

The Domain of Meru



A Travel Guide



DESIGNED FOR USE WITH

OLD-SCHOOL ESSENTIALS

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REQUIRED BOOKS: The following Old School Essentials books are referenced or are needed to play this Travel Brochure. As space for this product was kept limited on purpose to give it the feel of a real travel brochure, references to existing material was used instead of complete reprints.

Core Rules: Contains the foundation rules of Old School Essentials this book is based on.

Classic Fantasy Advanced Genre Rules: The Classes and Races in this book use references from Classic Fantasy Advanced Genre Rules.

Advanced Fantasy Monsters: Stat blocks have been provided, as well as any features of specific new monsters. Some references to Advanced Fantasy Monsters have been made.

Advanced Fantasy Druid and Illusionist Rules: These rules are referenced in the "Meet New People" section of this book

Povitrya: Isle of Wind: Two classes, Netlenne and Vedohon, are mentioned as options and will be detailed in Issue 2.

Old School Essentials will be shortened in-line to save space.

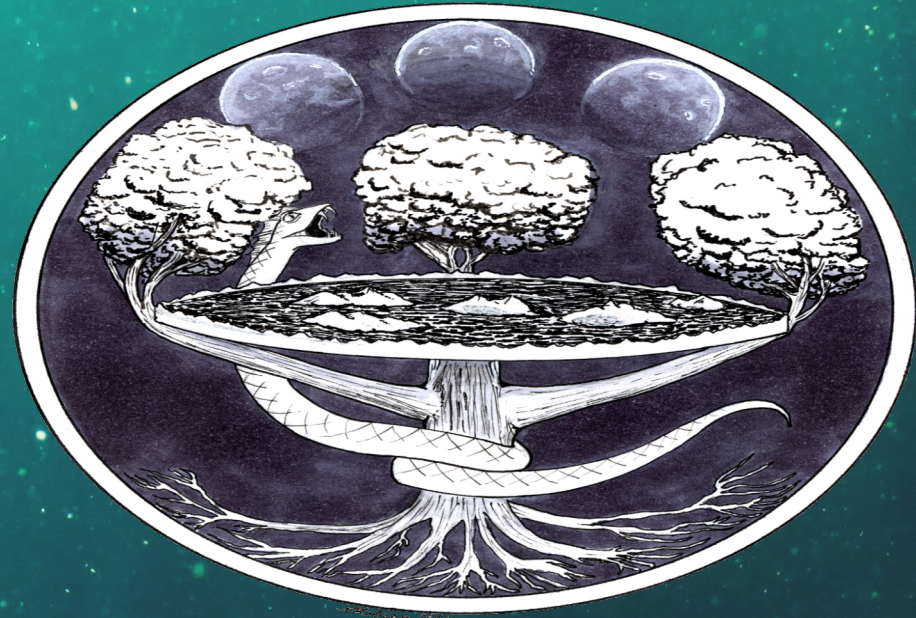
WHAT TO EXPECT IN EACH ISSUE

Thanks for taking the time to check out this overview of The Domains of Meru. At the end I have written a longer Authors Note that goes more in detail about this worlds inspiration. Here I would like to give a quick idea of what each issue will include and how it "plays" with the OSE rule set.

The concept of these Issues is based off our modern Travel Brochures. Expect them to be written primarily in the voice of a local guide trying to get you to vacation or adventure in their domain. Each Issue includes important locales, peoples, gods, local wildlife, pronunciation guide random charts, arch villains and legendary items. I hope to release small 2-3 page adventures for the world after the first 5 books are available. The first two will be released simultaneously and the following two by end of summer 2021, they are all written just need art!

The various races, classes and monsters are a mix of overlays of traditional classes and completely new work. I have used them in my games and will warn you that balance was less important to me than attempting to stay as loyal to the folklore as possible. I have found some of the challenges to offer wonderful role playing opportunities.





Rod, the All Father created Prav, the heavens that hold our sun and three moons. He planted the World Tree whose leaves are home to numerous other realms. He birthed his sons and daughters, our bogs (gods), and bid them to "create something."

So under the shade of the World tree his first son Svarog brought forth Yav, or as we named it: Meru. He began with life giving ocean's, then raised lands around it to keep the waters from spilling out into the cosmos. He raised mountains, planted forests for shade and sowed fields for food. Lastly, he created Nav, an underworld to house the mortal souls he knew would have nowhere to go when they died. Then admiring his work he bid his younger siblings to make homes of their own there and fill it with life. And so they did, each adding something of themselves to this new domain. And for a time things were good.

