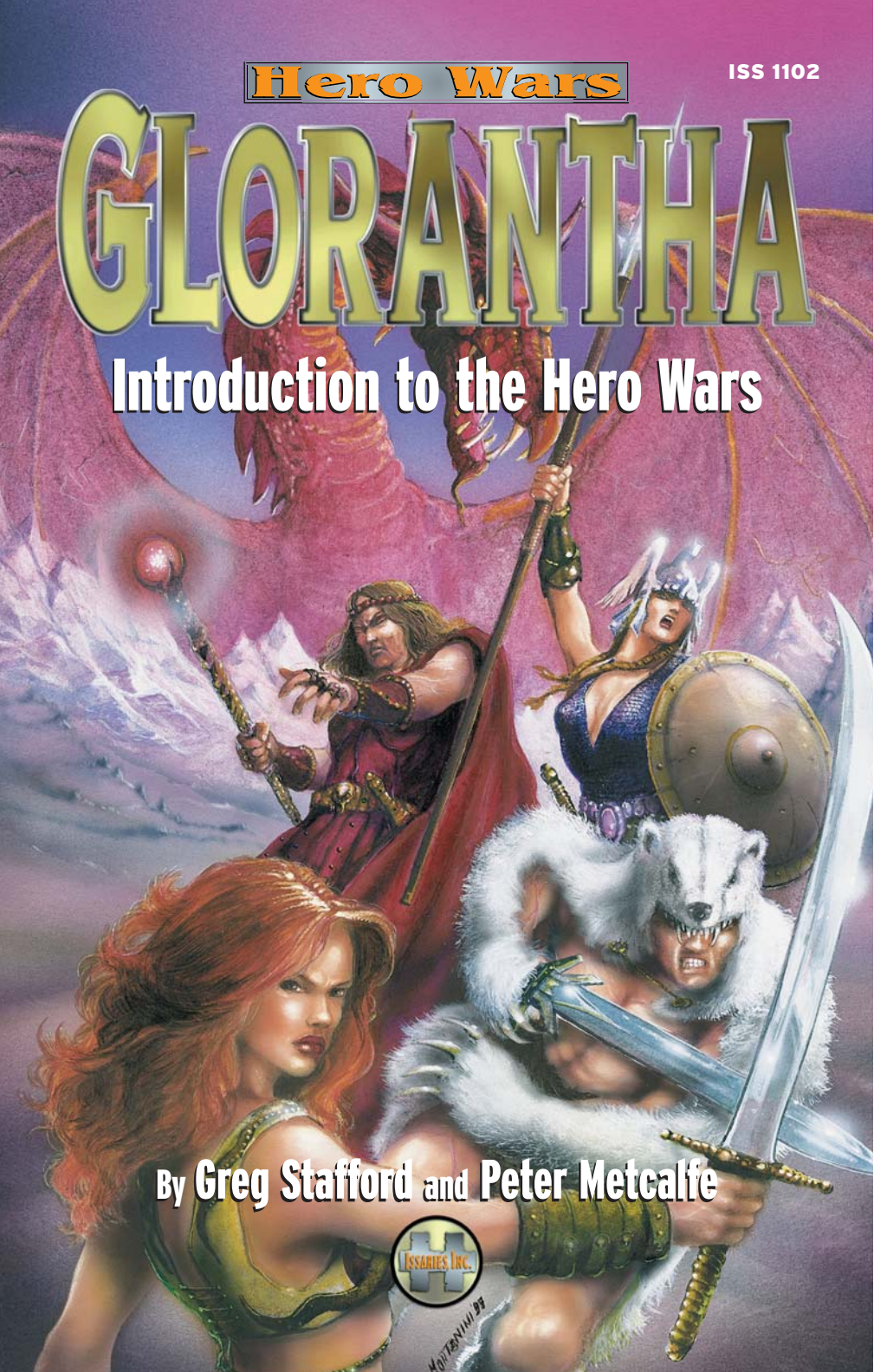


**Hero Wars**

ISS 1102

# GLORANTHA

**Introduction to the Hero Wars**



**By Greg Stafford and Peter Metcalfe**



MOZENTHINI '87

# Hero Wars



# **GLORANTHA**

## ***Introduction to the Hero Wars***

By Greg Stafford and Peter Metcalfe  
Sections by Roderick Robertson  
Edited by Izzy Vasquez

Cover Art by Angelo Montanini  
Maps by Cyrille Daujean, Charlie Krank  
Interior Art by Simon Bray, Heather Bruton, Dario Corallo, Jim Pavelec,  
Kevin Ramos, Steve Swenston  
Runes by Scriptorium, supplemental runes by Jim Catel  
Layout by Philip Reed • Supplementary layout by Charlie Krank



Published by Issaries, Inc.  
900 Murmansk St, Suite 5; Oakland, CA 94607

First Printing April 2000 All rights reserved. Similarities between characters in Glorantha and any persons living or dead are strictly coincidence. All contents are copyrighted © 2000 by Issaries, Inc. All rights reserved. Cover Illustration is Copyright ©1997 by Issaries, Inc. The reproduction of material from this book for the purposes of personal or private profit, by photographic, electronic or other means of storage and retrieval is prohibited. Address questions about his publication and request your FREE catalog.

Issaries Publication ISS1102.

ISBN #1-929052-02-2

Visit ***www.Glorantha.com*** for more about Glorantha!

Arachne Solara, Light of the Shadow, protects this book and its secrets. Rob it and you rob yourself!

# GTA



Issaries salutes the volunteers of the Glorantha Trading Association whose contributions made this book possible:

## Heroes of Glorantha

Randy Tomaszewski	Bob Vesterman
Yoshiyuki Murase	Richard Katsaros
Andre Jarosch	Andrew Cowie
The Clan Coriales	Rex Andrew Bean
Hiroto Kawakami	HANATAKA, the Stormer
Andrew Kelly	Michael Trout
Christopher Johnson	Andrew Joelson
Hayato Niitsuma	David Dunham
Mark Leymaster of Grammarye	Anonymous
Yoko "Anesan" Miyamoto	

## Rune Masters

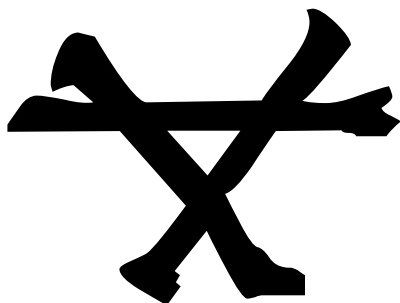
Jamie "Trotsky" Revell	FeaWa
Linedel Tiritauro	Mitsuru Karasawa
John E. Boyle	Takanobu Kurihara
Tadaaki Kakegawa	Rebecca Glenn
Hiroko Ozaki	Starshine Spearmaiden
Takashi "Incho" Miyamoto	Brian Kondalski
Don Finlayson	Drake Stanton
John M. Gilbert	The Book of Drastic Resolutions
Martin Tuck ("The Welsh Wizard")	Alex Ferguson
Guy AYUKATA Taka'aki	Thom Baguley
Michikazu Kawano	Scott Whitebull Schneider
Dan McCluskey	Anonymous
Swing	
Masanori 'rakuten' Ohshiro	

Are you interested in learning more about the GTA?  
Check out the web site at:

<http://www.glorantha.com/inc/gta.html>

# Table of Contents

Preface .....	4
Chapter One: Introduction .....	6
Chapter Two: Before Time Began .....	8
Chapter Three: History .....	23
Chapter Four: Seshnela.....	39
Chapter Five: Malkioni Culture and History .....	44
Chapter Six: Ralios .....	54
Chapter Seven: Mostali, the Dwarves .....	62
Chapter Eight: Fronela.....	70
Chapter Nine: Aldryami.....	83
Chapter Ten: Peloria .....	90
Chapter Eleven: Maniria .....	134
Chapter twelve: Dragonewts .....	159
Chapter Thirteen: Wastelands .....	162
Chapter Fourteen: Uz.....	176
Chapter Fifteen: Kralorela .....	183
Chapter Sixteen: Verenela .....	201
Chapter Seventeen: Oceans.....	210
Chapter Eighteen: Vithela .....	219
Chapter Nineteen:Pamaltela.....	226
Chapter Twenty: The Outer Limits.....	237
Chapter Twenty-One:The Futue of Glorantha .....	251



# Preface

## By Greg Stafford

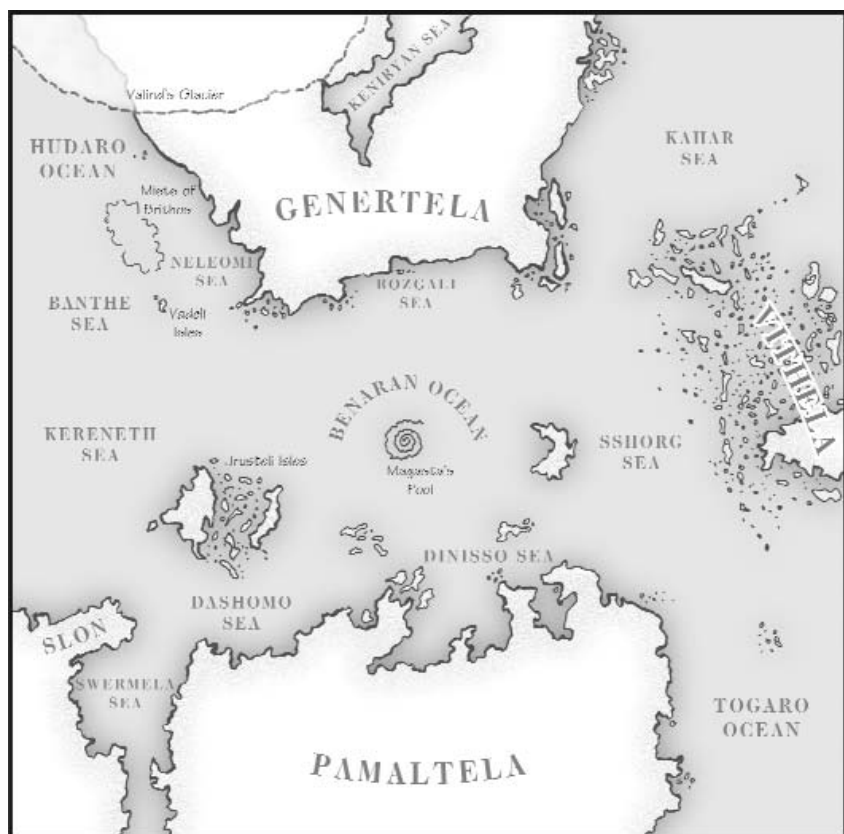
Glorantha was discovered by me and shared with the world. Glorantha is my personal mythology, spawned as an adolescent desire, rising to fruition and falling again, now coming here to new fruition upon the great groaning wheel of publishing life.

Myth has a secret power that is almost too simple to believe. Basically, a good story can make you feel good. We could talk here about memes and pheromones, or vibrations or sociobiological theory. Whatever the reason might be, though, there is the truth: a good story can make you feel better. That is the power of myth.

The story of Glorantha has, for the most part been a good story, and that is because it is a cooperative effort. The co-creation has had many significant players besides myself. I wouldn't have done this in the same way without other people. I want to acknowledge now, at the rebirth of Glorantha among us, the parts played by some of the major characters. It has been shaped by many people and I'd like to give thanks here to them. This story goes way back, and I will forget important people. I apologize.

☿ First, to the thousands of people have enjoyed the world through game or reading, you are the tribe. ♠ To my friends and girl friends who listened to this stuff way back in college without laughing except at the stupid parts. ☿ To the three publishers that rejected my first game and made me found Chaosium. ☿ To Chaosium, and Chaosium Inc. for the work and support of making the first great Gloranthan publications. ☿ To my first wife for the patience she had while I worked at Chaosium, and for giving it to me as my half of the settlement. ☿ To my children, Noah, Alisha and Jason who lost hours of attention while I was pouring out Gloranthan prose and game stats in the far corners. ☿ The creative folk during the dark AH years, especially Ken Rolston and Michael O'Brien. ☿ To Unknown in Japan who keeps fanning that hot flame there. ☿ To Andrew Dallman, for Conjunction '90 that lit my fire once again. ☿ To people who keep those great convention tradition going: Ingo Tschinke, the German Chaos society, Kevin Jacklin, and Convulsion, Inc. and still call the tribes to gather. ☿ To the people who sponsored the Glorantha Conventions at their own risk: David Cheng, Eric Rowe, Andrew Joelson, Neil Robinson, Andrew Bean. ☿ To the people who kept the earliest email groups together: Andrew Bell, Henk Langeveld, Loren Miller and Shannon Appel. ☿ For creative contributions: Sandy Petersen is first in my book of people who know Glorantha and have contributed significantly to its reality. ☿ Other big chunks were provided by Steve Perrin, Nick Brooke and others in TotRM. ♣ To Dave Dunham, a man of action and determination, and my favorite computer game designer, who has helped in extraordinary and unique ways; ☿ Lynn Willis for teaching; ☿ Charlie Krank for always being there to help prop me up, and his kids, Brian and Meghan who help him; ○ ○ To David Hall, whose perseverance and strength in publishing Tales has earned him the Elmal award for me; ☿ to Rick Meints for his publications and friendly support; ☿ To Mark Leymaster for the loyal and friendly support, especially in GTA moments. ☿ Steve Martin deserves special attention—he has spent more time than anyone doing critical voluntary work for Issaries, as well as publishing Drastic Resolution and sharing endless hours of discussion, all-important fact checking, and many pleasant lunches. ♣ Finally, to my current wife Suzanne, for her support and for being herself, the greatest woman I've ever met, and the reason I go home at all. ☿

This is the purpose of Hero Wars: to focus that excitement, interest and thought in a communal setting, to co-create a good story, that will make us feel good. Thank you to all who have helped in this. Here is the latest. I hope you enjoy it.



# CHAPTER ONE

## Introduction

### What is Glorantha?

**G**lorantha conforms to the mysterious and malleable laws of myth rather than the reliable, repeatable laws of science. Glorantha is not a globe. It is a huge cube of earth floating on an infinite sea, with one surface delicately exposed above water. In its center is a gigantic whirlpool that sucks all the waters of the world into it. The sky above is a dome housing the sun, moon, and stars. Beyond this firmament live the sky gods. Beneath the world other, darker gods dwell. Around the edges of the world, where the endless seas wash upon mortal lands, and where the curved sky touches the underworld, other gods and their many demigod children live. In the center of Glorantha is the human world, called by them the Inner World.

The area inhabited by mortal beings is only a small part of the Inner World, being the area within a more-or-less 5000 mile radius from the Great Whirlpool. Two large continents and a number of archipelagos are the main stage upon which the Hero Wars of Glorantha are played out.

Genertela is the northern and more populous continent. It occupies a land mass about the size of the continental United States. Its climate is mostly temperate, although its extremes range from arctic tundra in the farthest northwest through seasonal regions of woods and forest, broken by a blasted unnatural desert wasteland, and ending with a tropical jungle in the southeast. Genertela is also the location of Dragon Pass, a large break in the Rockwood Mountains. Dragon Pass is where the first great events of the Hero Wars will erupt.

The southern continent of Pamaltela is about as big as Genertela. Its climate is tropical in the north and east and desert in the south and southwest, with vast rolling plains between. The Eastern continent of Vithela is now a vast archipelago, shattered by other gods' wars many thousands of years ago. Now it is innumerable islands ranging in size from sandbars that barely rise above the tide to islands hundreds of miles in area. In the west are wide waters and only the scattered island remains of Danmalastan, the western continent that was destroyed by sorcerous wars at the end of the Ice Age.

### The People of Glorantha

The Inner World is the home to many mortal beings. Humans are the most populous now and are divided into many cultures. Most are everyday people: farmers, herders, craftspeople, soldiers, fishers. These everyday lives encompass a wide range of beliefs, practices, and cultures which are often in conflict or competition against each other. This antagonism and distrust among the species is unusual compared to the Elder Races, and may be the reason that the Elder Races still exist at all.

The Elder Races are the populous races that are found in many places across the world. These include the dwarves (*Mostali*), elves (*Aldryami*), trolls (*Uz*), the dragonewts and the five types of merfolk collectively called Triolini. They once dominated the world when humans were still new, but they fought against each other and then suffered huge losses in the Darkness. After history they fought each other more until humans grew so powerful that the Elder Races were nearly cut off from each other. Duck (*durulz*) are just one sample of the hundreds of colorful minor races to be found. Others include the *hsunchen* folks, who are animals that can take the form of humans; the newtlings, an amphibian race; the magisaur, a dinosaur-like being with great magic powers; and the Grotarons, humanoid bipeds with no head, but a third arm sprouting from where a neck might be. Other abound, usually small in number and found only in a few places.

## The Magic of Glorantha

All people of Glorantha practice magic of some form. Some gain power from the gods they worship. Others bargain with spirits to gain supernatural powers. Still others practice sorcery, applying a logical world-view to arrive at time-tested methods of manipulating magical energy. Then there are the mystics, who pursue the inner magic of personal enlightenment.

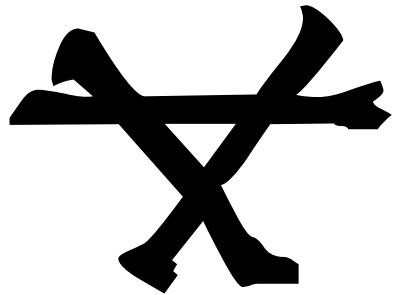
The existence and efficacy of magic is not in doubt; everyone can see its effects on the world. Everyone has been to the mythical realm which underlies their religion. Everyone has seen the effects of the gods, of gargantuan spells and of spirits and ghosts.

 God Rune

 Sorcery Rune

 Animist Rune

 Mystical Rune



## The Gods of Glorantha

Glorantha has an uncounted number of gods and goddesses, much to the bewilderment of Gloranthans as well as the reader new to Glorantha. One of the joys of Glorantha is uncovering the identity and experiencing the mythology of these beings layer by layer.

But since this is an *introduction* to Glorantha, our intent is not to overwhelm but to provide a primer. So, in this collection of tales, watch the action of these main players in the more important Gloranthan pantheons:







## The Celestial Deities

Yelm, the Celestial Emperor of the gods who was appointed to rule by the Celestial Court



Lodril, Yelm's rough and earthly brother, a fighter and a farmer



Sedenya, the Moon Goddess, called also the Red Goddess



## The Storm Deities

Orlanth, the storm god who rebelled against Yelm



Ernalda, Queen of the gods and wife of Orlanth



## The Monotheists

Malkion, the Great Prophet and father of the western peoples



Zzabur, the prehuman inventor of Sorcery



## The Elder Race Gods

Kyger Litor, the Dark Mother goddess of the trolls



Mostal, the cold Machine god of the Mostali



Aldrya, the Goddess of Forests, trees and plants; worshipped by the Aldryami



Magasta, the unfathomable Sea Maelstrom, worshipped by the Merfolk



## The Foes

Wakboth, the god of the evil, depravity, vice and despair



Kajabor, the World Destroyer, god of entropy.



CHAPTER TWO

Before Time Began

Glorantha is at the crux of existence as the Modern Age gives way to the time of the Hero Wars. The seeds of the Hero Wars were sown centuries before, and now the fruits are springing forth in bitter conflict. The other citizens of Glorantha will soon sympathize with the Kralori philosopher who cursed, “May you live in interesting times.”

There are more than two sides to this conflict: every race, human or not, has its own agenda for the future of Glorantha. It’s pantheon against pantheon as the worshippers of the One God clash against the followers of the many gods; shamans and spirits battle mystic dragons; and believers in a universal Order oppose the forces of Chaos that squirm under the chains of Time.

All of these troubles have their solution in myth. Glorantha began in myth, and it is descending once again into the cauldron of boiling opportunity. People will destroy each other’s myths soon, and they study them for good reason.

One great conflict in Glorantha is the struggle to control the original runes of the world. Here is a myth about how the world was made from runes to help understand why this struggle is so important.

The Age of Creation

A God Learners Teaching, circa 800 ST

The Invisible God created the **Prime Runes**. The less learned of Glorantha worships these runes as the Gloranthan Court, who are said to have made the world. Mystics say that since the deities were the first misconceptions concerning reality, they set the pattern for misunderstanding existence.

The Prime Runes are the thoughts of the Invisible God. They came into being from his mind. There are two distinct groups, and the Runes of Power came first, then the Elemental Runes.



**Acos**, god of Law and Stability,

**Larnste**, god of Change and Motion,

**Uleria**, goddess of Love,

**Kargan Tor**, god of Conflict and War,

**Orenoar**, goddess of Truth,

**Tylenea**, goddess of Illusion,

**Harana Ilor**, goddess of Harmony,



**Ratslaf**, god of Disorder and Confusion.

Those powers were pure thought, without any matter whatsoever. But their merest presence required some matter to have the thought materialized into reality. Thus the Elements came into existence almost simultaneously. However, the elements were naturally more material than immaterial, and in that way the measurable world came into existence.

There are always at least four elementals, and a fifth usually is added:



**Nakala**, or Dame Darkness, goddess of Dark and Cold,



**Zaramaka**, or Sir Sea, god of all Waters,



**Ga**, or Empress Earth, goddess of all Earths,



**Aether**, or Lord Light, god of Light and Heat,



**Umath**, or King Storm, god of Air and Storm.

These elemental Runes were composed of much matter and little intelligence or spirit, and each of them quickly devolved into the primal elements of the world. Devolution was the natural process whereby the Runes isolated portions of their power to manifest the primal elements. This devolution continued, producing further elements, some mostly matter and others highly spiritual. It was through this process of *reductio ad absurdum* that the world was made. It produced the gods and spirits in the process..

Although each of the Elemental Runes underwent the same devolutionary activity, their devolution differentiated according to their natures. Sorcerers have shown that the reduction occurred along mathematical lines, propounding that the divine genealogies are merely ignorant personifications of derivable mathematical formulae.

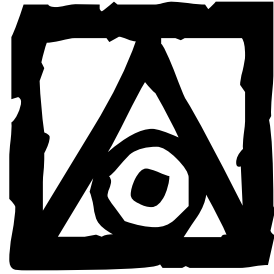
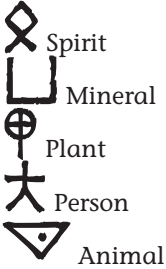
Yet amid the reduction, construction. The Prime Runes seemed different but all still had something in common, and so they combined and built the center of the world, known across Glorantha as the **Spike**. The Spike is the cosmic mountain; the term came originally from Mostal the Maker, lover of tools, who viewed the cosmic mountain as the thing which nailed together all of reality and held it in place. Upon the fastness of the Spike the powers of creation worked until the world spread far beyond the foot of the Spike. The world was made.

The demarcation setting off the Green Age from the Age of Creation is the introduction of the **Form Runes**. Said by the ignorant to be creations of the Gloranthan Court they are another process of the devolutionary creative process. The form runes were copied by the entities of the Gloranthan Court and so the world was populated as naturally as it had been created.

After that of course the purity of the world was gone and the gods seized power. This too was part of the process of devolution. At that time Zzabur formed the first sorcerers like us to resist the Devolution, which is also natural.

Rune for The Spike

## Form Runes



However the world was born or created it was early dominated by gods and goddesses of great power. They seemed to be merely the equals of anyone at first, but through countless actions gained or proved they had the power to be gods. At first all went well during the Golden Age, but that ended terribly.

## The Golden Age ☉

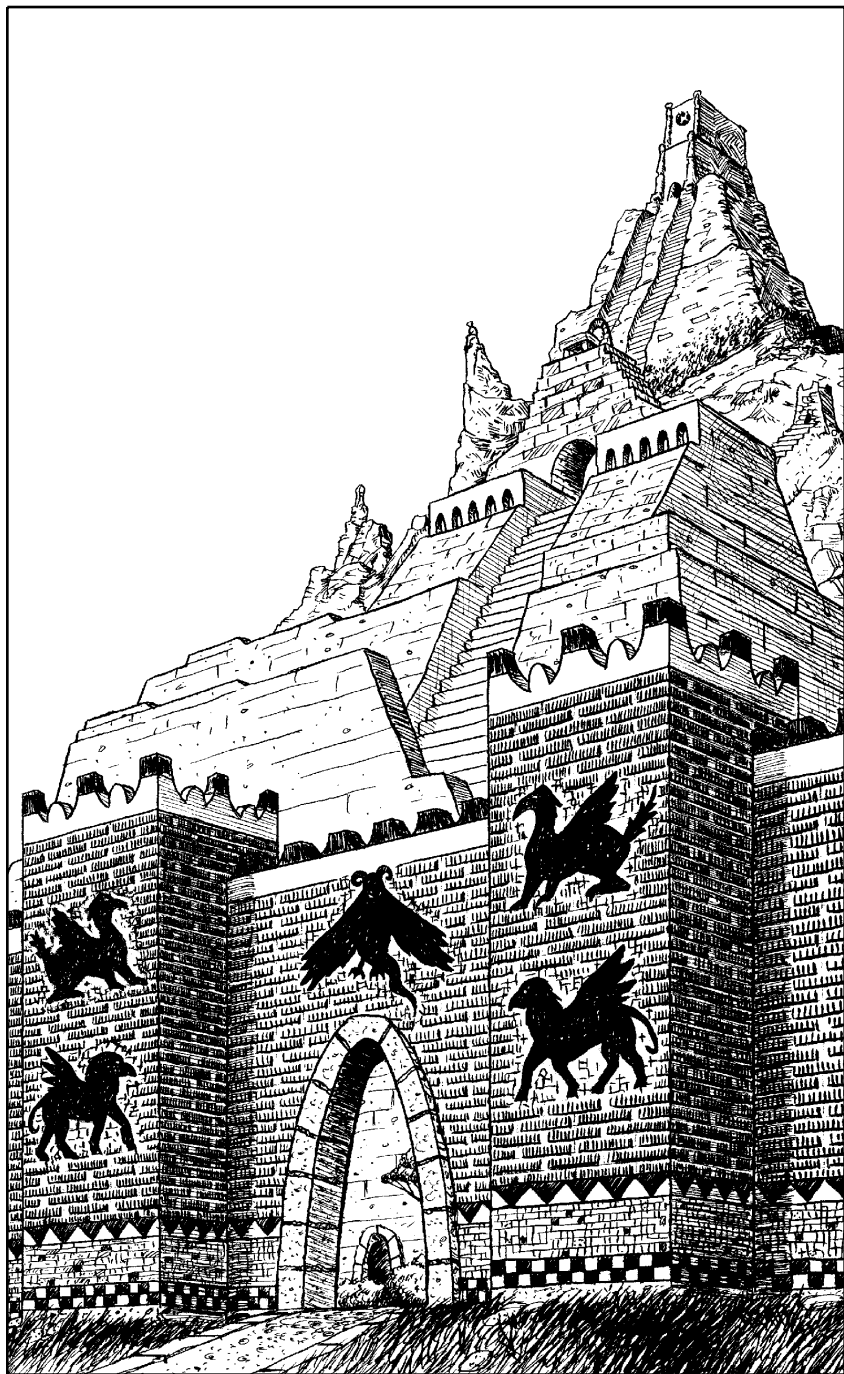
The Common Story as told throughout Peloria  
The Sun God, Yelm was the Emperor of the Universe when he ruled the world. He was advised by his elder brother, Dayzatar, and aided by his lusty younger brother, Lodril. Yelm wed Dendara, the Wife and Mother, and many other deities were counted in his pantheon.

During this time many cities and nations were made. There was no need to work, for the earth brought forth its own food, all water was pure and healthful to drink, and anything was willing to offer any aid or assistance. Peace was said to be Yelm's Cloak, and so the world lived beyond Time.

The peace of the Golden Age slowly turned into the strife of the Gods' War. The process was long, and came in small steps. Viewed with afterthought, the process seems inevitable.

The birth of the god Umath started the Gods' War. It was no fight or conflict, yet it immediately led to violence. Umath's first recorded activity was to demand a realm of his own to be equal to those of his parents. When none was available, Umath made one for himself by ripping asunder his father and mother. Thus the sky was separated from the earth forever. This primal violence set the pattern for the children of Umath as well.

Umath devolved violently, producing a brood of unruly entities bent on taking or making their own realms of influence. They were joined by many other



ambitious or frustrated Young Gods. A long period of growth, change, and movement followed in the cosmos, as these new forces found their places. The power of the Storm gods rose at the expense of other pantheons.

During this time the institution of worship spread as the lesser races sought protection and support from the greater entities. Sometimes the peoples could tame the violence of the gods, but more often not. As the fighting worsened, the races became more dependent for survival upon the gods.

When deities began competing for the worship of lesser races, the trouble spread rapidly. The Golden Age eroded. Imperial Yelm was weakened so much that he contested as an equal with barbarian Orlanth.

The power of Death was either the first of the New Powers or the last of the old. It came from hidden places in the Underworld and went to the hands of Humakt, who used it on Grandfather Mortal; and then to Orlanth, who used it to kill Yelm. The death of the Emperor of Light crippled the peaceful strongholds of the Golden Age and instituted a new reign. The sun went down and did not rise.

## The Storm Age

Philosophers also call the Storm Age the Lesser Darkness. It began when Yelm was killed and left the world of the living to follow Grandfather Mortal into the land of Death. Other gods of light also failed: Dayzatar the Sky God drew further away, Lodril was first buried and then imprisoned by a god of Darkness, and lesser gods were wounded or hid themselves away.

More than Darkness spread across the age, for life followed the light into the lands of the dead. Spirits of plants, animals, and minerals took the path of the dead and were lost to the world. With only inferior lights the earth soon slept and the world seemed barren when compared to the Golden Age.

## The Tower of Yelm (pictured at left)

By Jim Pavelec

In the Golden Age gods and men were separated by their different self-knowledge. The Great God Yelm stepped forth to rule over one and all with his Justice and Law. Majesty and grandeur descended from the Sky World and spread over the world, and the empire of Yelm was called the Harmonious Realm. So says The Glorious ReAscent of Yelm, the oldest holy book in Dara Happa.

“When Yelm received rule of the universe He looked upon it to set the New Order. So that He could overlook everything He raised beneath His feet a beautiful five-tiered ziggurat. Atop it was His golden throne from which He could see across the whole world and from which He delivered true Justice. This place was called the Tower of Yelm.”

The gods still fought when they wished. The Storm gods dominated, but the Darkness pantheons and Sea deities also fielded powerful forces. Glorantha became a broad, barren land swept by angry storms, crushing ice, brutal volcanoes, and pieces of the sky tumbling dead to the earth.

During this time new races of humans were born in the world, and sometimes the old ones adapted or survived as slaves. Despite the hardships new cultures thrived, and grandly barbaric societies gladly and grimly fought for existence.

Unchanged in all this was the Gloranthan Court. They had held aloof from the petty squabbles changing the face of their world and lent themselves impartially to anyone capable of wielding the powers, even remaining unattached when their powers were used in new ways by exploitive intelligences. This disturbed them only when the world was straining so hard that even its unattainable portions felt the pull. As the crisis grew the Court could not act efficiently to halt their own abuse. Instead they engaged in "immortal discourse, celestial debate, and the scribbling of scrolls." The world disintegrated around them, at last straining the immortal strength of the Court beyond endurance. Imagine the dilemma of Kargan Tor, the god of war, when he was forced to face himself in battle, or when Uleria, goddess of love, impregnated herself, or when Acos, god of Law, made a ruling and found himself unjust. It was as if a cosmic illness came upon the gods. Tremors shook the immobile Spike, and the cosmos weakened.

## The Birth Of Chaos

The growing instability worsened conditions for gods and men who simply craved peace and security. The initial disruptions were hastened by Ratslaf, god of Disorder, and his race of creatures called Boggles. Some blame everything on Ratslaf and his followers, but such blame only shifts attention from the real culprits, the gods themselves, who persisted in acting against their own welfare

Gradually there came to be other things in the world. At first these creatures seem to have seeped through cracks in the world's logic, oozing through and infecting the surface and the interior of reality.

One such creature is well-known in tales. Its true name is unknown but it is always called Krarsht. Krarsht may have been the creature which Larnste once saw, "a small squirming thing, foul to sight and smell, which lay on the ground and turned the dust to ash." The god of Motion stamped upon it, hoping to destroy the thing with his divine trampling, but the slimy thing bit him and pierced the skin. Larnste was immediately infected and ever afterwards limped when he moved. Worse, his blood was infected. Wherever his blood dropped to the earth it left a foul cesspool. The place where the monster had been was drenched in polluted ichor, and never has healed itself. The place is called Foulblood Woods, in the Holy Country.

There were other such minor invasions as well, but they failed to do more damage to the world than the gods did to themselves.

### The Conspiracy of the Unholy Trio

One god who lived at this time is said to be the last born of the Young Gods. He was called Rashoran, and none know his parentage. At first Rashoran went about calming the frightened gods, teaching them to be unafraid. It is said that of all the cosmos only he did not fear what he did not know. He taught this knowledge to some of the other gods; most of them succumbed to the Darkness without a struggle after learning from Rashoran, though a few seem to have been fortified, such as Humakt and Uleria. Three others found that they were not afraid, and that they could use the fears of others to their own ends. One of the first things they did was to destroy Rashoran to keep his secret to themselves.

These murderers were the Unholy Trio. Hatred, selfishness, greed, and jealousy motivated them. These short-sighted emotions are now considered to be symptoms of chaos in the world, and they were originated by the three, who concentrated their forces and wills to create something new. The first of the trio was Ragnaglar, whom some call kinsman to Storm Bull, driven to hatred by jealousy and dishonorable acts. The second was Thed, said to have been wife to Ragnaglar at one time. The third was Mallia, another goddess, who had great properties to aid birth and growth. These three joined together and perverted their natures to make their weapon of hatred and vengeance.

The Unholy Trio made the end of the world. They wove a great magical ritual of potency far greater than anything before accomplished, for they had discovered the wonder and power of primal chaos, and used it magically to strengthen themselves for what was to come. They then engaged in their rituals of chaos-birth. When it was done, the world was changed, and new forces roamed the world.

### The Devils: Wakboth and Kajabor



The product of the ritual was the Devil, the product of poisoned souls. Documents and oral memories from storm, darkness, and earth cults name the product Wakboth. After that, more deities and spirits of chaos and destruction were born into the world.

Wakboth the Devil is the moral evil of the world. This senseless and terrifying entity is caused by wanton disregard for life, and he supports continuous brutal destruction. Twisted and foul, Wakboth is the world defiler. His existence was pure insult, since the world was doomed anyway, and he worsened the pain for all involved. In the short run Wakboth offered immense advantages to his followers, and in their fear many of the world joined him, swelling the strength of chaos and bringing all creation to a crisis.

Kajabor is another major enemy in this age. Kajabor is the original "devil," a term which originated in the West. In some older documents he is confused with Wakboth. They are similar, for both were great gods for a short time, and had many worshippers, and both turned on their followers. But you must know that Kajabor did it because he had to, and that Wakboth did it for delight.



Kajabor wields entropy in the world. Often called God-Killer or Black Hole or Great Fear, he destroys all vestiges of matter or energy, annihilating all possibilities of individuality or unity. Entities slain by Kajabor have never returned, and often even their names have been lost after being pulled from the universe.

Kajabor is the Great Fear, and this motivator was important to the actions of the gods. Some say the Great Fear drives people or gods to follow such corruption as Wakboth. For those reasons Kajabor is as much an enemy as true evil, even though it is utterly impersonal and, some say, as natural as the forces of creation.

## The Triumph of Chaos

Several locations are believed to be original sources for the chaotic armies which began overwhelming the world. Most of these places are on the far edges of Glorantha, where the forces of order were weakest. Genertelan legend says that the major chaos army approached from the north, and that Wakboth led it.

The leaders of the gods were notable warriors and leaders who were inured to the rigors of war and death. A great alliance of deities met upon the Fields of Plenty to fight these new enemies. Genert led the gods' army. This earth god was the ranking spirit there, though not the greatest fighter. Others with him included Splendid Yamsur, who was a son of the Sun, and Seolinthur, river god for Genert's realm. They were disappointed that others did not come, such as their allies Storm Bull and Tada, and their friends from the Celestial Court.

Chaos won. The gods disappeared in a horror storm of previously unknown forces. Their bodies were changed to gorp, and their souls were scoured by the Fatal Screaming. Forever polluted, the Fields of Plenty mutated to be the Krjalke Bog. Some mortal races that sought to escape the rout were saved by Genert who into a stinging cloud of copper which protected the survivors. The sacrifice is still visible in the wastes of Genert, when the Copper Sands are seen.

Though inured to death the Storm Age beings were all shocked by this horror the way the Golden Age had been shocked by Yelm's death. But it was worse. Now True Death, divine entropy, sent even gods to oblivion. Some gods fled, some fell into inertia, and some began a more rabid defense. Many gods who could not fight or resist sought refuge in the Spike, relying upon the ancient Celestial Court for protection.

From all sides the armies of chaos were drawn toward the Spike. The inhabitants prepared a spirited, if hopeless, defense. The once-impregnable Spike was rent by cracks, and it groaned with misuse. The most ancient powers of the cosmos were decrepit and indifferent. The Young Gods did their best and did it well, delaying chaos and learning some secrets to fight it. But Kargan Tor abandoned his post and the hordes of chaos slid through his faults and into the heart of stability. The gods fought fiercely, desperate in their fear, but the armies of chaos soon swept down the corridors and into the chambers

where the Celestial Court prepared for their end. The chaos forces burst upon the powers of creation, smashing the ancient Runes and scattering them to the winds. The gods and goddesses collapsed and were hacked to pieces or otherwise abused by their foes.

The final struggle unbound anxious energies which had been pent and twisted by eons of divine misuse. A cosmic explosion freed the pressure, vaporizing the Spike and its inhabitants. A great vacuum opened in the center of the world, from which stepped the gods of chaos. This began the Greater Darkness.

## The Age Of Terror

The Age of Terror is another name for the period known as the Greater Darkness. This was the end of the world for most Gloranthan entities, and a period of pain, fear, and misery for the rest. Parts of the world vanished. Parts were isolated and set adrift in a shapeless existence without hope. Nothing was tenable, and even change was unreliable.

The destruction of the Spike begins this era, for the explosion rocked the world to its foundations and determined the final struggles of many gods.

At first the vacuum at the center of the world threatened to swallow everything. However, many deities sacrificed themselves by leaping fanatically to combat the void, and their acts filled it rather than leaving a hole into emptiness. The gods who sacrificed themselves that way were changed by it, though many of them managed to survive the death of their universe through their actions. Prominent was Magasta, the great sea god who rallied almost all the waters of the world to aid him in filling the hole. From that time on, all rivers have flowed downhill, toward Magasta's Pool, rather than continuing their creeping invasion of the land.

The struggles were rarely so successful. Death and entropy raged across the land, leaving it barren and rotting. Reigning Young Gods were now fugitives. Places became empty of air, water was broken or jelled, the earth began to lose solidity. Gods died. Races vanished. Life flickered.

Gods of terror in this age included Kajabor and Wakboth as leaders. The Unholy Trio continued their rampage, so that the names of Ragnaglar, Thed, and Mallia became synonymous with fear. There were other invaders, too, such as Tien the Headhunter and Krasht the Hungry One. Beings who had once been Gloranthan in nature, but had turned to Wakboth's ways for their selfish ends (such as Vivamort) prowled the lands. Conquered areas were filled with slime by a giant malevolent ooze called Gorpgod. New races of creatures, born from chaos or mutated from traitorous things, crawled over the land. The wildlife once opposed to the invasion, such as the Crimson Bat, was overwhelmed and enslaved.

Resisters still held out. Where there was a fight there would be help, meager though it might be. Star captains fell from the sky and saved their tribes. The

Lowfires were freed; Oakfed became a great weapon to scorch away all impurities. Found Child came and taught people to hunt for food to sustain themselves. The last ragged survivors eked out a shaky existence amid the warring forces of their enemies; the awesome unity which had stormed the Spike was revealed to be either an accident or a misconception.

The destruction of the world and its people left less and less for the chaos gods and monsters to prey on and so they hungrily turned on each other. At one point the armies of Kajabor and Wakboth began to devour each other, but philosophers dispute which one was killed, for no one alive or sane could know such things.

Prevalent belief says that Kajabor was killed by Wakboth, leaving the world defiler to face the Storm Bull and the god of entropy to face the forces of the dead. This theory has much strength, since the mundane world (reconstructed later) was usually held to be the origin of immorality, while the combination of entropy and existence seem to synthesize into the god Time, who later rules the cosmos.

## Mortals Strike Back

The world of the gods had ended. However, amidst the fragments still lived many of the lesser mortal races, clinging tenaciously to their miserable shreds of life and sanity. They resisted overwhelming odds and proved the resolution of mortality to survive.

One victory was the battle called "I Fought We Won." The peoples of Dragon Pass saved their world. Chaos swarmed across the tattered remains of the world. The peoples were separated from each other and seemed to have no chance for unified action against the forces of chaos. They were isolated by unbridgeable gaps. For instance, though there was a staunch fortress of elves who doggedly defended their sterile forests, aided by Arroin and Yelmalio, they were unable close the gulf of chaos between themselves and the trolls' Castle of Lead, another redoubtable fortress.

But unity bound them with their mutual wish for survival, and their unquenchable desire brought individuals across time and space, spanning order and chaos to confront the final dissolution of the world. It did not matter from whence they were drawn or where it occurred. Key beings, each individuals and alone, fought their last desperate fight against overwhelming odds, motivated by their survival and determined to do their utmost. Each separate, they still acted in unison. In this way they combined forces and unconsciously aided each other against their own fears. They were alone, yet felt themselves to be with others like themselves and thereby gained strength. The fight was joined and the forces of chaos were destroyed, neutralized, or dispatched.

This is called the I Fought We Won, said to be responsible for the preservation of the world. Notable among those who experienced this are

Ezkankekko and Heort, leaders among trolls and humans of Dragon Pass. They afterwards joined their peoples as allies with others so that there was a time of increased life in Dragon Pass, even though it was dark and monsters still roamed.

Zzabur's Great Spell was another huge victory. In the Western Lands followers of Malkion, the One God, had become divided. Great sorcerers and wizards broke the earth and turned the sun cold with their gargantuan spells until their thaumaturgy sank their entire continent beneath the bitter cold seas. An Ice Age set in and a tremendous glacier advanced steadily towards the last pockets of Malkioni huddled in settlements about the frozen Neliomi Sea. In Brithos Zzabur prepared a great spell and sent for help to cast it. People who had been foes laid aside their rancor to help so that religionists in Seshnela and prophet worshippers in Loskalm sent their energy and concentration to help. Bitter storms and fanatical savages tried to break the spell. Desperate forces struggled until the weak broke, and it was the unified magic of the Malkioni which prevailed. A warm wind blew, the glacial ice groaned mightily and then cracked so loud that weak men went deaf forever, and the gray clouds overhead parted to reveal the sun rising in the distant east.

## The Gods Strike Back 人

Many stories are known of how the gods fought back against Chaos. All of them agree that only a precious few deities were effective against the chaos gods. Many small local deities survived with a few worshippers, perhaps a clan or a tiny village sheltering against the hellish hordes. The actions of those who survived shaped the world that came after.

Above the world Urox Slew Wakboth. Some deities were still capable of action. Inn Prax was Urox, the raging Storm Bull. Storm Bull mustered its forces to fight the Devil in Prax. He was the destructive desert storm which leaves ruin in its wake and whose touch scours flesh from bone. He was backed by righteous outrage and strengthened by compassion, two things of which chaos has little. Though his kin and his friends were slain all about him he still fought on, aided by all who worshipped him. When he was thrown to earth, the earth gave him power, and when he was held in the air he drew power from his breath. Fire aided him and so did cold, and when he had run out of allies the cosmos responded to his cry. A massive block of Truestone, a piece of Law cast adrift when the Spike exploded, crashed to earth and struck the Devil, grinding him and spreading him and his strength about. Afterwards other forces and beings further lessened it and destroyed its unity in the world forever.

Without leadership, the forces of chaos further fell back. Gods, people, spirits attacked and began the arduous righting of their world. Daka Fal came, and taught people how to tell the living from the dead. Heroes appeared among the people, and taught survival and compassion. Slowly the world knitted into place. The survivors rebuilt, strong in their new-found hope.

The Lightbringers' Quest was another key component. Orlanth was always a leader among the gods of storm. Like the rest he was wild and unruly, powerful and violent. But each god grew differently in the Gods Age, and Orlanth first took command of his unruly clan, and then offered shelter to strangers who would serve him loyally. He mastered his own violence, discovered love, and manifest honor and justice.

When Chaos overthrew his brothers and forced his wife into unalterable sleep Orlanth realized the doom of the world had come. He realized he had begun its destruction when he slew Yelm, and he determined to take responsibility for its destruction and forge a new means of righting the wrong. He cast aside his old bonds and sought new ones, voluntarily dooming himself for the good of the world.

Orlanth had been a king among the storm gods and the Lightbringers were his councilors. They agreed to accompany Orlanth on his quest to the Underworld. during the journey each was pushed to the edge of their knowledge and endurance and beyond into unknown challenges. They trod unlivable plains, forded rivers of acid and hatred, met their worst foes, their deadliest nightmares, and faced their own doomed selves who tried to bar the way before them.

The whole of their tale is beyond the scope of this essay. They worked, fought, and suffered mightily for their labors, all of them losing parts of themselves forever. Yet they succeeded, and they entered live into the lands of the dead, and found their way to the King of the Dead. Then Orlanth, by strength of his virtue and might, freed Yelm from the bondage of death.



Emperor Yelm and the Great Justice was another essential component. Yelm, who had ruled the universe of Life, had gone to the Underworld when his worst subjects rebelled. Yelm took his place there and because he was Rulership itself, he began to rule the Land of the Dead. His power was undiminished, and he summoned all those who were loyal to him to come. They did, and the Upperworld became devoid of Life and Love as all of the good gods and goddesses went to their ruler in the Underworld.

Above, where the rebels and murderers were left to themselves conditions grew even worse. They killed and enslaved each other and then summoned or created things that were even worse than they were. This was Yelm's punishment upon them. When they had suffered enough Yelm summoned his murderer to atone for the crime.

In the Underworld, then, Yelm the Emperor and his murderer Orlanth came to terms. Each swore great vows of truth and honor to bind themselves to the task. A goddess called Arachne Solara laid great schemes and plans between them, and the chief deities swore to those plans also, then were joined by every other deity who yearned to survive.

Thanks to these preparations, they stood fast when chaos reached the land of the dead to confront the empty powers of life for the last time.

## The Green Age (pictured at left)

By Jim Pavelec

The Green Age was the time before death, before want, and before humans suffered any troubles at all. In those days mortals and gods walked side by side, each unknowing of the differences in the other. All was simple, peaceful and though much was unknown, nothing was feared. Many people wish to travel to that mythic time to experience such peace. Yet the Sages warn otherwise.

"That is a most dangerous place. It's in the Green Age, when you are unable to tell the difference between gods and mortals, between wood people and animal people or true people, between the living and the dead. Whatever you do there will haunt you forever afterwards and remain with you all your life. Many people have died early and in horrible ways because of innocent deeds done while seeking the Great Spike Mountain."

"Do you understand that you must do nothing to excite the natives while you are there? You must initiate nothing. You must not do anything they do not do, and you must not teach them anything which they do not know."

"Even good intentions done there will have ramification you can't understand. Back here, in your own life, there will be creatures and foes that hate you now for what you did then. Avoid the Green Age!"

Arachne Solara created the Great Compromise. Arachne Solara is the nickname of an otherwise unnamed deity, who may be the goddess of Nature in Glorantha. Her origins are mysterious and subject to speculation, but there are strong indications that she is the ghost of Glorantha, the Mother of the Universe.

Arachne Solara first comes to notice in the tale of the Great Compromise wherein Orlanth, Yelm, and the other deities in the underworld swear pacts and oaths to preserve themselves. The plan upon which they agreed is said to have been created by Arachne Solara, based upon mutual support between all of the remaining world.

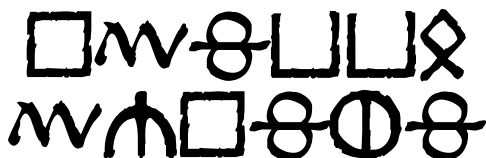
The goddess constructed a great and magical web made of many things no longer found in the world, and then she gave the web to all of the gods to hold ready between them. When chaos entered into their realm, the gods cast the net upon Kajabor and held him tight while the goddess leapt upon him with vengeance and a strength of desperation and mystical splendor. She enwrapped the chaos god in her legs and struggled mightily, and at last devoured him alive.

Then the goddess carefully collected her net and used it to conceal the birth of her child. The child is the Pledge of the Gods, and all existence swore by it to uphold their agreements. This is also called the Great Compromise or the Immortal Pact, and it is the oath which recreated the world.

Yelm and Orlanth and the other deities prepared to leave their home of death. There was still a struggle for them, for they were held in the underworld against their will, and even the victory of Arachne Solara did not bind the Holders of the Below Worlds to abandon their divine tasks. They resisted. But nothing could hope to stand against the liberated forces of Light and Life, and so they surged on into victory and beyond.

The reborn gods reached the edge of the world at the place now called Dawngate. There a star waited for them, and even the Darkness was glad to see them. The flush of Dawn, the rosy goddess, came. Arachne Solara stood upon the Gate of Time and cast her net across the universe, catching each surviving thing and binding it into the new world. The broken shards of the world were drawn together.

Her child was born then, concealed by the net and protected by the strands. The child was called Time. Regularity began in the universe again. Between Change and Eternity was reborn Glorantha. The gods marched across the barren world, bringing warmth, light, and flower to surprise the awed survivors. The new world was created. Time reigned. History began.



## C H A P T E R T H R E E

✘ **History** ✘**Chaos And Compromise**

History began when the sun rose for the first time. Mythical events prior to Time were non-sequential and simultaneous actions happening without the benefit of orderly lineal time.

Time is the Cosmic Compromise. The world of time is bound by certain laws which the world must follow. If the laws of Time are broken by the world then the impossible has occurred and chaos will re-enter the world. The most impressive display of this came in the Gbaji Wars which concluded the Dawn Age, as detailed later.

Time permanently separates the gods and their world from the destruction to which they had submitted in the Gods Age. They formed the pact to ensure their survival, and the world opted to become stagnant rather than nonexistent. The gods sacrificed all of their freedom in return for immortality. The balance between the extremes of creation and destruction was moderated by cyclical sharing of extremes by the participants. Everything which had been killed in the Gods War had to remain dead one-half of Time, yet also was alive one-half. Thus the world which made up the gods' bodies was subject to those changes, and the magical energies of the world also followed the flow and pattern. Thus in the winter the earth and fire deities are weak, but in summer the fire gods are most powerful.

Within the world of Time live other beings, though, who did not share in the Compromise. These are the mortal races who survived. Unlike the gods, the mortals maintained their freedom. They can impose themselves upon the world and change it to a small extent.

The chaos things surviving the Darkness and Dawning fall into the second category of entities. Few chaos spirits survived enough to become worshipped as deities. Thus there are few gods of chaos left.

The mortal races of chaos are more prevalent. They managed to hide in the forgotten places of the world, or to shore themselves up in a few strongpoints.

One of the clear distinctions made in the Compromise is that chaos is not of the world. The deities and powers of the world had touched it, and were still afraid of it, and their continued existence required that they remain apart from chaos. Chaos became the enemy which must be fought and suppressed. With one enemy recognized by everyone, the squabbling deities found a common theme for unity.



## The Dawn Age

The years following the first sunrise saw the surviving races of the world grow and flourish. Lands broken and ruined by the Gods' War and the Greater Darkness were rejuvenated as the deities reaffirmed themselves within the cold matter of the world. The Dawn Age began with a calm and wonderful growth reminiscent of the Golden Age.

After a time of peaceful growth, many cultures collided violently upon their borderlands. Ancient races renewed their primeval conflicts and there was war between trolls, dwarves, and elves again. Human cultures also clashed, as in Peloria between the sun-worshipping horse nomads and the storm worshipping First Council.

During this time there was no major incursion from chaos except for a couple of monsters which were uniquely immense entities. For instance, the Crimson Bat, already a glowing red spot of horror in the world, was active and wreaking havoc throughout Genertela. It is known at different times to have been driven away by heroes from many civilizations.

Four primary cultures survived the Darkness to establish dominant cultures. Each originated in one or two places, or were liberated by someone from those places. Each place can be identified as the homeland of one of the four thought-modes mentioned as propounding a view on what chaos was before creation.

Western Genertela was the source of the sorcerers. The culture began in the primeval land of Danmalastan, and survived on the island of Brithos. It was ancient even before time began. It was so old that it had schisms within it even in the Dawn Age. The original Old Malkioni religion was long forgotten, dead when their divine prophet was killed. On Brithos the Wizards' secrets gave spiritual mastery and fulfillment for the people, while in Loskalm a personalized deity gave comfort and in Seshnela clerical wizards led services venerating the Invisible God. Further, a year after the Dawning the New Malkioni religion began, providing a new spiritual support to the people and starting the institution of the Hrestol knights. These cultural centers expanded into the darkened lands and drove away or absorbed the savages who lurked there. They were allied to the sea-going race of Waertagi, who tried never to set foot on land. The Waertagi carried settlers to the regions around the Neliomi Sea and ferried peoples along the trade routes between Seshnela, Fronela and Slontos, but kept secret their sea lanes to more distant shores.

Central Genertela gave birth to the theistic way of life. There the people entered into formal and powerful relations with the intelligence of the universe, and the worshipped gods gave great magics in return, according to the patterns established the Great Compromise. The Lightbringer peoples led the liberation of Peloria from darkness, meeting the sun-worshipping horse barbarians first, and then the sun-worshipping Dara Happan Empire. Wherever the Lightbringer agents went they were agents of civilization and woke the gods and spirits of a region with their worship and

## Waertagi, the Sea People

The Waertagi area humanoid race that originated in the prehistoric land of Danmalastan. Waertag was contemporary to Malkion the Founder and learned primal magic from him. For that reason they are counted among the Malkioni. His people developed aqueous magics and eventually become adapted to the water. They have blue or green skin and goggled eye. Many also have webbed hands and feet. The Waertagi lived on vast city-ships carved inside conquered sea dragons, surrounded by their aquatic allies around and beneath them for miles. They scorn being on land.

The Waertagi ruled the waters of Glorantha at the Dawn and no ship could sail out of sight of the shore without their permission. Their troubles began in the early Imperial Age when the Eastern Seas Empire rose up behind the combined fleets of Mokato and Tamanjary Islands. The Waertagi sank the whole island Tamanjary and were about to do the same to Mokato when they heard a human fleet was at sea. The Waertagi mustered all their city-ships and sailed for Jrustela, resolving to sink it also. The God Learners summoned Tanian, the Fire that Burns Water, and destroyed the Waertagi fleet at the Battle of Tanian's Victory. Only a dozen city-ships survived and they fled far away from the God Learner empire.

Many generations later, at the end of the Imperial Age the Waertagi returned with a vengeance. The Sea of the Dead vomited up their kin and a foul fleet razed one God Learner port after another. In retaliation, Zzabur unleashed the Closing. No Waertagi magic could repel this terrible curse. Most city-ships not immediately destroyed sailed down the Ocean without Return in an act of desperation, while others were beached and the crew resigned themselves to a life on land. Their descendants can be found today in Sog City and the Edrenlin Isles of the Coast of Elamle.

Since the Opening the city-ships have been seen again in the Sea of Brithos. Many believe they are searching for Zzabur to exact vengeance. Not even the most intrepid explorers have boarded these mystery ships, and rumor insists they are crewed by hell-crazed demigods seeking revenge.

magic. The god-worshippers also had another source of power in the oceans, whose multitudes of merfolk worshipped their vast and deep deities.

The vast spiritual empire of eastern Genertela clung to the mystic secrets of the universe as being the most important. This was another ancient seat of culture whose list of kings was long at the Dawning. These people say they were untouched by the Great Darkness because the powers of their great meditating mystics kept them safe. In Kralorela dragons are said to have been their teachers; the dragons of Dragon Pass are also proof of the mystical way. Farther east people are mystics without the dragons.

The Animists were once widespread in Glorantha. They worshipped with ecstatic rites to cooperate with local spirits, objects, places or vague, impersonal, powerful forces. Animism is the religion of animals, plants, and spirits. In Genertela many clans that survived the Darkness through their shamanic associations were integrated into the subsequent theistic cultures that almost inevitably overwhelmed them. In Pamaltela, the southern continent, this way of existence dominated, and the natives of all races sought to live in a close and simple harmony with their world.

The expanding cultures of Genertela often encountered indigenous peoples whom they labeled savages and ignorant natives. Despite observer prejudice, these inhabitants usually were spirit-worshippers of similar outlook to the Animists, though frequently that outlook would be incomplete or limited.

In the Dawn Age, these cultures had little contact. Though the borderlands were regions of conflict and synthesis where people broke away from single-minded world views and integrated new knowledge and experience, there was little penetration of new thinking into the strongholds of belief. The west remained godless and practical, the central lands stayed a land of magical beings and places, and the east was a realm of mystic peace and strange studies. The rest sank in savagery.

But Doraster was a different land. Government moved there from Dragon Pass so that the leaders could use the remnants of a civilization discovered there. With its secrets men gained new insights, and many from across the world went there to study.

They unearthed what they thought to be the secrets of the universe, and a way to determine the truth of the matter. After many debates the leadership decided to attempt to return the Gods Age to the world by making a god, perfect in every way for all people, to be named Osentalka - the Perfect One.

As the project began, contention arose with those who were not consulted or ignored; swords flashed in the Hall of Inquiry, regiments clashed in Doraster, and war broke out in distant provinces. The trolls and dragonewts were especially disgruntled, but their opposition was not sufficient to disrupt the project. Great rituals aided the project, and many spirits were summoned while the gods looked on. Thousands joined in from many countries to lend their power to the project, and the rites went forward with less trouble than theorized.

Everyone was sure it would be a success.

## The Sunstop

The year 375 was critical for Glorantha. At the autumnal equinox many synchronous events of tremendous magnitude culminated to force an impossible act to occur.

In central Genertela, the great Genesis of the Perfect One reached a climax. In Fronela, the wizards engaged in a thaumaturgical contest with a powerful heathen god, promising a great sign of their strength to destroy their foes.

In eastern Genertela, in the land of Kralorela, the latest of the Dragon Emperor meditated upon a potent symbol whose consequence and inner working was unknown. Without realizing it or not caring about it, he called upon the Dragon's Eye to shine upon him.

In Pamaltela, a hundred thousand men and women danced with Pamalt and their other gods and goddesses to the sound of a drum not heard before. At the same time the jungle elves, led by their own spirits, sent their energies coursing through the world to call upon a good power to come to their jungle to help combat a virulent rot besetting their inner fibers.

The sun stopped in the sky. No-one knows how long it stood there, for that act halted all normal Time. Manuscripts from the west claim that time was different before and after the Sunstop, but this is not verified. All the mortals of the world looked skyward; the sun did not move from its place, though the people went about their business.

At first nothing happened, but then dark strands grew in the sky, like huge loops of rope from the western edge of the world, hooked over it tautly. Soon a great dark net was visible, straining to pull the sun back to its path. Strands snapped and unearthly shadows were cast upon the world.

Then a great dark spot rose into the sky upon the net. This huge bloated shadow flickered with a smoky glow. The shadow crept across the face of the sun, blotting it out and making all the world cold for a moment. A snapping moment of terror pierced the world, then the dark sky-web vanished, and the edge of the sun crept past the shadow. The shadow disappeared and the sun brightened, but everyone thought it looked paler than it had before. Some said it moved differently, too.

In Pamaltela, the heat strengthened the many spirits of that realm. They entered into the jungles, plants, and elves, and combated the rot in their fibers.

In Kralorela, the Dragon Emperor realized the secrets of the symbol, and was liberated from another stage of consciousness.

In Fronela the invading god was struck with weakness; the wizards used their magic to destroy his army, and the soldiers fled in panic, never again to be a great force.

In Dorastor, there was a birth. Osentalka was born, the Perfect One. Most called him Nysalor, the White Light, and worshipped him by that name. He was a wonder and a miracle to behold, and the peoples who helped to make him accepted him as a god, and instituted his worship.

The cult of Nysalor grew peacefully and benevolently; it spread eastward from Dorastor into Peloria, and westward across Kartolin Pass into Ralios. The spread of the cult was kind, and in Peloria many elves developed great fondness for this god of light.

Against the trolls and dragonewts the cult was harsher. Armies of the god Nysalor carried war to Dragon Pass. At the Battle of Night and Day the god cursed his foes and the light of his curse shriveled their children forever afterwards. The descendants of Kyger Litor everywhere afterwards suffered the Trollkin Curse. The dragonewts were conquered and became mercenaries for the rulers in Dorastor.

In the west, Nysalor's proselytizers encountered the monotheists and sorcerers of the Seshnegi and Brithini cultures, and the new cult was not well-received. But when a plague broke out in Tanisor and spread into Seshnela and Arolanit, the Riddlers of Nysalor were able to heal the plague, and so were often accepted among those peoples.

## Arkat and the Gbaji Wars



Arkat came from the western land of Brithos. This hero led a long and successful war against the cult of the god Gbaji. Arkat possessed a powerful weapon that he called God-Cleaver, reputed to be the Unbreakable Sword.

His mother was driven from home by war and Arkat grew up among the Aldryami of Brithos. He was raised in his grandfather's soldier-caste, and proved himself a prodigy in combat. Later, in his youth, he saw the dark side of the foreign cult Gbaji, 'the Deceiver.' Because of this Arkat fought well on his island and helped drive the vile religion from the cities. It was here that his life-goal of eradicating the Gbaji cult began.

As one of the leading soldiers, Arkat accompanied a Brithos expedition attempting to liberate their provinces in Arolanit from the Gbaji influences. Here, though known as the cult of Nysalor, the Gbaji cult gained wide acceptance by curing previously unknown diseases for free. The Brithini wizards discovered that the cult actually had planted the diseases in the first place. Such treachery earned Nysalor the new name of Gbaji, and so all his enemies called him thereafter.

Once freed, the Arolanit city-states volunteered forces to follow Arkat's army against foreign centers of power, especially in the kingdom of Tanisor. They set off with hope and cheer, but a vampire attack slew many leaders, and the Brithini effort collapsed when routed in one sharp battle. Arkat had no forces to fulfill his vow to destroy the cult. He realized that the Brithini caste structure made impossible efficient use of the forces available. He found new allies in Seshnela.

The Gbaji cult plagued the powerful kingdom of Seshnela at the time. Arkat raised and organized strong local forces to resist and drive off the cult.

There he also began to train to become a full Knight of Hrestol. In these years he uncovered the first clues to heroquesting, though making no great advance in the art. He became a great knight quickly, and led a splendid army against Tanisor.

Tanisor was a traditional enemy of Seshnela. When the Gbaji cult was driven out of Seshnela, they found refuge in Tanisor and swelled the army there, but to no avail. After several years of fighting, the capital was besieged and taken, and even the famous Vampire Legion was destroyed by Arkat.

Moving deeper into Ralios, Arkat and his army found that many barbarian nations and non-humans had embraced the cult. Since non-humans were uncommon in Seshnela and Brithos, the invaders called the forces arrayed against them the League of Monsters, using the word *krjalki* to describe their non-human enemies as a single group. In their ignorance, much of the army thought that the *krjalki* were mutated people who had sold themselves to chaos.

During Arkat's struggle in Ralios diverse forces aided him. At first even the Brithini sorcerers obeyed him, contrary to their tradition for mistrusting the Seshnegi. Many tribes of heathens followed too, despite their dislike of Malkioni monotheism. One by one the strongholds fell until the enemy's forces were concentrated in the eastern part of Ralios, especially the City of Wolves and the fortress of Kartolin.

The Telmori nation, which worshipped wolves, ruled the City of the Wolves. In taking a taint of chaos to strengthen themselves, they had become a race of werewolves. They commanded the High Llama Pass between Ralios and Fronela. Kartolin fortress commanded the Kartolin Pass between Ralios and Dorastor. Though his efforts against Kartolin failed, Arkat did storm the City of Wolves and put everything to the sword. Though pockets of survivors still hide there and the place still has their name, the Telmori as a people were driven from the land, and afterwards too from Fronela, this last by Talor the Laughing Warrior. They then began their long trek across the continent, to end only when they reached the edge of the impassable deserts.

While in Ralios, Arkat learned much of the heroquesting art. This method of spiritual conquest and growth was known previously, but none had the knowledge and power to explore and exploit the possibilities. Arkat made many incursions into the Hero Plane to gain magical tools and allies against the cult he had sworn to eradicate. Sometimes he failed and suffered greatly from these quests, such as the time a poisoned magical spear was turned in its flight and struck him in the foot. This wound plagued him long after. After many years of effort and thousands of lives and souls wasted, Arkat left an army before Kartolin and sought a new approach to the strongholds of the cult in Dorastor. During his spiritual journey he met a more powerful enemy from Dara Happa who killed him.

Peloria knew Gbaji as Nysalor or Osentalka. There this god was widely known and accepted as a benevolent god of light and power by the natives, and their worship of him had gained them peace and plenty in return. The Pelorians afterwards would view this period as the Golden Peace. As the wars drew closer, they gladly provided money and soldiers. Those armies were first used against the races which had betrayed the council and walked out on the creation of Gbaji, especially the trolls (who suffered the tragic Trollkin Curse from Nysalor) and the dragonewts (who had been humbled and forced into servitude).

The Heortling tribe of Dragon Pass also fought against the cult. Armies crushed them and occupied their country, trying to force the worship of a god to replace Orlanth. After a generation of severe oppression the hero Harmast traveled through the quavering realms of mythology in search of a liberator. He was the first human to perform the quest of the Lightbringers. With his band he eventually found the way to the Underworld where he found Arkat. They brought him to life again and walked with him out of the mausoleum in Ralios. They convinced him that he could approach Dorastor through Dragon Pass, and that he could find powerful allies there to help him. They provided him important details about his magical sword and who had made it. Arkat decided to break with his knightly position and to join the cult of Humakt, the god whom people said was his father. These acts endeared him to the Heortlings of the lands he approached.

Arkat and a western army landed in Slontos and marched to the Shadowlands, later called the Holy Country. There they were aided by many peoples, including a great army of trolls that rose to help him. Although first distrustful of this inhuman aid, he took it immediately and it was well that he did, for the trolls' anti-chaos powers were instrumental in breaking the army flowing out of Snake Pipe Hollow against him. The region was cleared after much pain and blood, and a year later the cult of Gbaji/Nysalor was driven from Dragon Pass. An army of dragonewts shortly afterwards joined to help.

The further struggles in Peloria were painful and difficult, and Arkat lost as many battles as he won. His western allies dwindled, replaced by Orlanthi barbarians and trolls. Arkat noted the troll successes and chose to transform himself into one of them to achieve his objectives. He first joined the cult of Kyger Litor, taking the name Kingtroll, then joined Zorak Zoran as well to bring mighty devastation against his foes.

This last act horrified many, especially the Lightbringers who had brought him to central Genertela and who now saw their quest a failure since they had brought darkness instead of light. The survivors set off again to find proper help. The Humakti were shocked to see their once-revered leader acting trollish, ordering the devastation of cities and fields to destroy his enemy. Already depleted and demoralized, many westerners returned home with sad and fearful stories of their leader becoming a bloodthirsty krjalki like the foes he once had fought to eradicate. But all the while Arkat's army inched forward, taking land, city, and fortress, devouring life and leaving little behind.

Arkat left no part of Dorastor untouched. His remaining armies dissolved in the increasingly awesome struggles that broke the land and drove chaos from it. Both Arkat and Nysalor summoned mighty heroes and demigods to aid in their last fight. Finally, atop the Tower of Dreams, amid the City of Miracles, the two opponents met in single combat as all existence seemed to shatter around them. The city was turned to dust and poison, killing many of the greatest still surviving. From the ruins only Arkat emerged, and the downfall of Nysalor was complete, and he now was known only as Gbaji the Deceiver. The defamed god was dismembered, and his parts were buried in different places beneath many tons of rock and much powerful magic.

## What Came Before the Beginning?

... of high crown [major importance] concerning the hordes of the Divine Fear may be that the Four Horrors of the long night [the Great Darkness] could have been the Four Origins turned into and through themselves, as a glove may be when first it is sown and then it is worn. Mark that the inside of a glove may be smooth, yet the outside be rough. So might it be that this Plane is the same and yet different, perhaps not just once but many times, for all things will have a start, a stop, and a new beginning. The forces do set well in balance.

*The Void less than nothing, formless beyond emptiness, became the Wasteworld, the concealer of demons.*

*The Prime Mover, that natural force never missing, dissolved to Kajabor God-Killer.*

*The Silence, the wonder of the world to come, became the Howling Rage, the Mountain Stabber.*

*The Well of Wonder [the Primal Plasma] faded from a butterfly to the worm, then to the gray Gorgopod, whose waves lapped upon creation and ate it away.*

This I see as tragic, but not tainted with the evil which came but from Wakboth the Devil at origin; the tears of the world come in this way: that which was beautiful and good outside this Plane became foul and fearful brought once to us.

-fragment from the lost book of Salonar Tamaskil, trans. by Greg Stafford

After the battle Arkat was no longer a troll, or so said his friends, and so did many trolls. The war against Gbaji had lasted 75 years; now Arkat retired to quiet lands in Ralios which he had admired in his younger days. There he cleared a simple farmstead and kept the area around it under his watchful eye for another 75 years. In Ralios the region is known as Arkat's Peace.

After the war was over and people talked about the events, they always wondered how Arkat could be so lucky against the various cult spirits of retribution, and they wondered where his sword went, and they agreed that he was strong-willed and severe in his dealings.

People in Peloria said that Nysalor's reign was a wonderful time, and thought it had been much like the Golden Age. But when people tried to sacrifice to the god to help him with prayers, there was no response, and so they also said he was dead.

The cult of Gbaji was ended. Those of Peloria who had revered Nysalor returned to their simpler, older gods, but ever afterward held bitterness against the demigod Arkat, who had destroyed a friend.





## The Imperial Age

The years of the Imperial Age are from 450, when Gbaji was destroyed; to 1120, when the dragons destroyed their empire. The final years of this age are actually quite debated, varying by region. So many disasters occurred that most people use whatever local disaster overthrew their own previous civilization. Despite the cataclysms at the end of the age, there was little at its start to forebode doom ahead. The forces of chaos enjoyed little success at this time.

Two great schools of investigation existed in the Imperial Age. One originated from far eastern mysticism and became a popular mystical religion which created new horizons of magic. The second began when *The Abiding Book* wrote itself before witnesses. Its contents provided them with a way to create a new religion.

### The EWF

Some people one day learned to speak draconic, and to understand its subtle meanings. They obtained mystical powers and taught many people in a short time. Religion and politics adopted dragon practices into their everyday content. The political form of this religion was the Empire of the Wyrms Friend, the Dragonlords. They conquered Dara Happa and many other lands.

This type of mystic practice required huge amounts of worship. To raise the vast energies for maintaining this type of magic caused many peoples to be severely oppressed. After a time they no longer believed that their leaders could return the Golden Age to them, and began revolting. Aided by foreign gods, the rebellions spread, civil war ensued and then the dragonewts destroyed the Empire of the Wyrms Friends in 1042.

Over the next three generations the peoples of the world decided they had to eradicate the dragonewts and their kin, in vengeance for their oppression during the Empire. In 1120 the True Golden Horde entered the nesting ground of Dragon Pass. There they met a world full of dragons, come to their home from across space and time for the sake of their souls. Few humans escaped from this Pelorian disaster, which brought new respect to the ancient races. It is called the Dragonkill.

### The God Learners

The second line of investigation was from the God Learners. They began as a sorcerous investigative school of a then-new religion that established a strict monotheism. They collected secrets from many diverse cultures, applied logic and sorcery, and brought about new types of magic. Cleverly exploiting the similarities and differences in all that they found, they created grand and grandiose devices or magical spells, they wove the four modes of magic into one etheric cloth of powers and energies which seemed to envelope the cosmos.

They achieved special freedom not available before to god or mortal, making new realizations, and devising measurements and recordings, and computing and testing their results among the world of the gods. The two accompanying texts show some examples of their thinking and cast further light upon some of the mysteries of chaos.

## What is Chaos? ☹

[Our] philosophers deduce chaos to be the passionate refusal to recognize the limits of the natural and moral universe. It is part of the mortal condition that this limitation should be vital to a decent life for any of us, but in extreme it is manifested in the so-called chaotic creatures in whom it is virtually the sole passion. Chronic discontent with the limited world therefore causes the chaotic creature to ... despise life and the limited happiness it yields when compared to the possibilities of transcending the world. The chaotic are arrogant: they want to be in the world, but not of it.

This passionate refusal has odd consequences. Whereas a man might decide to commit murder for financial or moral reasons, the chaotic being will consider murder because it is forbidden, and he cannot endure being forbidden to act. This refusal of the chaotic to so submit allows him to draw upon the Power of primordial chaos, and thereby partially transcend the rules of the world. Yet those rules still determine the chaotic's actions: you or I must obey the laws, because they are the laws; the chaotic must disobey the laws, because they are the laws. Since even the most powerful chaotic cannot defy all laws at once, they feel forever enslaved by all those checks on their freedom. The true chaotic, such as the two-headed dragonsnail, must be then both miserable on Glorantha and a menace to the societies of it, and a warrior does both the afflicted being and all of us a favor by killing it.

... Chaotic features are the consequence of a particular combination of feelings and ... philosophy characteristic of a chaotic spirit, and could not be induced in you or I by anything less than attunement of a cursed crystal. Less intimate connections, such as the ability of some to converse mentally may allow thoughts and feelings to be known, but does not alter the personality structure....

— from *The Wizard's Primer*, translation by Ray Turney

The God Learners pioneered our understanding of the hero plane. They stole the secrets of Arkat, and of others before him who did not often realize what they did. The God Learners standardized many myths and methods for reaching to the secrets of the gods. They went into the mysterious Other Side to retrieve legendary artifacts or to view cosmic events which had been forgotten. They were accomplished mages, and several among them were noted as heroes of later ages.

As the God Learners developed new magic, in the political sphere the Middle Sea Empire applied it. They are sometimes called the Jrusteli Empire after the island from which they emerged. They destroyed the Waertagi and triolini, then dominated the sea. They rarely occupied an entire region, but seized individual cities or established colonies, then let their overwhelming culture infiltrate and take advantage of whatever outlets were available. They ruled almost all of the important coastal regions of Glorantha in the Imperial Age.

## The Battle of Brond's Serpent (pictured at right)

By Dario Corallo

The Imperial Age saw many fantastic creations, and none were more marvelous and terrifying than those of the God Learners. It was they who built the Machine City, where grim factories cranked out magical implements for their relentless armies. They made Zistor the Machine God to mock all the gods of the world; and Oldaram the Man Machine. They bound demons and demigods to be their slaves, and thus they made the Howling Fleet that had living figureheads that helped them to clear the sea in many battles.

The old gods struck back at last, after the God Learners violated the Great Compromise that normally restrained the old gods to keep them in their places. New powers flowed through the world, and in northern Fronela the god Ygg blessed Brond the Carver with a magical power. To fight the foes of his people he carved the Sea Serpent from a sentient tree, then sacrificed his brother to it so it drank the blood of humanity, then finished the rest of the ship. Hardy warriors volunteered to man it, and they sailed to battle.

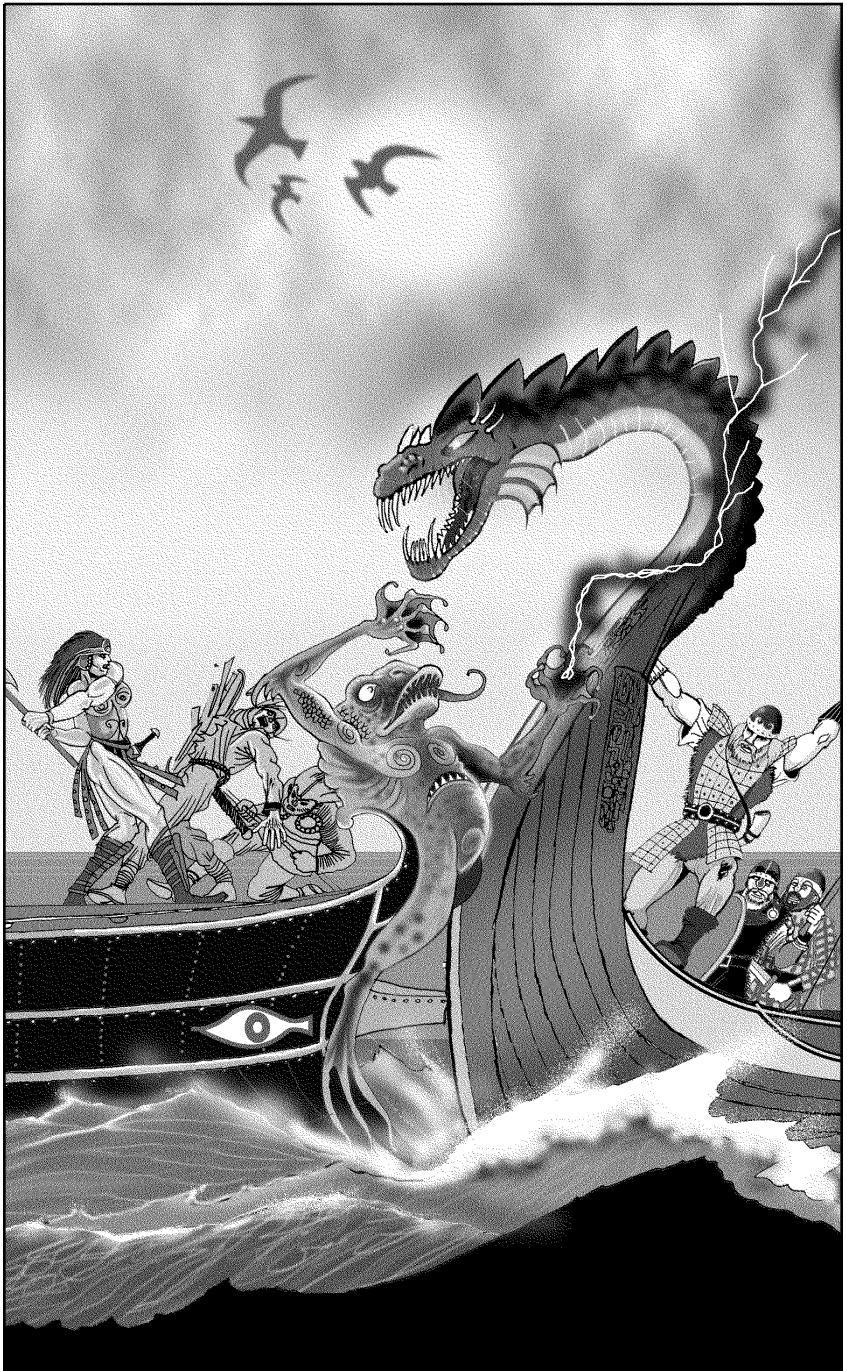
In Astor's Bay the Serpent met the Howling Fleet. Ygg the icy storm god silenced the howls of the fleet and the Serpent struck, caring naught for itself but seeking only to destroy the figureheads. The sailors were no match for Brond's savage warriors, and the Howling Fleet was disabled, dashed and destroyed on the rocks.

Brond went on to sweep the Neliomi clear of foes. While he was gone the Aldryami nearby, outraged by his treatment of their sentient tree, turned the crops of his people to be poisonous, and the fish in their larders turned to goo. When Brond returned found his remaining people had taken refuge on the off shore islands, where their descendants still live.

They fell because they bent Nature too much to their own ends. They believed they could work around the Great Compromise, but they could not. The forces of the old world pressed back, then the old gods released all their power and their foes. The brooding Waertagi struck suddenly and sank not only ships but lands as well. The lands of Seshnela, Jrustela and Slontos were sunk beneath the sea, and Brithos disappeared also. The Kralori lands mustered great mental powers and drove their oppressors into the ports first, then flushed them from the land altogether.

A curse swept across the sea, making it impossible to pass over the surface of the oceans. The Closing, it was called. Though most people thought this was the gods' work, the Closing destroyed much of the Waertagi strength. They claim this treachery was done by Zzabur, ancient wizard of Brithos.

Coupled with the great lands lost to the sea, this was a mortal blow to civilization, and the coasts were abandoned. Power shifted to the interior of the continents for the next age. No cry of chaos or uprising from the ooze dismayed the world at this time. The great lands were sunk, the Closing swept the seas clear, and then the dragons slew thousands in self-defense. The Imperial Age was over.



## The Modern Age

The coasts soon became abandoned and mysterious. The great ports became darkened and ruined troll haunts. Though rivers were friendly, no sailor could bear to sail the sea.

In the west the warlords of Tanisor inherited the mantle of broken Seshnela and eventually united the lands of the great Tanier river system, even into Ralios. The kingdom of Loskalm prospered in Fronela, controlling a great peaceful bay which was navigable despite the curse. In Ralios the city-states squabbled, fought hill barbarians and krjalki, or temporarily united against Seshnela. In Peloria, the tired eastern satrapies trembled before mounted barbarians, while the west knew peace. In Kralorela, the ancient mystics lived on, spreading benevolent peace for the submissive farmers and stirring unspoken passions among the richer classes.

In 1220 ST, great stirrings in the land of Peloria presaged an event which would utterly change the spread of chaos across the world. It was the birth of Sedenya, the Red Moon Goddess. The birth was a long-wrought magical spell completed with the extraordinary event. The Seven Mothers brought back a goddess who was a shattered in the Gods Age. No one knew her parents or her powers.

She was called Teelo Estara and proved that she had extraordinary powers when she slew her foes with unearthly powers. The Red Goddess stirred fear and mistrust from the peoples and deities about her, and her early life was a time of battle and victory. Her battle was temporal at first, then she entered into a great heroquest to find herself and her secret inner powers. She was gone for years and during that time her lands fell into disrepair as enemies slowly crushed them. At last she reappeared riding the Crimson Bat and she spread victory for friends, terror and madness for foes. Afterwards, with the Bat and her army, she spread her conquests.

Because her growth was unprecedented and because she was blatantly connected with chaos the Red Goddess' growth stirred the ancient powers of the elder gods. After destroying the kingdom of Carmania she warred with a race of magical beings at a place called Castle Blue. The old gods were drawn into the conflict, mustered to dispel this eruption of chaos from the universe. The world seemed torn apart, but when it was remade the Goddess was victorious. In mystic struggles and arcane judgments she had proved herself a part of the world of Glorantha, unable to be cast out by the greatest powers and magics. Shortly afterwards she took upon herself the great piece of earth which is now the Crater, and ascended into the sky, where she is now visible as the Red Moon. The Red Goddess met and overcame some strange deities in her heroquest, and these are said to be part of her source of odd powers. These gods include Arachne Solara and Nysalor and philosophers say she also is intimate with Time. These are all strange powers to the gods of the world, and many still fear and mistrust her.

Happily, the Red Goddess in no way condones the widespread worship of

chaos entities which follow the ways of the Devil and fall into moral depravity. Unhappily, neither does the religion and state forbid it, either, as required by their philosophy. The rulers are adroit at correcting the mistakes of people who fall into the ways of chaotic gods. Lunar history contains lessons of generals and priests gone bad, and point them out as bad examples.

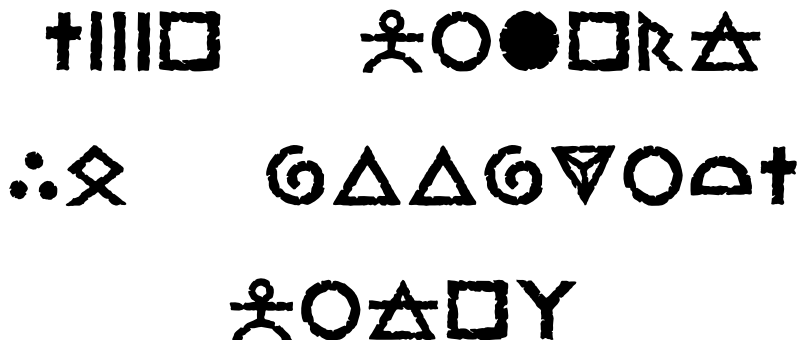
By its faith, the Lunar Empire must accept chaos in its philosophy and make use of it as necessary. The Crimson Bat is an example of how this can be done, as may be the vampire regiment rumored training in the mountains. Yet many Lunar heroes gained fame by killing vampires or smashing the slave heads of Thanatar. The awareness of the educated or sensitive concerning the proximity of chaos makes them acutely aware of their dire responsibilities. The teachings of the Red Goddess, though passionate and fierce, strongly admonishes against certain temptations.

The Lunar Empire has grown powerful and effective. It has conquered most of Peloria, and nibbles the borders to push beyond, but the final effect of its cults and temptations is yet to be seen. Foreigners are uncertain about what has been brewing inside the imperial borders. Lunar citizens, content in the fruitfulness and peace of the Empire, are often blind to what they might see. Even the Red Goddess, known as the Mistress of Time, is blind to the future.

Philosophers say it is time for a new cataclysm to end the world age, as seems to occur every 500 years. Others see the gods and spirits drawing closer, as the powers of certain men attain godly stature.

It is the start of the times when the world is pushed to excess and it is time for hard reckoning. Powers are stirring to make a stand. Old foes have strength for new troubles.

It is the start of the Hero Wars.

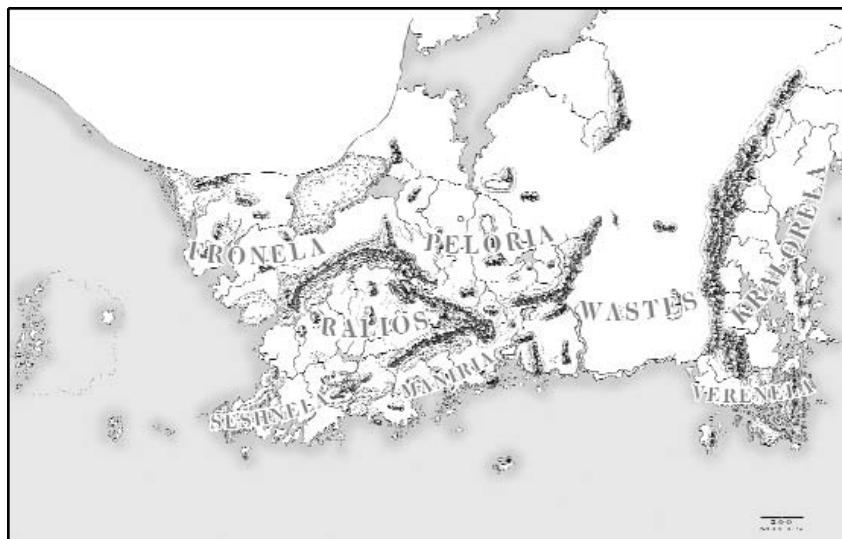




## Genertela

The northern continent is the most populous regions the native home to many great gods and where the Hero Wars will begin and end. This introductory book concentrates on for those reasons.

Genertela has eight distinct regions, divided unevenly among four areas. They are the western area, with Seshnela, Ralios, and Loakalm, where the Malkioni peoples live; Peloria and Maniria where god-worshipping theists live; the Wastes, inhabited by shamanic nomads; and in the East, Kralorela and Verenela.



## CHAPTER FOUR

## ⊕ Seshnela ⊕

**S**eshnela was the heart of the God Learner Empire in the Imperial Age. When the demigod Luatha shattered western Seshnela into fragments the survivors moved eastward to the lush Tanisor Valley, taking with them the surviving treasures of the Seshnegi kings. Seshnela encompasses two types of areas now: in the eastern center is the great Kingdom of Seshnela along the great Tanier River; around it are several autonomous areas. Autonomous areas include a large worthless area of Arolanit and Old Seshnela that stretches across the north and west to the sea; and the Quinpolc League covers the south.

### The Kingdom of Seshnela, God's Eternal Kingdom

Bailifes the Hammer founded the current Seshnegi dynasty over two centuries ago after his enemies were forced to acknowledge him as King after the Battle of Asgolani Field. His descendant, Ulianus III, expanded the kingdom to its largest size by conquering much of Safelster, city by city. King Vikard of the Tourneys, Ulianus' extravagant grandson, frittered away all the Safelster gains and so weakened the monarchy that the kingdom continued shrinking as the outlying nobles, one by one, renounced their oaths. Even the Kingdom's Peers openly defied the kings.

The current ruler, King Guilmar the Imposing, has reversed this decay. He humbled the Peers, consolidates his gains and plans to win back all the lands that were lost through the follies of his predecessors.

The kingdom of Seshnela is divided into a number of fiefs. In the past each of these was ruled by a noble dynasty headed by a duke or count. Their independence ruined the kingdom, but most recently has ruined the nobles instead. They could not unite to the King Guilmar, who is correcting this weakness by reverting all titles into the Crown and expanding his royal administration to oversee the fiefs. He currently holds over half of the old titles as part of his royal demesne, and the remainder are very careful to work with him to keep whatever honors they might.

The heart of the Kingdom of Seshnela is the Duchy of Tanisor, a fertile land that is rich with towns and world famous for the beautiful carpets they weave, the gold jewelry they make, and the ironware that is so rare everywhere else in Glorantha. The other lands in the kingdom are the Duchy of Rindland; the Counties of Noyelle, Estaurenic, Deu and Voi; and the Baronies of Gilboch, Vogai and the Dangim March.

The people of Seshnela are almost all in the Rokari Church, making it the only religion in the kingdom. This faith is noted for upholding rigid caste boundaries: each person is born to a caste, lives in that caste, and dies in their caste. For the Rokari, to aspire beyond the limitations of one's caste is wicked, with the sinner sure to be punished in the hereafter. Punishment or failing to



fulfill caste obligations is also severely punished in life, with the rights and obligations of each caste as rigidly defined as the barriers between them.

The kingdom's peasants are bonded, with few exceptions, to manors run by a knight and his family. Others are attached to a monastery or other church institution. Towns in Seshnela have charters, with certain and specific rights conferred to them. Mayors, chosen by burghers, run the internal affairs of the towns and cities but are still subject to the rule of nearby lords.

Knights are a caste unto themselves. They are the class of landholders and military force. A knight owes allegiance either to one of the counts, barons, or dukes or directly to the king. Knights are called up to serve in the king's army and must be armed as heavily-armored cavalry. The knights are supported by others in their case who are not the landholders. These supporters are called sergeants and are most often the younger sons of landed knights whose life ambition is to become successful freebooters. Infantry is common, recruited from the bonded peasantry. They are poorly equipped and poorly motivated. These spear-and-bow-equipped troops are usually used for garrisoning cities instead of fighting in the field. Even in iron-rich Seshnela the foot men never get armor.

According to the holy books, the only way that women can know God is by imitating the Blessed Menena, the daughter of Malkion. Women were made



## Great King and the Ecclesiarch

By Heather Bruton

King Guilmar of Seshnela and Ecclesiarch Theoblanc have spent decades working together to unite the old kingdom of Seshnela under a single rule. Now the king sits over an obedient council of lords and prepares to conquer the last counties that defy him. The Ecclesiarch has reformed the church, pledged to cleanse the clergy of corruption and ignorance, and to prove to the world the superiority of his Church. It seems that none can stand in their way, as long as they work together.

by God to be the bearers of children, keepers of the hearth, and subservient to their husbands.

A few women follow the example of Saint Elleish and take up arms in the service of God. These holy maidens were barely tolerated for centuries, but have risen to the fore of popularity since they came to the defense of the Ecclesiarch Theoblanc and destroyed a rebellious army whose noblemen intended to plunder the patriarch's cathedral. For this and other loyal service during the Peers Revolt, King Guilmar and Theoblanc awarded them the lands of Lalia in Safelster as their own fief.

## The Wasted Lands, Failed Histories

### Arolanit, Lost Peoples

In most ancient times the race called Brithini occupied all of the western world. Now this impoverished coastal region is the last major settlement of the Brithini immortals in Glorantha. They still live in absolute accordance with their ancient ways and so speak a dialect known nowhere else, wear clothing as they did before seasons began, and shun all contact with outsiders. Zzabur the first sorcerer was a Brithini, and Arolanit is best known now for its ancient sorcerers. Some of them are prehistoric: several were born on Brithos before Time began. Almost all travelers to Arolanit are struck into depression by the grayness that permeates everything there. A merchant from Handra says, "Faces, food and flowers were dull. It looks like the radiance was taken from the light. But most frightening was the total lack of children".

### Old Seshnela, the Ruined Land

At the end of the Imperial Age, when the oceans did not allow any normal ships to sail a single ship came to Seshnela. The Luatha, purple-skinned demigods from the Land of the Setting Sun, debarked and performed a rite that destroyed the magnificent Kingdom of Seshnela in a day and night. The earth broke and waters flooded in and drowned huge tracts. Afterwards the Luatha brought in Aldryami who quickly covered it all with woods and wild beasts. The elves once said that the Luatha to save the earth goddess from the abuses of the God Learners.

Now the whole southern part of the former area are Kanthor's Islands. The Luatha built their Castle of Purple Shadows and remained. The castle's exact location is a mystery but their ships sink every human ship or boat there, and so Kanthor's Isles are free of humanity. Elves, centaurs, and other beast-folk inhabit the forests in the south and the islands.

The Castle Coast is a peninsula, the northern coast the once proud kingdom of Old Seshnela. The land is unfit for agriculture and has been so ever since the land goddess withdrew her favor from humankind. Nevertheless a few strongholds of people still live on the Castle Coast, for most of the iron in Glorantha comes through the Mostali trading post in the ruins of ancient Laurmal. The dwarves will not deal with anyone except their ancient con-

tractors, who were specified to live in Laurmal. The Iron Merchant alone deals with the dwarfs, and the Castle Coast is his fief. Every petty knights knight there is weighted with pompous titles and dwells amidst decaying but still impressive ruins." They claim to also own virtue, prudence and honor among knighthood and, for that, they are loathed by all knights outside of Old Seshnela.

## The Quinpolc League, the Sea Alliance

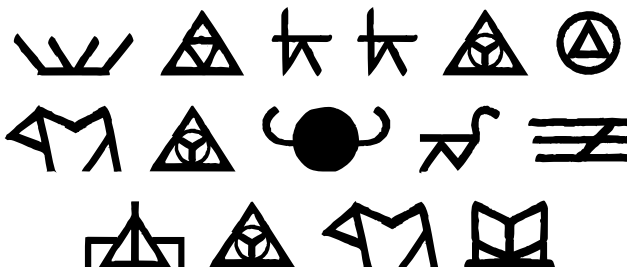
The Quinpolc League is the major sea-going power in the West. When the oceans were inaccessible to shipping these were miserable areas, thought to be cursed by their proximity to the seas. Saint Dormal the Opener landed here and the nobles and commoners alike seized the opportunities offered. The Opening hugely enriched the Quinpolc League as they traded rich carpets, exquisite gold jewelry and rare ironware from the north for ivory, precious stones and exotic furs from Jrustela and zebra hides, carved obsidian and dragon parts from Esrolia.

Although the people of the League are pious Rokari, they resist Ecclesiarch Theoblanc's oversight. The coastal people laugh at Seshnela's obsession about the inherent evil of money. They have many churches giving thanks to Saint Onokos for teaching them the spells to sanctify coin or goods from foreign places, and Saint Dormal for opening the way.

The Quinpolc League is an alliance between the doge of Pasos, who has a huge fleet and all the ship building facilities; the doge of Nolos, who has a couple of seaside ports but many other cities inland; and the Count of Pithdaros, who has magic everyone fears.

Pithdaros is inhabited by dark-skinned inhabitants from far Pamaltela who landed here in the Imperial Age. They had come to against Gbaji the Bad God. When they learned they were eleven generations late they promised to adopt local ways and wait for his return. They are good Malkioni, but are notorious for never being on time.

The Quinpolc League is in struggle with Seshnela to maintain its independence. The king to the north rules a landlocked kingdom. The League members have been building many castles lately, and though cautious, are not fearful.





# CHAPTER FIVE

## Malkioni Culture and History

### Malkioni Culture and History

Malkioni people dominate the western part of Genertela. Pockets of them are found elsewhere, often being residual outposts from past empires.

Malkioni culture is hierarchical, patriarchal, monotheistic and materialistic. Malkion the Prophet laid down ancient Laws which are still followed, though their interpretation varies in different nations. The division is especially marked between the northern Loskalmi and the southern Rokari. Nonetheless, both agree that society was organized to be in strata, divided by profession, ruled by superior men. Males are superior to females, whose status is natural, involuntary and innocent, but inferior nonetheless. The Invisible God is the Creator and His Laws shaped the Ultimate, Nature and Society, and the world fell into a degenerate condition due to the ignorance of people who are now foreigners. Rationality and logic are the powers which God gave humans to oversee the universe, and applying it to the material world results in Sorcery, which is God's own magic used by mortals. The material world is the real world, measurable and predictable. Anything which is not so, such as spirits and gods, is illogical and wrong, bad and/or evil.

### What types of people inhabit this Cosmos?

We are the Malkioni followers of God's Laws named after the Prophet who was the Mind of God. Every Malkioni has caste that defines what God expects them to do in their life. Malkion proved that living according to the rules of one's caste is the best of all possible ways to live.

Most of us are Commoners, ordinary folks in both the town and country. You are not properly one until you have demonstrated to your peers that you understand the duties and privileges of the commons. Most peasants do not bother with such tests and are legally the wards of the local noble. Their way into Solace is the easiest for God demands the least from the innocent. If you have demonstrated your entitlement then God expects you to be thrifty and industrious. The commoners in the country serve their betters by helping them run the manor while the commoners in the town practice a trade to the satisfaction of the town or a responsible guild.

Many among us are Soldiers and sworn to defend the land from its enemies. They are the landed gentry of the country and the wealthy burghers of the towns. The greatest soldiers are the knights, followers of Hrestol's path. They are chosen by God to bear the struggle against trouble and evil.

Next are the Wizards, responsible for the spiritual balance of our great land. Most wizards are priests for their piety draws them closer to God. They can intercede with Him and the Saints for our benefit. A few wizards

## Brithos

Long ago, before the Gods War, a large continent existed in the Western Ocean. This was DANMALASTAN, the Land of Logic, the original home of the Malkioni of Genertela. Peaceful at first, it was beset by powers seeking to destroy it. The greatest struggle was the Vadeli-Brithini War. At its climax the entire western continent was shattered by the Vadeli evil magics.

The ISLE OF BRITHOS survived the Vadeli-Brithini wars because it was the home of Zzabur, the Sorcerer Supreme. Through the Dawn Age it was protected by the Waertagi, who were staunch allies. In the Imperial Age it was a member of the Middle Sea Alliance and taught their knowledge to many of the God Learners but did not become God Learners themselves. At the end of the Imperial Age Zzabur unleashed the Closing, perhaps to destroy the God Learners or the Waertagi and perhaps to protect his people. The spell wiped the oceans clear of all shipping.

A generation ago the great sailor Dormal opened the Oceans. He sought Brithos and found that it was no more; only a sea of dense, impenetrable, haunted fog remained. Many took this as a sign that the Closing was a mere side effect of a massive spell to transport Brithos to another place. Not even the wizards of Arolanit know what really happened. Attempts to penetrate the heavy mist which fills the area only result in lives and ships lost. Survivors report a cold and foggy, monster-filled sea. Huge ghost ships of the Waertagi patrol the sea and inhuman sounds drive ships onto wicked reefs and shoals.

are sorcerers, responsible for working miracles and knowing the unknown. God loves them no less than the priests, but their occupation is so dangerous that hubris often makes them forget this.

The last of the four castes are the Nobles, who rule us all wisely, justly and well with the advice of the local leaders of the other three castes. Knights can deputize for the Nobility by holding manorial estates or serving as a Lord Mayor or another civic magistrate. But they can only do so by receiving their authority from a Noble.

Women are a caste unto themselves for God has made them to be the child bearers and hearth keepers. They have the same legal rights as their father or husband. Some women claim the right of independence but the authorities they quote are dubious and most use their "independence" to indulge in deeds contrary to the natural order.

Castebreakers have strayed against the laws of their caste. The soldier that wars against his own people, the fool that believes in the Fifth Caste and the lord that neglects his people are all castebreakers. They are outcasts from us all and damned by God.

A Knight alone is not a Castebreaker even if he does sometimes live in the wilds as Bandits do. Instead he is an Errant, as Hrestol was, seeking God in the World. Their presence is a happy event for they shall do only good.

Pagans worship the False Gods. They are pitiful people for their error will lead to oblivion after death. Do not worship the False Gods even if their magic appeals to you for they seek to lead you into damnation.

Many pagans have become Krjalki, warped by their worship of the False Gods to be utterly inhuman. They are no longer entitled to the protection of human laws and should be killed without mercy.

Heretics and Schismatics know the Truths of the Invisible God but willfully pervert them for their own wicked ends. Although they are still Malkioni and entitled to our courtesy, do not trust them and report them to the ecclesiastical authorities for appropriate action.

## **What does God expect from me?**

Living according to your caste is the least that God requires.

Commoners must be industrious and resourceful. Soldiers and Knights must be brave and disciplined. Wizards are wise and pious while the Nobles rule rightly and for the benefit of all.

Regrettably many people have failed to live up to the standards of their caste as Robber Knights, Wicked Sorcerers and Foul Usurpers constantly blight Malkioni civilization. Nevertheless God expects Malkioni to obey their rightful lords according to their caste. To rebel against the rightful social order, imperfect as its members may be, is to defy the Invisible God.

Other virtues are codified in the Virtues of Hrestol, an ancient list of chivalric concepts. Observing these virtues enhances one's communion with God. Their practice depends largely upon where one is. In Seshnela, chivalry is a condemned doctrine adhered only by quixotic knights amidst ruined palaces while in Loskalm, the Overmen embody the chivalric ideals as their duty.

## **What is our history?**

God is, always was, and always shall be. God initiated the First Action which was Creation; and the Second Action, which was Manifestation. In the Third Action Identification made the Land of Logic to be a happy land whose people were devoted to the study of God and the Laws. The Mind of God, called Malkion the Prophet, walked among men and all was right with the world. Everybody looked forward to the time of the Fourth Action, Duplication, in which the Land of Logic would become more grand.

But people are naturally weak and subject to temptation and wrong judgments. Many abused the Third Action to identify themselves wrongly. They no longer looked to the Invisible God but to themselves as the source

of all power. They were the False Gods and their Great Error caused the ruin of the world. At first the True People paid them no heed, but the Great Error infected them nonetheless. Wars and Floods invaded the Land of Logic. Vadel and his people explored the Unlawful Realms and brought Death upon us. Valind sent the Great Ice against us to grind our cities into pulp. Through the collective abuses of the False Gods and the Vadelis, the Fifth Action could only be seen as Destruction and its coming presaged universal doom.

Old Malkion tried to save the True People by re-establishing contact with God and allowing them to see the true meaning of the Fifth Action. But Zzabur, infected by the Great Error, succumbed to Pride and betrayed Malkion in his hour of need. Malkion and his supporters were blasted into nothingness and the world seemed truly doomed.

The Fifth Action was Sacrifice and Malkion's selfless sacrifice integrated his essence into the cosmos and redeemed it. Malkion made Solace, the place of Eternal Truth, known to humans. The False Gods were made aware of their error and humbled themselves. Even Zzabur was moved enough to cast his Great Spell to make the Sun reappear after being unseen for so many centuries [0 ST]. This is the world that God has made through the Five Actions for us.

Zzabur, still thinking that he knew everything, said there was no Solace for the dead and that to live forever, everybody must obey him. To confound him, the Invisible God revealed to Hrestol the secrets of Joy that made the simplest souls see through Zzabur's hollow sophistries [1 ST]. Hrestol did many great things such as make the first knights before Zzabur had him martyred out of sheer spite [33 ST].

The False Gods, persisting in their error, incited their many worshippers to destroy us. But in the very hour of their victory, our wizards stopped Ehilm in the Sky to prove to the pagans the power of the Invisible God, whereupon they turned and fled [375 ST].

The False Gods then made a new god, Gbaji, to spread evil lies to destroy our faith in God [375 ST]. They very nearly succeeded. Arkat was the first to reveal these lies [400 ST] and did much to teach others of them before he fell into error and damned himself [427 ST]. Only his former comrades, Gerlant and Talor, persevered and finally cleansed the world of Gbaji's presence [450 ST].

On the Isle of Jrustela several Malkioni cities struggled because of differences between their practices of worshipping the Invisible God. They could not understand why, if there was only One God, there should be many faiths. The crisis was resolved when the Abiding Book wrote itself before a group of witnesses [646 ST]. Scholars and philosophers proved it had been written by the Invisible God, a statement of the One Mind, the True God and the Ultimate Being. They founded a new religion of absolute Monotheism and vowed to spread their faith to the whole world.



Many wizards turned to explore the material instead of the spiritual world. They founded a movement which is called the God Learners who, with their newfound learning, could even do the impossible. Thus when the Waertagi refused to allow the preaching of the Abiding Book overseas, the God Learners destroyed them by making the water burn [718 ST]. They drove heretics out of Fronela [725 ST], liberated Seshnela from the Dark Empire [734 ST] and even freed the Stygian Empire from Arkat's lies [740 ST]. Even the Kralori received word of the Invisible God [768 ST], though the missionaries apostatized afterwards, mutated themselves to be evil dragons and then crowned one of themselves to be Emperor of Kralorela.

King Svagard made an Empire. He united the Jrusteli, the Loskalmi, the Umathelans and his own Seshnegi into the Middle Sea Empire [789 ST]. The Empire strove to bring the Abiding Book, albeit with mixed degrees of success, to the Brithini [823 ST] the Esrolians [842 ST], the Fonritans [c. 850 ST] and even the Agimori of Far Pamaltela [c. 870 ST]. But their methods had a flaw, and as their learning increased the wisdom of the God Learners declined until one day, they forgot God.

God had warned them with many sendings and imprecations, such as the Destruction of the Machine City and the Windless Typhoon that ravaged Seshnela [917 ST] and the Ice Summer of Ralios [925 ST]. The God Learners still persisted in their error. To punish the heretics God then gave the God Learners over to their enemies. The Waertagi reappeared and ravaged their coasts. Zzabur cast the Closing, a magical spell that wiped the sea clear of all ships [929 ST] and isolated the stronghold of the Middle Sea Empire. The False Gods drowned much of Jrustela [940 ST], and finally the Luatha destroyed Seshnela [1049 ST].

For centuries people agonized to find God again. At last God appeared to Rokar, a cleric in the land of Tanisor, and showed him the corruption that had plagued the God Learners. Rokar spread his word but was martyred for his teachings [1349 ST]. But Truth will out, and in Tanisor Bailifes the Hammer was crowned King of Seshnela [1412 ST] and purged the kingdom of false religion and recognized one leader of the True Rokari Church. The religion later spread less successfully into Loskalm [1427 ST]. King Ulianus the Great even spread them into Safelster [c. 1455 ST], although his great-grandson, Vikard of the Tourneys squandered his inheritance [1511 ST].

As Rokar's beliefs took hold in Seshnela, other events occurred in Fronela, to the north. Prince Snodal of Loskalm, in the wars against Black Hralf, came to the land of the Altinae [1443 ST]. There he discovered a map of the Future detailing Zzabur's revenge on Loskalm. Most of Fronela was underwater. When he returned, he discovered that although he had been away for five years, some forty years had somehow elapsed [1483 ST]. After he killed Black Hralf Snodal formed a magical conspiracy to kill the God of Silver Feet so that Zzabur's plot was foiled. With dread rites performed over the divine body [1499 ST], the Syndic's Ban succeeded. The whole land was covered with a dense bank of magical mist which cleared,

but left impenetrable walls of fog that separated the Fronelan nations from one another. The conspirators have never been contacted again, so we don't know if they knew what would occur. The Rokari Primate declared the disaster to be God's punishment for the Fronelan's reluctance to obey him.

Dormal the Sailor, a pious Malkioni of Esrolia, took it upon himself to defeat the Closing. He created a spell called the Opening that allowed boats to sail upon the open seas for the first time in four centuries [1580 ST]. He sailed to Nolos [1581 ST] and Loskalm [1582 ST] and taught people of the Opening there. He tried to find Brithos but only found an empty sea of fog, showing that Zzabur had met his end at last. He was last seen sailing to Luathela [1583 ST] where his priests say he was martyred for his faith.

The Opening of the Oceans at Loskalm caused the Ban to thaw from Fronela. However the Ban revealed many new strange nations. The most terrifying of them is the Kingdom of War, devoted to conflict and spiritual slavery. This is, says the Rokari Patriarch, god punishing the Loskalmi once again for their folly and disobedience.

## ⚔ Malkionism, The Western Religions ⚔

"The Invisible God was, the Invisible God is, and the Invisible God forever shall be." – from The Abiding Book

Western Genertela has several similar religions which have a common ancestry in mythic prehistory and still share important features with each other. They are the belief in One God, veneration as the true style of worship, the preeminence of mind, the exercise of Will, and Solace and Joy.

### The One God

The Invisible God is Infinite and Perfect, the Creator of the world, a transcendent and ultimate power. The world of humans was created by God, and is there "of God but not God." People have a natural inclination towards spirituality, but because God is so distant many methods have been invented or discovered to interact with it. These are different religions which all share the essential belief in the Invisible God.

### Veneration

Veneration is a method of worship that is led by priests, who are called celebrants because they read prayers from a book. Veneration allows people to share their personal energy with God, who returns part of it to be used as magic by the celebrants. Most people venerate God by simply yielding to His will. Anyone who does this, and follows the other precepts of the prophets, is sure to get a place in Heaven after death. They are the millions of ordinary worshippers.

## Mind and Logic

Malkion the Great Prophet taught that the human mind is God's gift to people to give them access to Him. Logic and thought are exercises to strengthen a mind and, if applied correctly, will reveal the solution to anything. Malkion taught the first Philosophy.

## Heavenly Will

Humans have a unique gift from their Maker which is Will. Some people can exercise their Will and effect changes in the mortal world. Methods have been studied and categorized for centuries, and is called sorcerous magic.

## Solace and Joy

When a faithful Malkioni commoner dies he goes to Heaven, the perfect paradise of the Invisible God. Philosophers and wise people know Heaven is called Solace. Either way, once a person goes there after death no one can afterwards contact him. Joy is a temporary contact with Heaven which can be experienced in modern Malkioni veneration rites.

## The Atheist Sorcerers

A large number of people are atheists, not believing in a god or God, but in impersonal forces that can be exploited by sorcerers. These are mostly remnant Brithini that remain, and sorcerers who practice those particular types of magic. They believe that after death a person's body and energy disintegrate, leaving behind no personality and no afterlife.



Zzaburism is the belief of Atheists. Laws and Consequences are the only Truth. Several sorcerous Orders, independent of each other and more importantly, of all Churches, practice this in the West today. Their common grimoire is not the Abiding Book, but is the Blue Book of Zzabur, a mighty grimoire that was written on the skin of his enemies.

## Major Malkioni Religions



Malkionism is based on the teachings of Malkion, a great being who existed among the earliest humans and taught them how to venerate the Invisible God. Malkion guided them through many troubles, and opened the way to Solace with his self-sacrifice. The Malkioni Churches all believe that the Invisible God is a personal God, and is interested in the affairs of humankind.

## The Great Churches

The Malkioni churches are generally in agreement on the essential points of doctrine, but are divided on most everything else. Philosophers and churchmen argue bitterly about God's nature and accuse each other of heresy, apostasy and sometimes just plain imbecility. The last time everyone spoke to God with one voice was when the Abiding Book created itself.




## The Gate of Banir


By Heather Bruton

Many worlds exist, normally kept apart by the barriers of existence. But weak points exist, and woe to those who forget them. In the God War the Gate of Banir was practically an open hole into the demon realm called Sorang until Saint Seletir closed it with spells and prayers. It has leaked since that time, though the Order of Seletir has always forced it closed again. But each time, it seems the creatures that come through are more powerful and ghastly. And it has been seen to be weak once again.

---


A period of bright perfection followed, but when the God Learners abused the Book people learned all too painfully that the Book is True, but that humans could still be wrong. In subsequent centuries the Malkioni have all undergone much soul-searching. Now several great Churches claim to have found the error of the God Learners and look forward to uniting the Malkioni under their banner.


 The Hrestoli Church believes in Joy and the possibility of personal contact with God. Malkion was the First Prophet, a superhuman being created by God to bless and oversee the world, and who is still active in the lives of humanity. Malkion touched Saint Hrestol to know and teach about Joy, a grace which rewards a personal relationship to God and provided personal bliss in an afterlife. The modern Hrestoli church recognizes that Divine power touches many humans and they venerate many saints. Especially since King Siglat's time they have promoted an uncommon egalitarianism among their communities. The Hrestoli Church is dominant in Fronela.


 The Rokari Church believes that Malkion was the First Prophet and a very extraordinary man. His teachings unified humanity in the earliest times but were fragmented afterwards. Saint Rokar denied the prophet status of Hrestol, whom he demoted to being just an adept who made some clever but flawed spells. Rokar proved to his people that Malkion taught that Heaven was only Solace, and that it was accessible to humans who imitated the prophet's self sacrifice. Rokar taught that all humans should obey God, the Church, and its spiritual leaders. Rokarism is the dominant Church in Seshnela.


## Saints of the Invisible God


Numerous individuals have helped the cause of the Invisible God in the world. These people are Saints, the Sacred Ones. Most Malkioni churches believe in saints, though they differ in how to treat with them in that the Hrestoli encourage their veneration, while the Rokari discourage it. Both churches recognize many of the same individuals.

 Gerlant the Flame King is the famous warrior king who destroyed Gbaji. He was first tempted by the heresy of Arkat, but when Arkat betrayed Malkioni principles, Gerlant chose his people over his friend, and he chose rightly. He is worshipped today for his valor and noble bearing. Anyone can identify the true followers of Gerlant by the flaming sword that they wield.


 Saint Talor is the Laughing Warrior who cleared Fronela of the Deceiver, just as Arkat and Gerlant had cleansed the South. Talor led with light and joy when Arkat was only capable of waste and massacre. Throughout his epic struggle he maintained a sense of grim humor, so wry that the God Learners claimed he was mad. Their blinkered scholasticism and dour nature prevented them from seeing that Talor's happiness stemmed from his communion with Joy, the highest state of grace within the Invisible God. It was through this grace alone that he was able to save Fronela and preserved that which he loved. Likewise his followers cultivate a happy mien so the Invisible God too will grace them.


 Saint Onokos showed men how to protect themselves against foreign corruption. He wrote *The Book of Superlative Nationalism*. The Quinpolc League cherishes his memory yet others consider him fallen and deluded.


 Saint Xemela, Hrestol's mother, sacrificed her life and soul to save her people from the terrible Black Swelling. Hrestol redeemed her soul to allow her to attain Joy, which she returned to Humankind and obtained Sainthood.

 Saint Waertag was the father of the sea-going Waertagi that dominated the Oceans in the Dawn Age. He still has adherents among their land-bound descendants and in the Duchy of Pasos.

## Heresies and Minor Religions

 Perfectism is a minor religion which has resisted many attempts at eradication. It says each person is God, shuns all priests and clerics, practices no magic, abstains from meat and sex, and requires constant prayer and vigilance. It has no churches, orders or schools, only individuals touched by God. It is still practiced widely in Fronela where it has influenced even the dominant church.

 Stygianism. Arkat the Great began a religion that combined Malkioni veneration with sacrifices made to false gods and many other perversions of good worship. The religion is now extinct though many even more degenerate churches still exist in Ralios.

 Henotheism. Archbishop Surantyr of Otkorion, in Ralios, has started a new religion called the Henotheist Church. He combines the faith of the Orlanthei barbarians with that of the Invisible God.

## False Gods

The Malkioni know the One True God, but they recognize the existence of spirits and divinities. In truth, these entities are apparitions caused by a defective understanding of the Cosmos. Use of proper reason reveals that the Invisible God is the True Source, and sacrifice and worship to anything else is a waste at best, an aid to evil beings at worst. Thus they are called False Gods. Worshipping them is an error that prevents one from knowing God and reaching Solace and Joy after death.

# CHAPTER SIX

## **Ralios**

Ralios has a lake at its center and mountains on three sides. Fenced by precipitous Rockwood and Nidan mountains in the north and to the east, thick Tarinwood forests to the south, and by the ominous Kingdom of Seshnela to the west, the people of Ralios are fiercely independent and proud of their local traditions—perhaps too proud. The land is divided into three regions—urban Safelster, northern Vesmonstran, and the Eastern Wild.

### Safelster, Urban Heart of Ralios

The Safelster people are all boat peoples, starting from their fleet-crossed inland sea of Felster Lake and running up and down every river and stream.

A thousand years ago Safelster was the center of the Autarchy, known to its foes as the Stygian Empire. The nation, benevolent when untroubled, deserved both names, for it used horrible magics to suppress, punish, and destroy its foes. The Seshnegi destroyed the Autarchy with the help of the God Learners and like the history of so many places and times, the vanquished Autarchy was reviled ever after. So thorough was their vilification that it is difficult to think of the Autarchy without thinking of its unspeakable atrocities. Its shining moments are unknown outside of Safelster.

Now, Safelster is not a single political entity but rather the region of prominent city states, autocracies, theocracies, principalities, bishoprics, and other petty regional organizations populating the fertile lands around the shores of Felster Lake and its great tributaries. Its people are generally western—e.g., Malkioni—in customs and habit but with their unconquerable sense of independence they have retained many peculiar practices: rites to their Galanini ancestors; Orlanthei temples in the lowlands surrounding Felster Lake; and *hsunchen* dances held under starlight skies and out of sight of a church.

The fiercely independent nature of the Safelsteri is evident in the nature of their political states, in which each strives to expand its authority over its neighbors. These mini-kingdoms are constantly being conquered and liberated by the ruling families and their own citizenry. When forced to surrender to another power, the citizens resist passively when their conqueror is strong, riot when oppressor is weak, and rebel at the first opportunity.

The real conflict in Safelster is the bitter struggle over the right way to be governed: oligarchies, tyrannies, or democracies? While philosopher mobs argue over the best form of rule, Rokari Inquisitors and Arkati adherents fight for the right to control the religious life within each city.

Despite what to outsiders looks like insurmountable internal divisions, the dream of a united Safelster is widespread. As typical when more than one Safelsteri congregates, any harmony vanishes in debates over how Safelster should be united and how it should be governed. The ruling families of each city state claim to rule by the rights of the Ancien Régime, when foreign Seshnegi nobility ruled after the downfall of the Autarchy. This claim has no support outside the old families, while the Autarchy enjoys massive popular support among the populace, who unfortunately feud over the correct interpretation of Arkat's actual message. Meanwhile, city mobs demand democracy yet riot whenever voting polls are erected.

Perversely, the Autarchy remains a source of pride in much of Safelster. Everybody knows the names and deeds of the Autarchs, from Arkat to Paslac. They know how Arkat slew the evil Gbaji in the Age of Terror, and how Arkat's heirs humbled the haughty Seshnegi. Rescuing the good name of Arkat from the wicked histories of the Ancien Régime is a major preoccupation of many modern Safelstrans.

## Vesmonstran, An Orlanthe Stronghold

Vesmonstran is the northern third of Ralios. Its forested hills are cut by the Tanier River, the main highway for travel through this difficult land. Vesmonstran is made up of Lankst, Telmoria, Karia, and Ormsland.

Several Orlanthe tribes inhabit **Lankst**. When threatened, they unite to form the Confederation of Jofrain. Each tribe has one part of the sacral regalia of the ruling Iron Council. However, it's the House of Warriors that must approve all council policy. The Confederation has recently been strengthened by the acquisition of the tribes of Surkorian.

At the start of the Dawn Age Lankst was thinly populated by hsunchen clans. These original inhabitants were overwhelmed when Orlanthe barbarians moved in during the earliest centuries. A thousand years ago their ancient ways in turn were disturbed when Arkat conquered them. He plundered their lands, then betrayed their god and made them subject to the vicious race of trolls. Jofrain Nightburner was the hero who destroyed the troll overlordship and freed Lankst. Later, under King Alakoring they conquered their old neighbors, the Telmori and the Ormsland Dragonewts, with whom they still war. The Orlanthe still hate the Stygians, too, for their friendship with Arkat.

### Runes of Ralios



Arkat



Stygianism



Galvosti Church



Heontheists



Borists



Kochalang, the current King of Lankst, maintains a standing army called the Knights of the Lightning, for they can hurl lightning bolts. He encourages the worship of Siglolf Cloucrusher, a hero who can hurl rocks from the rain clouds. His worship is popular and is spreading into Otkorion.

**Telmoria** is the land of werewolves and is inhabited by the wretched Telmori tribe. The Telmori are the largest remnant of the once-proud hsunchen wolf-people who were cursed twelve centuries ago by Talor the Laughing Warrior. His curse still turns them into wolves for one day out of every seven. Although some families have grown sophisticated and have homes, armor, and livestock, most run wild in the hills with only sticks and stones which they gather and lose without concern. Their hunting packs plague the northern barbarians.

**Karia** is a pleasant land with a terrible past. During the Dawn Age it was part of now-cursed Dorastor, which lies on the other side of the Kartolin Pass. Karia was scoured by Arkat and since has remain unpeopled. In the

## Politics of Safelster

Once the **Autocracy of Sentanos** dominated eastern Safelster just as the Seshnegi of Tanisor dominated the west. Syran, the capital of Sentanos, is famous for its glassblowing, which was first developed locally. Sentanos is now a crumbling power and few expect it to survive much longer. Its woes started when its army was decisively crushed in an ill-fated attempt to return the Galvosti priesthood to power in Valantia. Now only Tortun is subject to the autocrat's decrees.

The **Proven Appearance of Arkat** movement started in Tortun. Led by Eregazor, an archon also called the High Priestess of Low Delight, the movement enjoyed a few years of power but the defeat of Eregazor's army at the hands of the barbarians at Valantia sounded its death knell. Eregazor still tries to summon Arkat, but few now heed her.

Marost, on the banks of the Dorskior River, was until recently a typical Safelstran city state. Now, this center of the **Archonate of Naskorion** is haunted by shadows since Reinard de Faucille, Archon of Naskorion, became Grandmaster of Zorakarkat. Faucille has built a church-fort to Saint Zorakarkat, and has sent messengers to the other city states inviting all who wish to practice the ancient Stygian religion to come to him. Archon Faucille is now determining how sacrifices can be best offered to the Stygian saints. The nobility of Marost's old families, powerless to stop their divinely-appointed leader, have embraced it with frightening vigor.

*Estali controls the rich Estal river valley now that Partan has been razed. Its Archon rules by virtue of wielding the Purple Scepter of Serpentine Sentience. This allows him to see through the eyes of every snake in Estali. Currently he maintains a torrid affair with Alangellia, the high priestess of the Great Green Lady.*

*Continued on next page . . .*

The Ancient Beast Society is an ancient and widespread spirit cult. It's strongest in Estali, Helby, and Basim, though adherents can be found in most cities throughout Safelster. They clam to be able to reach the ancient animal spirits that were worshipped by their hsunchen ancestors. By engaging in sessions of drumming and dancing they summon these spirits to possess them. The most spectacular of their festivities occur during the Storm Dances of the Helby. All the adults wear bestial masks and congregate for dancing, feasting, and anonymous activities.

To remember their beast selves worshippers leave their human selves at the entry of the temple and address each other only by their animal names. Some people, devoted entirely to this cult, have forgotten their human names entirely and are referred to only by their cult names.

Partan was a famous city founded by the God Learners to subjugate the hsunchen tribes of Estali. Its citizens emphasized their humanity and the natural inferiority of beasts to disrupt the hsunchen magics. In response, the hsunchen adopted civilized ways, though they kept contact with their ancestors through the Ancient Beasts Society. Now that the Estali have destroyed Partan City, many believe the beast people will revert to their primitive spirit cults.

**Helby** surrounds the lake of the same name. The fishing was once so plentiful that nobody in Helby bothered to hunt. Because of this, men and terrestrial beasts maintained their friendship much longer than elsewhere in Glorantha. Gbaji ruined this friendship by stealing the Fifty Fishes and forcing the Helbyans to hunt and farm instead. The Fifty Fishes were never recovered.

The Sandrya tribe of Basmoli inhabits the **Land of Basim**. They are hsunchen Lion worshippers and were once part of the ancient beastlands along with Estali and Helby. They are hunters and herd goats, hiring themselves as mercenaries for the Archon of Estali.

Until recently, all of southeastern Safelster was part of the **League of Daran**, a military alliance of Dangim organized to resist any army from Seshnela. For their obdurate defense the Seshnegi court slandered them as the new Stygian League, despite the fact that most inhabitants are stout Rokari. The League took heavy blows when **Azilos** burst into civil war as **Tiskos** was ravaged by an outbreak of Chaos Monks. When Tanisor conquered the Dangim March and slew its count the League collapsed immediately.

The Count of Daran has since reformed the Daran League. He employs fugitive Dangim knights and makes conditional defensive alliances with **Tarasdal** and Tiskos. The Old Arkat Kult Alliance and the Ancient Beasts Society of Estali have also promised him whatever help they can. But with Foyalfine, Archon of Azilos, on his flank, the chances of holding back the Seshnegi are slim.

*Continued on next page . . .*

*Many years ago the great King Ulianus of Seshnela conquered western Safelster. He built a castle and an arena in his **Kingdom of Kustria** unique in all Ralios and Seshnela, and designed a fief whose sole purpose is to sponsor the Greatest Tournament of All Time. Its charter states that it is to be a "proving ground for the lords and knights of Ralios, wherein to settle differences according to the rules of chivalry, whereby the hapless farmers of this land may be spared from needless pain and fear."*

Janus de Chevalier, King of the Tournament, recently wooed and won the hand of the widowed Countess of Galin. Galin was the birthplace of the Horse God, Galanin, whose people ruled Safelster during the Dawn Age. Its people are still famous for their light cavalry, rightly acclaimed to be the best in Safelster.

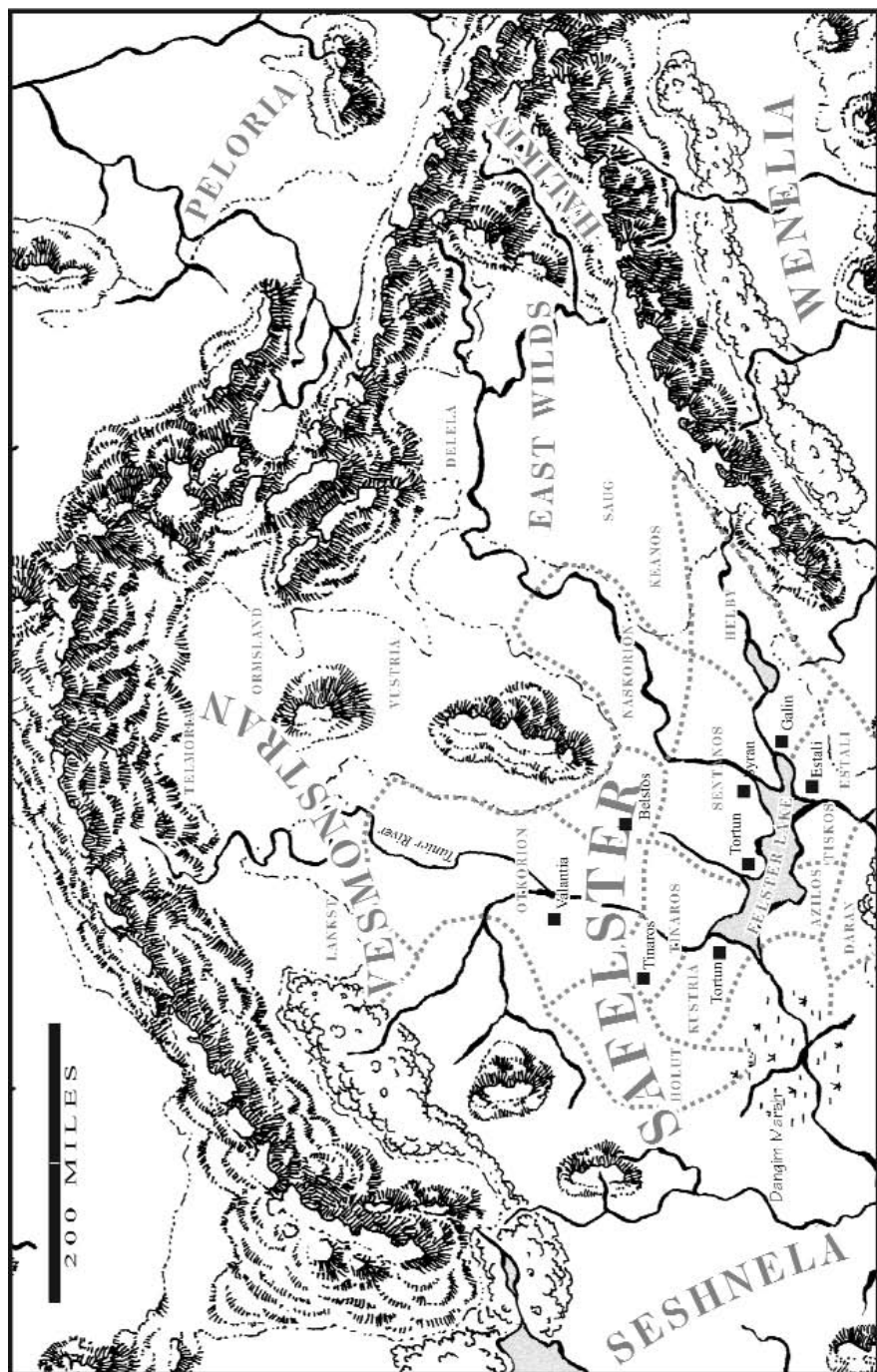
*The **County of Tinaros** once paid tribute to the Nomian Crown, but since the sack of Valantia it has been independent. It is the seat of Argin Terror, a devotee of Arkat the Krjalki*

*The **County of Belstos** is the origin and stronghold of the Borist heresy. Its capital, Belstos, has never been taken by storm or siege, only by treachery. The Boristi are feared and hated throughout much of Safelster for their mastery of chaos. They use it to defend themselves against others. Their acceptance of chaos is a result of their belief that chaos pervades all creation and inhibits the attainment of Solace after death. To avoid this threat, the Boristi have refined the rite of Tapping to tap the chaos from a person in a ritual known as Shriving. Once shriven, the victim is pure, thus able to enter Solace after death.*

The Boristi do not turn the Tapped chaos into energy for their spells, but manifest it outside their bodies, creating chaotic monstrosities. By virtue of their shriving, they are able to control these obscene blasphemies and make them do their bidding. This, say the Boristi, shows the superiority of Law over Chaos.

Nobody believes their claims and many, including both the ancient Autarchy and their foes, the God Learners, persecuted them root and branch down through the centuries. The Boristi have learned to hide their beliefs under a façade of orthodoxy, concealing their chaotic familiars in sprawling catacombs and loosing them on their enemies only when the stars are right.

Archbishop Surantyr is a churchman who got his name, the Nonheretic, from his recent activities of defining and organizing a new church. As head of the **Archbishopric of Otkorion** he learned magic to protect people from the vile Galvosti heresy. He rallied local leaders of Otkorion, gained other support and overthrew the rulers of Valantia who supported the terrible Galvosti heretics. His congregations, made of Malkioni church and Orlanthei cult converts, placed political leadership into the hands of the church. The state church is now the Henotheist Church, which has successfully integrated the faith of the barbarians into that of the Invisible God.



## Five Famous Arkats (pictured at right)

By Simon Bray

Shown here are five modern statues of the hero Arkat, all found in temples in Ralios today. These illustrate how different one worshipped being can be to his many worshippers. Here we see:

ah The Knight. Arkat was first a noble fighter, serving the King of Seshnela and setting that land free of chaos. In this form he is venerated by the Order of Saint Arkat the Liberator in Azilos.

a0 The Martyr. Arkat was martyred and chopped into three parts, then these portions were nailed onto the three parts of a Y-shaped scaffold that was stuck into the ground. Despite this, he returned to life with the aid of Harmast Barefoot and overcame all his foes. This gruesome form is venerated by the World of Losers Movement.

ag The Troll. Arkat became an uz to fight against his chaos foe, and finally destroyed the evil foe. As Arkat Litor, the Great Troll Demigod, uz in Guhan sacrifice to him.

a5 The King. After he retired from the wars Arkat benevolently oversaw the many peoples of Ralios, keeping them in peace and plenty for his entire life. In such form Great Arkat is venerated as the ancestor of several ruling houses among the Ralios city-states, including Tortun, Azilos and Syran.

as The Devil. Arkat is loathed by everyone whom he betrayed during his life. In the West this has taken the form of demonizing him as Arkat Gbaji, or Arkat the Deceiver. The Guild of Chaos Monks venerates Arkat the Son of the Devil, acquiring vile sorcerous spells from him.

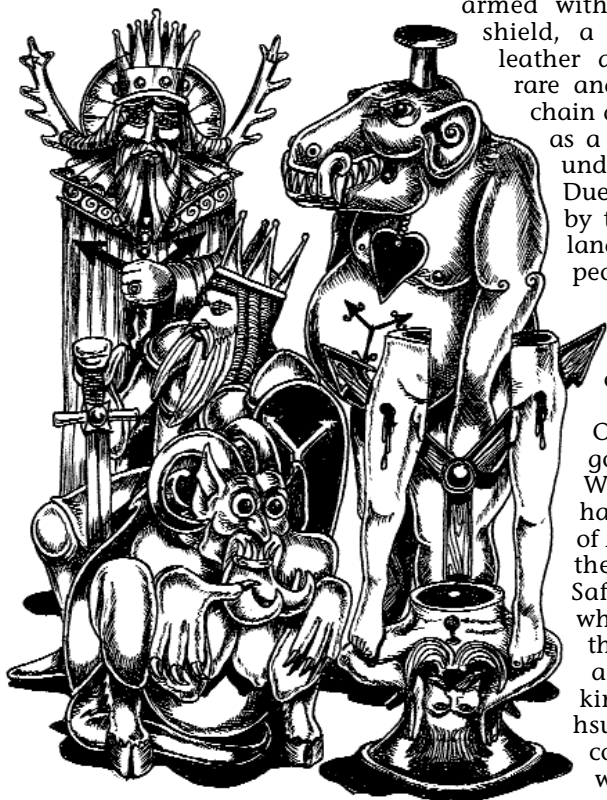
past few decades a few families have resettled Karia, but it's a rough life. Broos from Dorastor are a constant threat, as are the strange monsters that accompany them.

**Ormsland** is a savage and wild land inhabited by barbarous dragonewts. Alakoring Dragonbreaker, a Lanksti hero, slew the last inhuman King of Ormsland in his war against the EWF. Because of this, their behavior is often less erratic and irrational than the dragonewts of Dragon Pass. Their hunting parties range through all Vesmonstran, but only within the boundaries of Ormsland itself do they hunt humans for food.

## Eastern Wilds, A Contested Wilderness

Geographers place the lands of Delela, Saug, Halikiv, Keanos, Corolaland, and Vustria under the label of Eastern Wilds.

Orlanthi inhabit the lands of Saug, Keanos, and Delela, although a few hsunchen are also found there. These barbarian warriors are typically



armed with spear and sword, shield, a helmet, and some leather armor. Heroes have rare and expensive suits of chain armor. Warriors fight as a band of brothers or under their clan chief. Due to an ancient curse by the pony-riding lowlanders of Safelster, the people of the Eastern Wilds rarely ride horses, but rather hitch them to chariots.

Orlanth is the main god in the Eastern Wilds. The people here have many memories of Arkat's misdeeds and they despise the Safelstran lowlanders who admire him. On the other hand, they are aware of their own kinship with the hsunchen and retain cordial relationships with the beast-people, except for the Telmori wolf-brothers.

In times of war, the tribes of **Delela** form a confederation with the Chief of the Voshfrei as their Warlord. The **Saug** tribes have no such confederation; each tribe rules itself, and swears no allegiance to any overlord.

**Keanos** is so rough that the people there eschew all agriculture and live solely by hunting and herding on their forested, though elf-less, lands. Fiercely independent but not aggressive, these people are not troubled by outsiders, who have no need of their inferior lands. A sacral king claims to rule all Keanos, but the clan chiefs pay him no heed.

**Halikiv** is a huge troll stronghold. **Corolaland** is bitterly contested between the Orlanthe and the trolls of Halikiv.

No one claims the parched, broken highlands of **Vustria**, home of rustlers, Telmori, madmen, and bandits. Recently, explorers have found gangs of Dorastor broos. These chaos beings worship a new god they call Hezel Dorang. They all wear necklaces and are allied with exotic krjalki, the likes of which have never been seen before in Ralios.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# U Mostali, the dwarves 大

*Also known as: Babadi (Kralori), Dwarves (Malkioni), and Underground Men (Pelorian)*

The Dwarves are stocky, short humanoids with rather grotesque facial features. Many, but not all, are bearded. They have disproportionately short limbs and many are hunchbacked or otherwise distorted. These seeming deformities, far from hindering them, seem to make them better suited to their cramped burrows and heavy labor. Their gnarled bodies have massive bones and are stout with twisted muscle. Dwarves are capable of shrewd cunning when it is necessary for their tasks, but they often lack the simple intellect to generalize from their experiences. Some are little other than idiot savants while others struggle for hours trying to understand innocuous questions, such as the blacksmith who was asked he could make iron ploughs. Outsiders have commented on the laconic and taciturn nature of the Dwarves. This is not because, as some optimists allege, the Dwarves wish to preserve their secrets, but simply because the Dwarves have defective personalities.

Although they have females among them, they treat them like males and deny all knowledge of sex or reproduction, often before the questioner has finished asking! Selemanthus wrote that the Dwarves reproduce as we do, but since this is contrary to their God they must repress their memories of the act. Their young are raised in the New Mud vats, tended by the Quicksilver Dwarves, until they are fully mature. The Dwarves are immortal but this is conditional on keeping faith with their God.

Dwarves live in huge underground artificial caverns hollowed out by Rock Dwarves. Their cities are connected to each other by tunnels, which are sometimes hundreds of miles long. Their caverns, by all accounts, are spacious and carefully formed. Walls are decorated with geometric patterns or grinning faces while the floors may be polished stone or splendidly tiled.

The Dwarves possess a unique earthsense, a long-distance touch that permits them to sense heat, air pressure, and air currents with remarkable accuracy. They can maneuver in the dark, calculate their depth beneath the surface, sense moving objects, and even measure the size and shape of a cave system by standing in a corner and sensing the air currents. Thus a dwarf can travel swiftly through unfamiliar caves, simply trusting his feel as to what tunnels lead where.

## Mostali History of the World U大

In the Beginning was the Machine and the Machine was in accordance with the Plan. The Machine fulfilled the Plan and made the eight ancient minerals and the Mostali to maintain itself. But a component became flawed, and the flaw was Umath. He damaged the Machine by separating

## The Elder Races

Many species of inhuman beings share the surface of Glorantha with humanity. The most common are the elves, dwarves, trolls, dragonets and mermen, that are detailed in their own chapters of their own. A few are found in large concentrations; others are spread out over many different areas. Some, such as the Durulz or the Timinitz, are found only in localized areas.

The information below is excerpted in part from Ocron Everseer's *Compendium of the Species (Abridged)*. Ocron Everseer was a famous God Learner who named all the known creatures and their habits in a now lost compendium. Surviving fragments are still extant, but the most truthful copy (as verified by numerous Truth Contests) that exists is the abridged version, a single codex in the Nochet Knowledge Temple. This version was written by Philarus the semi-eidetic who had seen the original and was reproducing from memory what he had read from those pages.

sky from earth. This allowed Grower, designed to grow raw materials for the Machine to refine, to mutate and change its purpose without proper authorization. It decided to replace the Machine and sent elves armed with entropy to wreck it.

The Octamony of Ancient Minerals proclaimed Damage Control and promulgated the Doomsday Plan to repair the Machine. They took the entropy and used it to fashion the Crucible of Iron. Iron Mostali marched out of the Crucible to destroy the enemies of the Machine. But the Iron Mostali were too few. The Octamony suspended Quality Control and fashioned the Clay Jar. From it clambered many clay Mostali, the Dwarves. Dwarves are smaller, less intelligent, and inferior in every way except one: ease of manufacture. The Octamony outfitted many dwarves with Iron and sent them to war. The remainder were sent to help with further creation on the Spike. The Octamony and the first dwarf then made the Diamond Goblet. Perfection was sought this time, and the Diamond Dwarves were endowed with diamond skills to be the leaders of the Dwarves.

The Ancient Minerals tried to repair the damage of the Machine. At the height of the procedure, chaos entered among them and shattered the Ancient Minerals into nothingness with a clap of doom. Many dwarves and a few ancient Mostali survived this cataclysm in factories and outposts across the world. The Diamond Dwarves at Nida formed the Decamony and assumed responsibility for the Plan. Despite their losses, the Decamony persevered and with bodily fluids, grease and toil, they repaired enough of the damage, allowing the retrieval of the Sun from the Dustbin [O ST]. But the Doomsday Plan is not yet complete, and the Machine is not fully repaired.



## ⚙ Mostal, The World Machine ⚙

Mostal is gone now because evil gods broke it long ago. Now is the Gods War when the dwarves toil endlessly to repair the Machine. Foolish mortals believe that the Gods War ended long ago with the rise of the Sun, but the dwarves know that the Machine is not yet fully operational. The Hero Wars are just a small part of the ancient Gods War.

In the day to day operation of the broken Machine all cogs and other components are eventually transformed into raw energy and lost. Dwarves were made to reverse this loss by doing Work. This Work transforms the energy back into Machine components in ways that seem marvelous to mortals. By laboring at their chosen tasks the dwarves reclaim the lost energy and repair the Machine.

Entropy is the dissipation of vital material processes into energy. As a result of this loss the animated body becomes broken and inert, fit only for rendering for raw materials at the vats. The change is irreversible rendering normal work processes ineffective. The Ancient Minerals forged Iron to recapture this lost energy and contain it. Gold Dwarfs teach that dwarves have nothing to fear from Entropy so long as they labor perfectly at their tasks and do not become heretics or apostates.

To assist it in its operation, the Machine created the Octamony of Ancient Minerals. When Mostal was killed the Octamony proclaimed a state of Damage Control and assumed all responsibility for repairing the Machine. They forged three more minerals from the Crucible of Iron, the Clay Jar and the Diamond Goblet. Iron and Clay took their place as the New Minerals while the Diamond Goblet was used to transform the Octamony into the Decamony that rules all dwarves. All Good Dwarfs serve the Machine through one of these metals.

When the Machine was halted the surviving ancient metals met together in council and decreed the construction of the Crucible of Iron. Mortals call it the Doomsday Machine. To strike against their bitterest enemies Iron was wrought to burn both trolls and elves at the slightest touch. Humans were spared the Iron Curse, although the Decamony has been known to complain that they would have pronounced it against humans if they had known what would happen. The worshippers of Iron are covered from head to toe in pure iron and their axes are likewise made from the deathly metal. But even more fearsome are their monstrous war engines, their great exploders and their horrendous thundersticks that can strike one dead through loud noise.

Everything in Glorantha is part of the Machine but only the Dwarves can see the workings of Machine in the individual components. Regrettably they can also see that many components work for their self-interest or even against the Machine.

Many Dwarves in Greatway and Gemborg aided Ezkankekko, a local troll, against his enemies. They survived under Enkankekko's auspices, despite their isolation from the Decamony. They even developed an aberrant rationale, Openhandism, to justify their actions. When contact was re-established with Nida, the Decamony cautioned them against their policy [182 ST]. The Openhandists would not recant, and the Decamony declared Greatway a conclave of heretics [212 ST]. Their action was justified. The Openhandists, in pursuing the God project, broke a cog in the Machine and halted all time [375 ST]. Only great sacrifice saved the Machine and restarted the Sun.

The God Project created Gbaji, a chaotic entity. The Elves were Gbaji's greatest supporters, and they started assassinating the Openhandists when their work was done. A Decamony expeditionary force restored contact with Greatway. Many Openhandists now could see the error of their ways and sent their own army to Dorastor to terminate Gbaji before further damage was done [450 ST]. Most died in the process and unreformed Openhandists used this waste of resources to question the Decamony's policy.

As a result of the Openhandist debacle Octamonism broke out. The Octamonists desired a return to the rule of the Eight Ancient Minerals. The Decamony never formally condemned Octamonism for, once its ramifications were pointed out, many adherents returned to Orthodoxy. This was fortunate because the elves, the trolls and even the giants started warring against the Machine again. In particular, the return of the Octamonists saved Norkananti from destruction, although Gonn Orta stole many Jolanti from the Decamony and an alliance of trolls and Kralori destroyed many conclaves in the Eastern Mountains [570 ST].

Humans profited mightily from picking among the destruction caused by trolls and elves. From the secrets they uncovered they fashioned mighty empires. They then sent more looting expeditions against our cities and made a Machine God in the Leftarm archipelago to misappropriate control over the Plan. Every new secret they found was sent there to improve their empires.

While the Decamony warred against the humans, it overlooked a new heresy spreading within its ranks. Chark the Liberator said every dwarf was made in the image of the Machine [700 ST] and his followers called themselves Individualists. When the Decamony finally condemned it [850 ST], Openhandists again seized control of Greatway, declared the Decamony to be criminally insane and sent secret support to the Octamonists in Nida.

The Decamony could not allow the consequent disruption to the Plan and prepared for battle. Aided by support from recently contacted Slon Decamony, the Nidan Decamony sent an expeditionary force to Belskan in the Iron Mountains and purged it of individualism [852 ST]. Numerous expeditions against Greatway failed to break their alliance with the Third Council.

The Decamony resolved to destroy the source of the human's power and persuaded many races and peoples to destroy the Machine City [917 ST]. They were willing to do this despite their hostility towards the Decamony, for they shuddered at the thought of human domination.

As soon as the Machine City was destroyed the world started coming right. The great empires started to disappear, one by one. The humans tried to stop this from happening but they were all destroyed. The Red Moon rose [1247 ST]. The Plan had predicted its return but said it would only happen with strict Dwarf unity. The Openhandists of Greatway suddenly realized their disputes with the Decamony were not as large as they had thought. They sent emissaries to the Decamony repudiating their former disruptive policies and pledged to further the Plan. The Decamony reversed many sanctions against Greatway on the condition they would not spread their beliefs.

The Unity of Mostali is once again secure. The Machine is coming together according to Plan.

*Some notable dwarf establishments:*

**BELSKAN CONCLAVE** is in the Iron Mountains of Seshnela. They have been trading iron to the Seshnegi since the Dawn. This is part of the Plan and strictly controlled. Half of the iron in the world has come from here.

The **BRASS MOUNTAIN** dwarves maintain a formal trading relationship with the Carmanians. They have a strict limit to their trade and never negotiate the amount of brass or the price.

The dwarves of **Jrustela** are organized into the **CURUSTUS CONCLAVE**. They are subject to the Decamony of Slon and rumors speak of a large port hidden by a movable cliff side. The Orange Guilds trade with the Dalamdring dwarves for iron in return for toucan feathers.

**DIAMOND MOUNTAIN** lies in the Hachuan Mountains. Despite the name, no Diamond dwarves or even Iron dwarves live here, for they are strict otca-monists

One of the friendliest ancient Mostali lives at **DWARF RUN** in Dragon Pass, practicing a brand of Openhandism and Individualism. He has been known to give out gifts or offer rentals, such as the cannon cult, for unusual prices.

The conclave of **GEMBOURG** lies beneath the Bluesmoke Volcano in Caladraland. It is named after the famous gems in which it specializes.

**GREATWAY** is in the Rockwoods Mountains between Dragon Pass and Balazar. They disdain trade with Dragon Pass and prefer to trade with the primitive Balazarings.

The **IMTHER MOUNTAINS** are home to conservative dwarves who trade only with the ruling family of Imther.

The dwarves of the **JORD MOUNTAINS** are the largest population in and around the Lunar Empire. They suffered terribly in the Elder Race Wars and trade with the local humans.

The **DECAMONY OF NIDA** rules all true Dwarves in Genertela. They maintain the trading post of Bad Deal where they trade with anyone including elves and trolls. The name says it all as the Dwarves put daylight robbers to shame.

The island of **SLON** has the largest dwarf population in the world.

## 大 工 Who are the workers in the Machine? 大 工

Workers are ordinary dwarves. They must labor at their allotted tasks according to the Plan. A good dwarf does not deviate from the Plan

**ROCK DWARVES** mine, quarry, dress and build with stone and cement. They are responsible for the construction of our factories and our cities. **LEAD DWARVES** are plumbers and glassblowers. **QUICKSILVER DWARVES** are alchemists. They produce many compounds in their labs, including gunpowder, medicine and all sorts of vitriol and potions. Their primary purpose is to make our food in prepared tin containers. **COPPER DWARVES** make tools, containers and some weapons. **TIN DWARVES** work with tamestones, that is, living rock. They shape the rock into useful creatures, such as Jolanti and Nilmergs, to work in places where no dwarf can. They manufacture the food cans and replacement limbs and organs for crippled dwarves.

**BRASS DWARVES** are alloyists and metallurgists. **SILVER DWARVES** are enchanters and sorcerers that specialize in working with energy. **GOLD DWARVES** are the mind of Mostal. They are our teachers, and maintain the continuity of dwarf society through correct education and indoctrination. **IRON DWARVES** are our blacksmiths and soldiers. **DIAMOND DWARVES** have become one with the Machine by being absolutely perfect in their tasks. They are no longer subject to the worker schedules for they have proven themselves. Good workers should aspire to become Diamond dwarves.

Heretics deviate from the Plan. Good dwarves are all alike. Any deviation from the Plan is a heresy. Good dwarves never deviate from the Plan.

**OCTAMONISTS** believe the creation of Iron and Diamond was evil. According to their premise, they must also hold that Clay is evil, which they do not. They seek to halt our progress on repairing the Machine.

**OPENHANDISTS** think it safe to give outsiders our secrets. They believe that with the loss of the Ancient Mostali, dwarves are incapable of understanding the Plan. They seek this understanding from other races and reward them with our secrets! They are fools for what can the surface world offer to surpass our secrets?

VEGETARIANS are infected by the cancerous principle of Growth—they actually produce food by breeding plants. Fortunately they are confined to remote Pamaltela.

BROKEN DWARVES are Mostali that will soon die because they have disobeyed the Machine. They are corrupted by entropy and visibly age.

EREDAN MADABALUMFARALLI, (Molded Broken Rebel Inconsequences, humans) are dishonest creatures with short lives and even shorter attention spans. They steal our secrets by rummaging through our refuse piles.

POMODARAVA UMBLADARSHARN, (Rebellious burning fuels on feet, elves) personify the wrongness that began the ruin of the Cosmos. Their malignance has often stymied dwarf plans, as when they slew Mostal or assassinated the dwarf rulers of Dorastor in the first age.

ARKASTARDAPPLE MONONGO, (Down Below Hunger Smash, trolls) are an inferior underground species that competes with and eats Dwarves, causing great catastrophe. Since they delight in similar spaces, they are considered to be a competing species.

What are my objectives?

You are expected to live in perfect harmony to the Machine or not at all.

Follow orders from above.

Work without mercy or fault.

Live Forever.

## **Mostali** (pictured at right)

By Heather Bruton

The dwarfs say Mostal was the first being, the Maker whose immutable Laws set everything in perfect and perpetual motion. Mostal's original beings were of pure living metals: living gold, vital silver and all the rest of the eight original metals. At first they were the only beings in the world. Foreign gods came out of Chaos and broke Mostal's perfection. Mortal beings came and destroyed resources and chipped away at transformers and stole important tools. The Breakers came and smashed Mostal, the Creator. Most of the ancient metal Mostali died with him, vaporized into the emptiness of chaos.

A few survived, and they made the new race called dwarfs. These were made of clay, not pure metal, which has deteriorated to be flesh. But their ancestry is true and it bestows immortality upon every one of them who follows their Mostali nature perfectly. After a few thousand years of selfless service the once clay dwarfs, like the one on the right, can refine themselves in mind, body and spirit until they obtain their pure metal heritage, like the one in the back.



## CHAPTER EIGHT


**Fronela**

**O**n the edge of the great northern continent of Genertela, at the foot of the vast Valind Glacier, lie the lands of Fronela. Fronela is traditionally divided into three parts: civilized Loskalm, the rich Janube valley and the wild lands, including the Aldryami lands of Winterwood and Eronwood. Over a century ago, the mysterious Syndic's Ban enveloped Fronela, cutting each country off from its neighbors. Less than forty years ago the Ban receded and Fronela slowly emerged into the modern age. Unfortunately for the Fronelans, the lifting of Syndic's Ban brought a new curse on Fronela: the Kingdom of War, the fourth and newest region.

### Loskalm, The Land of Siglat's Dream

The preeminent region of Fronela is Loskalm, a large and wealthy kingdom. It's healthy population flourished under Syndic's Ban, and continues to prosper after its lifting. Loskalm's many rich cities, especially along the seacoasts, are walled; castles defend its wide borders.

Within Loskalm itself exist three regions: North Loskalm, South Loskalm, and Junora. North Loskalm lies north of Ozur Bay and traditionally contains the provinces of Ease, Agria, Norans, Tawars, and Nevs. Dilis, once a province of the north, was cursed a thousand years ago to be a chaostainted swamp after Dilis soldiers fomented rebellion against Sog City. It's now a no-man's land claimed by no country.

South Loskalm, south of the bay, includes the provinces of Tarins, Jorri, and Pomons. During the Ban, several provinces were isolated from South Loskalm and were annexed by Junora, the region to the south of the Janube River. Junora was once a region within Loskalm but is now an autonomous county. Junora relishes its independence but its proximity to the Kingdom of War keeps the populace in a state of nervous distress.

The Loskalmi worship Malkion, the One God, and hold Hrestol his prophet as the human Ideal. The influence of the Hrestoli Church on Loskalmi culture led to a major difference on Loskalmi culture from that of other Malkioni peoples. The original revelations from Hrestol change the earlier Malkioni caste system into a meritocracy, but the idealistic state was never properly obtained by subsequent generations of worshippers. During the Ban King Siglat finally put this worthy ideal into practice by giving all children the social status of Farmer. Any subsequent promotion into the upper classes is open to all men regardless of birth, wealth, or status, and is decided solely on the merits of one's abilities.

The ideal career of a successful Loskalmi is as follows: in his early teens he is sent out to labor in the fields as a farmer. If he masters the arts of farm-

## Lords Temporal

Unlike other Fronelan nations, the meritocratic Loskalmi appoint Lords Temporal to run their cities and towns instead of mayors. The Lords Temporal oversee the administration of the King's Peace and the local collection of the King's Pence.

The lowest of the Lords Temporal are the mayoral lords. Above them are the ranks of baron and count Lords Temporal. And above them, ruling Loskalm's eight principalities, are the princes of the land.

No matter their station, the Lords Temporal rule from palaces, magical castles that embody the authority of the One God. Their specialized architecture, overseen by wizards of the Order of Artificers, channels the veneration of the commoners of Loskalm towards the lords. This magical energy is transmuted into blessings which aid the Lords Temporal in their duties. Thus a Lord Temporal is blessed with preternatural wisdom, pronounced sagacity, long life, and sheer will. The higher the rank of the Lord, the more magnificent his palace and consequently the more potent the blessings that he receives. The Royal Palace at Northpoint is so majestic, and the King rewarded with such blessings, that illiterate pagans reckon him to be a demigod.

ing to the satisfaction of his superiors he is allowed enter the army. Successful soldiers are raised in rank to the status of a Knight, thereby gaining access to more secrets. Able knights can choose to become Wizards, a social caste capable of sustaining the spiritual needs of the land and its people. Wizards who show the most wisdom and judgment may then become Lords. Therefore, every lord understands the common man perfectly, and will have earned the respect of everyone he rules.

Most farmers, because of the peace and plenty of Loskalmi rule, do not have the ambition to rise through the ranks and are content to work their farms. Those who master the skills of the commons and are acceptable to the government are made squires and given some of the rights and responsibilities of the Lords. Much of rural Loskalm is run by these squires and their head is the Chairman of Farmers, who sits on the High Council as a Peer of the Realm. The people of the towns and cities are considered to be of the farming class. They do not send their children to work at the farms; instead they are trained in the crafts of their fathers.

Women are separate from the caste system and stand mostly outside the Loskalmi meritocracy. Most are simply accorded the rank of their father until married, when they take that of their husband. They are usually given subordinate roles in deference to their feminine nature. As an example, women in the army usually serve as healers. A select few are trained as knights, but until now they have never been allowed to fight in battle and are instead used to rescue the fallen.



As with other aspects of Loskalmi society, positions within government are determined by merit—there are no hereditary positions, including that of the king, who is selected from the pool of wizard lords. In addition to the locally governing lords, a High Council of five Peers of the Realm aids the king in governing Loskalm. These Peers are the Grand Duke of Westpoint, the Royal Justiciar, the Royal Treasurer, the Chairman of the Farmers, and the Ecclesiarch of Southpoint.

The Grand Duke of Westpoint leads the military in defense of the kingdom. The Royal Justiciar keeps the kingdom's lords in line, watching to ensure they don't fall into the bad old habits of aristocratic rule. The collection of taxes, the minting of coins, and all royal accounting fall under the aegis of the Royal Treasurer. Representing the bulk of Loskalmi society, the office of the Chairman of the Farmers cannot be held by any outside the farmer caste. Overseeing the spiritual welfare of the people, the Ecclesiarch makes sure that all are united under the doctrines of the Hrestoli ideal.

## The Janube River Valley, Highway of Fronela

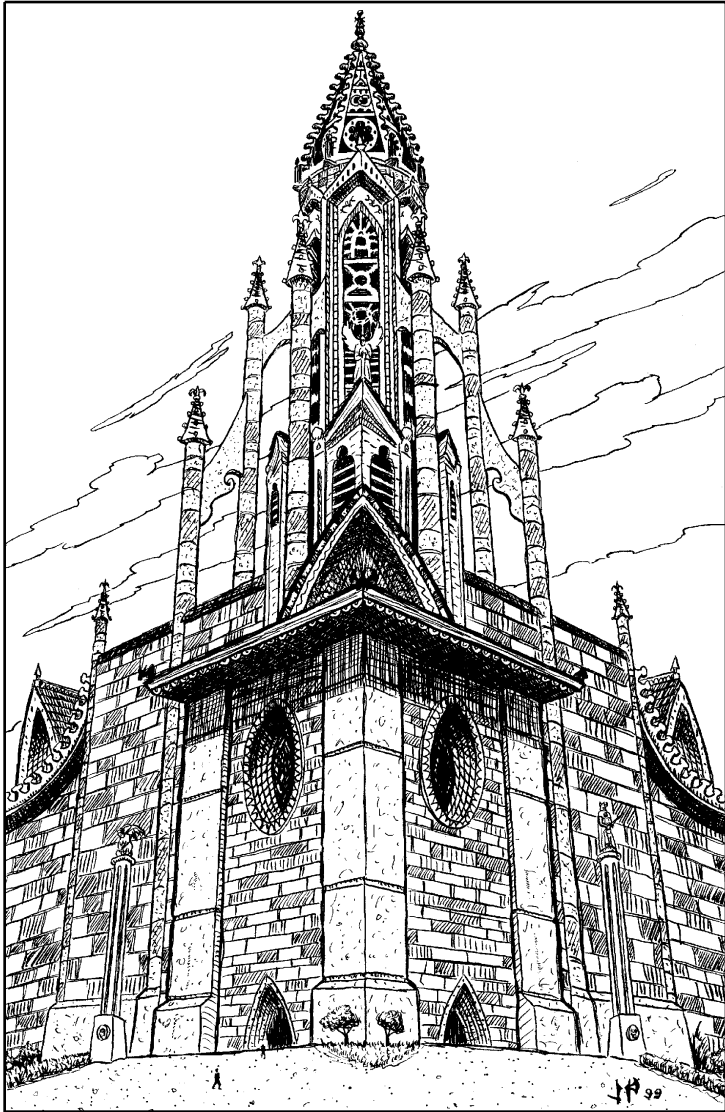
Springing from the waters of the Sweet Sea, the River Janube winds westward through Fronela to empty in Ozur Bay. This mighty waterway supports the seven large and independent city-states of Sog City, Perfe, Galastar, Zoria, Southbank, Eastpoint, Riverjoin. Dozens of towns also occupy the river's banks but rarely achieve independence, more often being captured in wars or traded between the cities.

Sog City is a large city that straddles the mouth of the Janube. Its actual name is Sogzanjio Malakumb, but no one uses that now except the original Waertagi people that founded it before the Dawn. It is also known as the City of Green Men because of the large number of green-skinned Waertagi that were stranded by the Closing. A guild of Brithini rules the city now. Their capital is surrounded by red-hot brazen walls and entry is forbidden to foreigners. These Brithini also run a famous university that is the center of Malkioni learning which is based entirely upon the precepts of Logic. With the influx of immigrants since the Opening of the Oceans Sog City is now one of the largest and most cosmopolitan of Gloranthan cities.

Perfe used to be noted for its artists and fine exported porcelain, its beautiful woven cloth and its unique Poet's Guild. Since it fell to the Kingdom of War Perfe is now a bastion of bloody sacrifices to the dozens of war gods there.

Ancient Galastar was the capital of the Kingdom of Valmark that once dominated the upper Janube. It's long been a center of Lifebringer and Orlanth worship, despite Lunar and Malkioni influence.

Zoria, called the City of Free Love, was founded centuries ago by an incarnation of Uleria and is known locally as "the best place in the world to keep warm." Zoria is ruled by the daughter of the infamous Queen of the Kiss. She is seen publicly and speaks to the citizenry only when the city's founder possesses her. Despite Zoria's proximity to the Kingdom of War, its ruler isn't worried: "Love is stronger than war," she says. Area farmers aren't so sure.



## The Cathedral of Saint Hrestol

By Jim Pavelec

Magic lives and grows in the churches and palaces of Loskalm. Southpoint is a large city which has thrived on the benefits of its favorite prophet and martyr, Hrestol, Prophet of the Joy. Here is his great cathedral, a small mountain of architecture that defies natural laws to glorify Hrestol. Through this holy palace flow all the prayers of thousands of devout worshippers and, in return, the sweet Joy of the Heart that brings comfort to humanity.



## Corpses Rot in the Streets of Perfe

Three years ago the King of War sent out his first emissaries who grandly proclaimed that all of Fronela now belonged to the Kingdom of War. Count Kirdasse of Perfe resolved to crush this unknown upstart. He mustered out his loyal knights, supplemented with hired Jonating Boyars, Arrolian pikemen, barbarian skirmishers, and many other warriors from throughout Fronela.

This Perfian host marched unopposed north from the Janube River to the Black Forest, seat of the King of War. By the ancient code of Sir Horal, Count Kirdasse issued a challenge to the King of War. That night the Perfian army found what the Kingdom of War thought of the courtly conventions of Sir Horal when War attacked at night, using a tactic expressly forbidden in honorable practice. The sentries were overwhelmed and the Perfian army was utterly destroyed. Many soldiers never even woke to face the enemy that black night. The body of Count Kirdasse, among the thousands dead that night, was never found.

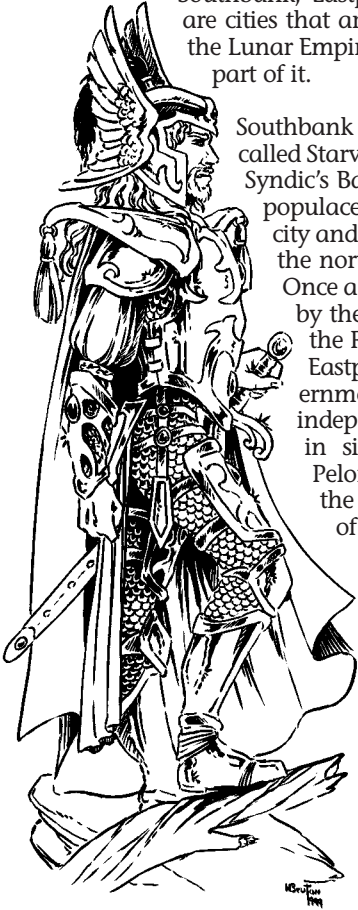
In a pattern soon to be repeated many times, the denizens of Perfe surmised the fate of Count Kirdasse's army when War's outriders showed up at their gates. Despite their grief and alarm they secured the walls and sent messages for help to the nearby Count Defin Anostos. But before the count's Army of the Red Garter could arrive, the Army of War besieged the city. The walls of Perfe had withstood Jonat's siege when he used giants to try to push them over. Despite Perfe's lack of a professional army it seemed reasonable to expect they would withstand the Kingdom of War, too.

But the people within the walls of Perfe didn't comprehend the scale of the menace outside. Vicious warriors were catapulted into the city and, upon landing, slew everything within reach, even household vermin. When finally cut down by the Perfians, their corpses revealed they had been untroubled by the broken bones and injuries from their violent flights. People from the countryside were rounded up and taken to other catapults. After being forced to drink a special potion to harden their innards, these human missiles were hurtled at the city walls. With each scream and sickening thud the walls of Perfe suffered more damage.

During the days of bombardment by these human missiles a large faction of the Army of War left the siege and hurried to the town of Hendoros to meet Count Defin Anostos. Defin had hoped to engage the Army of War encamped before the gates of Perfe, where he could count on the support of a sortie from the city, but as he approached Hendoros he saw that this hope was in vain. As the Army of the Red Garter lined up against the Army of War, the King of War removed his bull-skull helmet and glared across the lines. It was said that the malevolence of his gaze unnerved Count Defin Anostos' knights to such an extent that the battle was over before it began.

With the retreat of the remnants of the Army of the Red Garter, Perfe's hope for succor evaporated. The city fell several days later, and its citizenry became the first to feel the heavy hand of the King of War.

Southbank, Eastpoint and Riverjoin are Arrolian cities. These are cities that are dominated by the people and religion from the Lunar Empire, which lies to the east of Fronela, but are not part of it.



Southbank was founded by them in 1388. Originally called Starvdyke, the city once spanned the Janube but the Syndic's Ban had a harsh effect on it when the northern populace was cut off from both the southern half of the city and the surrounding countryside. The buildings on the north bank were razed and planted as farmland. Once a center of solar worship, Southbank is still ruled by the Golden Tyrant, though most citizens worship the Red Moon instead of the sun.

Eastpoint was founded many years ago as the easternmost outpost of the Loskalmi Empire. It became independent when the Loskalmi Empire was reduced in size. In 1384 the King of Valmark allowed Pelorian refugees, fleeing Sheng Seleris, to settle in the depopulated city. Thus Eastpoint was the first of the Arrolian cities to worship the Red Moon yet not be part of the Lunar Empire. Later, the Carmanians, in a bid to conquer the Arrolians, seized Eastpoint; a hundred years later, the Carmanians were tossed out of Eastpoint by the White Bear Empire. The people of Eastpoint still venerate the Red Goddess and still despise the Carmanians.

The third Arrolian city of Riverjoin was founded in 1396 by refugees fleeing the Carmanian seizure of Eastpoint. In the city's early days Orlanthe and Arrolians coexisted peacefully, but renewed Carmanian oppression at Eastpoint brought an influx of Arrolians to the city. As a majority, the Arrolians built a

Temple of the Red Moon in the city square, much to the consternation of the Orlanthe whose influence has, since the Ban, diminished to almost nothing.

## The War Against War. †

By Heather Bruton

(Pictured Above) The Knights of the Order of the Swallow have heard the word of God, and they have seen the threats to the Dream of Siglat. Brave knights, bright in burnished armor and battle magics, are preparing to combat the filth that opposes them. It is a holy war. It is the Hero War.

(Pictured at Right) The Slaves of Destruction serve their master willingly. Their glory is war, their pleasure is hurting, and their desire is to be freed of their obligations to their master, War. They will be free when there is either no more war or when all is war. They fight the Hero War.

## The Kingdom of War, A Never-ending Nightmare

In the days before the Ban the Kingdom of War did not exist. No one knows what caused it to appear but everyone can see that the Kingdom of War is growing. Diplomats who have endeavored to meet with the King of War have met instead with gruesome fates. The only intelligence to make it outside the borders of that hideous land paint a bleak picture of pillaged wasteland where farms and towns once stood. The Kingdom's only inhabitants are the Armies of War and the misery they breed.

Somehow—doubtless through the magics of the King of War or his hidden Queen—the Armies of War are well-armed, well-equipped, and well-fed. Discipline is absolute; commands are obeyed without question. Their vanquished receive no quarter.

The people of Fronela are ignorant of the interior workings of the Kingdom of War, but they are very familiar with its expansionist efforts. Most familiar to the Fronelans is the ordering of War's army. The basic unit appears to be the company. The Companies of War are outfitted to be uniform in dress and armament; each company worships its own patron deity, saint or spirit. Within each company may be found men from many races and tribes mingled together, united by their worship of the unit's god. Rathori tribesmen rub shoulders with renegade Fronelan knights, mammoth-riding mahouts, stalwart Jonating pikemen, and diminutive skirmishers riding upon impalas.

The first emissaries from the Kingdom of War are the refugees fleeing the latest conquest. Next come the bandits and brigands that prey on the displaced, always seeking the quick profit and to stay one step ahead of the Armies of War. Any farmers, craftspeople, or townsfolk who haven't fled at this point then encounter War's Outriders: scouts, raiders, skirmishers, and pioneers exploring routes for the armies behind.

Some people have tried paying tribute or conceding lands to avert War but in every case this only prolongs the inevitable. When the Army of War arrives it proves itself to be a very efficient machine. Animals and small children are slaughtered for the stew-pot. Older children and adults are assigned to a Company of War if fit; otherwise, into the stew-pot or . Nothing is left behind when the Army of War moves on.





## Doctrines of the Hrestoli Church

The Loskalmi worship the One God, and hold Hrestol his prophet as the human ideal. Because of this, the Loskalmi church is often called the Hrestoli church. Several doctrines differentiate it from the related Rokari church of southern Genertela.

### The Doctrine of Equality

This states that all men are born equal. This led to King Siglat's implementation of Hrestol's Just Society, based entirely upon meritocratic ideals. Other Malkioni creeds accept the veracity of the Hrestoli arguments, but deny that this was meant to be the fundamental basis of society.

### The Doctrine of the Hidden Mover

This doctrine reveals the ultimate identity of God is Irensavel, totally separate from the world. Irensavel precedes the creation of even matter or energy. Five centuries ago the God Learners suppressed the doctrine, but its truth was more powerful than the God Learners. According to the Loskalmi, the corrupt God Learner's god, Makan, was unveiled as an evil demiurge that sought to ensnare the ignorant into the world of matter so that they would never know Solace. Unsurprisingly, Hrestoli adherents characterize the Rokari worshippers as dupes of Makan.

### The Doctrine of a Personal God

God is not impersonal. God can be experienced by people who exercise their will and attune that will to the ways of the Hidden Mover by applying their powers to improve the material world. This way of life includes a strong code of ethics, said to transcend humanity and even the gods.

### The Doctrine of Malkion's Divinity

Irensaval manifested Himself as Malkion, who was an incarnation of the Hidden Mover that came to the world to teach the truth to humankind. He was more than just a prophet or philosopher (as the southern church insists.) His appearance in a male form confirms the superiority of the male gender.

### The Doctrine of the Saints

Saints are mortal beings who attained the highest understanding and experiences of Irensaval and also extended those as teachings to other people. Everyone has the opportunity to become a saint, and the purpose of the Church is to facilitate that opportunity.

## Wild Fronela, the Rough Frontier

Outside of civilized Loskalm, the city-states along the Janube and the Kingdom of War is Wild Fronela: Charg, Jonatela, Maidstone Mountains, Rathorela, Tastolar, and Ygg's Isles.

The hills of Charg are still enclosed by the Syndic's Ban and therefore utterly isolated from the surrounding lands of Rathorela and Jonatela. In the east an invisible and impassible barrier runs down the middle of the Esel River from the borders of the Lunar Empire south to the Nidan Mountains. An impenetrable fog lies between Charg and the waters of the Sweet Sea and Janube River. Charg's neighbors fear that if the Ban should be lifted, Charg will be another Kingdom of War—or something worse.

To the west of Charg, lying at the feet of the Nidan Mountains, is the Kingdom of Jonatela, a wide land of river valleys dotted with towns and small cities. Castles, rich and modern in the lowlands, poor and ancient in the highlands, house the boyars and the ruling nobles. Jonatela was widely fragmented under the Ban; its king has labored mightily in the years since to reunite the kingdom. This has often meant the overthrow of the old tribal nobility, much to the dismay of the stubbornly pagan peasantry. Eastern Jonatela is now under the king's sway; his Malkioni boyars keep the peace and provide him with armored horsemen for the king's latest efforts to bring the County of Timms again under Jonatelan rule.

In the bitterly cold Maidstone Mountains live the remnants of an odd and mysterious species, the Grotarons. No one goes into their mountains, and most people do not quite believe what they say about themselves. These Maidstone Archers are great in stature, reaching heights of nine feet. They all have three arms, the third growing out of what would be the back of the neck of a human. On each hand is a yellow eye and in the center of their torso is a large mouth. They say they subsist by hunting the saber-toothed mountain mammoth, though no non-Grotaron has ever seen these mountain mammoths. The Grotarons hunt their prey, which leaps from mountaintop to mountaintop, with their immense composite bows that are made from the bone and sinew of the very creatures they hunt.

The dense virgin forests of Rathorela shelter Bear Hsunchen tribesmen. The Rathori hibernate during the fierce winters that bury their entire land in deep snow. According to the Rathori, the White Bear once gave some of them the power to stay active during the cold winter months, but that power was lost when the renegade Harrek the Berserk slew and skinned the white bear spirit. The Bear Hsunchen do seem to have a gift for slumber: most were sleeping when the Ban fell. They slept through the whole of the Ban thinking only a single winter had passed when at last they awoke. The Rathori alone in Glorantha use longbows that can go entirely through a tree at a hundred paces. They learned to make these when they accepted the refugee Aldryami of Erigia who would otherwise have perished without a land to live in.

The plains of Tastolar are largely occupied. Only the Uncolings pass through. They are Reindeer Hsunchen who migrate with their herds from the tundra of Porent to their winter grounds on the taiga of Gharkor. In the spring and autumn the Uncolings come together in tent cities, some of which reach prodigious size. Other clans of hsunchen that are found in Gharkor include the Sabadari, or wolverine people; Ghadari, or wooly rhinoceros; and Telmori, wolf people.





## †‡ The End of the World

by Steve Swenston

Harrek the Berserk is the greatest warrior in the world. No man, woman or immortal has stood against him in combat and escaped afterwards to anywhere but the Land of the Dead. He came from the Bear People in Fronela after capturing their secret god, the White Bear, to be his slave. He fought to leadership among the Yggites, mustered a fleet and migrated from Ygg's Isles. He ravaged all western Genertela before settling at Three Step Isles, south of Dragon Pass. He plans to lead a great fleet all around the Inner Seas and take treasure from every port and every country. No one expects him to fail.

Harrek is one of many great heroes whose presence and actions help to shape the Hero Wars that will shatter Glorantha's peace.

## Companies

A bewildering array of war gods are worshipped in this kingdom whose only pursuit is that of war. Even gods who are normally antagonistic are found being worshipped together. Grim Humakt and howling berserk Urox are common enough together, but here they stand next to their normal enemies, such as the pike unit that worships Lodril and an archery unit worshipping Yelm Sagittus. Even the Malkioni saints are here: a regiment of Saint Talor's laughing knights was heard at Perfe. Furthermore, new gods whose names are unknown are found. Some of the most feared are:

The company of **Arrow Rainers** are armed with Rathori bows, even though at any given time there may be not a single Rathori among the company's soldiers. The Arrow Rainers aren't ambush fighters like the Rathori but instead stand boldly in the field of battle and drop torrents of their deadly shafts into the enemy. The showers of arrows unleashed during the Battle of Hendoros was said to have blotted out the noonday sun.

**The Company of the Engine** stands out among the many companies of siegecraft. Their terrifying siege engine has no levers or pulleys. It is simply a bronze cylinder that gigantic stones with a deafening thunderclap whose noise alone terrifies normal people. At the siege of Perfe a commander at the walls was unfortunate enough to be in its line of fire: his head was taken off and flung more than six hundred yards.

**The Legion of Ghouls** gain magical powers by eating the dead. They often appear during night attacks; during the day they unnerve the enemy and spread disease. The Armies of War have no funerary rites and are said to feed their dead to the Legion of Ghouls.

**The Dedicated Destroyers** were vicious warriors who were catapulted into the city and who, upon landing, slew everything nearby, even household vermin. After being dispatched their corpses revealed they were untroubled by the broken bones from their hard landings.

In the highlands of Tastolar is the native home of the Third Eye Blue people, a tribe of talented metal smiths who make their living selling implements to the residents of Fronela. Clans and families of them have migrated from their homeland over the ages. The Third Eye Blue tribe claim to have formerly ruled all of Fronela until jealous Mostali destroyed them in a war. True or not, the Third Eye Blue continue to suffer from the effects of the Ban, which still lies on their ancestral home.

Off the northwestern Fronelan coast is a small archipelago known as Ygg's Isles. The Yggites also inhabit coastal Fronela in Winterwood and are friendly with the Aldryami there. During the Closing their ships could not go whaling but they could still hunt seals and fish from their small boats and over generations they have exhausted those natural resources. When Dormal arrived the Yggites were eating their own children to survive. The Yggites quickly took to the seas again and came into conflict with the Loskalmi, who sought to control their raiding and trading. Sporadic naval battles marked the next few decades until the Loskalmi

## 大 The Perfecti Heresy 大

Lately, the church has again been troubled by the Heresy of the Perfecti. The Perfecti disdain the showy parades that are alleged to manifest the Ideal of Loskalm in favor of rigid spiritual discipline. They claim to master the real truths of Hrestol. Instead of outwardly mastering the ranks of the castes, they seek to transcend the castes entirely to become Perfect Men. They do this through severe asceticism. Once they have achieved transcendence they seek to spread their truths by becoming Martyrs to the cause. The most common route to martyrdom is to disrupt the Loskalmi rituals and expose their false view of the Ideal.

killed the Yggite king and built Coldfort on the coast near their islands. Harrek the Berserk took refuge among them once, and then led many away in a migration south to settle the lands of Seshnela, the Three Steps Isles, and Jrustela. Since that migration tensions have eased between the Yggites and Loskalmi, as the Loskalmi find it easier to hire or pay off the troublemakers than to fight them. Yggites worship Ygg, a storm god who rules winter and the north wind. However, they actively disdain Orlanth, a storm deity foisted on them by the God Learners.

Winterwood is a dense forest of primeval pines and other evergreens. All elves know it was the Last Forest during the great winter when only the green elves still stood awake. Its Eldest Tree is the oldest in the temperate world. Erontree is where another Eldest Tree still stands. Both forests are in close contact, and large parties of elves regularly petition the king of Loskalm for permission to pass across his territory.



## Church Organization

The Ecclesiarch leads the Hrestoli church from his seat in the imposing Cathedral of Southpoint. Eight cardinals, one for each province, ably assist the Ecclesiarch. Each cardinal's province is divided into spiritual dioceses that are overseen by Vicars. Beneath the dioceses are the parishes which are overseen by the Liturgists, the lowest of the Lords Spiritual.

Serving the Lords Spiritual are the wizards from the different orders within Loskalm. Because of the very high standards set to become a wizard there is a chronic shortage of spiritual guides, especially in the rural regions of Loskalm. For this reason certain pious farmers are blessed as acolythists to fulfill the spiritual needs of their fellow farmers. They are taught a few magics for this purpose but nothing profound.

The village churches are ubiquitous, the city churches numerous, and the cathedrals spectacular. They are all magical. Churches derive most of their spiritual protection from the wizards; the buildings, by nature of their proportions and relationships, hold the magic necessary to power these defensive spells.

## CHAPTER NINE

## ⊕ Aldryami 大

*Also known as: Wood men (Pelorian), Elves (Malkioni), Fethloni (Kralori).*

Elves belong to the vegetable kingdom. Essentially mobile plants, they are significantly different from other humanoids and beasts; some even have leaves for hair. Elves are smaller than humans and are markedly slimmer. Their most striking difference from humans are their eyes. These have neither white nor pupil, and come in many colors, such as pale chartreuse, violet, silver, or light pink.

Elves are tied to the woods through their preternatural sense of touch. This is so well developed that elves can sense the health of any nearby plant and whether or not it is stressed or in pain. The sensations generated by the forest are so strong that many elves lack any sense that they are separate from the Forest. A few elves are deaf to this and are called rootless by their kin.

Elves reproduce by internal fertilization. The female gives birth to a coconut-sized seed that is planted in a secret place. The seed, under the parents' tender loving care, sprouts a stalk and leaves and eventually produces a large fruit. When it is ripe, the parents open it and within it is a small elf child. It takes about two years from fertilization to the opening of the ripe fruit. The new elf child in age and maturity is similar to a human child between four and six years of age.

Dryads are tree spirits, and are invariably female. They are necessary for some elf species to reproduce, taking the place of female elves. When a dryad is pollinated by an elf her tree produces the elf-fruit, either as a true fruit growing from a branch, a protuberance on the trunk, or a sucker growing from the base of the dryad's tree. The exact manner of growing the seedpod depends solely on the Dryad. Cross-pollination of species is rare, though usually possible between elves of the same type (Green, Brown or Yellow).

Elves reach physical maturity at twenty summers but apparently their stamens or pistils do not become active for another twenty. They live for at least two centuries becoming more and more treelike. Elves live in the forests, needing no shelter. They build no buildings and make no cities.

Although elves are closely related to specific types of trees, such as oak elves and birch elves, three broad types of elves can be distinguished: Brown (Deciduous trees), Green (Evergreens) and Yellow (Jungle Evergreens). In addition, many authorities also list the Blue Elves of the Sea, the Red Elves of the Pamaltelan Swamps and the Black Elves tending fungus forests. None of the latter can be considered true elves.

Brown elves do not sleep except in winter. They find a hollow tree or bury themselves and remain comatose till the spring. Their spirits go to the Afterlife during the winter. Brown elves can successfully reproduce with dryads.

## ⊕ Aldrya, Goddess of the Woods ⊕

Aldrya rules all regions where trees dominate, whether pine forests, deciduous woodlands, or tropical jungle. She commands everything within the woods including plants, animals, wells and springs, bright glades and dappled glens, emptiness and shadow, ghosts and terrifying spirits. She is the mother of the elves and dryads, who are her servants in the forest. Aldrya once blanketed all Glorantha in the Green Age and many Aldryami are seeking to bring back that pleasant time by enveloping the land in new, dense forests. Aldrya is the Grower of the Forest, and every elf knows of the Taker. In all ways, the Taker is the equivalent of the Grower, yet opposite. The Taker is necessary for the existence of the Grower. A common elf truism states "There is no life without death, no death without life".

All Aldryami can hear the Song of Aldrya. It is not noise heard through the ears but sensations felt by the whole body, making them aware of the life of the forest. Sick and wounded plants cause discordance in the Song that compel any nearby Aldryami to heal or kill them. Most Aldryami are simply content to bask in the song that washes over them and consequently any magic they use is unthinking. A few elves are aware of their own separation from the Song and find that they can consciously influence its course. They are famed as great wonderworkers.

Gods are unknown to the Elves. Instead they sense distinct several euphonies within the Song of the Woods. When humans attempt to understand these euphonies, they view them as gods or spirits of the woods for they lack the heightened senses of the Aldryami.

*Continued on next page . . .*

Green elves inhabit the evergreen woods. When a green elf mates with a dryad, no children result. Green elves either sleep during the day or during the night. They have the heavy responsibility of defending the forests in the winter.

Yellow elves inhabit the Jungle and are much less prominent in their forests than other elves. All yellow elves are male and must mate with dryads.

ARSTOLA FOREST is primarily a brown elf forest in Maniria. It consists of thick deciduous woods that covers the foothills of the Mislari Mountains south to Wenelia.

BALLID FOREST contains a mixed population of Green and Brown Elves. Elves claim their forest is blessed by one of the six Great Trees grown from the seed of the First Tree. No outsider has ever seen this tree.



**HALAMALAO** is the enveloping warmth, the unfailing light and the wise father. Humans can only see him as the sun in the sky but the elves feel his full presence through the Song. Halamalao is prominent among most young elves whose stamens or pistils are too immature to fully appreciate the Song. Instead Halamalao's vibrant touch fills them with a bustling vibrant wanderlust that often enables them to wander beyond the borders of their woods without fear. Most followers of Halamalao are part of the Marching AldryamiAldryami and charged with the defense of the forest. Eventually as the elves mature, they appreciate new joys and most leave Halamalao behind.



**BEBESTER** is the Taker that destroys the forest so that it can grow anew. When Bebester strikes down an AldryamiAldryami, its soul goes to the Taker's land for a while before being reborn. Elves do not fear Bebester for they visit the land of the Taker every year in their winter-sleep.



**ERON** is the waters that nurture plants and heal wounds and the Aldryami invoke him whenever they desire these things.



**FALAMAL** is the seed father that begat all the plants of the world upon the earth goddesses. He is the weakest of all gods yet is protected by all the Aldryami for he is the most precious.



**VRONKAL** and his small band of followers defended the lifeless woods during the Great Darkness. His long labor was rewarded at the Dawning when life returned to the world and the defenders of the forests strive to be worthy of his blessing.

In the Green Age, Aldrya and her children covered the whole world. Since that time, many of her forests have been razed and she is still bitter about her loss at the hands of other gods. The forests share her grief and are creepy towards the enemies of the trees, whomever they may be. Only in rare cases, can an outsider win the trust of the Forest. Primary among her foes are the other Elder races, especially the Mostali and Uz, who caused harm in the God's Age. They are much worse than the recent, upstart humans.

**ENKLOSO FOREST** dominates Umathela in the far south with a handful of ironwood. Its elves are a mixture of Green and Brown. It is the largest known Elf Forest in the Inner World and even rules several human tribes.

**ERONTREE** is a mighty elf forest, primarily inhabited by Green Elves, though a sizable minority of Brown Elves also lives here. There is limited contact between Erontree and Loskalm.

The vast ERRINORU JUNGLE is inhabited by Yellow Elves. In the Imperial Age, this was the home of the Elf Empire of Errinoru. But a special pest devoured the house of Errinoru and now each of the many forests are separate.

FETHLON is the only yellow elf jungle on Genertela, although some brown elves reside there. It is friendly to the Teshnans and hostile to Kralorela.

The Jrusteli ISLE OF GRIGDOM is home to the green and brown elves who were settled here by the elf hero, Arkans Warwood.

KANTHOR'S ISLES are home to many green and brown elves. Despite their close proximity to human lands, little is known about them due to the presence of the Luatha.

TARINWOOD is virgin forest, full of brown elves. They maintain a traditional aloofness and forbidding presence from their woody strongholds.

VRALOS is a Brown Elf Forest in Umathela. It maintains an alliance with the human city-state of Cerngoth and frequently raids Fonrit.

WINTERWOOD is believed by the resident Green elves to be the birthplace of the first green elves and that it was also Vronkal's last stronghold against the Darkness. There is little contact between Winterwood and Loskalm.

Many smaller Aldryami enclaves can be found throughout Glorantha, from small forests to groves. A few are corrupted by Oblivion, and are dangerous places for anyone to enter.

## History of the Elves

*(While relating the history of the forest we have chosen to convert the poetic speaking style of the elves into dull drab prose for reasons of clarity and beg the reader's forgiveness for our crime.)*



During the Green Age, everything grew and the entirety of creation was filled with life. But, since the Taker had not yet come into the world, the Growth strained the fabric of the universe like a root growing through stone. A tiny crack appeared into the universe and a bit of oblivion, which takes without returning, seeped into the world. The elves were plucked out from Aldrya and experienced awareness of themselves.

Taker was born to prevent the abuses of Grower. All good things became bad. Water turned to dust, earth turned to stone and light turned to darkness. Taker moved across the world slaying all that he saw. Many gods fell leaving behind only darkness, stone and dust. It soon became obvious that the excesses of the Taker were as bad as the excesses of the Grower. The world grew weaker and weaker, and oblivion once more seeped in. The entire world was dying. Many elves fought valiantly during the Age of the

Taker, all trying to preserve the sacred growth and all failing. Eventually, all creatures of the Grower were dead, and the creatures of the Taker began to take themselves.

When everything was dead, Grower and Taker were reborn in the world. In the past, they had worked against each other, rather than together. Now they were changed. Taker took that which was unrecoverable, so that new Growth could occur. Taker destroyed all of that was left of the world, so that it could begin anew. Grower accepted Taker, knowing that it would bring better life. When all was gone and the world nearly extinguished, Grower regrew the world [0 ST].

In this reborn world, one forest was very friendly to other races. In the place where Dragons Live, Fwalfa Oakheart had fought in a great battle against Chaos. Other races and peoples cooperated in that fight, called the Unity Battle. They fought as one against chaos. Since then, they remained friends. Under the leadership of Ezkankeko the Troll they formed the Unity Council, and brought their message of unity to the shattered survivors of the Taker. Over the centuries the Unity Council met more and more peoples; some only clans, others stronger tribes. When they met the Pelorians, the Horse Riders scorned their Unity and fought [167 ST]. The Council was devastated and did not know what to do for a long time. At first they tried war and the growth of forests seized the lands of the horse riders, forcing them out of Peloria. But the horse rider's former subjects decided they had no need of Unity, either.

The Council decided that they needed to reform the unity of all beings in their world. To do this, they decided to create a new deity of harmony and peace. Saratin Seomale, the speaker for Talastar Forest, was their mover. He saw the new deity as being the reconciliation between the world and oblivion, just as the Grower and Taker had been reconciled. The world would be grander than it was in the age of the Grower. Ezkankeko and the trolls opposed this because their evil natures did not want to be changed for the better. They disunited the Council along with their Orlanthi and Dragonewt Allies [365 ST]. War quickly followed and it was obvious they had been preparing for it for some time. However, nothing could stop the birth of the New God, and even the sun stopped in the sky to lend his light at the critical point [375 ST]. Nysalor the White Light was born.

The Trolls summoned Kygor to devour Nysalor but he defeated her in the battle of Night and Day [379 ST]. In her hatred, Kygor sacrificed her fertility to Oblivion to give birth to a new child of Taker and Oblivion: Gbaji. Many Council Dwarves saw this as a good thing, and negotiated with the enemy before they were unmasked and slain. Nothing could halt Gbaji's progress. Even the valiant sacrifice of the entire Marching Aldryami at the Battle of the Traveling Stone failed to slow him down [444 ST]. Gbaji entered Dorastor and was met by Nysalor, who defeated him at the cost of his existence [450 ST].

With the true intentions of the trolls and dwarves exposed they renewed their war on the world. At first their strikes were quick and deadly, such as





## ⊕ Elves

By Heather Bruton

The Aldryami are Plant Beings. Most are ordinary, with roots and leaves and seeds, spores or shoots. One small part of the Plant Beings is different, and they are called Elves. They have two unique features in Plantdom, for they can move about at will, regardless of Nature; and they are self-conscious. Nonetheless, they are a part of their forest, and they know it, and never feel safe when apart from it. They have not mustered a force like an army for 800 years, because every time they did they were destroyed. They have a better plan, and have been saving up seeds and magic to grow them for centuries. They ran some tests. They plan to march overland and turn it all into a vast forest overnight. They are not telling where, though.

the Seven Kidnappings that destroyed the Forest of Talastar. But with help from Errinoru from the far south [c. 735 ST], we fought back and eventually their persecutions ceased for humans started to fight both them and us.

The war against the humans was both longer and harder than the war against the trolls and dwarves, and is still not over. The most wicked among them have summoned the Red Moon, a child of Oblivion, and used it to burn down two entire forests: Rist [1296 ST] and Erigia [1279 ST]. But their onslaught will end for the Great Reforestation is nigh. Soon thick woods will reclaim the fertile fields of the humans in a single day.

*Who is within our forest, who is against it?*

We are one with our forest. We live to maintain it and all things within. Your life was given so that you can protect the trees and growing things. Females are the seed bearers who increase our species. Males are the pollen bearers and expendable. Dryads are the spirits of the trees. Some trees are so magical that their spirits can take our form and walk among us. But they can never leave the vicinity of their tree. Just as we are to the trees, runners are to bushes and shrubs. They lack size, courage and awareness. Sprites are likewise kindred to flowers and weeds.

ZASARA SSH, (Taker's Children, trolls) are a race of Takers that seek to consume all, enclosing the world in their darkness. They delight in devouring us and our forest.

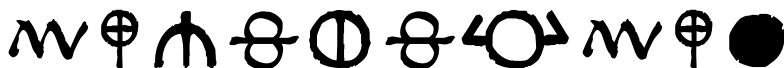
SOYENA SSHNANA, (Song's Wrong Dancers, humans) are our foes. They have no respect for our forest. They proliferate like the Grower gone mad, and chop our forests like an insane Taker.

EKEEM SSH, (Stone's children, dwarfs) are sterile, lifeless, children of the stone. They were fashioned by Oblivion to mock the Grower.

*What should I do for Our Forest?*

You should be with Aldrya. Protect our forest as yourself. When you see an outsider that frightens you, you must send your fear into Our Forest, so that the brave ones will investigate. If you are unafraid, then hide and observe the outsider and send your impressions of it into Our Forest, so that we know what to expect.

You must oppose Oblivion in all its forms: chaos, undead and dwarf. Oblivion is the only thing that can destroy our forest.



# CHAPTER TEN

## ① Peloria ⑤

The wide basin of Peloria is divided into three parts which each cluster around the three large rivers that empty into the White Sea. Pelanda and Carmania are on the westernmost river; Dara Happa, Darjiin, and the Provinces are on the central river; Rinliddi and Oraya are in the east. The Lunar Empire rose from the ashes of the Carmanian Empire which had, in its time, conquered the Dara Happan Empire (including Darjiin and Rinliddi).

Four centuries ago, Sedenya the Red Goddess was born in the small town of Torang, in what is now the First Blessed Satrapy. She came to be amid desperate rebellion against the oppressive Carmanian Empire that held all Peloria in thrall. Ultimately, after terrible hardships and heroic events, she destroyed it. Although her teachings had condemned the Empire, the Empire became a vessel to bring her message to all. So began the first of many contradictions that embodies the Lunar Empire.

### The Lunar Empire, the People of the Moon

An upper class exists in all parts of the empire that is composed of people who are in the know rather than the lucky few that were born into wealth and power. Sedenya's light has produced a new way of living through the worship of her Lunar Way that frees people from customs that were eons old when the Goddess was born. These modern people are the Lunar citizens who were mentioned above. The Lunars are most common in Dara Happa and in Rinliddi, where they are still a substantial minority. Otherwise, the Lunars can be found all over the Empire, and always at the highest levels of government. Some cities are thoroughly lunarized. The largest Lunar city is Glamour, the Imperial Capital where the Red Emperor lives. The town of Torang, where Sedenya was born, is now a bustling city and the Highest Priestesses of most Lunar Deities reside here. Graclodot, home to the Great Sister, and Jillaro, founded by Hwarin Dalthippa, are the other major Lunar cities.

The Empire brought peace to nations that have festering hatreds for one another. Before the coming of Sedenya only the Sun Emperor could bring a trouble peace because he always favored his own land of Dara Happa. Now with the teachings of the Goddess tranquility reigns, at least on a national level.

Lunars make up the ruling echelons of the imperial government and almost every local potentate has at least one Lunar assistant to smooth relations with the Imperial Government and other rulers. In Dara Happa and Rinliddi Lunar Citizens are much more common, and even lower social classes have a large proportion of Citizens. The presence of Lunars throughout most of the Empire lies between these two extremes. Strictly speaking, only worshippers of the Goddess or her associated deities are

## Dart Competitions

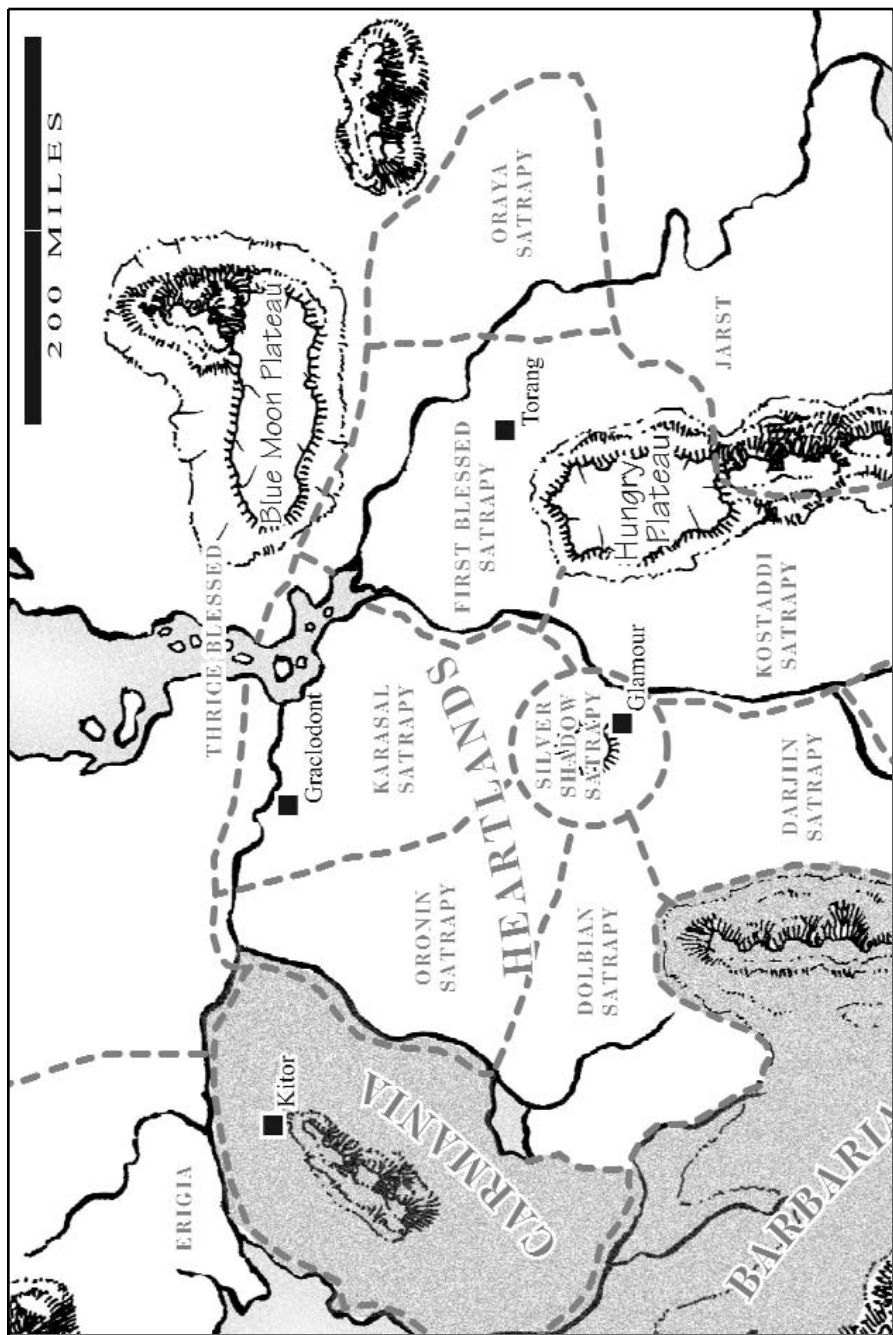
The Lunar Empire is dominated by a powerful, entrenched elite who are connected by ties of blood and patronage. But it still has room for the ambitious and powerful to rise. Many of today's greatest clans were virtual nobodies only a few centuries ago, and even common peasants have become satraps. Lunars attribute this to the Red Goddess helping her people fulfill their potential in the mortal and magical worlds.

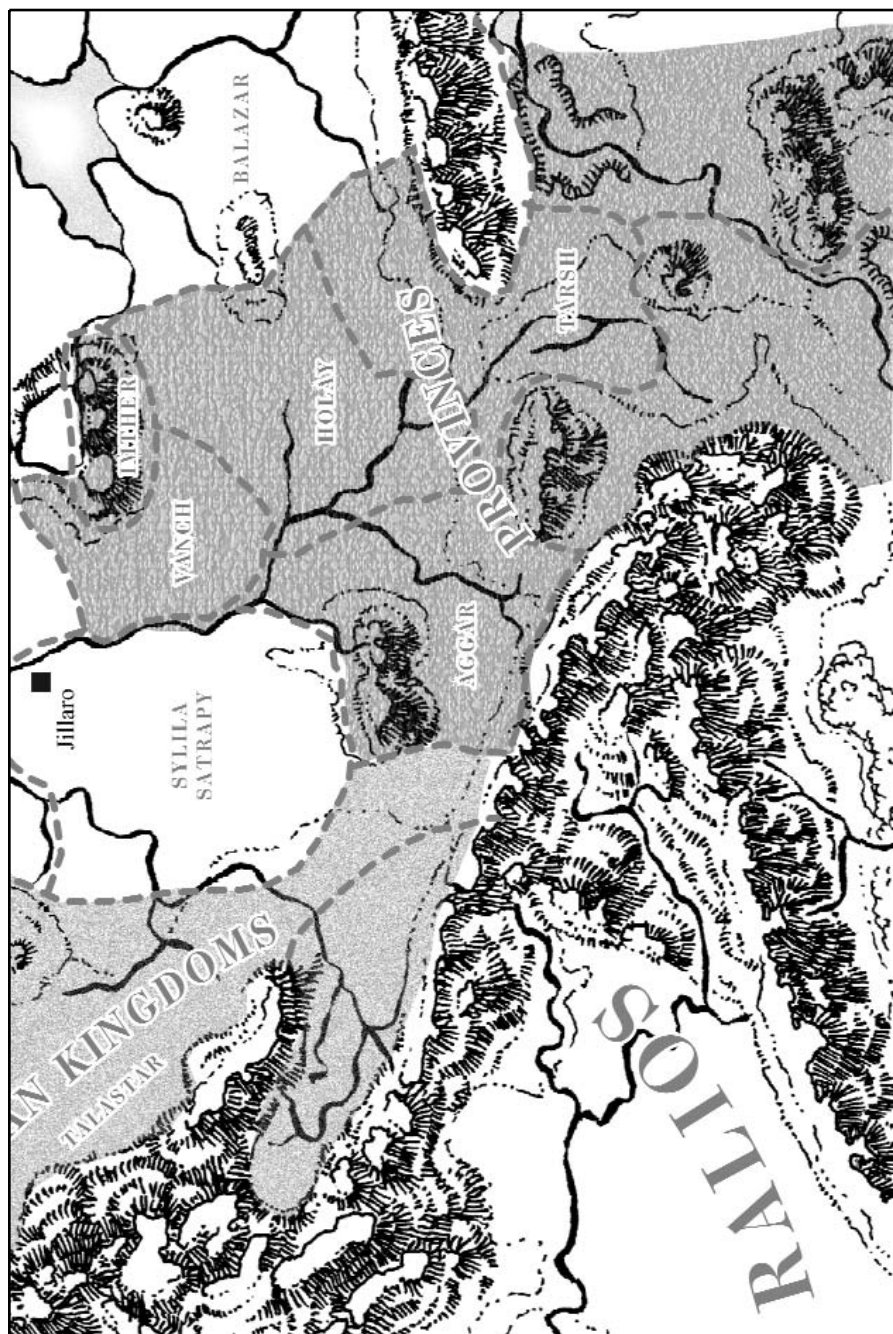
Others subscribe a more mundane reason for this success. These days, family promotion is often won through the notorious dart competitions. The most visible Dart competitions are hugely popular public spectacles, sponsored by the Lunar aristocracy to settle their scores. But rather than being a contest of skill at throwing darts, they are a euphemism for assassination. The term was coined after a prominent noble was killed by a "drunken mis-throw" of a poisoned dart during an athletic event. This legitimate violence keeps the most ambitious and powerful people of the empire on their toes at all times.

Many of these contests are simple public spectacles, fought between mercenaries for whatever their employer has wagered and watched by huge crowds. Mercenaries are the usual players hired in the dart competitions, with the best coming from the Lunar University, retired army veterans and the occasional barbarian. Many a hero of the Empire has honed his or her skills in such contests. Much more deadly are the "secret games" where magical assassins are used.


The Emperor tolerates these games as long as they do not interfere with his revenues. Indeed, rather than wasting resources to raise large armies to fight each other, the dart competitions keep public costs—and destruction—to a minimum. Thus a satrap and his entire family might fall in a dart competition, but the trade will pass unhindered, the cities will not be besieged, nor the fields burned. On occasion, the competitions have overstepped the bounds set by the Emperor. On one notable occasion, when the feuds burst into open warfare and the Imperial Army was sent in, the Emperor himself was slain by Harrek the Berserk in a particularly unfortunate incident.

Lunars. However, on rare occasions eloquent speakers of New Pelorian become sufficiently enlightened by the language to be lunarized, even if they have never worshipped Sedenya or her fellow deities. This has caused some rebels to limit their knowledge of New Pelorian for fear of becoming a Lunar. Most Lunars continue to identify with their mother-culture and to participate in local rites and live as the locals do. Thus a Lunar from Raibanth is still considered to be Dara Happan. Such identifications are encouraged by the Empire; for Sedenya was present in one form or another in the founding myths of all Pelorians. Only in a few parts of the Empire are the Lunars numerous enough to form the majority population and identify themselves as Lunars first.





## The Celestial Religion


 Since the first Dawn all mortals can point to one object of reliability in the sky, the Sun. The Sun is known by many names across Glorantha but his greatest worshippers, the Dara Happans of Peloria, call him YELM THE EMPEROR. According to the Dara Happans, all other gods serve him, and people worship Yelm through these lesser deities. So close is Yelm to the Ultimate Being that only the Emperors and their direct descendants can worship him directly.

One hundred and more gods and goddesses serve Yelm and his divine family. Yelm has designated each of their duties so that they may serve him best. Yelm's court is the model for Dara Happan society; thus there is a god of farmers, a god of fishermen, a goddess of healers, and so forth.

Being so close to the One, bright Yelm's pure light creates an intense shadow in which the malignant and monstrous hide. The Golden Age, a time of perfect life when Yelm ruled the cosmos from his burning throne in the sky, ended when rebels burst from the shadows and slew him. Deprived of Yelm's pure light of the world, the cosmos began destroying itself in the most horrible way.

Cast lifeless into the darkest hell, Yelm saved the cosmos by sitting in judgement of himself. Through his exercise of his forces of ultimate justice his enemies were forced to pay him obeisance in hell. One by one they prostrated themselves at Yelm's feet with piteous cries his enemies and offered themselves up for sacrifice. Yelm was freed by their offerings and rose triumphantly into the sky once again to universal rejoicing. That was the first Dawn.

*Continued on next page . . .*

In spite of any hostilities their home culture may have, Lunars are inclined to deal in good faith with other Lunars. This is most marked when Dara Happan and Darjiinian Lunars meet. It is as if they can set aside ancient prejudices and see the humanity in others. Even fluent speakers of New Pelorian have experienced this aura of goodwill. Consequently Lunars are the intermediaries of the empire between their own folks and the Lunars of other peoples. It should be remembered that the Lunar Way does not transform people into mindless, trusting imbeciles. The curses of a Lunar fishwife in New Pelorian are just as foul as other fishwives'. The Goddess just causes people to evaluate others as they are, not on the basis of prior prejudices. Lunars can still hate one another for personal reasons, although naïve missionaries of the Goddess deny even this.

Yelm's death and subsequent resurrection give him power over the rebels hiding in his shadow. His servant gods like Shargash and Antirius now monitor them to keep the world healthy.

Ⓟ SEDENYA is the Lunar goddess, the Red Moon that arose less than three centuries. This daughter of Yelm was dismembered during the gods' war, her parts hidden by the shadowy rebels who sought to prevent their future illumination. The pieces of Sedenya were so well hidden that she was not reborn at the Dawn. Only through the efforts of the Seven Mothers were her buried parts found and reassembled. For twenty-seven years after her reassembly Sedenya was human. During this time she learned about herself and about the Great Self, discovering how to embrace the creatures in Yelm's shadow and to bring many of them into the light, unharmed. [

During her reemergence as a goddess many nations—foremost among them the Carmanians, who ruled the Empire then—did not want to see the light of the Red Moon and warred against the goddess. Sedenya vanquished the Carmanians and their allies after illuminating their own gods at the Battle of Four Arrows of Light. Since then, the teachings of the Red Goddess have spread across Peloria, and Yelm has declared her the patron goddess of the Empire.

Pelorian metaphysicians divide the world into fire and fuel or, more properly, into that which is consuming and that which is to be consumed. Fire is the essence of the Ultimate Being while fuel is the mortal world that everyone sees. Magic, the metaphysicians declare, is the moment when fire and fuel are one and the Ultimate Being is visible.

Humans are capable of magic because they can make fire. The light of the Sun is pure mystical fire that only the most holy and devout can wield or even look at, for it is a fire that burns itself as fuel. Others are forced to use low fires to burn their sacrifices in the manner prescribed by Yelm so that the gods answer their petitions. Proper sacrifices maintain the cosmic order and the myriad priests of Peloria toil tirelessly so that these rituals are done at the right time.

Sedenya shows people a different way. Not for her are the daily libations of bull's blood onto sacral flames. Instead, she teaches how to integrate the divine powers directly so that one does not need to make fire to see the Ultimate Being. She is the perfect fuel that contains its own secret fire without consuming itself.

When people die their souls go to the Underworld of their deity to be purged of the impurities of their existence before they can be reborn. Yelm's Solar religion teaches people how to purify themselves so that they will be reborn into more exalted stations until they are reborn as Sky People and never die. They become more and more spiritual and scorn materialism.



In the days before Sheng Seleris the Lunars were a tiny minority in the Empire. With the official adoption of the New Pelorian language the wisdom of Sedenya is easier for most people to understand, making the Lunars more prominent in the Heartlands. The enhanced penetration of Lunar Consciousness among the Heartlands has brought unparalleled peace and prosperity to Peloria. One consequence of the Lunar Enlightenment is that, because Lunars have no customary rights to the labor of others, they must use slaves to do their bidding. As a result, the Lunar Restoration has revitalized an archaic institution that was defunct for over a thousand years. Now vast plantations worked by slaves can be found throughout much of the Empire.

Most Lunars are subject to the laws of the place they live in. However, they form the vast majority in several key places in the Empire and must provide the institutions to rule those places. Since they have no traditions of their own to draw on, they borrow from others. The Lunar response is to adopt offices from the local authorities and require the Lunar official to perform perfunctory sacrifices to the patron gods of that office. The Lunar cities have different types of officials because they draw upon different local traditions. Glamour is run according to Dara Happan practice, while Graclodont draws from Darsenite traditions. The Unifying Moon school has been sponsoring cultural exchanges from distant parts of the Empire to help standardize Lunar urban administration.

Rufelza is all-inclusive. "We are All Us," she taught. Everyone in the Empire has a normal mistrust of outsiders, but the Goddess destroys that mistrust with her powers of *Inclusion*. Even the Chaos that terrifies both Orlanth and Kyger Litor is worthy of inclusion. To deny inclusion exposes one to internal contradictions that ultimately led to madness. Everybody knows the story of the Red Sultan who tried to deny that the Bat was worthy of inclusion and was driven mad. The Goddess has lived since the world was made, been blessed and cursed, and spent many lifetimes as a human being. She has had many forms, and lives within everyone. She revealed her mystical power, which can set anyone free if they join her. Because of this she does not seek to replace other religions but to enlighten them. The Gods of Dara Happa and Peloria have joined her. Only Orlanth in distant Dragon Pass holds out. Many people have become immortals by following Sedenya's Way. These individuals now live on the Moon, adored by their followers. Indeed, particular to many of these new deities is that no sacrifices are made to them at all, but instead private prayer is offered.

## The Lunar Empire

The Lunar Empire rules the religious and political lives of millions of people of Peloria. Many outsiders hate it for embracing Chaos, but it is probably one of the finest places to live in Glorantha. Tradition is appreciated and studied, but not slavishly adhered to. Opportunity abounds, and social and geographic mobility is widespread. Peace reigns - no major wars have been fought inside the imperial borders for over a hundred years. The Government is stable and the people are content. The "infernal presence of chaos" which terrifies the outside world is carefully avoided by most citizens, and the "taint of evil" is never touched except on a voluntary basis.

## ☾ Goddesses of the Moon ☾

Sedenya is a very complex goddess, and not easily seen in her entirety. While alive she encouraged people to choose a part of the Lunar Way which they could understand clearly and concentrate on that instead of being confused. Because of this, distinct cults have sprung up to worship her different aspects. Collectively called THE MOON GODDESSES, they are:



**SEDENYA.** The Great Goddess is the being who combines all of the aspects of the moon, lunar cycles and other collective powers into her own being. Most people worship one of her aspects.



**RUFELZA** is the creator of sex and death and is worshipped mainly by the mobs of Peloria. As the Red Goddess her color is seen as more important than her lunar nature.



**NATHA**, as befits a lunar goddess in existence since the Creation, has many names and aspects and fine temples where the educated and sophisticated gather to worship. In the Storm and Darkness Ages she was conquered and degraded by the gods but she persevered despite the suffering. At last she used her secret and joined fire to fuel again and brought it back to life.





**TARALTARA** is a mystical power rather than a goddess and is the ultimate understanding of the lunar goddess Sedenya. Few worship Taraltara, but those who do can obtain great power.


The Red Moon Goddess said, "We are All Us." Her government and religion are efforts to bring together the diverse parts of the world in a benign and meaningful manner. Both government and religion are headed by the Red Emperor. The Red Emperor is the absolute head of the Empire. Only a few beings are equal to him, and none can claim to be his superior. As the Son of the Moon he incarnates the Imperial Powers for the Goddess and is answerable only to the mysterious Egi for his decisions. All citizens of the Empire worship him. He can empower chosen representatives with a portion of his magical Self to assist them in their tasks.

The myriad imperial administrations and temples are all ultimately responsible to a select coterie of officials known as the **FIRST CIRCLE**, named after the imaginary line in Yuthuppan Celestionomy that surrounds the Upper Heavens. In this body are the highest authorities of the Empire such as Bellux Maximus the Imperial Overlord, Great Sister, and favored Satraps. The membership of the First Circle is wholly ad-hoc, and the Emperor can create and dismiss officials at will. Given the current inclinations of the Emperor, the First Circle has taken a leading role in the Empire and issued instructions in his name to see that the Empire runs well. Portions of the emperor inhabit many of these individuals.

## Other Great Gods

 **ORIA** is the Great Mother and goddess of the Earth. It's Oria who is invoked for fecundity in all its forms, from bountiful harvests to healthy children, at the ceremonies of most of the goddesses in Peloria.

 **LODRIL** is Yelm's younger brother. In the Golden Age, Lodril descended from Heaven to conquer the underworld, from whence he freed Oria. But he fouled his celestial nature by embracing Oria and has since been sundered from the sky—now, even his fires are based in the natural world instead of the gods world. Yelm has recognized Lodril as the Ruler of the Earth and patron god of the common man. Like the rustic, Lodril is respectful towards his superiors in his unmannered way; he is also utterly uninhibited. If not treated well, his rebellious fury is to be feared, as it manifests as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

 **SHARGASH** is the Destroyer. He was kept from destroying Yelm's enemies while Yelm was emperor, but after Yelm's death Shargash slew them all. Then he killed everybody he didn't like. The killing continued until there was no one left to kill but himself, then Shargash finished the job. But as death creates life, Shargash's complete devastation was necessary for the world to be reborn. All those Shargash sent to the underworld submitted to Yelm, paving the way for his recension. While Shargash is widely worshipped today, most of his devotees sacrifice to him in the hope that he will never visit them. The Red Emperor can unleash Shargash to obliterate his enemies, but so far the hour of reckoning is not yet come.

Their own local authorities ruled the peoples of the Pelorian basin before the Empire or during its periods of decline. After Sedenya's apotheosis, quarrels and fights between Carmanians, Dara Happans, Pelandans, and all the other myriad peoples of the Empire marred the Unity she brought. To bring harmony and reduce friction the Emperor appointed nine SATRAPS; Lunar officials responsible for the guidance of everyone in their area, or Satrapy. Satraps are also called Sultans, a Rinliddi title; or Overseers, a Dara Happan one. All three titles have enjoyed waves of popularity at times. Currently Satrap is the preferred title, but exceptions abound. The Heartland Sultanates are *First Blessed*, *Kostaddi*, *Silver Shadow*, *Oronin*, *Doblian*, *Karasal*, *Darjiin*, *Sylila* and *Oraya*. When aristocrats from different cultures or cities in the Empire clash they appeal to their Satrap for guidance. They argue their respective cases before him. Satraps try to reach a consensual decision by using their magics of Inclusion, but even with magic some cases require arbitration. Due to the large number of such cases, a deputy called a *Judex* handles most.

The Satraps also have the responsibility for collecting taxes, protecting their subjects, assuring respect for the state religion, keeping the peace and enforcing the

personal demands of the Emperor within their borders. They control all government functions, including courts of redress, licensing of inter-city travel and trade, police and fire brigades, and so on. They collect official fees for everything. Each satrap has a small private army at his or her command to enforce their decisions in their territories.

History has proven the absolute necessity that there be an EMPEROR of Dara Happa. Their subjects say, "Ten Bad Emperors are better than none," and few contradict it. Without the Emperor war would rage unchecked, justice would be a forgotten ideal, and the order of the Empire would be shaken to its core. This truth has been confirmed again and again, starting with the Death of Yelm and, most recently, reinforced by the invasion of Sheng Seleris. The traditional nobility of the Emperor's many subject peoples accept and understand this and they usually obey the Emperor without complaint or delay. In return for their obedience the Emperor allows them to practice their traditional authority over their people. However, their understanding only goes so far. When the potentates feel that they have been unfairly treated, or that their traditional privileges have been trampled upon, or even they have not been paid the respect that is their due, they are often among the first to cause trouble.

Every CITIZEN in the Empire is normally subject to local rule. But citizenship in the Empire is complicated by the existence of many legal definitions of one's rights and duties. Most traditional law codes make distinctions on the basis of social class, sex and piety. Often their distinctions bear little resemblance with each other; Pelandan Law recognizes six social classes, while Dara Happa knows only four. Further, similar social classes may enjoy radically different rights. Slaves in Pelanda are typically treated better than free peasantry in Dara Happa.

Due to such complexities, a number of practices are used when dealing with people from other parts of the Empire. At the bottom of the Imperial social order are the OTHERS. The unfortunates in this rank are slaves, criminals, scapegoats and foreigners. Slaves may be bought, sold or summarily executed at their owner's whim. Scapegoats and criminals have a difficult time, as they are required or desire to stay outside of the cities. Foreigners are a special case; they may register with the appropriate authority, which usually grants them the equivalent of basic citizenship for the length of their stay, revocable at any time.

Most people are part of the MANY, a status which gives them basic legal rights. An aristocrat, potentate or official must treat the Many with the same rights that they grant their lowest free subjects. Joining the Many involves swearing an oath of loyalty to the Emperor, and this is forbidden to people such as slaves. When the Emperor proclaimed the humanity of the Weeders and Mudders, he was making them Many. He did this as a sign of his humanity, although the Weeders and Mudders saw it differently when they were visited for the first time by Imperial tax collectors. Above the Many are the FEW, the traditional aristocracy of the Empire. They must be treated with the honors and privileges of local aristocrats.

The Lunar Way has introduced a new class, the SELECT, conferring imperial citizenship. Qualification is easy, a person must simply worship any aspect of the goddess. The Goddess has been many people and many gods in past incarnations. The followers of all these goddesses, such as Verithurusa, Natha, Lesilla,

## ☉ Takenegi, the Red Emperor ☉ (pictured at right)

By Heather Bruton

Seventy-seven Emperors have sat upon Dara Happa's Throne of Justice since the Golden Age. Takenegi, commonly called Moonson, is the latest. He has restored its ancient glory and power, as is proved by the fact that Takenegi has sat upon Yelm's Tower for almost 375 years. Here he is at court, outfitted in traditional Dara Hapan regalia to receive ambassadors.

He is a god, being the son of the Red Moon, and the incarnation of the masculine powers of the Red Goddess. He is able to appear in multiple places at once and to alter his appearance at will.

As ruler of the Empire his merest desire is law. He works diligently to uphold its power and honor. He has a whole pack of slavering infernal furies that bay for human blood. The most fierce are only unleashed to hunt down those the Emperor considers the vilest criminals: tax evaders. Ixev Devouring Dog is their chief priest and master.

The Son of the Moon possesses a silvery tongue and sharp wit that can turn an oath inside out and a pledge on its head. The CharUn and Sir Ethilrist bitterly rue the day they agreed to the Emperor's oath. Bound by their sworn word, they now inhabit worthless lands instead of the rich grants that they thought they were getting.

The Emperor is immortal. Many the heroes have attempted to kill the Red Emperor. Some, like Sheng Seleris and Harrek the Berserk, even succeeded. But the Emperor always comes back. Since his death at the hands of Sheng he has changed his appearance and manner each time he returns. These different personalities are called his Masks.

The world is fortunate that the Emperor's current mask is that of a bloated debauchee, utterly without ambition, content to wallow in his own depravity, filling his time with meals of roast unicorn, indulgences of exotic drugs grown in ungodly planes, and wines distilled from magical ethers. The Emperor proclaims his conduct to be a great blessing, and such luminaries as Send Valu, Appius Luxius, and JarEel praise his name. However, most people consider his court to be a squalid pit of decadence and sordid self-indulgence. And many are content with that.

Despite the repugnance of the Emperor's current mask, Lunars dread its passing. Inured as they are to the current mask's villainies, they do not want to face the unknown of a new mask.

Rufelza and even mystics such as the Rashoranans, the Mountain Seers of Jermotius and the Nysaloran Riddlers, are eligible for the status of Select. The applicant must demonstrate her comprehension of Sedenya's mysteries to the high standards of the *Examiners*, imperial agents who supervise the teaching of her mysteries.

The benefits of the Select are many. They are exempt from traditional levies, imposts and the *corvée* (forced labor in lieu of taxation). By tradition they are

exempt from certain punishments, such as crucifixion or castration, and have the right of appeal to their local satrap. They have a final right of appeal to an Imperial Court. They are required to tithe to the Lunar Temple in which they were initiated. This may be changed to another Temple upon application to the Examiners. The Select form the high- and mid-rank bureaucrats and officers in the Army. In most Imperial organizations there is no way to reach top rank without joining the Select.

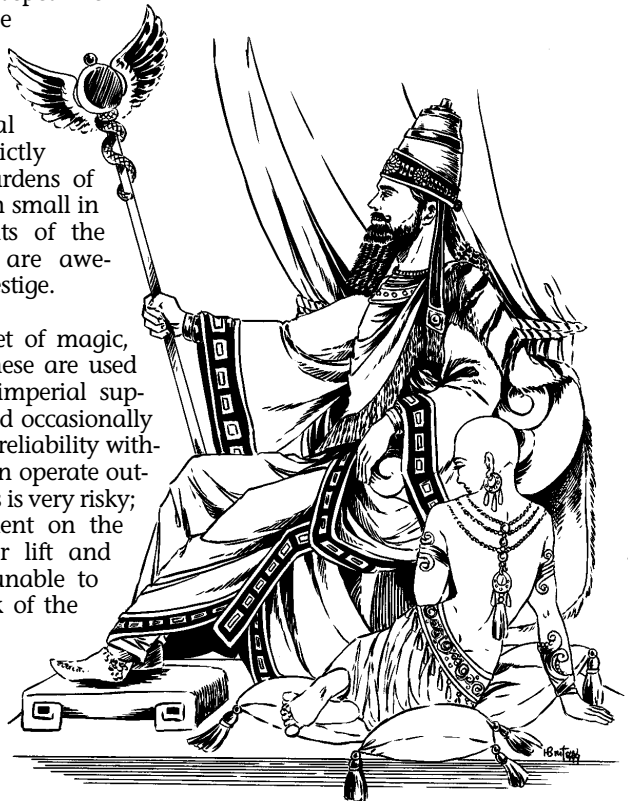
The Imperial Army is the one of the largest, most effective and certainly the most magical armies in Glorantha. Huge manpower, widespread resources, unusual magic and a professional officer corps all help to assure this. Supreme command is vested in a council of generals known as the High Command, ably led by Bellux Maximus, the Imperial Overlord. He is the only active Full General in the army, though the Emperor and JarEel also hold honorary Full General rank. The High Command creates subordinate formations as needed and appoints the Generals to lead them. The Satraps furnish four standing corps, each with a well-established order of battle and led by a Half General.

Units are organized by regiments. The largest part of the army is made up of traditional troops that are recruited from each of the satrapies. Thus the city states of Dara Happa muster out spearmen

and archers, the Pelandans muster hoplites, and so on. The best part of the army is the Imperial Army, which is strictly Lunar without the burdens of older tradition. Though small in number, the regiments of the Imperial Bodyguard are awesome in power and prestige.

The Empire has a fleet of magic, flying moon boats. These are used to carry messengers, imperial supplies or passengers, and occasionally troops with speed and reliability within the Empire. They can operate outside the Empire but this is very risky; the boats are dependent on the rays of the Moon for lift and propulsion, and are unable to move during the Dark of the Moon.

The only people in the Empire who know how to sail the moon boats are the Yestendos sailors of



## Gods Who were People

A characteristic of the Lunar religion is that it works to help people acquire divine status. The Red Goddess did it, and so did several other important figures. Here are three samples from among the many hero cults that are known.



**YANAFAL TARNILS**, Ram and Warrior, is one of the Seven Mothers who restored Sedenya; he is also the warlord for Sedenya.



**IRIPPI ONTOR** is another of the Seven Mothers. He founded the Lunar University.



**Etyries** was a woman who became so adept at speaking and travelling the worlds that her cult is now the dominant mercantile cult in the Empire.



**DANFIVE XARON**, the Penitent is a bloodthirsty outlaw committed excesses that sickened even the CharUn. He joined the Conspiracy of the Seven Mothers to make the Goddess and, through his partial success, he became truly contrite. He is the God of Criminal Repentance. Remorseful miscreants can seek extirpation of their evil deeds in his monastic penitentiaries. After a long period of suffering, they are judged by their priest-jailers. If they are truly reformed, they are sent out to convert other criminals to the life of reform through suffering. If their prospective converts refuse the message, then it is the Xaroni's sad duty to denounce them to the appropriate authorities for punishment.



**HONEEL** is nicknamed the inspiration of Moonson. As well as the ancestress of the Tarshite Kings and founder of the Orayan Satrapy, HonEel blessed the Empire with maize, a gift from a long lost elf-god, Sinoda, murdered by brutal Alanthore. The corn rites involve bloody contests where champions tried to defeat the evil Alanthore. Usually the person playing Alanthore is killed; in return the crop is bountiful beyond all measure. The priestesses consider this a humane practice, as they only kill convicted criminals, madmen, or impoverished down-and-outs. The Emperor foolishly condemned the practice and expelled the priestesses of Sinoda to Oraya, but the prohibition has been gradually whittled away and people throughout the Empire are once again feasting upon bountiful harvests of maize.

Darjiin, readily identifiable by their cocksure swagger. Each moon boat draws its crew from a single clan of the Yestendos, so when a new moon boat is built, there is a contest among the clans to choose the crew. The more moon boats crews that a clan provides, the more prestige the clan has. Moon boat officers are drawn from the Lunar and Celestial elite, while the marines are warriors of the Sky Captain cults.

A unique superiority of the Army is their use of sorcerer-priests organized into military units. Other cultures and lands have units raised from Temples, who can create one or two specific magical effects; the Lunars have much more flexibility in their choice of magic and their use of it. The priests are conscripted from the various colleges of magic in the Empire and trained to use their magical abilities in unison. No other nation in Glorantha has yet duplicated the Lunar tactic and this makes the Empire's army nearly invincible when it deploys the College. Many army officers have grave concerns about the magical devastation caused by the unrestrained use of magic and prefer instead the clean certainties of honorable battle.

Irippi Ontor was an exiled sage from Yuthuppa who was one of the Seven Mothers. When the goddess was gone on her godquest he prepared for a battle. His foresight warned him that he would not come back. With heavy heart Irippi Ontor called together his disciples and taught them his memories of the Goddess and bade them to teach these mysteries to others just as he had taught them. He died in the arms of Sedenya, who had come back. At the same moment that the Hammer from the Sky smote Irippi Ontor, his disciples sanctified new grounds in Torang for their lectures. The spirit of learning was established there. This was the origin of the Imperial University.

The Imperial University has grown far beyond its humble origins and now has campuses in many major Heartland cities. The upkeep of its buildings and its many philosophers, sages and tutors is paid for by the generosity of the Emperor and the Lunar nobility. The University maintains an intense rivalry with the Carmanian Halls of Viziers, where the Carmanians are schooled in their arts; and is considered far more prestigious than the hoary old Buserian Schools of Dara Happa, with their emphasis upon scribe-craft, sky-watching and nighttime sojourns. Most of the students of the University are the children of wealthy Lunars, and it is here that the next generation of Lunars is made. Students from poorer families attend with the support of scholarships sponsored by the Emperor and other nobles.

The syllabus of the University has been expanded to incorporate the discoveries and revelations uncovered by generations of Lunar exploration. The students are thoroughly schooled in the Lunar Way, learning such secrets as the Seven Masks of the Goddess, the rudiments of KanaPor's Chronomancy and Nysalaran Philosophy. Gifted students are taught esoteric topics such as the Addic Chronoportation magic, through which they experiences the distant past, or even the Skywalking magics of Erana Halfmoon, useful to visit the planets. Self-exploration is strongly encouraged. A favorite hobby is Wendarian dancing, in which scantily-clad students, covered in tattoos and paint, dance to the beat of heavy drums to the point of exhaustion. Other students practice levitation, seeking to escape the confines of this mortal world.



## ☯ JarEel the Razoress ☯ (pictured at right)

JarEel is famous within the Lunar Empire for her deeds, but is not yet known outside of it. She was born about thirty years ago, after several generations of planned breeding from the wisest of the EelAriash clan. Her entire life has been a series of challenges in all matters of the magical and material worlds, and are as tests to whether she is the incarnation of the Red Goddess.

JarEel is the daughter of Goddess of Life and Death and is the darling of the Empire. She is a demigoddess and the equivalent of a small army all by herself when the powers rise within her. Yet she is more than a murderer, but also the heart of all pleasure. Her music can bring relief to the most aggrieved soul and energize the crippled to dance. Her smile has healed, her touch has destroyed, her past is of power, and her future unknown.

Her first challenge occurred almost as soon as she was born. JarEel was among the legion of infants accompanying a moon-boat expedition to Fronela's Eastpoint on a mission to destroy Syndic's Ban. Her divine presence and innocence were crucial in driving off the demonic Uz while the expedition descended from the Nidan Mountains into Fronela.

*Continued on next page . . .*

At the end of schooling the students of the University are expected to serve in the Magical Divisions of the Field College of Magic, part of the Lunar Army, for a year. Lurid tales abound about what the barbarians do to their captives and most students are loath to serve their tour of duty. Protests and sit-ins against the Emperor's subjugation of the barbarians are common.

The core of the Empire are the Lunar Heartlands, a vast expanse of grasslands, now turned mostly to farming grains. It is divided into nine sultanates or satrapies, whose residents can become imperial citizens and gain benefits thereby. The Heartland is a vast wide bowl, mostly plains and gently rolling ground. The Oslir River and its tributaries drain most of it, aided by the Poralistor and Oronin in the north and west, and the Arcos in the east. The population is heavily concentrated in the rich and broad valley of the Oslir River. