be demanding.

5 Wandsmen and 40 Bosses are posted on PERIFERIA at full readiness at all times; since there are Boss barracks in short distance, another 50 men may be called into service at any time. All of these forces are concentrated on and around the checkpoint. The checkpoint itself is a combination of three defensive elements:

a) First, there are two great portals which allow passage into the city, but which are closed off by light blue curtains of electricity as a means of protection against demons from Outside. The gentle light inside these bronze frames is harmless, but induces such excruciating pain that a save versus energy drain must be made to prevent crying out; this save will be more difficult if the individual carries. There is a large courtyard between the two gates with no cover available.

b) Second, there is a meandering open-air passage flanked by thick concrete walls that also leads through PERIFERIA. This passage is vulnerable to attacks from above, the walls to the side, behind and from the defensive installations.

c) Finally, there are tall defensive buildings which in fact form the majority of the checkpoint complex. Two tri-beam lasers are mounted at critical points, allowing wide-arc fire, and there is also a tripod-mounted flamethrower aimed at the pass-through. This device is behind a protective screen. Moreover, the defensive installations are interconnected inside, with multiple exits on the walls and to the courtyard, offering excellent mobility to their defenders.

PERIFERIA's forces are commanded by Wandsman Messenauze, a trusted follower of High Wandsman Encellon with a direct signalling system to ARKHOCENTRON and Grand Boss Pinchenden. Bosses posted on the walls carry holstered laser pistols.

The procedure of passage through PERIFERIA is as follows: the arrival of Work Brigades when Exillion's light is fading is signalled to ARKHOCENTRON. Once a confirmation is received, the checkpoint is ready to receive incoming cargo and persons. It is important to note that no passage is granted at any other time unless

ARKHOCENTRON confirms it first, and that such an almost-unprecedented irregularity will turn a lot of heads from important people. PERIFERIA uses a parallel process to filter incoming traffic. All mine cars loaded with cargo are placed on iron tracks and dragged through the electric gates by a pulley-and-chains mechanism. The cars are lined up inside METAREGIO and taken to their final destination, the Autocreator, once the brigade they are assigned to has passed border control. Meanwhile, workers slowly pass through the twisting open air passage under the watchful gaze of Bosses standing on the walls, as well as Wandsmen who direct the Bosses and deliver a constant stream of propaganda preaching about the doctrines of Systema Tartarobasis and the implements of His divine will, the Wandsmen. Norms, quotas, the dictates of Encellon, and (especially) Exillion's deliverance myth; namely, the concept that once all glass is mined and brought into METAREGIO, the inhabitants of the city will stand before Systema Tartarobasis and partake of his Plentiful Benevolence, are mentioned with great frequency. The kindness of Wandsmen shines less brightly upon skimmers and normbreakers. People deemed suspicious are taken to the sides and searched by the Bosses; those found skimming are immediately lead away for rotation and beatings (and woe to the unfortunate woman who falls in the Bosses' hands!). Since skimming is widespread enough to be practiced by the majority of citizens, this is more a random means of terror than a systematic form of punishment. Also, the Wandsmen, who certainly enjoy exercising their power, like to call out and berate people for no specific reason at all (e.g. "*YOU! Yes, you in the sixth row! What is the number of your brigade? Which sector are you bound to? ... Speak up when you are talked to! Yes, and so what? Move faster! ... imbecile. I am surrounded by imbeciles.*").

Once the border has been crossed without a serious incident, the characters may start thinking about what they are going to do in the city of METAREGIO: in arm's reach of their final goal, yet still maddeningly far from

attaining it. (Note: it is likely that the characters will be dead tired by now, especially if they had to do fighting or other hard labour. Take this into account now and later on.)

### **THUS CONCLUDE THE PARTY'S TRAVAILS IN THE LAND THAT IS NAMED EXTERIKO**



### **METAREGIO**

A ruined barracks city of concrete and iron, METAREGIO is a shadow of its former self. Abandoned blocks are intermingled with run-down living complexes that show signs of having been several stories high in the past, but where only the remaining lowest floors are populated now. Narrow alleys are choked with hills of debris, although others, as well as all main roads, have been cleared, and some of the material incorporated into new construction. Warped and corroded metal sheets, stones that sometimes have glazed surfaces as a reminder to the extreme heat they had been subjected to, and other remains of a once mighty industrial civilisation are apparent. The top of intact buildings is a black mess of metal antennae, grids, poles and other inscrutable instruments of no current function. Everything shows signs of extreme age and neglect, and there are no living things outside humans.

METAREGIO is dominated by the immense complex of the Autocreator. The Autocreator has no entrances from the city except for the glass intake chutes, and therefore it remains its own closed-off world, perpetually operational with a steady hum of machinery. Towering above METAREGIO are the steep concrete walls of ARKHOCENTRON, the seat of the Wandsmen and their God, Systema Tartarobasis. It is an ominous presence above a ruined landscape, the elite of the Bosses standing on its parapets by the day and searchlights scouring the surrounding

desolation by night. Two bridges approach the iron gates, constantly lit and always in sight of observing eyes. ANOTERA, the mountain ARKHOCENTRON is situated on, is separated from the city by a wide bottomless chasm.

METAREGIO shows little signs of life when most Work Brigades are at work Outside. Except for Bosses posted at checkpoints and those who are transporting various supplies or spending their day off doing light work (an excuse for relaxation and non-sanctioned normbreaking), the streets are empty of traffic. Various areas around the city show increased activity: quarrying, repairs, heating and rolling synna for use as textiles, down to entirely meaningless tasks to keep workers occupied (carrying debris from one pile to another, dismantling an old communications array on top of a towering building and taking it to a warehouse where it is promptly forgotten, clearing a new building for use as a new communal barracks that will never be filled, etc.). In the evening, there is a bustle of activity with people going their various ways or walking around at random, but this period rarely lasts more than two or three hours, as the dimming of Exillion's lights signals the approach of curfew and the rest period. At night, the streets are dark and the only form of illumination that supplements the sun's weak night-time radiance is giant street lamps creating concentrated pools of intense light. These devices, which project light in three

directions roughly forming a circle, are mounted on tall metal poles and are frequently selected as sites for Boss checkpoints. They are, however, inadequate for illuminating anything but their immediate area; therefore, it is possible to move about unseen through most of METAREGIO in this period.

Rallies are an exception to this rule. These huge events, which take place on an empty area below ARKHOCENTRON's main gate, are held in the evening and last well into the night. They are attended by the majority of adult citizens, as the long sermons and speeches by the top Wandsmen, including High Wandsmen Encellon and Second Wandsmen Feluxis through the loudspeakers, are accompanied by the distribution of synna blocks carefully selected from less polluted batches, as well as a synna-derived alcoholic drink, and are followed by spontaneous orgies among the citizenry. Rallies are wild affairs with frequent fistfights, but there are always enough Bosses at the ready both at positions around the masses and on the roof of their headquarters, to efficiently quell any riot that may result. For serious situations, the tri-beam lasers and flamethrowers on the HQ building may be used to disperse the crowd. Nevertheless, rallies are an opportunity for releasing pressure, and a gathering point for those who desire to engage in illicit activities from exchanging glass for smuggled goods to the gatherings of Apostates. Rallies are organised without any obvious pattern, but the appearance of demons in EXTERIKO, news on whom are certain to spread, prompts the Wandsmen to stage a grandiose event to mold fear into a tool against the invaders and to strengthen their own public support. The implications of this rally, and further concerns, are elaborated under **Dynamics**.

Patrols in METAREGIO consist of 4 to 6 men, or double the number if the alert has been raised. They carry standard equipment.

**H.** This tent camp next to PERIFERIA is reserved for the five Punishment Brigades. The tents are synna on a metal framework, and have no furnishings whatsoever except uncomfortable mattresses laid on the ground. Each is home to a full brigade. Workers who

are placed on a Punishment Brigade have their freedom of movement severely curtailed in METAREGIO, but they are under no special surveillance outside a few token Bosses watching over their camp at night, as there is nowhere to escape to, and being discovered missing is met with brutal punishment. In effect, the camp is run by Brigade Nine, thugs closely associated with the Apostates, whose enforcement of order includes mandatory cuts from brigade quotas and other favours forced from the rest of the prisoners. Those who fail to comply are ratted out, beaten or even murdered in an out of the way location.

**I.** Also close to the checkpoint on PERIFERIA, an orderly group of barracks is used by 80 of METAREGIO's 250 Bosses. The barracks are equipped with bare-bones personal comfort marginally better than workers': bunks and a few tables to sit around. There are no extra supplies or weapons. There are usually 30 to 40 Bosses present.

**J.** The blocks of the Autonomous Production System, which are surrounded by dilapidated residential districts, are an endless conglomerate of industrial architecture. Despite the ramshackle appearance, the Autocreator is in good condition and it could operate at almost full functionality. The input of the system is a mixture of glass debris and other materials as prescribed by the Wandsmen. All materials are entered via large funnels on the southern side of the complex. These wide mawlike openings are above ground so glass from mine cars has to be carted up on metal wheelbarrows while Wandsmen watch and keep tally of brigade results. Inside, a conveyor system separates chunks of various size and purity via moving bolters, while a combination of melting and pressing shapes them into glass blocks of various prismatic shapes. Synna is a byproduct of this manufacturing process, being made of reprocessed slag and additives. Finished products are loaded into crates and placed on further conveyors that take them through the chasm around the base of ANOTERA and into the depths of

ARKHOCENTRON. 40 Wandsmen and 20 special workers are the overseers of the Autocreator. There are no Bosses and the Wandsmen are mostly unarmed, although if there is a serious emergency, eight Meta-Droids can be released into the facility. This is only done as a last resort, for the Meta-Droids have no friend-or-foe recognition system and attack indiscriminately. Until then, 15 sets of Divine Light can be retrieved and distributed among defenders.

Entering the Autocreator undetected is difficult. The funnels are situated on a large open plaza in open view of at least two checkpoints and close to the barracks near PERIFERIA. There is no cover to speak of, and light clearly outlines the scaffolds at night. The best chance is actually during the confusion when cargo is delivered; creating or taking advantage of a diversion could draw attention away from characters. The challenge then is to proceed along the conveyors and eventually find the loading bays and ride across the chasm into ARKHOCENTRON without being discovered on the way by the Wandsmen and their flunkies. Describing the facility in detail is outside the scope of this module.

**K.** An isolated building in a silent section of METAREGIO is used as a place of healing. It consists of a colonnade forming a quarter-circle, and an inner chamber with a font of curative waters. The water is able to heal 3d4 points of damage, but only once per day per person. Naturally, a Wandsman is tasked with distribution, and four Bosses patrol the perimeter at night with a larger group (10) at a checkpoint nearby. The Wandsman, and one of the Bosses, have the key to the locked iron door which leads inside. The water rapidly loses its benign properties if taken from the font.

**L.** This is the large gathering ground for rallies and executions. Even at other times, there are always people – including Wandsmen – around, plus the place is in clear sight of Boss headquarters.

**M.** The headquarters of the Bosses is a blocky concrete monstrosity sitting in an empty space

devoid of other construction. The rectangular outcroppings of the windowless structure rise to imposing battlements. There are a total of five battle stations outside (one right on the top), each with two tri-beam lasers mounted on metal tripods. The highest battle station, hovering a full 120' above ground, also has a battery of six heat-seeking missiles. There are, moreover, great searchlights for seeking out intruders and alarms to signal ARKHOCENTRON if there is an attack on the building. The corridors, which are cold, grey and empty, are lit with flickering electric spotlights.

170 Bosses, mostly equipped with their usual spears, short swords and javelins, but having access to a locked store of 30 lasers, are quartered in the building, of whom usually 80 to 100 are out on patrol. Grand Boss Pinchenden has his office on the first floor. No Wandsmen are present; important prisoners are taken to ARKHOCENTRON for interrogation.

**M1.** Entry lobby supported by thick rectangular columns. Gates to the outside, smaller metal doors to passages and chambers.

**M2.** Barracks; these are crowded with bunk beds and simple furniture.

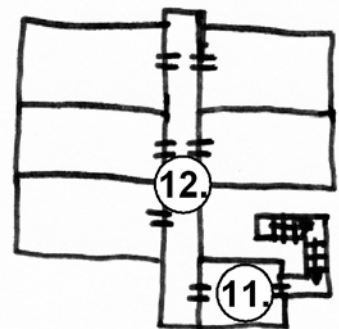
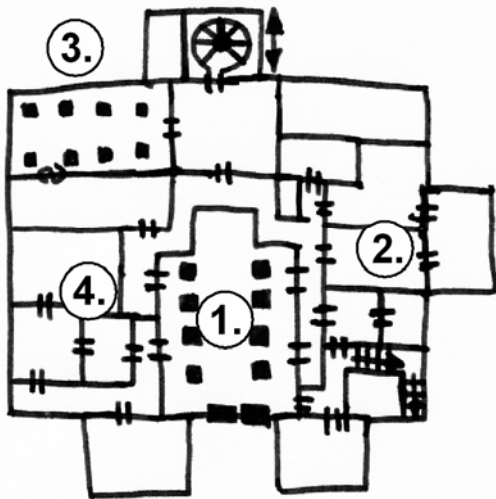
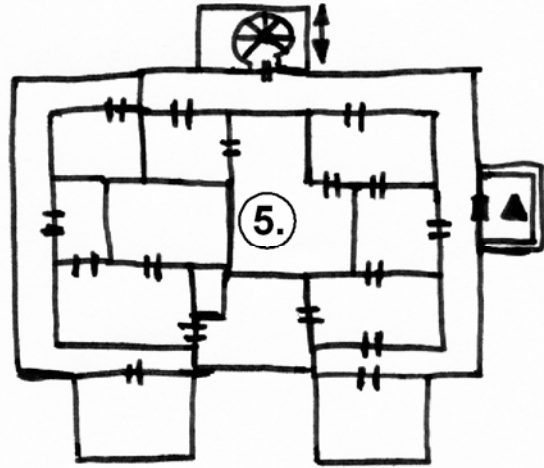
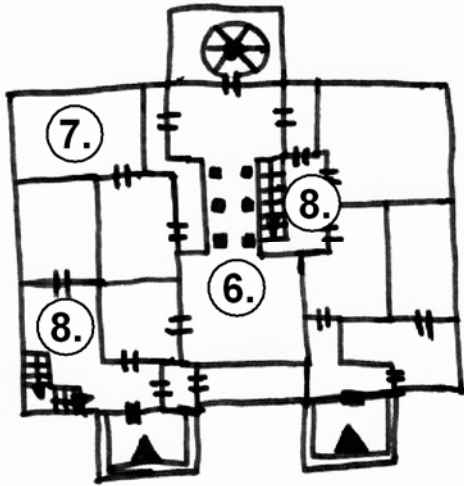
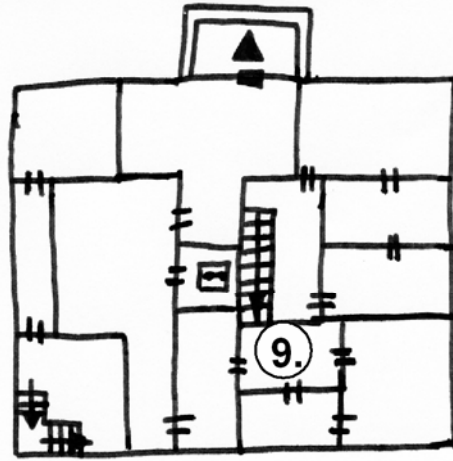
**M3.** Pinchenden's office is located in a columned hall. He has a desk, a black banner with the lightning in the circle, and two personal bodyguards. A secret door leads to his spartan sleeping chamber to the south. Pinchenden carries a laser pistol on his body at all times.

**M4.** These are more barracks.

**M5.** The entire floor is reserved for storage space. There is enough food and drink to outlast a siege, in addition to other equipment and weapon racks.

**M6.** Another columned hall, heavily guarded at all times.

**M7.** The laser pistols are kept in this locked chamber. 30 pistols charged at various levels



are available, placed in sealed metal containers. There are also equipment parts, tripods and even a few batches of explosives (75% ineffective due to advanced age). Getting in the chamber requires Pinchenden's dog tag to avoid triggering an alarm.

**M8.** These rooms have stairwells that ascend to the floor above. Each set is guarded from above by two elite Bosses equipped with lasers.

**M9.** This level is abandoned. Dust covers everything. It is also separated into two sections with no interconnection. Access to the roof is via a 40' ladder in the central chamber.

**M10.** The roof of the HQ, studded with the usual comm equipment. Four Bosses man the tri-beam laser, missile battery and searchlight station.

**M11.** The entrance to the underground holding cells, constantly guarded by four. It is also used for beatings, as evident from the heavy steel pipes by the wall.

**M12.** The cells under the building were converted from giant storage rooms with a semicircular domed vault. Every cell is closed by a heavy sliding blast door that may not be opened from inside. There are only eight prisoners, all arrested Apostates awaiting the next execution. The facility is way below storage capacity; if needed, as many as 500 could be brought in.

**N.** This nondescript building in close proximity of Boss HQ is used as a warehouse by Santiscauld's Apostates. There are all sorts of illegal goods here: synna blocks, synna textiles, alcohol, mining equipment, worker and Boss garments (even ten well-hidden Wandsman uniforms!), a small store of Outside items, weapons, etc. Basically, everything that could be found in Exillion except lasers and other advanced gear is available. The place is guarded day and night. Nobody is allowed inside unless on Santiscauld's direct orders.

**O.** A ramshackle building on the outskirts of METAREGIO, this is the main hub of the Apostates' black market. Here, glass debris may be exchanged for extra luxuries: synna, alcohol, and even food which comes directly from divine dispensation (or more correctly, through the URANOMETAFORA). Nympharium services are also found herein, a highly illegal thing. The seedy dive is frequented by workers, but Bosses can also be seen downing a cup or two (at reduced rates, of course). Wandsmen come rarely, and then only in plain clothes.

The market is run by Santiscauld, the Don of this operation, and a confidant of Second Wandsman Feluxis. Santiscauld is the corpulent type, constantly escorted by two tough-boys who are expert legbreakers. His office is underground. There are also sentries posted at other entrances, and some key locations (+). On the other hand, the guard is neither strong nor very attentive. Additionally, the thick iron doors block sound so infiltration and even an assault can work if it is done fast and relatively silently. Walls are bare concrete, and lights are electrical.

**O1.** The bar section demonstrates that even in such an unusual place, certain constants of fantasy apply. The bar consists of a low ceilinged room below street level. There are cross-legged tables and stools (all made of metal, of course), and a long counter where drinks are served. In the evening (the place opens after sunset and closes around midnight), there are up to 16 guests, usually at least two or three Bosses among them. They drink alcohol, consume synna, but it is also possible to spot that some of them are eating Outside food – roast chicken legs, eggs and fruits! There is constant conversation, and although groups keep to themselves, they are freer with their tongues than elsewhere.

The barman, Roxin, is a bald guy with a moustache. He stands behind the counter, usually preoccupied with cleaning mugs (ugly aluminium cups) with a filthy rag. If presented with good proof that the PCs may be interesting, he whispers that they should wait until the place is empty, and is willing to take them before Santiscauld. The exit from the bar – like other doors in the building – is

an iron blast door which closes with two “arms”. This one may only be opened from the other side.

**O2.** These are sleeping chambers for goons. There are four in each room. They have bunks and simple personal items, including some very minor Outside trinkets.

**O3.** Three large sleeping chambers for the prostitutes working in the nympharium. These unfortunate women have been brought here by kidnapping and extortion (often from Punishment Brigades), and are kept against their will. There are a total of 18, six to each room. They have a few personal effects, but certainly don’t like their lot, even if mining is not pleasant work either. All of the rooms open from the outside only.

**O4.** More sleeping rooms for toughs upstairs. Their inhabitants are mostly away at the warehouse, so there are only six present in all. The middle room has a large opening outside, where the wall collapsed around a window. A watcher is posted here, as this is where goods are brought in.

**O5.–O6.** Nympharium rooms, empty during the night. Mattresses, synna tapestries and a peculiar smell, a mixture of sweat and other, sweetish odours. O6. is an entire suite, reserved for special guests and occasions.

**O7.** Santiscauld’s underground office is a comfortably furnished and soundproof room. The Don sits behind a steel writing desk, where he also has a bottle of white wine and a bowl of sugared fruits. His boys are constantly by his side. Santiscauld is hard to negotiate with: he knows that he holds many cards in his hand while the characters hold very few: after all, he can order them captured, Outside items offered as bribes taken, etc. Only extraordinarily interesting things or outstanding but tangible offers capture his attention – basically, a reason not to sell them to a higher bidder in ARKHOCENTRON. One such possibility is magic items, but only once their powers have been demonstrated in his arena. The subject is going to be a wretch taken from a holding

cell, and Santiscauld will watch the proceedings from the safety of his observation gallery.

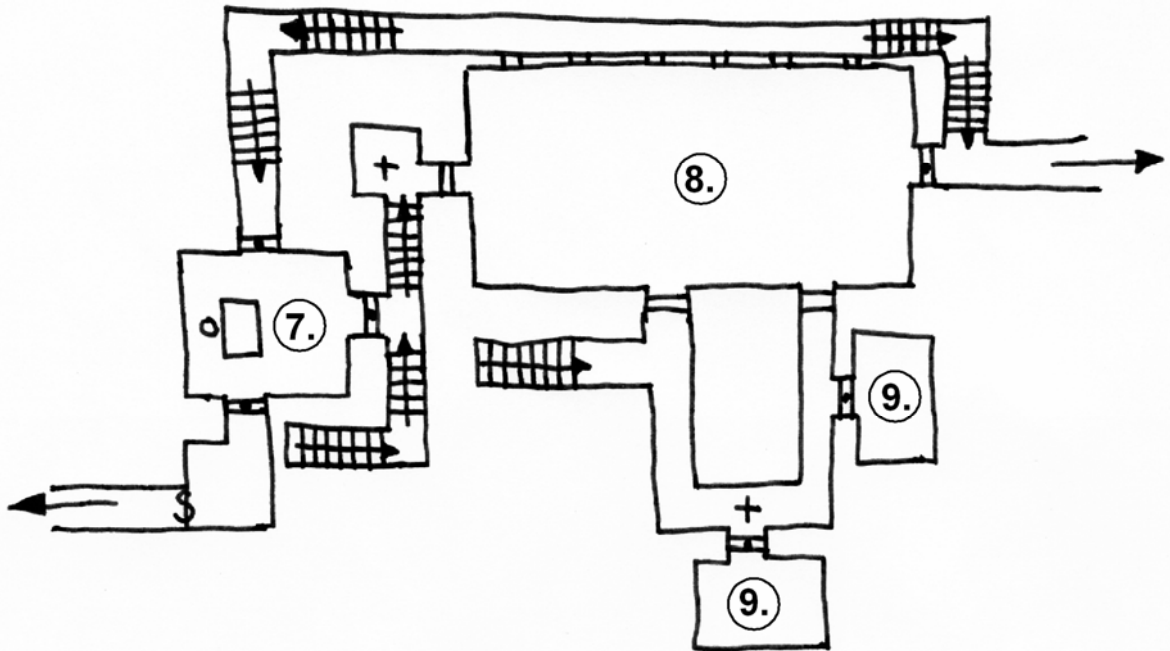
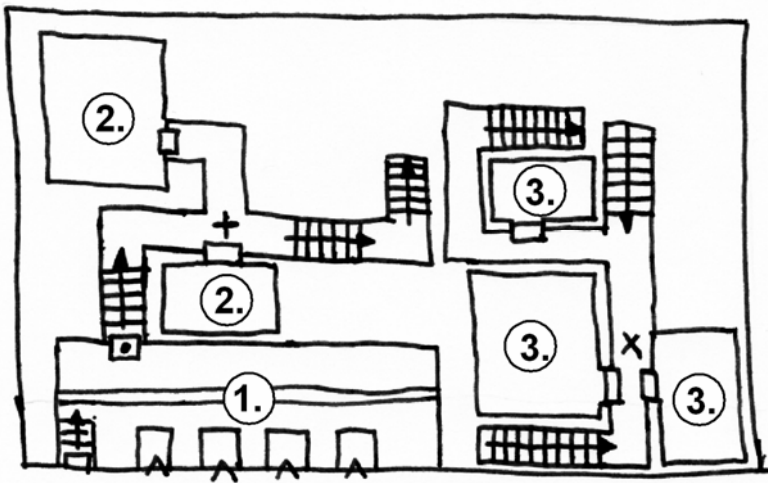
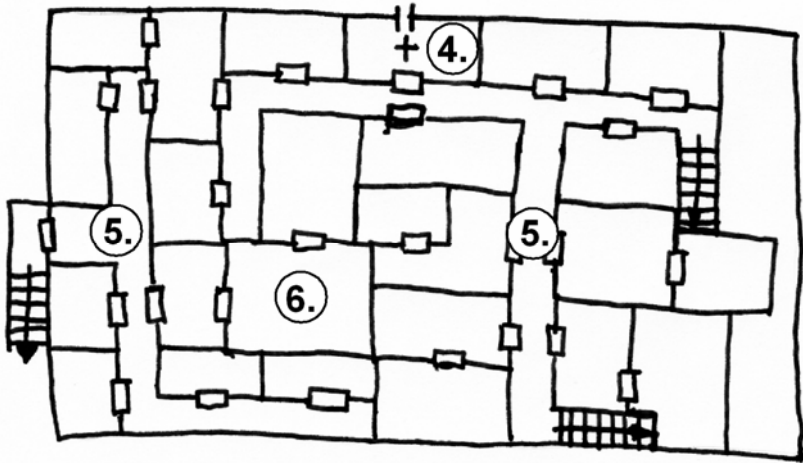
If things go wrong, he threatens PCs with his laser pistol, but surrenders to obvious superior force if called on the bluff. Remember that Santiscauld knows all about the URANOMETAFORA, and that the PCs desperately need to reach it. He uses this knowledge as a bargaining chip even if he is “losing”, reminding them that nothing will be gained if he is dead. On the other hand, he is careful to withhold key information, including the facts that he has learned how to operate the device, or that his association with Second Wandsman Feluxis doesn’t stop at smuggling. He later suggests that the party retrieve the Wandsman uniforms from his warehouse – only once they are near Boss HQ, he walks away, remarking that making a scene here would be a foolish idea...

There are two exits from Santiscauld’s room. The one to the south leads to a sleeping chamber and a secret escape route, and the other to a gallery overlooking the large chamber.

**O8.** A large chamber, roughly equal in size to a basketball court, and with an equally high ceiling. An observation gallery overlooks the place, separated by iron girders. The chamber is used to stage gladiator fights, usually against victims who have little chance.

**O9.** These are used as holding cells for people who had crossed the Apostates or refused to pay extortion. There are six unfortunate wretches, including one former Apostate who knows of Santiscauld’s dealings with Feluxis, and a Boss who is familiar with the layout of ARKHOCENTRON.

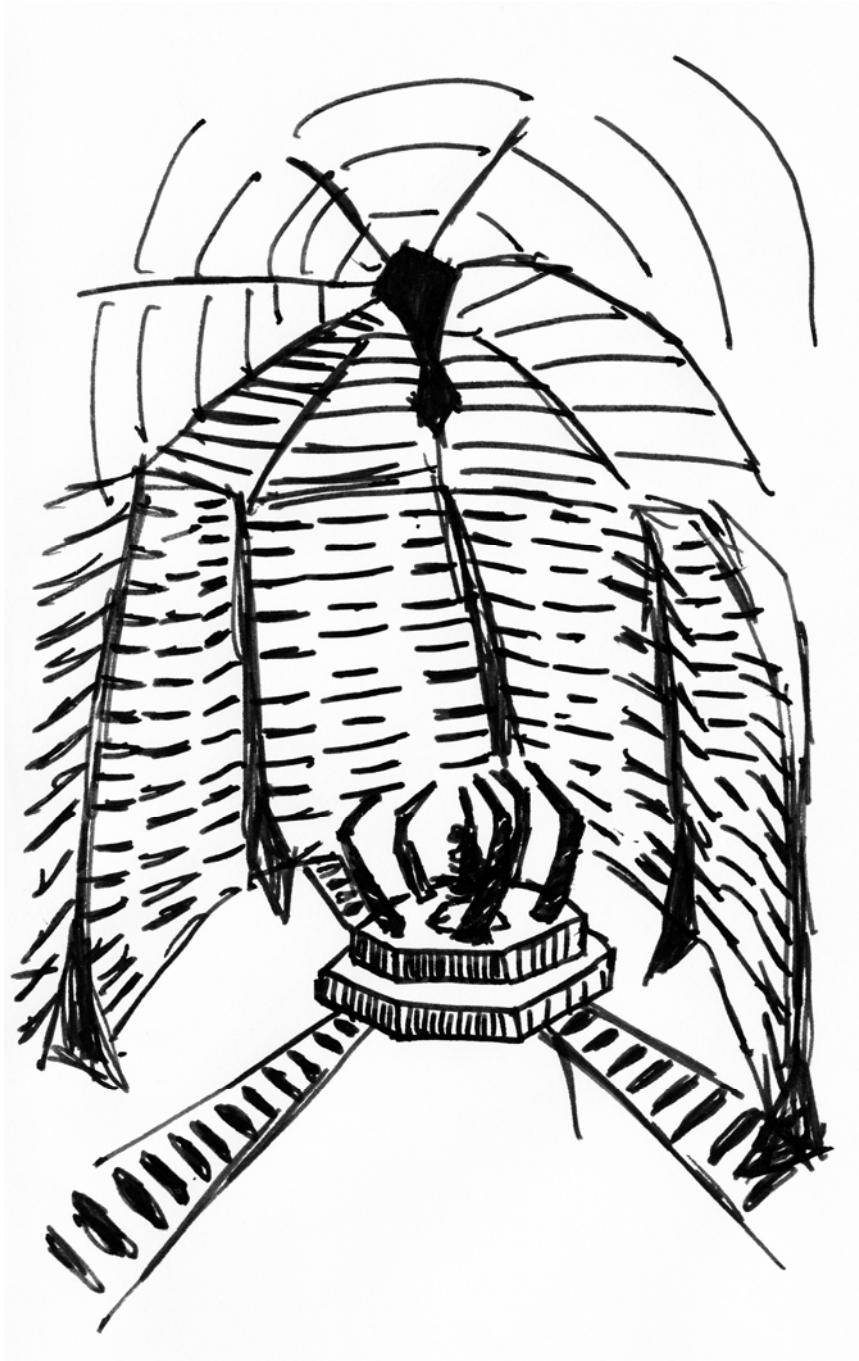
**P.** The bottom of the chasm at the base of ANOTERA is lost in darkness. Conveyor belts carrying sealed crates from the deep storages of the Autocreator run across the gulf at odd angles and heights. The closest one is approximately 30’ below the edge. All belts are located in the segment between the northern and central bastion. Even at night, it is not easy to descend without detection, although doing so during a rally may be

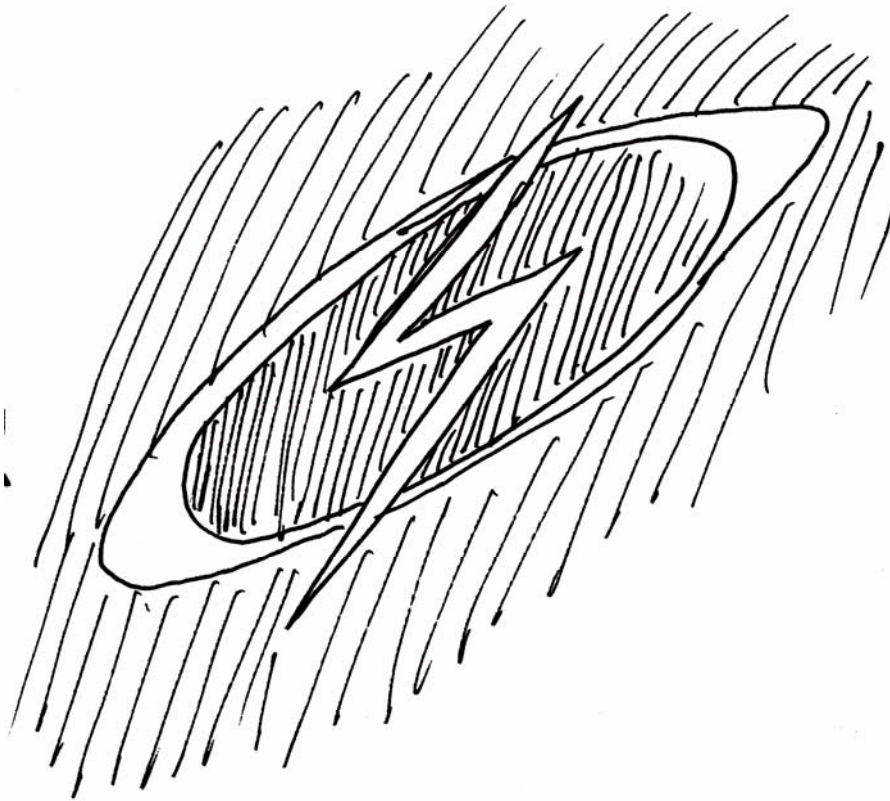
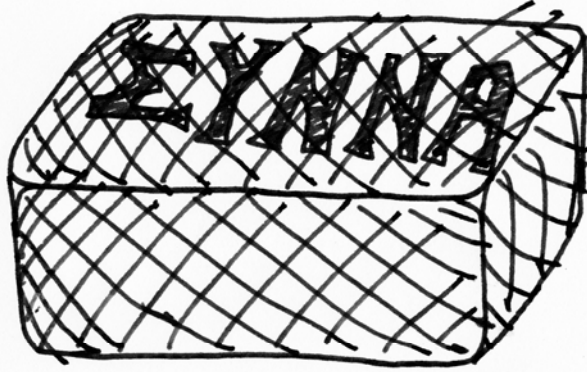




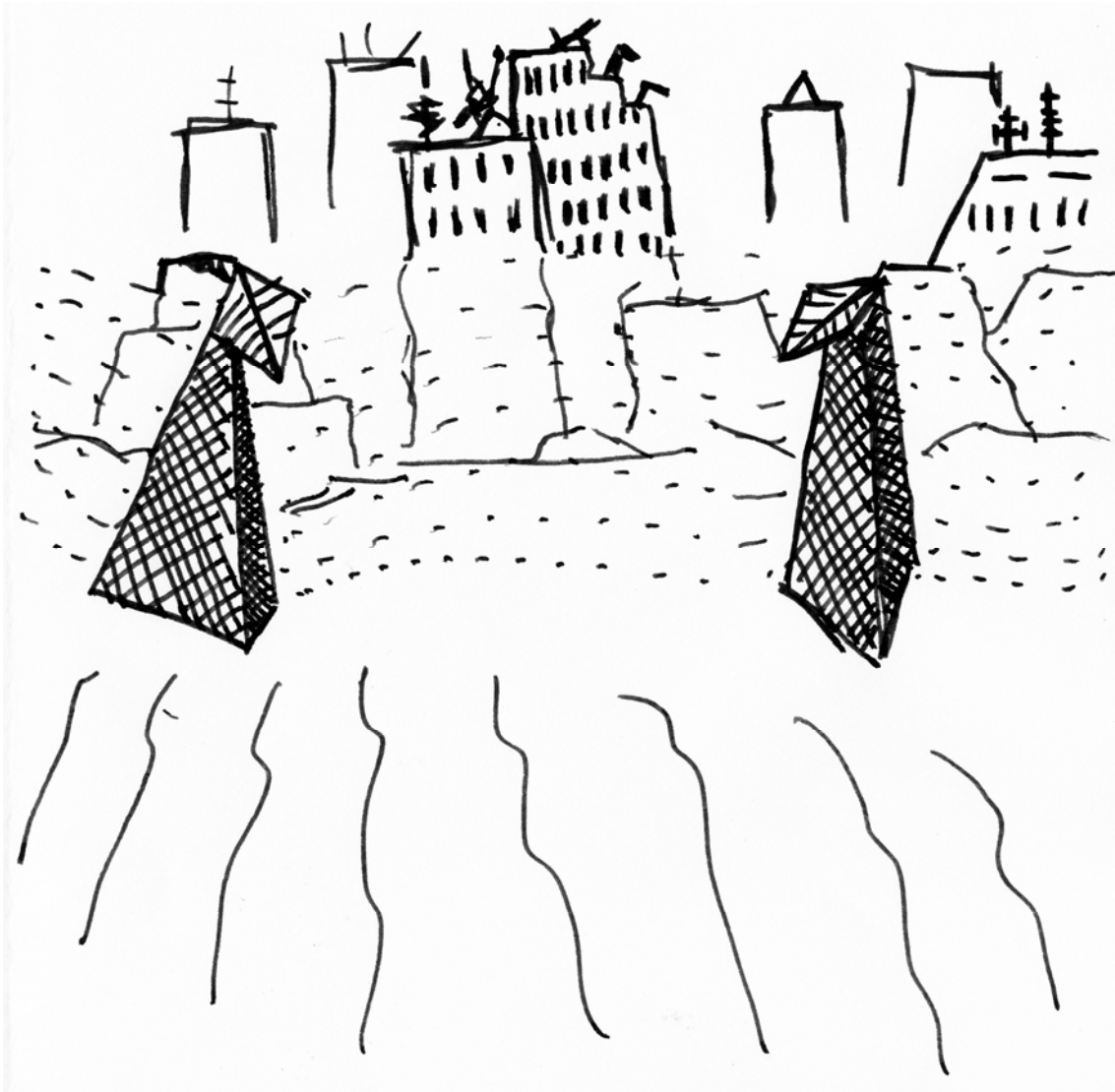
# Illustration Booklet

1. Machinery (UNDEREARTH 11.)
2. Block of synna
3. The device of the Bosses
4. Ruined comm array (EXTERIKO E.)
5. PERIFERIA (EXTERIKO G.)
6. Checkpoint on PERIFERIA (EXTERIKO G.)
7. Pole-mounted spotlight in METAREGIO
8. The URANOMETAFORA
9. URANOMETAFORA controls
10. Systema Tartarobasis

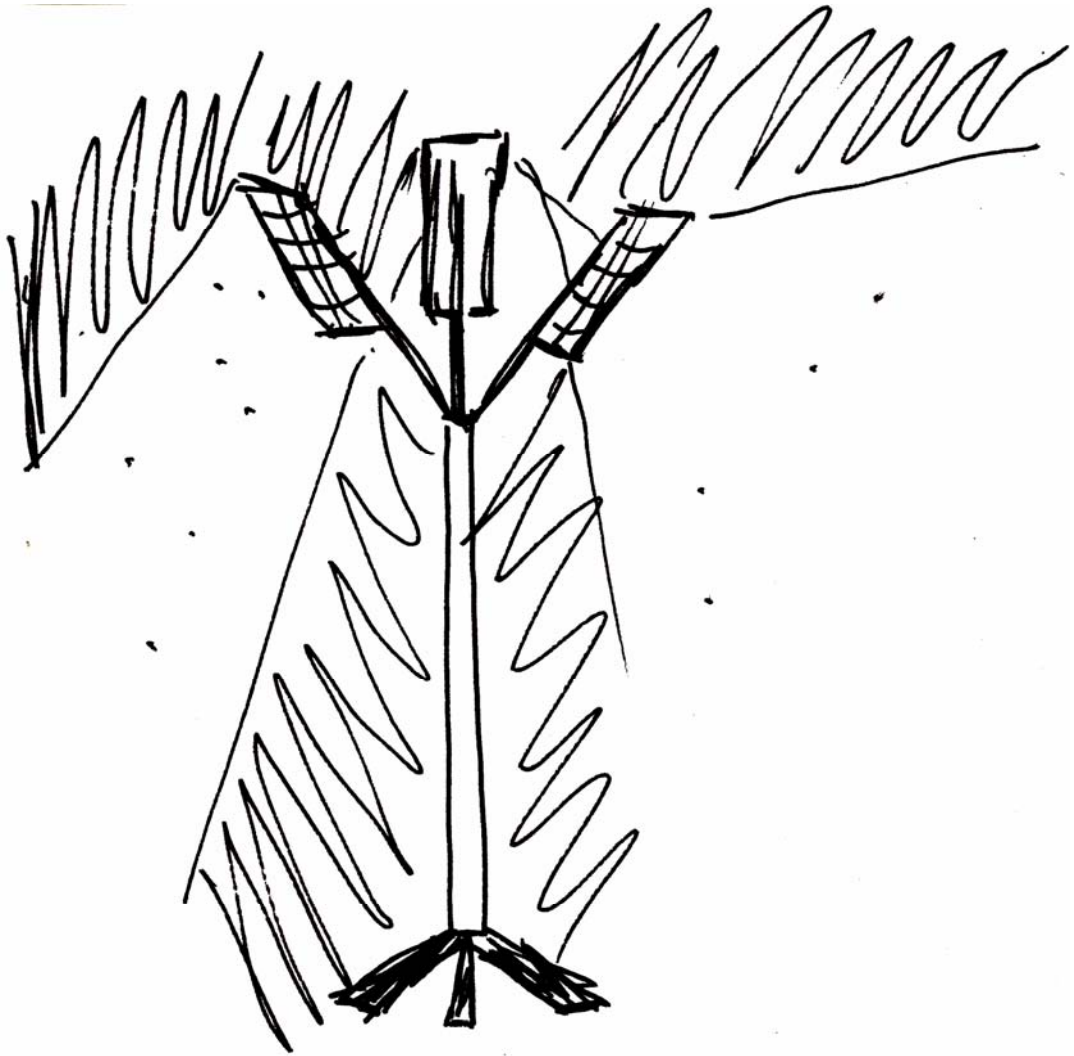






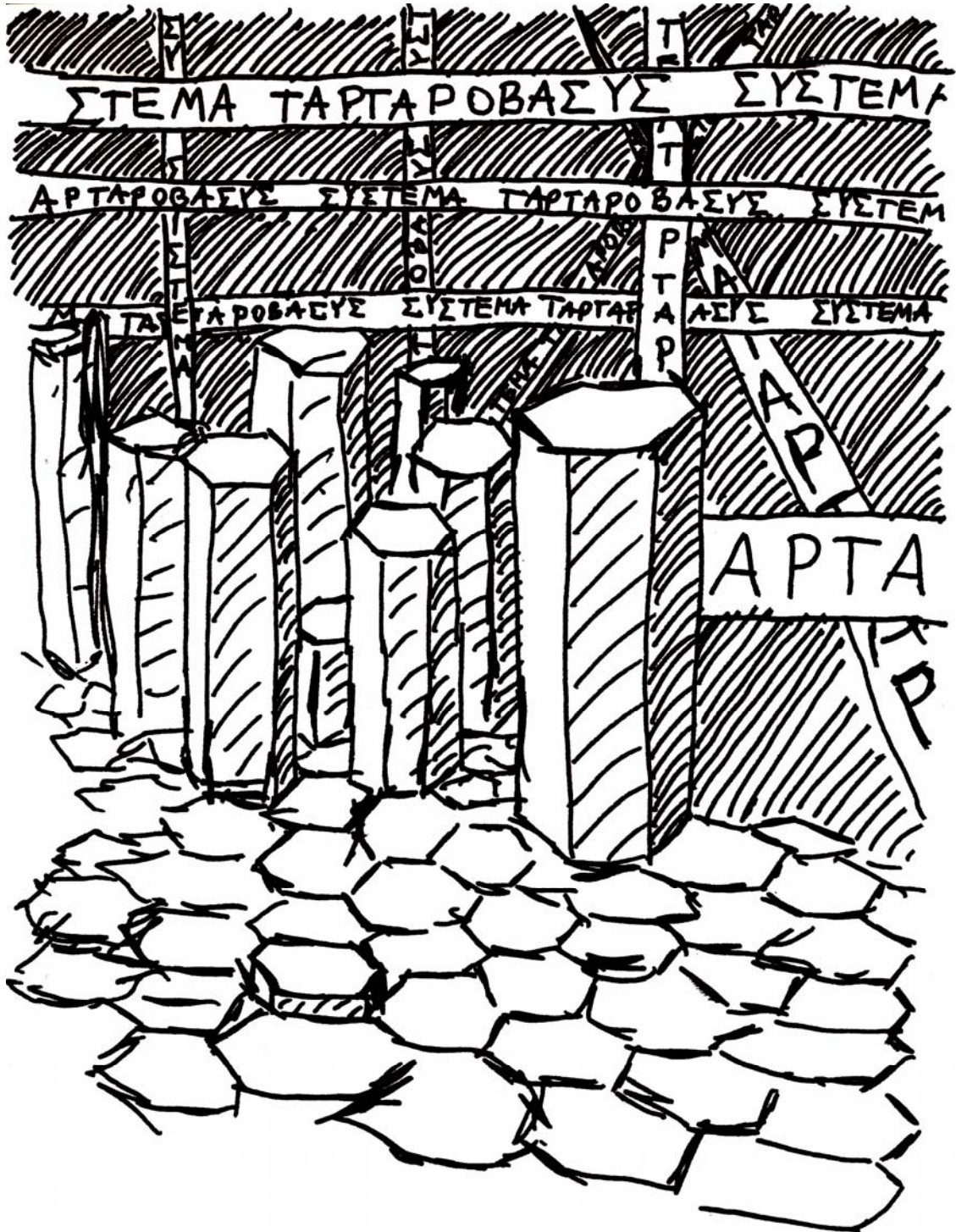












# **This Ends the Illustration Booklet**

achieved, as the crowds stay away from the chasm for fear of an accident.

**Q.-R.** Two gate towers leading into ARKHOCENTRON. Both towers are linked to METAREGIO via metal bridges, and both are closed by great iron gates. It is impossible to approach the gate unseen without turning invisible. Workers may not visit ARKHOCENTRON under all but the rarest circumstances (almost certainly unavailable for the PCs). Bosses who have a very important report to make may be let in, and Wandsmen are theoretically free to come and go (practically, they are also known enough to the Bosses to be recognisable under most circumstances). In any event, entering through

the front gate leads to a thorough questioning by an inquisitive and high-ranking Wandsman who can unerringly recognise impersonators. This doesn't apply to people who are escorted by a high-ranking Wandsman such as Encellon (as unlikely as this is), Feluxis or elders like Brother Cudgel: it is their discretion and their accountability.

Having gained entry into the ancient fastness of the Wandsmen, the characters are now closer to freedom than ever. Yet their hardest task is still to be finished: find a way to the URANOMETAFORA's controls in a place crawling with their enemies, activate the teleportation device and return to their own world unharmed.

### THUS CONCLUDE THE ADVENTURES IN THE RUINED CITY OF METAREGIO



ARKHOCENTRON, haughty seat of the Wandsmen and God, Systema Tartarobasis, towers above the city of METAREGIO with its parapets, bastions and chaotic building complexes. Even so, this is only part of the whole, for many more stores, factory bays and machine depots exist under ANOTERA, unknown even to the Wandsmen themselves. As the central hub of a Stabilisator City from Fomalhaut's prehistory, the technology is so sophisticated that much of it is beyond human understanding. Systema Tartarobasis is one such enigma, being made God by the fact of worship, yet not divine in the traditional sense even if none in Exillion could live without it. Then there is the URANOMETAFORA: an enchanted gate into a supposed heavenly world, this primordial technological artifact is a means of commercial exchange, but perhaps it is also a door to salvation to the player characters. Irregardless of the philosophical implications the place invites,

ARKHOCENTRON is going to be a place of denouement.

It is not possible to describe in exact detail every passage, lecture hall, chapel and hidden nook in this module. Instead, what is presented is a summary of the notable areas and their accessibility. Familiarity with the personalities who may influence play is paramount to run this part of the scenario. Likewise, what happens in ARKHOCENTRON; indeed, what possibilities are *left* by the time the characters reach it, is greatly dependent of what had happened previously. If more than four days have been spent in the city or events have escalated beyond control, only a suicidal last-ditch effort may be available. Contrariwise, an earlier time or sufficient discretion provides a lot of manoeuvring ground; indeed, there is a possibility that the characters will be with a friendly (although rather greedy) escort, and attain the final destination

inviolable. The state of alert and the mobilisation of inimical forces is as follows:

- **Level Zero:** The characters have been very carefully avoiding confrontation. Even if their presence is known, they have caused little damage (under five casualties or disappearances) and no news have travelled to Encellon about their intent to use the URANOMETAFORA. This is the optimal scenario: guards are at a low alert and will not be suspicious. Life goes on in ARKHOCENTRON as usual, and if the proper precautions have been taken and appropriate disguise donned, the characters can move about without drawing undue attention. Finding a Wandsman who has access to Systema Tartarobasis and who can be coerced or bribed into activating the URANOMETAFORA may be easily accomplished. Of course, being where they are not supposed to be, or doing things they are not supposed to do is still not advisable, and running into Encellon or Feluxis is bad news.
- **Level One:** The characters have been cautious, but there have been disturbances that have drawn attention: casualties or disappearances numbering between five and fifteen, intentions known to Encellon, causing smaller calamities, etc. In this scenario, guards have been told to watch for suspicious intruders. Unless they can employ extraordinary guile, bluffing no longer works and movement within ARKHOCENTRON must be clandestine. Key locations marked on the map (+) are guarded at normal level (2 guards at each point). However, investigation will be concentrated in METAREGIO and characters who remain out of sight can avoid a violent conclusion.
- **Level Two:** The characters have done major bloodshed, killed/alerted important personalities (this means Pinchenden, Santiscauld or any Wandsman in charge of a major installation) or drawn widespread

public attention to their activities. In this scenario, Encellon takes special precautions. All normal guard posts are manned as usual, but a search party is also assembled to patrol ARKHOCENTRON's outer courtyards. The SCORPITRON is activated and placed inside the northern gate. If the intruders are identified, Encellon immediately gathers all elite Bosses and moves to intercept them at the courtyard of the URANOMETAFORA. Depending on player swiftness, his appearance may take place before or after the activation of the gate. Meanwhile, Feluxis awaits the PCs in the activation chamber to take them prisoner as proof of Encellon's inefficiency. If they have been encountered, he will be with Santiscauld or Pinchenden (in this order); otherwise, the companion is an unidentified elite Boss. In this case, no Wandsman will help the characters unless threatened with bodily harm, as they know the consequences of aiding demons from Outside.

- **Level Three:** Major confrontation has occurred between characters and Exillion forces, important people have been killed and the activities of the PCs have become a public spectacle. Alternately, characters arrive after the noon of day four. In this scenario, all odds are stacked against the intruders. Encellon places ARKHOCENTRON on high alert. All hands are called into service, entrances and points of interest watched by a triple guard (6 men) and laser weapons distributed among all Wandsmen. Encellon personally leads his best into battle, moving around the inner areas of ARKHOCENTRON with orders to shoot on sight. A very minor hope exists in that the High Wandsman also suspects treachery, and his attention may be briefly drawn away if this fear is exploited. Even so, massive luck, ability or their combination is going to be needed to live through this

entanglement.

- Day six arrives. Alert in this case goes back to level two, but the PCs only have one hour after sunrise to stop Encellon from destroying the URANOMETAFORA, and thirty minutes of *game time* after his intention to do so has been broadcast.

Running ARKHOCENTRON, the Referee must keep things fluid and be prepared to think fast and improvise. Keep in mind that even at full alert, the complex isn't airtight: there are just too few people to guard every entrance and passage.

There are six known levels below ARKHOCENTRON.

**A. (ALPHA)** This is just below the main building complex. It is lightly guarded with a few checkpoints. The layout is gridlike, with domed rooms in intersections and rooms branching off the main passages. The primary purpose is manufacturing activity; the materials being manufactured are various industrial additives mixed in giant fermenting vats. They exhibit pudding type characteristics, but are not in fact harmless unless something is intentionally thrown into them: in this case, they have a formidable pull and need a hard Strength check to break free. There are stairs up to 8., 7. and 12., the last through a jail area. Access down is through stairs to B. and ladders to Γ.

**B. (BETA)** A lesser intermediate level. It is full of machines which are responsible for regulating the Autocreator's activities. Access up and down is through stairs, but there is also a shaft that goes through Γ. to Δ. and an elevator to an underground passage which connects to the Autocreator. Guard activity is low but present (the elevator is always guarded).

**Γ. (GAMMA)** Much of the level is meandering tunnels and storerooms full of heavy machine parts. No guard is set. Stairs descend at various points to the bay of Δ., and also to Φ. There are also stairs up to B. and ladders to A.

**Δ. (DELTA)** Almost the entire expanse of the level is one immense distribution bay for the conveyor belts incoming from the Autocreator. Distribution is usually supervised by two junior Wandsmen standing on a ledge. They are unarmed. If level three alert is declared, Bosses with lasers are placed here to shoot interlopers.

**E. (EPSILON)** Deep storage for several types of high-tech equipment, including lasers, but also scientific tools, unused terraforming devices, navigation instruments and much more. Everything is sealed behind blast doors and often kept at low temperatures. Nobody really comes here. Access is only available from below.

**Φ. (PHI)** There is only one way to descend to this level, through a winding staircase from Γ. A spiral staircase leads up to E. Most of the level's area is a hazardous environment where the Radiation Pits are located. Consignation to this oubliette is certain death. Nobody comes here unless commanded to. There are possibly even more levels below Φ., but they are unknown, not to mention irrelevant to the scenario.

**1.-2.** Two gate towers and a bastion in between. All of them are three stories tall. The gates are guarded by two men; the middle level is usually empty (but with firing ports in case of an emergency and an immobile flamethrower aimed at the bridges). A tri-beam laser is mounted on the roof; there are usually two guards – one to man the tri-beam and another to watch the trapdoor down. There is a pole-mounted lamp on each tower.

**3.** The battlements are wide enough for three to progress abreast. There is adequate cover on both sides.

**4.** The outer courtyard is a flat expanse offering little cover unless characters stay in the dark and close to the walls. At a level two or three alert, the SCORPITRON will have been placed on the southern corner of the main complex (14.) where it can instantly fire at anyone in a 270° arc. Traffic on the courtyard is low but constant during the day,

and very low during the night.

**5.** This triangular hall of columns is the building of the nympharium. Everything is covered in beautiful white marble, imported from Outside at outrageous costs. There is a circular pool, comfortable seats to lounge on, golden wine, and pretty young things to take one's mind off the days' troubles. None of the latter are to be seen if there is any hint of danger. The hall is a perfect place for ambush.

**6.** The servants' wing, a somewhat simple concrete building with two floors. There aren't too many workers living in ARKHOCENTRON, and they are all harmless old people. These Heroes of Work are usually too pious to offer help and too cowardly to be a threat.

**7.** Storage space for all kinds of mundane supplies, one story. This is where one of the exits from level A. emerge. There are normally only two or three Bosses to the entire place, four at level two alert and six at level three. Exits open to the outer courtyard at two points, as well as the servants' wing (13.).

**8.** The novices' wing is a compact three-story building. It is flanked from the east and the north by long colonnades with numerous doors leading into cells and communal chambers. It is cold, impersonal and very bare. There are few novices, mostly youths between fourteen and twenty years of age. Hence, much of the place is completely empty. The novices' wing is unguarded, but except for the iron portal at the westernmost terminus of the colonnade and a passage to the temple, there are no useful connections. Novices know little but doctrine and small practical tasks. Their attitude is usually of naive devotion. They have no possessions outside their habits and scientific textbooks.

**9.** The temple of Systema Tartarobasis is a three stories high hall that shows signs of extreme age, probably used as a lecture hall in the distant past. Pews are simple and uncomfortable with large writing surfaces. The podium is equipped with loudspeakers.

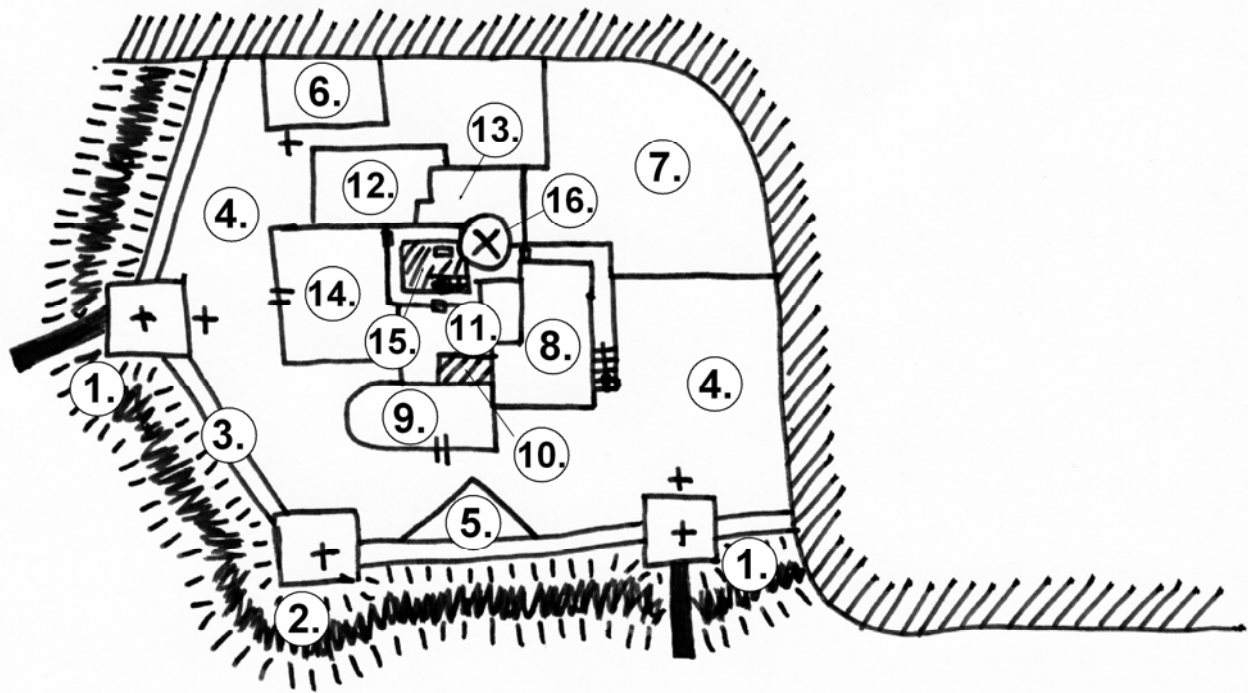
There is no representation of God in the temple, or anything that could be interpreted as decorative. There are no guards or passersby either.

**10.** The southern courtyard connects three major areas: the novices' wing, the temple and Central Core. Since the surrounding buildings are at least three stories tall, it is always a bit dark. A colonnade runs around the ground and first floor. There are no Bosses in normal circumstances, but very frequent traffic. At level two alert, there are two men on the ground floor. At level three, there are two on both floors.

**11.** Central Core is the highest block of ARKHOCENTRON except Systema's tower, with a full four stories. Only the elder Wandsmen and the 15 elite Bosses are allowed into its halls without special permission. There are secret libraries, sitting rooms, comfortable sleeping chambers, discussion chambers and more – equipped with everything divine providence can provide. Here, too, are the audience chambers of Encellon and Feluxis. The characters won't encounter many people here, but there is a good chance they will be armed and extremely dangerous. Central Core has a flight of stairs down to level A. just outside the iron portal leading to the courtyard of the URANOMETAFORA, and connections to all surrounding areas except storage and the southern servants' wing.

**12.** The entire wing is reserved for ARKHOCENTRON's Bosses. It is two stories, and consists of spartan cells with bunks and tables, plus a few rooms reserved for practice and other activities. There is a connection to level A., where ARKHOCENTRON's jail is located, and exits to the outer courtyard, the main building and the southern servants' wing. Obviously, there are a lot of Bosses here, less if they have been dispatched elsewhere.

**13.** The southern servants' wing, just like the other at 6. Exits to 12., 7. and the outer courtyard, no guard activity.



14. This large three-story building is reserved for the Wandsmen. They have individual rooms for relaxation and study, and kitchens, lecture halls and so on for communal activities. It is a somewhat busy place, but with enough undisturbed nooks to hide from prying eyes. Furnishings include a few Outside items, but nothing as opulent as in Central Core.

15. The courtyard of the URANOMETAFORA is accessible from three directions: blast doors from the colonnade of the novices' wing, the main Wandsman building and Central Core. All of the doors open with dog tags belonging to one of the high-ranking Wandsmen (or Santiscauld). No conventional force can bring them down, although explosives or a battery of at least 30 laser shots may work at the Referee's discretion. The doors can be locked from the inside.

The courtyard is surrounded on three sides by a colonnade running on level one, from where stairs descend to the courtyard proper. The fourth side is taken by a wall and the tower of Systema. The courtyard is always pleasantly shady, if a bit bare. Standing against the northern wall is the URANOMETAFORA, the doorway to freedom, or perhaps Heaven itself... It is a corroded old bronze frame with

brass steps leading upwards, and a plaque which bears its name in archaic characters. When the PCs arrive, the portal is deactivated. There is also something else: a half-hidden steel door in the corner of the tower, and short stairs beyond descending before the presence of God.

16. Soaring above ARKHOCENTRON and the rest of Exillion, the tower of God, Systema Tartarobasis, is a sleek yet massive structure. Below ground lies the hall of Systema. It is a giant, domed chamber where every surface is inlaid with hexagonal steel plates that glint when light falls on them. It is cold here – probably below freezing point – and there is little light to orient oneself. In the middle of the chamber, thick hexagonal pillars rise from the floor, metallic surfaces shining in crystalline symmetry. Behind, in endless rows of right, letters bearing the Divine Name run across long displays. Silence is perfect, and noise echoes. This is obviously sacred ground.

Across the entrance, behind Systema's pillars, another mystery presents itself. A pedestal, or probably an altar, made of dull metal with a steel frame holding a round mirror of black crystal. There is a mass of levers, dials and buttons, all without an apparent purpose. This curious device is the key to the

URANOMETAFORA, but only if one is familiar with its secrets. A senior Wandsman, or Santiscauld (who has spied on Second Wandsman Feluxis and learned the means of bringing it to life) could use it to open the gateway to Outside. If such help is unavailable, there is still a small chance a character can figure it out by himself: the probability of success is 2% per point of Intelligence, and an attempt takes ten minutes. Nobody may try more than once. Trying to harm the Systema hub is an

extremely bad idea. Even so much as a single shot fired at the columns or the displays activates the guardians, six Meta-Droids in closed wall niches. These yellow monstrosities proceed to kill anyone their movement sensors detect. Of course, actually succeeding at bringing down Systema (a feat requiring explosives or highly destructive magic; lasers simply bounce off the polished surfaces without doing too much damage) is going to result in the overloading of Exillion's reactor core and total destruction.



### Conclusion

Once the URANOMETAFORA has been activated, the door to freedom is open: Outside awaits behind the shimmering blue curtain... Yet there may be one more obstacle. If it became known that the characters are in ARKHOCENTRON (the alarm has been triggered, bodies discovered or opponents allowed to escape), there is going to be a welcoming committee: fifteen black-clad elite Bosses, commanded in person by God's appointed second, High Wandsman Encellon. Encellon orders the Bosses to take up positions around the colonnade, pistols at the ready, while he himself stays close enough to a column to duck at a sign of danger.

Characters who are trapped with no exit have some hard choices to make.

- It is possible to make a run for the URANOMETAFORA and reach it in one round – if the character survives a volley of laser beams. Everyone running through the courtyard takes a minimum of four shots (six if he is alone, four if shots are divided among characters; characters shielded by their companions only take one or two). As described in the Appendix, it is possible to dodge shots with a save versus wands, but there is a -4 penalty

against the second shot, -8 against the third, etc.

- Guards are behind cover and gain +4 to their AC. They are also positioned at distances so they can't all be taken out with a fireball or similar spell.
- Encellon, who has no weapon himself, can pretend to negotiate, but immediately orders fire on the Apostates if an opportunity presents itself, including hostages. He doesn't budge to threats regarding Systema's destruction – in fact, he counters by remarking that this is an impossibility, and even if the PCs were to be successful, they would be destroyed along with the tower, ARKHOCENTRON and the entire world. Likewise, bribery is completely ineffective. Only with some very clever idea, or somehow taking the High Wandsman their prisoner (e.g. an *invisible* PC could sneak up behind him), may the situation be resolved without a fight. Last but not least, note that Encellon has nothing but contempt for the PCs or their world, and is prepared to die rather than leave his own behind.



Stepping through the URANOMETAFORA, the characters can finally leave behind this place of confinement. With a flash of light, the concrete walls of ARKHOCENTRON melt, giving way to different skies. The party is presently standing atop a low ridge below the stars of Fomalhaut. In all directions, the lifeless sands of untrod deserts stretch towards a darkened horizon.

## THUS ENDS THE ADVENTURE IN THE RUINED WORLD OF EXILLION



### Dynamics

Systema Tartarobasis is a scenario where players may attempt to achieve their objective (finding a way out of Exillion) in several different ways. Although the module offers some suggestions here and in the main text, none of them should be taken as holy writ. Instead, the Referee should present consequences and opportunities which emerge logically from the actions of the characters, even if this results in a departure from what is given here.

In Systema Tartarobasis, the players face an interesting dilemma. They are transported to an unknown and hostile world where they cannot rely on their usual resources (see **Initial conditions**), and where they are being hunted by local denizens. To get out, they need to find information and supplies; but also, they have to avoid drawing too much attention to themselves. These objectives hold an inherent contradiction. The strategic challenge, escaping from Exillion, needs as much secrecy as possible. But to know what they are supposed to do, and get closer to their eventual goal, the PCs need to overcome tactical obstacles which often carry the risk that their activities will draw the attention of the Wandsmen who then muster their forces to contain and annihilate the threat. The problem, therefore, is escalation: the more entangled the PCs get with the environment, the more they will understand the puzzle before them, but their opponents will also

mobilise and eventually take countermeasures. It is possible for PCs to successfully complete every tactical problem they come across but eventually push themselves into a corner. A standard scenario of escalation is provided below.

Even if their task looks monumental and their foes invincible, Exillion's forces are hindered by weaknesses inevitably shared by totalitarian regimes: inefficiency, bureaucracy and a high level of corruption. Although the power in the hands of the Wandsmen is theoretically absolute, their underlings are often inadequate for their tasks, or simply too slow in their response. If the PCs exploit this fault, they can always stay one step ahead of their pursuers. Contacting various groups active in METAREGIO may also be beneficial – although not without its hazards. Finally, a note of caution: the aim of the scenario is not the merciless extermination of characters, although random harassment by Wandsmen and Bosses, being sent to do senseless labour (even better, sending different PCs to different work sites under an armed escort), sudden checks and questionings should be frequently used to maintain an atmosphere of paranoia. And in tight situations, combat or escape remains a possibility. Of course, if the players fail to exercise elementary caution, let loose the dogs and enjoy the spectacle.

## Initial conditions

When they arrive in the abandoned underground facility beneath Lower Basin and regain their senses, the characters make an unpleasant discovery: most of their equipment is gone, and only a few items remain. Available items are selected by the players according to the following guidelines:

- Every player may choose three items from his or her previous inventory. A group of identical items (quiver of arrows, pouch of spell components, bag of coins, three healing potions) counts as one pick. No shields or suits of armour may be selected. (Also note that large or hard to conceal items such as two handed swords and greataxes are nigh impossible to smuggle past checkpoints – emphasize this when the PCs approach one of these places!)
- Active cursed items are mandatory to pick first. However, a PC who relies on special equipment (spellbook, holy symbol, lockpicks, etc., but not weapons) to function in his class can select them in addition to the three normally allowed. “Quest items” – items of moderate size but great importance – also fall into this category.
- When the characters arrive, note carefully if a PC takes out an item before their situation is revealed; this will count as one pick (with the above addenda).

Later on, the following problems also become apparent:

- It is impossible to regain spells above 1<sup>st</sup> level regardless of their type. Higher-level spells and magic items that reproduce their effects can still be *used*, however.
- No deities or similar forces may be contacted. This means spells such as *commune*, *augury* and *divination* produce no answers, it is impossible to call summoned monsters and there is no chance of divine intervention.

## Standard progression of events

**Day one** is set to the date when the characters enter METAREGIO. Unless serious damage has been done (such as storming a cable transport station, systematically murdering members of a Work Brigade, eliminating more than one boss patrol, etc.), the city will be at normal operations. If the former is the case, however, events immediately proceed to day two.

On **day two**, most of the day goes on as normal. By evening, news spread that demons have been spotted in Exillion and they may already be inside the city. The Wandsmen organise a huge rally below the walls of ARKHOCENTRON. The main speaker is High Wandsman Encellon. Encellon confirms the rumours and calls for the capture of the intruders as well as any Apostates who would help them. A long speech is delivered on Apostasy versus following Systema Tartarobasis and those He had personally appointed to lead the citizens of Exillion. Any element of Wandsman propaganda which has not been heard by the participants yet should be incorporated into this sermon, and the Referee should also return to previously mentioned issues to reinforce them. Encellon is followed by Second Wandsman Feluxis. Feluxis, being a very poor public speaker, causes a general loss of interest; upon sensing this, Encellon returns to the pulpit. The speeches proceed for two or three hours. During the same time, synna and alcohol is distributed among the masses. The end of the speeches signals the beginning of a free-for-all orgy. At the same time, the characters can observe small groups breaking off from the crowd and sneaking away in separate directions. These people are Apostates. One group, Santiscauld’s criminals, proceeds to the nympharium; while the others, who are dissenters following Targammaux, hurry to be on time for a secret meeting about the current questions of overthrowing The Man. Following either group may lead to further encounters.

On **day three**, martial law and high alert are declared over the city loudspeakers. Workers aren’t sent out into EXTERIKO and general panic starts to break out. Mass hysteria results

in the formation of vigilante groups who will try to look for demons in various abandoned buildings. These searches are random and therefore not very efficient. Meanwhile, the Wandsmen and Bosses prepare to flush out the Apostates Targammaux and Orimaxxald. In this task, they receive help from Santiscauld and even Brigade Nine. By afternoon, everyone concerned is going to be under arrest and extra scaffolding is being constructed on ARKHOCENTRON's battlements in preparation for the evening's executions. If the characters are not on track yet, this is when they are approached by Kavisgante and made an offer to meet Brother Cudgel in exchange for their valuable equipment (*"Greetings, Apostates... You are in a bit of a predicament, aren't you?"*). At the same time, Santiscauld, who starts to become afraid of possible consequences, mobilises his men to bring in the characters one way or another. Spies and snitches prowl the streets of METAREGIO to find the intruders. Feluxis, smelling an opportunity, starts to discuss Encellon's replacement with a few of the disaffected Wandsmen. In the evening, there is a massive rally, greater than the previous. The crowd is in a frenzy as Encellon thunders about the Apostates who *"now imperil the very Foundations upon which our enlightened Civilisation rests, bringing with them cold, hunger and darkness, and all consequences thereof"*. The tone is extremely threatening and preempts ominous things to come; it is promised that *"our bonds to GOD, Systema Tartarobasis, will prevail over those who would lurk in shadows and seek to undo the work that had been done in the Divine name"*. Feluxis is nowhere to be seen.

On **day four**, Encellon orders a raid on Santiscauld's Apostates, forever bringing down the crime syndicate. Feluxis and his

supporters are placed under arrest and scheduled for execution. The holding cells below the HQ of the Bosses are filled up with all manner of dissenters and suspicious personalities. The terror of the Wandsmen triggers a small-scale uprising by the remaining Apostates, but this is immediately suppressed and its leaders summarily executed or brought to ARKHOCENTRON for interrogation.

By **day five**, total control over the city will have been reestablished. The streets are empty as nobody is allowed to leave his or her designated place. Wandsmen and Bosses systematically scour the neighbourhoods for signs of the demons. All entrances to ARKHOCENTRON are placed under constant surveillance and the Autocreator's operations are put on hold indefinitely until high alert is cancelled. At this point, reaching the URANOMETAFORA is an almost complete impossibility.

If the outsiders haven't been apprehended by **day six**, Encellon orders the destruction of the URANOMETAFORA and forevermore seals off Exillion from the world of Outside. This decision is announced as a global broadcast over the ARKHOCENTRON loudspeakers, and is audible all over the city. Systema Tartarobasis sustains accidental damage in the process and as a result, the reactor core of Exillion suffers a meltdown. The last snippet coming from Encellon is a confused half-sentence, muttered accidentally into a speaker left operational: *"Yes? What do you mean, the system isn't responding properly? I have told you you need to..."* Then there is only static as all electrical devices are rendered useless and the expanding sphere of light engulfs METAREGIO. By the time the city's final sunset approaches, there are no living beings in all the land.



## APPENDIX

### Glossary

ANOTERA, a steep mountain above METAREGIO, site of the fortress ARKHOCENTRON. The term is rarely used.

APOSTASY, the act or intention of defying Systema Tartarobasis or the Wandsmen.

APOSTATES, those who have committed apostasy by the lesser crime of Disobedience or the greater crime of Doubt. Wandsmen propaganda often uses the term interchangeably with ‘demons’, and therefore the two have become synonymous for many.

ARKHOCENTRON, a concrete fortress above the ruined city of METAREGIO, seat to the Wandsmen and their machine god.

ASHMEN, a race of demons that lurks in the Dead Zone and sometimes underground vaults. They are not intelligent, have no culture or means of reproduction and recoil from light. Ashmen have been hunted to near extinction by Exillion’s forces.

AUTOCREATOR, Exillion’s remaining Autonomous Production System. A series of vast industrial blocks in METAREGIO.

BIG CATCH, THE, legends about a fabulous wealth of glass below Dead Zone’s broken communication relays. A lie of the Wandsmen.

BOSES, THE, the armed forces of the Wandsmen. Brutal thugs characterised by low integrity and intellect.

CABLE TRANSPORT, the only transport route between Lower Basin and Dead Zone. There are two stations, both operated by the Wandsmen.

DEAD ZONE, the higher and northern tract of EXTERIKO. It is characterised by more intact buildings but lower glass yields. Ashmen are said to lurk in its ruins.

DEMONS, those who come from Outside; a source of spiritual corruption that can lead to Apostasy; therefore, a danger to Exillion.

DIVINE LIGHT, laser pistols.

EXILLION, an artificial sun illuminating a world of the same name, created by scientists of an age long passed. Used as a synonym of ‘the World’ by its inhabitants.

EXTERIKO, the part of Exillion Outside PERIFERIA. A place of abandonment devastated by a long-forgotten conflict.

GLASS, or GLASS DEBRIS, is the input of the Autocreator. It is mined in EXTERIKO and transported to METAREGIO by the Work Brigades.

LOWER BASIN, the lower parts of EXTERIKO, located south of Dead Zone and approached by a cable transport line. The main site where glass is mined.

META-DROIDS, robotic defenders of key installations.

METAREGIO, the half-ruined remains of Stabilisator City VIII. It is a shadow of its former might, both in physical integrity and population.

NINERS, a Punishment Brigade composed of the criminal element; an occasional tool of the Wandsmen as a sort of “workers’ guard”.

NORMBREAKING, sabotage by laziness or intentional neglect; sanctioned.

NYMPHARIUM, a place of relaxation whose divine boons are restricted to the most faithful, and whose heretical duplication by the Apostates is adequate proof of their transgressions.

OUTSIDE, that which is not of the World (Exillion). A place of cold, darkness and hunger. This term is as much metaphysical as real, as it represents something Outside the safety of METAREGIO, but also Outside the will of Systema Tartarobasis. Believed to be the source of demons.

PERIFERIA, a wall of force that protects METAREGIO from the demons of Outside. It is crossed by a single checkpoint.

PUNISHMENT BRIGADE, a unit for forced labour. Those assigned to Punishment Brigades must do harder labour with less reprieve and restricted movement.

ROTATION, the means of intra-class mobility in Exillion; theoretically based on one’s merits.

SALVATION, the belief that once all glass in Exillion has been mined, all inhabitants will personally stand before Systema Tartarobasis and partake of His Plentiful Benevolence. Another lie of the Wandsmen.

SCORPITRON, an engine of destruction employed as a mechanical guardian.

SKIMMING, or QUOTA SKIMMING, the act of smuggling chunks of glass debris across PERIFERIA to exchange for illicit goods; sanctioned.

STABILISATOR CITIES, immense underground metropolises created to facilitate Fomalhaut’s terraforming process and used as temporary shelters. Most of these have been destroyed by acts of war or millennia of neglect.

SYNNA, short for synthetic manna; a multi-purpose industrial material manufactured by the Autocreator and used for food, drink and clothing by Exillion’s inhabitants. Synna comes in soap-shaped blocks and has a similar texture. The taste is mildly unpleasant but it provides good nourishment. Synna-based clothing looks and smells like cheap plastic bags.

SYSTEMA TARTAROBASIS, a computer system responsible for running Stabilisator City VIII., worshipped as God by the Wandsmen and the people they rule over. In Wandsman propaganda, service to Systema Tartarobasis is the only guarantee of Salvation.

TRIANGLE POINT, a stone outcropping in Lower Basin, used for orientation.

URANOMETAFORA, a gateway before the divine presence of Systema.

WANDSMEN, THE, the masters of Exillion, these priest-bureaucrats rule their subjects in the name of Systema Tartarobasis but according to their own desires. They are served by a body of guardians, the Bosses.

WORK BRIGADE, a division of workers, numbering between 50 and 60 on an ad hoc basis of assignment. There are 32 brigades, 5 of which are for punishment.

WORKERS, the general population of Exillion who are sent out into EXTERIKO's wasteland to mine glass for the Wandsmen.

### Personalities of note

#### Wandsmen

HIGH WANDSMAN ENCELLON, the de facto ruler in Exillion, second in rank to God Himself. Encellon is in his late 60s, with greying hair and goatee, lean of stature and shrewd of mind. He wears all red as a sign of his station. Encellon has risen to his position through decades of scheming, and has the intelligence and caution to keep it. While Encellon is a master of demagogy, he is himself an inflexible ideologue who may underestimate his opposition. Even so, he is very cautious to avoid direct confrontation unless backed up with a superior force in an advantageous position.

**Encellon, male human Ftr5:** HD 5d10; hp 17; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +5 (unarmed); AL LN; SV Int, Wis, Cha; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 18, Wis 15, Cha 17; dog tag "AAA" allowing access to anywhere in Exillion, wand.

SECOND WANDSMAN FELUXIS, Encellon's aide. Feluxis, who is around 40, has spent more than a decade in the shadow of his mentor, but being a poor public speaker has hindered his ambitions to succeed him. Consequently, his desperation has led to entertaining thoughts of treachery, in which the demons from Outside could become valuable pawns and his alliance with Santiscauld a means of their delivery. Once carried into ARKHOCENTRON, he plans to have the demons freed, but recapture or kill them as a demonstration of his abilities. Like Encellon, Feluxis suffers from an inflated sense of importance. He is lean, looking like a younger version of the High Wandsman.

**Feluxis, male human Ftr4:** HD 4d10; hp 24; Spd 30; AC 12; Atk +6 laser pistol 2d10; AL LE; SV Dex, Int, Cha; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 9, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 7; dog tag "AAB" allowing access anywhere but Encellon's quarters, laser pistol, spare cartridge, wand.

BROTHER CUDGEL, or WANDSMAN STINAXAS, one of ARKHOCENTRON's elder Wandsmen and the Master of Novices. A jovial and grossly fat old man, he enjoys his nympharium privileges much more than his work. Brother Cudgel has so much dirt on other Wandsmen that he is all but untouchable. He uses this position to have agents in the city – the most important being Kavisgante – just to satisfy his curiosity. He is willing to aid the PCs' escape if an attractive bribe is offered... including certain services from high Cha characters. If he believes there is going to be danger, no contact takes place. In ARKHOCENTRON, he is found in the nympharium (40%), the novices' wing (20%) or Central Core (20%).

**Stinaxas, male human Ftr3:** HD 3d10+3; hp 17; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +4 (unarmed); AL CN (with epicurean tendencies); SV Int, Con, Wis; Str 14, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 15, Wis 15, Cha 12; dog tag "EAY", laser pistol (unloaded), wand.

MENDARFLOUX, a light-framed artist who serves as Encellon's chief inquisitor. Falling into his hands is bad news, as he will demonstrate to the player characters on another captive.

**Mendarfloux, male human Thf4:** HD 4d6; hp 13; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +1 dagger 1d4; SA back attack (+4 to hit, 2x damage), hide, listen, move silently; AL NE; SV Dex, Int, Cha; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 9, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 13; dog tag "XEF", various tools, wand.

WANDSMAN MESSENAUXE, in control of PERIFERIA. A fanatical devotee of Encellon's.

**Messenauxe, male human Ftr3:** HD 5d10+5; hp 22; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +4 laser pistol 2d10; AL LN; SV Int, Con, Cha; Str 9, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 11; dog tag "ΦΟΘ", laser pistol, two cartridges, wand.

WANDSMAN SIGSIGAMMAX, in control of the lower cable transport station, and very unhappy with his lot. Bitter enemy of Ustinsylis

**Sigsigammax, male human Ftr2:** HD 2d10+2; hp 18; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +3 laser pistol 2d10; AL N; SV Str, Con, Wis; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; dog tag "ΣΝΦ", laser pistol, three cartridges, wand.

WANDSMAN USTINSYLIS, in control of the upper cable transport station, a bitter enemy of Sigsigammax and not much happier.

**Ustinsylis, male human Ftr3:** HD 3d10+6; hp 18; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +3 laser pistol 2d10; AL LN; SV Con, Int, Wis; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 16, Int 13, Wis 9, Cha 14; dog tag "TKI", laser pistol, three cartridges, wand.

WANDSMAN INSELLANOX, the Wandsman who is called to investigate the opening Work Brigade Five has made in Lower Basin. Heavy-set, balding with short cropped hair. Although not very talented, Insellanox is surprisingly stubborn and resilient when placed in a stressful situation. If left alive, he requests to be allowed to join the hunt for the demons.

**Insellanox, male human Ftr2:** HD 2d10+2; hp 15; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +2 (unarmed); AL N; SV Str, Con, Cha; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; dog tag "ΙΣΝ", wand.

#### MISCELLANEOUS WANDSMEN

**Novices and initiates, male human Ftr1:** HD 1d10; hp 5 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +1 (unarmed); AL variable; SV variable; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 11; no equipment.

**Wandsmen, male human Ftr2:** HD 2d10; hp 11 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +2 (unarmed) or +2 laser pistol 2d10; AL variable; SV variable; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; dog tag, wand.

**Wandsmen, male human Ftr3:** HD 3d10; hp 16 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +3 (unarmed) or +3 laser pistol 2d10; AL variable; SV variable; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; dog tag, wand.

**Wandsmen, male human Ftr4:** HD 4d10; hp 22 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +4 (unarmed) or +4 laser pistol 2d10; AL variable; SV variable; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; dog tag, wand.

## Bosses

GRAND BOSS PINCHENDEN, a square-jawed film noir type, except with a laser. Armed and extremely dangerous, he keeps on coming until shot a few times.

**Pinchenden, male human Ftr5:** HD 5d10+10; hp 36; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +7 longsword 1d8+2 or +7 laser pistol 2d10+1; SA weapon spec (lasers) AL LN; SV Str, Con, Cha; Str 16, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 11, Cha 15; laser pistol, 2 cartridges, shortsword, uniform with lightning symbol made of gold (600 gp).

## MISCELLANEOUS BOSSES

**Boss, male human Ftr2:** HD 2d10+2; hp 14 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +3 shortsword 1d6+1 or +3 spear 1d8+1 or +3 javelin 1d6+1; AL variable; SV variable (usually Str, Dex, Con); Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 10; shortsword, spear or javelins (5), black uniform.

**Boss, male human Ftr3:** HD 3d10+3; hp 20 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +4 shortsword 1d6+1 or +4 spear 1d8+1 or +4 javelin 1d6+1 or (if in ARKHOCENTRON) +3 laser pistol 2d10 or +3 tri-beam laser [3 attacks, 2d10 dmg]; AL variable; SV variable (usually Str, Dex, Con); Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 10; shortsword, spear or javelins (5), black uniform.

**Boss Elites (15 in all), male human Ftr4:** HD 4d10+4; hp 26 avg; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +5 shortsword 1d6+2 or +6 laser pistol 2d10; weapon spec (lasers); AL LN; SV Str, Dex, Cha; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; decorative shortsword, laser pistol, black felt uniform with golden trims.

## Workers

**Worker, male human Ftr1:** HD 1d10+1; hp 6 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +2 pickaxe 1d6+1 or other tools; AL variable; SV variable (usually Str, Dex, Con); Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; tools, synna clothing (poor), 20% 1d6 glass.

**Toughs, male human Ftr2:** HD 2d10+2; hp 12 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +3 pickaxe 1d6+1 or other tools; AL variable; SV variable (usually Str, Dex, Con); Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; tools, synna clothing (poor), 20% 1d6 glass.

## Apostates

SANTISCAULD, the Don of the criminals who operate the black market, and a close ally of Second Wandsman Feluxis. Morbidly obese yet surprisingly agile. Santiscauld is constantly in control, even when he seems to be on the losing side. His knowledge of Outside – indeed, directing the smuggling operations – and extraordinary intellect make him a dangerous opponent and a useful if unreliable ally. Otherwise, he behaves like a mob boss does.

**Santiscauld, male human Ftr4:** HD 4d10+4; hp 20; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +5 laser pistol 2d10+1 or other tools; AL NE; SV Int, Wis, Cha; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 17; laser pistol, two cartridges.

TARGAMMAUX, leader of an Apostate faction. A lean, bearded revolutionary with lofty but impractical ideals; basically, a loser who brings ruin on his allies. Only his suggestive personality has made him what he is today. Targammaux detests Orimaxxald more than he does the Wandsmen.



**Targammaux, male human Ftr1:** HD 1d10; hp 10; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +1 (unarmed); AL N; SV Int, Wis; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 8, Cha 14; ragged synna clothing.

ORIMAXXALD, leader of another bunch of sorry losers, erstwhile student of Targammaux and his sworn foe. Orimaxxald is a short-statured pragmatist (doing anything in his interests without thinking twice), whose failures have made him extremely frustrated, and prepared to organise an uprising against the Wandsmen at any moment.

**Orimaxxald, male human Ftr3:** HD 3d10+3; hp 14; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +1 (unarmed); AL N; SV Int, Wis; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 14, Wis 7, Cha 16; synna clothing.

KAVISGANTE, Brother Cudgel's agent. He may approach the characters on day three and offer to help them escape. The price is everything the PCs have on them except clothes (and if they are Outside clothes, even that). If they are *really* pitiful in their begging, magic-users may keep their spellbooks, and clerics their holy symbols (if very simple looking *only*). Thereafter, he arranges an evening meeting with the good brother in METAREGIO, from where they can be taken to ARKHOCENTRON. Kavisgante possesses a very odd sense of humour, enjoying to torment and frustrate the characters. He is no fool, however. All meetings with him are going to be in a crowd (gathering, public spectacle, work site or common lunch) where he can't be easily attacked or blackmailed. Being Brother Cudgel's confidant, Kavisgante knows a lot about the situation in Exillion, but refuses to tell the characters – and if pressed or begged, he lies.

**Kavisgante, male human Asn4:** HD 4d6; hp 13; Spd 30; AC 13; Atk +1 dagger 1d4; SA case target, climb, death attack, disguise, hide, listen, move silently, sneak attack (+2 to hit, +4 damage); AL CN; SV Dex, Int, Cha; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 11, Int 15, Wis 14, Cha 17; dagger.

#### MISCELLANEOUS APOSTATES

**Thugs, male human Ftr2:** HD 2d10+2; hp 12 avg; Spd 30; AC 10; Atk +3 shortsword 1d6+1 or +3 metal club 1d6+1; AL variable; SV variable (usually Str, Dex, Con); Str 13, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 11, Wis 11, Cha 10; shortsword or steel club, 50% 2d4 glass.

**Santiscauld's boys, male human Ftr2:** HD 2d10+4; hp 16, 16; Spd 30; AC 11; Atk +4 longsword 1d8+2; AL LE; SV Str, Dex, Con; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 7, Cha 8; longsword, 2d4 glass each, some Outside items (woman's stockings, decorative knife, silver amulet 5 gp, etc.). These guys are evil and mean it.

#### More names used in Exillion

Ommesten	Arxaude
Giniscault	Linnax
Xennaudor	Peldaran
Cauxennis	Oxallande
Gellestys	Bellestis
Samsroule	Lassaume
Quipellouse	Betaxan
Nuepsallis	Roxentes

## New opponents and items

### Ashmen

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 3d6

SIZE: M

HD: 3 (13 avg)

MOVE: 30

AC: 13

ATTACKS: +3 claws 1d8

SPECIAL: light vulnerability

SAVES: P

INT: Inferior

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: sorry remains of a bygone era

XP: 20 + 3/hp

Ashmen are the only nonhuman inhabitants of Exillion. They lurk in the ruins of Dead Zone and deep underground. Sharp light repels them, but as long as there are intruders, they skulk around and hope to find an opening or call more of their kind. The body and limbs of Ashmen resemble burnt wooden logs. They have no intelligence, society, or means of reproduction. They are considered demons, and have been hunted near extinction.

### Meta-Droids

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1d6

SIZE: M

HD: 8+16

MOVE: 30

AC: 20

ATTACKS: +8 fist 1d12+2 or +8 laser beam 3d10

SPECIAL: laser, immune to mind-affecting spells, ½ damage from cold, fire or electricity

SAVES: P, M

INT: Robotic

ALIGNMENT: Neutral

TYPE: robot guardian

XP: 1050 + 8/hp

These mechanical sentinels are somewhat larger than humans, and are protected by riveted and yellow enamelled metal sheets. In addition to attacking with their fists, Meta-Droids can shoot a laser beam every third round, for a maximum of 5 per day. Meta-Droids are set to guard ancient ruins and military bases, and are found there as well as in certain domains of Fomalhaut's Underworld.

### SCORPITRON

NO. ENCOUNTERED: 1, and that's going to be enough

SIZE: H

HD: 8+24 (88 hp)

MOVE: 50

AC: 20

ATTACKS: 2\*+11 claws 1d10+3 and +8 laser beam 4d10

SPECIAL: laser, laser diffraction, immune to mind-affecting spells, ½ damage from cold, fire or electricity

SAVES: P, M

INT: Robotic  
ALIGNMENT: Neutral  
TYPE: a freaking war machine  
XP: 2100

An autonomous battle platform resembling a huge armour-plated scorpion. The SCORPITRON can shoot a laser beam every other round for a maximum of 10 per day. This beam can blast through thinner brick walls and hurl a human target 10' backwards. Lasers and other rays harmlessly bounce off the reflective carapace. Mechanical legs provide excellent mobility on smooth and sloped surfaces. The SCORPITRON's only weakness is its bulk, which makes it hard to progress through or turn around in narrow spaces. Two of these living weapons are found in Exillion, one in Dead Zone and another in ARKHOCENTRON. On the surface of Fomalhaut, they are sometimes encountered in the molten glass deserts and ruined cities.

### High tech weapons

Laser pistol: DMG 2d10+, long range, 30 shots max.  
Laser rifle: DMG 3d10+, long range, 30 shots max (consumes stores at a 3/2 rate)  
Tri-beam laser: 3 attacks, DMG 2d10+, long range, 50 shots max  
Flamethrower: area-based attack (20'x60'), short range, 6d6 damage, 6 shots max

Laser weapons are characterised by an infinite penetration capability but the need for precise aim. Therefore, armour, shields and even natural defensive ability is going to be useless against them (magic and Dexterity still apply), but a character who concentrates on moving unpredictably can avoid beams by making a save versus wands (Dexterity). No other action can be taken during that round. This advantage only applies versus one opponent; if there are multiple attackers, the save is normal versus the first, at -4 versus the second and so forth.

If a "0" is rolled on any dice of damage, it is counted as 10 and an additional dice may be rolled. There is no theoretical upper limit to the damage that can be inflicted this way.

Characters who attempt to employ lasers but are untrained in their use need to learn by practice. Until they can be considered proficient, the Referee applies a d6 roll to the attack to simulate inaccuracy. If the result is an even number, the attack is as rolled. If it is odd, it is subtracted from the attack roll. Since lasers are very simple to learn, proficiency is attained after winning three battles where the character successfully uses a laser.

Laser pistols have a maximum capacity of 30 shots. Those found in the field usually have 2d10+10. Since the specimens found in Exillion are all very old, an attack roll of natural '1' means that all remaining charges have been depleted in one burst. Recharging pistols is done with cartridges holding 15 shots. Cartridges are only found in ARKHOCENTRON caches, or on NPCs where noted. No laser rifles were stored in Stabilisator City VIII., but they may be found elsewhere on Fomalhaut. Tri-beam lasers are too heavy to transport, and are therefore mounted in key locations.

Flamethrowers attack in a cloud-shaped area. A save versus breath weapons (Dexterity) may be attempted for half damage. Flamers are also immobile with a relatively short range. They are almost always behind protective screens, since heat (including laser beams) sends them up in flames as a *fireball* (3d6 damage and 10' radius per remaining shot) unless they make a saving throw.



## Alphabet

	Letter	Numerical value		Letter	Numerical value
<b>A α</b>	Alfa (a)	1	<b>Ξ ξ</b>	Xi (x)	60
<b>B β</b>	Beta (b)	2	<b>Ο ο</b>	Omicron (o)	70
<b>Γ γ</b>	Gamma (g)	3	<b>Π π</b>	Pi (p)	80
<b>Δ δ</b>	Delta (d)	4	<b>Ϟ ϟ</b>	Quoppa (q)	90
<b>E ε</b>	Epsilon (e)	5	<b>Ρ ϱ</b>	Rho (r)	100
<b>F f</b>	Digamma (w)	6	<b>Σ σ</b>	Sigma (s)	200
<b>Z ζ</b>	Zeta (dz)	7	<b>Τ τ</b>	Tau (t)	300
<b>H η</b>	Eta (é)	8	<b>Υ υ</b>	Upsilon (y)	400
<b>Θ θ</b>	Theta (th)	9	<b>Φ φ</b>	Phi (ph)	500
<b>I ι</b>	Iota (i)	10	<b>Χ χ</b>	Chi (ch)	600
<b>K κ</b>	Kappa (k)	20	<b>Ψ ψ</b>	Psi (ps)	700
<b>Λ λ</b>	Lambda (l)	30	<b>Ω ω</b>	Omega (ó)	800
<b>M μ</b>	Mu (m)	40	<b>Ϻ ϻ</b>	Sampi / Disigma (-)	900
<b>N ν</b>	Nu (n)	50			

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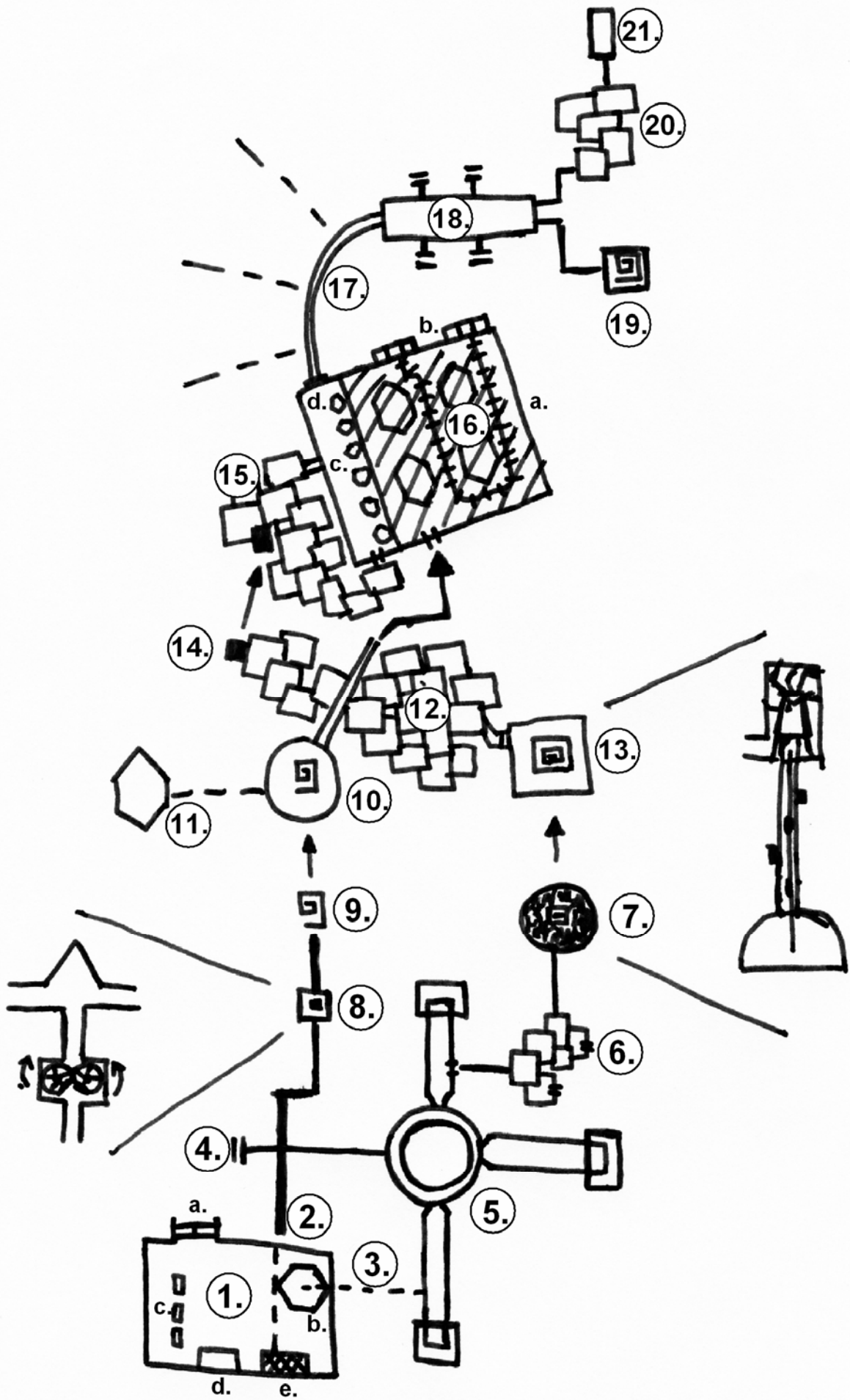
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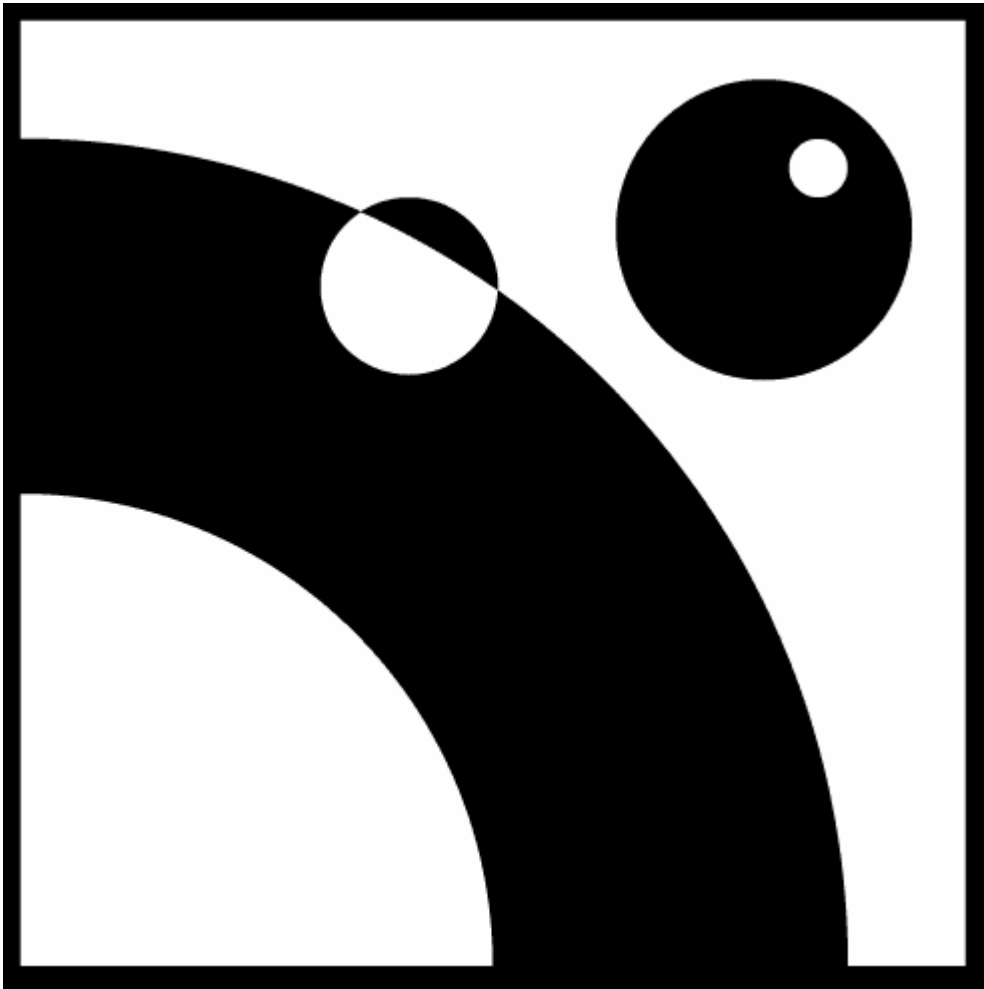
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