What Svarog did not see was that his new realm had cast a shadow over the base of the World Tree. In this shade, a dark and evil serpent born at the creation of the cosmos, Rods opposite, had what it needed to grow and scheme. It began to whisper corrupt thoughts to any of Rods sons and daughters who would listen.

First among these was Chernobog, the lord of winter. He resented his place and despised the mortals worship of him driven only by their desire to be rid of him. He recruited other bogs who felt they deserved a more respectful lot, especially those who had been tasked with keeping track of perished mortal souls in the underworld of Nav. He recruited the most powerful mortals and gifted them a kind of immortality. Then, he set about conquering Meru.

His opposite, Belbog the lord of summer, rose up and opposed this affront. Many battles ravaged the lands, but in the end Chernobog was defeated when Svarog intervened and defeated the great serpent behind the chaos. Chernobog went back to his home in the east, while Belbog retired to the west. Now each watches the other and works in Meru through heroes, villains, witches and tsars.

After all, a Rod is family, and sometimes families disagree what is best.

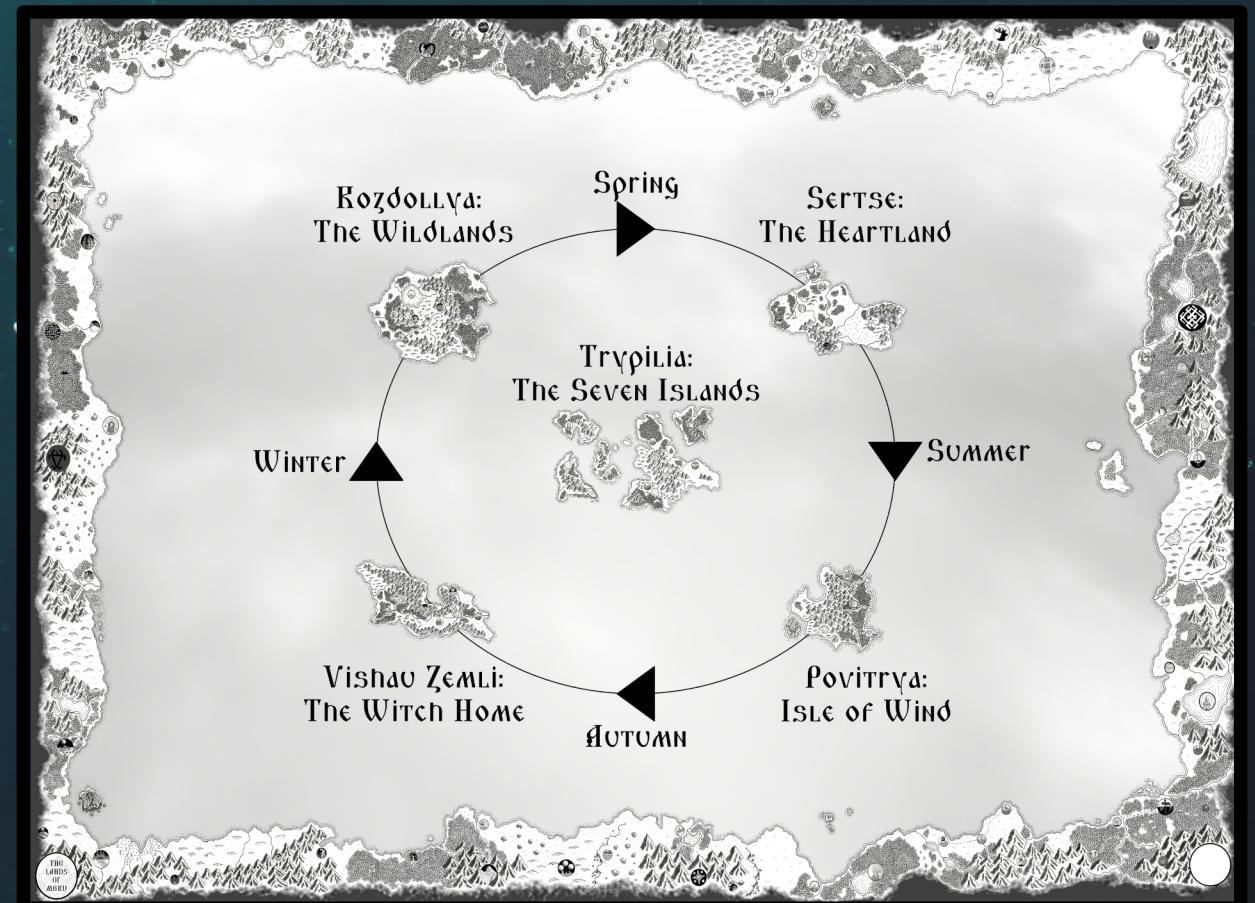
The Domain Of Meru

To the Bogi (gods) our domain is know as Yav, but to us mortals it is Meru. A land slowly expanding into the aether of the cosmos. With its view of the World Tree's branches, we know how special our place is in the universe. We are both blessed and cursed to live among the gods themselves. Let me give you a quick tour, if I may.

The lands bordering the aether are the Obid. A land where Bogi make their homes, and brave heroes attempt to carve out their own domains and become Knyaz or Tsars immortalized in poetry and song. You too may desire a stronghold of your own, why not one with a divine neighbor?

The ocean, Zhyttya Okeanu, holds five domains: Trypilia, Rozdollya, Sertse, Vishau Zemli and Povitrya. The islands of Trypilia sit motionless, centered between winter and summer, while the others travel around them over the course of the year. One can find adventures of all kinds among these lands: Eco-friendly excursions, wild kazino nights, treasure hunting, spelunking, undead and demon hunting and quest for lost wisdom to name a few.

So, are your bags packed? What are you waiting for? See one our talented referees and book your next adventure or vacation immediately! Before someone else visits and has the experience you were looking for.



Travelers Guide

BOOKING YOUR TRIP

If you are not lucky enough to have been born in Meru, there are many options available when planning your vacation or next adventure here.

THE WHIGHTMANA: Cosmos traveling merchants that travel through the World Trees leaves and visit all the universes known to the gods.

NAV: Our underworld shares many edges with other lands resting places for souls that have passed on. Not always the safest route, but possible.

LEOPOLIS: The Kishka maintain several portals to their kin found throughout the cosmos and often arrange travel.

THE LEAP OF ROD: Rod has a soft place in his heart for those willing to sacrifice everything for a greater cause or love. Often brave heroes that are on the brink of dying or those that commit to the ultimate price will wake and find themselves on one of our shores. Not the easiest way to plan a trip, but it may get you here.

Currency

Standard coinage in Meru is simple small disks of gold, silver, and copper called Obmin. Some areas will have Whightmana currency exchanges to help make sure you get a good rate. Trade is also preferable throughout many areas.

PACKING FOR WEATHER

The weather in Meru is rather predictable. Chernobog lives in the west, and there winter rules year round. Belbog, living in the east keeps the weather a warm summer year round. As you move towards the center, these two extremes even out. In the north Vesna, boginya of spring rules and in the south Seva, boginya of autumn holds sway.

The four lands that circle Trypilia take one year to make a complete an orbit. Reference the map to see where each would be according to season.

Rain, rains. Snow, snows. Only Dodola can answer the as to when and where these will occur.

TIME

1 Week/9 Days, 1 Month/36 Days, 1 Year/ 12 Months

Month Names (January-December):
Sichen, Lyutyy, Berezen, Kviten, Traven, Cerven, Lypen, Serpen, Veresen, Zovten, Lystopad, Hruden

DISTANCE

Meru is roughly 5600 miles east/west and 3800 miles north/south.

Trypilia: Covers roughly 750 by 500 miles

Povitrya: 400 by 450 miles

Rozdollya: 600 by 450 miles

Vishau Zemli: 600 by 300 miles

Sertse: 700 by 450 miles

The Bogi

BELBOG: Bog of Summer, Protector of Knowledge

BEVO: Boginya of Exploration, Protector of Learning

CHERNOBOG: Bog of Winter, Spreader of Knowledge

CHISLOBOG: Boginya of Time, Protector of Crops

DAJ'BOG: Bog of the Sun, Watcher of Weddings and Unions

DAJD'BOG: Bog of Wisdom, Protector of the Written Word

DODOLA: Boginya of Rain, Protector of Fertility

HOVALO: Bog of Fire, Protector of the Eternal Flame

KUPALA: Bog of Change, Provider of Cleansing

LEL: Boginya of Love, Protector of Harmony

MARA: Boginya of Night and Eternal Life and Sleep, Guider of Deceased Souls

MYESYATS: Bog of the Moon, Protector of Magic

NIY: Bog of the Sea, Protector of Sailors

OZEM: Bog of the Under-earth, Protector of Shadows

PERUN: Bog of the Sky and Lightening, Protector of Rods

ROD: The All Father, Creator of All

SEVA: Boginya of Autumn, Protector of Youth

STRIBOG: Bog of Wind, Spreader of Curiosity and Diversity

SVAROG: Protector of all, First son of Rod

SVYATOBH: Bog of Forests, Protector of the Wilds

SYRA ZEMLYA: Bog of Earth, Protector of Growth and Nature

VELES: Bog of Nav, Watcher of the World Undersea, Font of all Magic, Giver of Cattle

VESNA: Boginya of Spring, Giver of Rebirth

VIY: Protector of the Separation of Yav and Nav

VOLUH: Bog of Warriors, Protector of Yav

YNDRA: Bog of Thunder, Protector of the Starry Skies, Keeper of the Heavenly Swords

ZEVANA: Boginya of Animals, Protector of the Wilds

Trypilia: Land of Seven Islands

The Seven Islands we named Trypilia began as a retreat for our beloved goddess Syra Zemlya, a place she could be alone and find peace away from her ever-warring lovers- Veles and Perun.

Alas, lonely she birthed life into her little realm, and eventually created our people, the Odyn. Peaceful years passed and we learned about nature and the satisfaction hard work brought. Then one day the boys searched out their wayward lover. Veles, ever jealous, felt another rival for his loves heart was unacceptable and should be shown to be undeserving of her affections. Perun, sworn to ever challenge Veles, aided us.

The troubled times that followed are over now, and we have five beautiful islands for adventurers to rest, relax and if they choose- adventure in.

“Do not cry, morning is wiser than evening” folk wisdom



Exotic Places



DALEKO ISLAND

For the adventurous, Daleko offers the Two Towers of Kniez, home of the mortal demon and enemy of the Odyn, King Nibel.



OZERO ISLAND

The picturesque city of Muzyk, home to the Odyn and Kar. Mythic location of the Portal of Byr, where the legendary Klave Sword lies.



TSENTR ISLAND

Visit the Feya, Vedmid and the village of Vitsi. Procure passage to Staryi Island for even more adventures.



OSTRIV HROMU

Thunder Island, home of Perun. Epic challenges, with epic rewards.



ASHSA

Destroyed by the fires of Veles's volcano over and over, our ancestral home is now a strange city of the undead.



NAVKA

The entrance to the underworld, for those that enjoy underdark adventures.



PAHORB BANI

Relax at these outdoor lava spas, and have your fortune told by Bannik.



SMIYA FALLS

Home to the Rusalka. Not recommended for tourists.



IRIY

This volcano is home to Veles, bog of Nav, when he walks the lands of Meru.



THE DRUM

A drum the size of a mountain once used by Perun to woo Syra. Attempt the race to the top, and be granted a wish.

In This Issue

NEW RACES

Domvoi: Shape-changing halfling-esque people prone to epic heroism and epic depression

Feya: Born of water, forest or cloud these fey tend to nature and battle evil

Kar: Underground people who are compulsively greedy and clockwork smart

NEW CLASSES

Mystra: The mystical magic-users of Meru

Zduhac: Nature attuned warrior mages

NEW MONSTERS

Chemer, Lake Somen Monster, Likho, Popeliuha, Rusalka, Vodnik, Vu'Stat Ghul, Yogosha

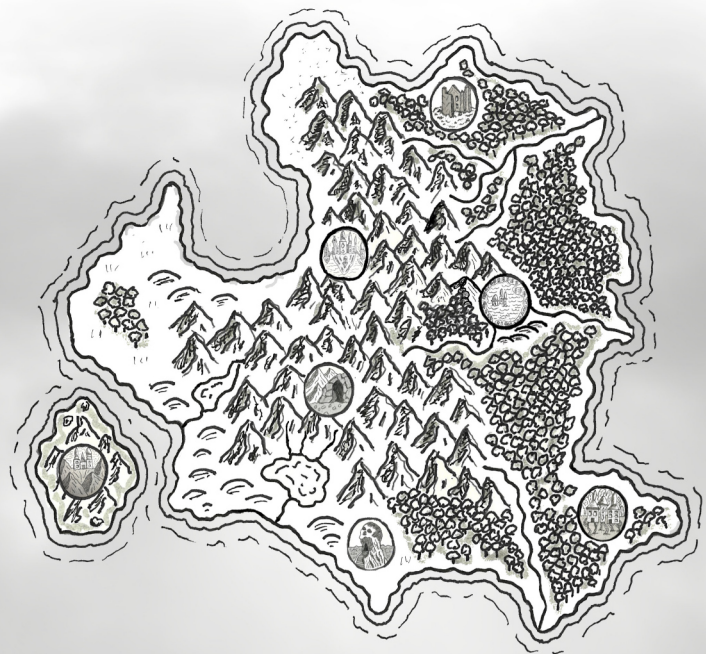
Povityra: Isle Of The Wind

The winds travel through the cosmos, free of constraint. They see and experience everything. Rod gifted dominion over them to our lord Stribog. For many years he drifted along with their whims exploring the farthest of fars. Then, seeing the home his siblings were creating, he decided to construct one for himself upon it. And Povityra was born.

Eventually, he grew restless and decided the time to explore again was at hand. It was then he asked his sister Syra Zemlya to create us, the Vetry, to watch over his home. Inspired by his travels we are diverse, filled with a desire to live life to its fullest and a belief that we shape our own destiny.

Povityra, our home, is filled with this joy towards life, as well as mysteries from across the universe. Come explore your desires, and if you dare, pit your wit against an otherworldly puzzle.

“ If thou dost want to find the Wind, seek him on the open steppe. He can go ten different ways to thy one” folk wisdom



In The Wind



MT SMERCH

Home to The Gentleman Demon, Tsar Tomislav. This tornado protected island is one of Meru's most hated places.



VYSIACHE MISTO

Home of the Vetry! The city that hangs in the air, nestled among the mighty Vyty Mountains. Spend your evenings in one of the many Kazyno's and your days recovering in one of the many restaurants or cafes.



SOJENICA'S HEART

Deep in the Vyty Mountain Range lies this hole in the ground. Legend says it holds the heart of a god.



CHEREP CHAPEL

This mysterious chapel is constructed completely of bones. Popular for adventurous souls as it holds the remains of many unlucky recipients, and their treasures.



OSVIZHYTY TOWER

Osvizhyty was constructed to guide the universes winds to Povityra for rest and recharging. It lies in ruins after a strange surge blew in from the cosmos and destroyed it five years ago.



MRIYA LIS

Interested in the people who dwell between worlds? Visit this forest home of sprites, nymphs, and all manner of fairies.



KORINNYA

City built from floating wood. The craftsmen here are unparalleled in all of Meru. Its markets host the Wightmana.

IN THIS ISSUE

NEW RACES

The Vetry: Aerial race comprised of six species: Burivnyk, Litnyk, Siver, Stryga, Vitroico, Vitrylo

Kazhennik: Other-worlder that struggles with luck, controls cosmic winds and carries one special keepsake

NEW CLASSES

Netlenne: Powerful druids trained in the wild from youth

Vedohon: Blessed warriors who fight for the cause of law in multiple realms

ARCH VILLAIN

The Gentleman: Soul collecting demon who brings misery to Meru

NEW MONSTERS

Hykavka, Perelsnyk, Svitylka, Vyrovik, Zerkalytsia

LEGENDARY ARTIFACTS

Sojenica's Heart: The heart of a god

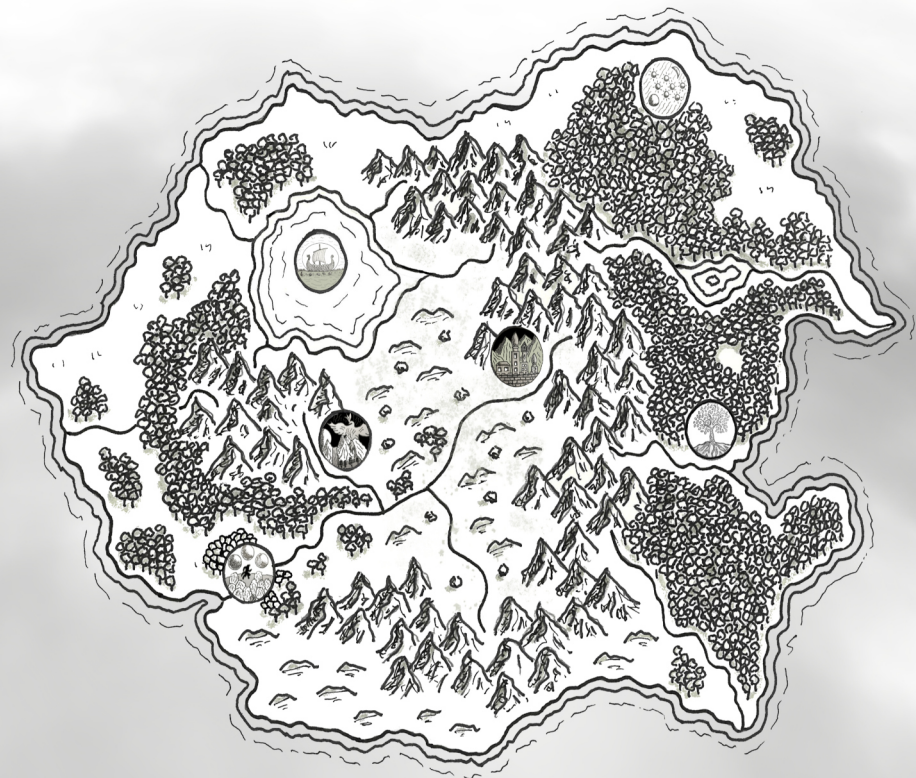
The Cup, Spoon & Clock: Powerful fairy magic that summons 25 helpers

Rozdollya: The Wildlands

Rozdollya was for much of time the marriage home to Voluh, bog of warriors, and his wife Lel, boginya of love. Then the vile Tsar Ariadyk began his rise to power and swept through Meru with a mysterious demon horde in an attempted coup. Put down by the forces of light, it was discovered he had accomplished the feat of immortality. The decision to imprison him was made as well as to construct a home for the souls of the brave warriors who perished battling him. The Valley of Ispyt where the final battle took place was chosen for this honor.

To guard these sacred places, Voluh blessed the surviving warriors of the final battle with the ability to transform themselves into powerful animals. Equal to any demon Ariadyk may summon to him, my noble ancestors now known as Vovkodlak were born. Now, Rozdollya is a domain for those with adventure and adrenaline in their hearts. A place to test ones skills and mettle against nature and beast. Or if you are brave enough, at the yearly Kulachni Ihry, the Game of Fists held by the Volosini warriorress. And for those in need of protection from evil, one can consult the wise healers of Oldstaun.

“Fear is worse than misfortune itself.” folk wisdom



In The Wild



MYR RAZOM

For visitors to our domain this is where one finds accommodations and information about the wildlands that dominate the landscape.



CHERVONYY LAKE

It is no secret that this lake is home to Svarog's legendary ship, the Korabel of Nadiya. But knowing where something is and being worthy of its use are two different things.



THE VYSOTY

The final resting place for a warrior who dies bravely or for his rod/family. Watched over by Lel and Voluh personally.



ARIADYK'S TOWER

Prison to Tsar Ariadyk and his demon scum. We use their chaos to hone our own strength and complain to no one.



STOZHARY

Home of the Volosini, a skilled and noble warrior race of daughters from the Pleiades galaxy. Drawn to our island to challenge and hone their skills in battle, we welcomed them with open hearts and have lived in agreement with them ever since.



OLDSTAUN

This sanctuary lies in a great Elderberry forest. It is harvested by the good Buznyshye and protected by more than one bog of law.

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- Tovan Peaks: These mountains hide more secrets than truths know about them
- Valley of Ispyt: The site of the final battle with Ariadyk

IN THIS ISSUE

NEW RACES

Vovkovoyin: Shape-shifting (wolf, great cat and bear) warriors

Vovkolaw: Shape-shifting (wolf, great cat, bear) magic-users

Volosini: Warrior daughters from the Pleiades galaxy

ARCH VILLAIN

Ariadyk: Compatriot to Koshei the Deathless and leader of the second uprising of chaos on Meru

NEW MONSTERS

Bogynka, Buznyshye, Chort, Huka, Scheznek, Zagnshysina

LEGENDARY ITEMS

Ash Horn: Mythic instrument that summons courage and heroes past

Elderberry Magic: Sacred Elderberry Trees and the magic derived from them

Korabel of Nadiya: Svarog's planer traveling ship of heroes

Vishau Zemli: Witch Home

Majestic mountains. Rolling plains. Slow cool rivers. Forests of ancient trees. Does this sound like the home of a evil villain? And why am I evil, maybe I'm just misunderstood. Let me, Koshei the Deathless, welcome you to the domain of Vishau Zemli, or the Witch Home.

The forest and the grassy valley plains are home to the Baba sisters: Yaga and Yoga. Yes, they often work against my plans, but what's the saying from one of the futures I like to visit: keep your friends close and your enemies closer? Keep that in mind when seeking them out.

Speaking of seekers, those of you that see the hypocrisy, control and selfishness of the bogi can find true freedom and knowledge here. Start your studies in Vil'niy Dim, a city of independent thinkers and cosmic explorers. For those of you who have been wronged and search for retribution, visit the swamps and speak with the Cult of Chuma for advice. And for those of you that show great promise, my own home and gardens in the Try Vershyny Mountains offers a special experience

"Turn your back to the forest, your front to me," folk wisdom



Find Your Truth

BABA YAGA

If you come to call on the witch Baba Yaga, be prepared. Though she is keen to help, much to my annoyance, she is known to barter less than honest as well. And no or maybe she is my sister or ex-wife. That is my personal business.

SVIATOVIT TEMPLE

Heroes enjoy being heroes. Even when it was they that did us "evil-doers" wrong in the first place. And here we keep the Arkona Spear from them. A vile weapon of light.

"MIY SAD NA DEREVAKH"

Vain people name their homes. I just call mine, if asked "My tree garden." See one of my Nochnitisi demons for travel arrangements.

BABA YOGA'S FIELDS

Baba Yaga's sister. So clever in her ways. We know the truth of her deception, those children she "eats." No, we know they are trained to hunt us.

SWAMPS OF CHUMA

The Cult of Chuma prides itself on concocting schemes to show the hypocrisy of the so called heroes. If you have cause, they can help.

VIL'NIY DIM

City of freethinkers set at the edge of a forest of beautiful black trees. When the three moons all shine in the sky the city radiates a purple and green aurora that simply must be seen once in ones lifetime. Here one can find truth, not the lies the bogi have told you.

IN THIS ISSUE

NEW RACES

Dvoedusunik (Chaotic): Corrupted mortal magic-users on a journey to Lichdom

Puganko (Chaotic): Shadow folk with a hole in their souls

NEW CLASSES

Khzhniki (Chaotic): The evil apprentice

Radunitsi (Chaotic): Necromancer

Vozylo: Demon hunters

ARCH VILLAIN

Koshei the Deathless: The original immortal mortal monster

NEW MONSTERS

Chuma, Gryzachka, Kopsha, Mana, Nochnitisi, Zybochnik

NEW SPELLS

All new spells for evil mages and the necromancer class

LEGENDARY ITEM

Arkona Spear: Feared by chaos, they have locked it away on this island to ensure no hero wields it again

Sertse: The Heartland

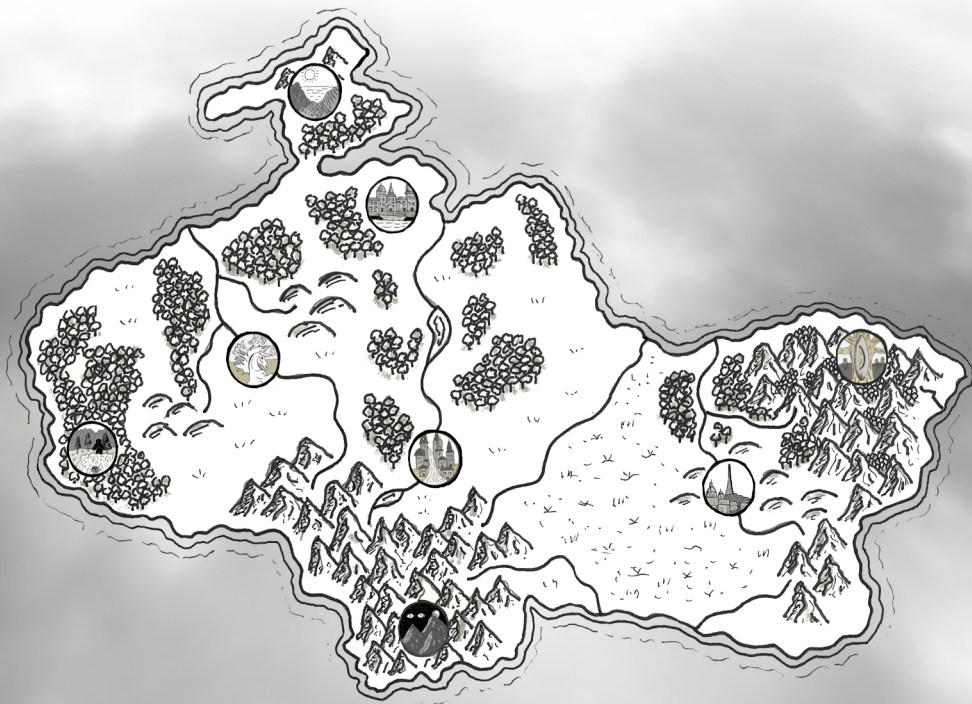
Of all the lands in the Zhyttya Okeanu , Sertse is by far the most cosmopolitan and worldly. Three great cities await your attention. Cherson, the port of ports, is home to the greatest sailors in Meru. Further up the Dnipro river lies Kyjevu, a sprawling metropolis founded by a hero of the battles against Chernobog.

And in the shadow of the Carth Mountains lies Leopolis, home of the otherworldly Kishka (cat-folk).

Looking for a countryside retreat? The lands in between are fertile and well cared for by the kindly Konikshnyk (horse-folk) and Bagan (cattle-folk). In the west a great wood sprawls across the land. Here you will find the home of Leshy, caretaker of forests and and the wilds.

You still have not booked your trip? Maybe the peninsula of Tauris and its beautiful vistas and beaches will tempt you? Or maybe its magic you seek? Iron Mountain is home to some of the vilest witches in Meru, while their opposite in reputation make their home amongst the Carth Mountains.

“Your tongue will bring you to the capital” folk wisdom



In The Heart



PERSHYY LIS

Leshy, caretaker of forests, makes these woods home. From here he is able to access any other forest in all of Meru.



THE ROUMINH PLAINS

These rolling hills and grasslands are home to a large population of Konikshnyk. Great herds of stallions run wild and free and are a beauty to behold.



TAURIS

Long beaches, forest covered mountains and resort towns cater to pleasure seekers and Eco-tourists alike.



CHERSON

Heralded as the greatest port in Meru, Cherson lives up to its moniker and more. Deep harbors, safe trade, few questions and a Whightmana trading station are just a few of its perks.



KYJEVU

This great fortified city stands in the shadow of Iron Mountain, watching and protecting Meru.



IRON MOUNTAIN

Lair of the Lyhomanka, twelve sister witches of unknown origin with the power to destroy worlds.



LEOPOLIS

Home to the dreaming cats of Kishka. Astral wisdom, art and philosophy are the daily studies here.



CARTH MOUNTAINS

Domain of the Molfar, the greatest mages of Meru.

IN THIS ISSUE

NEW RACES

Bagan: Cattle folk who prefer to work the land and live in peace, but are brave and proud when called to heroism

Kishka: Strange otherworldly cat-folk who live between dreams and reality

Konikshnyk: Bi-pedal horse-folk who prefer the countryside to the city

NEW CLASSES

Molfar: Legendary mages of the Carth mountains

Tabunyk: Slavic style swashbuckler

ARCH VILLAIN

Lyhomanka: The 12 witches of Iron Mountain

NEW MONSTERS

Hoha-Yaroha, Hovalo, The 12 Incarnations of Lyhomanka, Upyr

LEGENDARY ITEMS

Golden Apples: Cultivated by the Molfar, these apples can take on many magical properties

Rings of Dolya: Two is mightier than one, and these rings allow for this

Author's Note & Inspiration

ANOTHER PLACE

I moved to Ukraine with my wife, and having to learn the language led to her reading stories to me. Of course, I chose folklore and mythology. My language skills are still lacking, but the inspiration from this wonderful land has been amazing. The stories and tales are different from my previous exposure to Russian inspired Slavic sources. This led me to rewrite much of this project that I had already been developing. Especially intriguing are the pre-Christian era and more localized tales that do not even show up on the precious internet.

These stories tell of a world aware that there is more beyond our world. References to space travel and other universes, gods that operate on a local level and involved in everyday life, all manner of strange and different species, and many other wonders can be found. What is presented here is only a small portion of the stories I would like to introduce people to, and what from a game perspective I felt would give a referee a good base to start from. Limiting myself with the layout concept was a challenge as well. I will admit to a few liberties, but it is fantasy and I like a little weird in my home games. The larger world around the Meru awaits to be revealed.



INSPIRATION & FURTHER READING

Dara Korniy, *Magical Creatures of Ukrainian Myth (Volumes 1-3)*, Ukrainian Only

Dmitriy Kushnir, *Slavic Tales & Myths (Parts 1-13)*, English Versions are available

Jan Machal, *Slavic Mythology*, English Version Available

Olga and Elena Kryuchkova, *Slavic Gods and Spirits*, English Version available

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THANKS, DYAKUYU

No project gets completed by just one person and I can never express my gratitude to the ones I have had the pleasure to work with so far. Each issue will have a list of specific people that contributed to that issue and I will update this page as people continue to join the Domain of Meru.

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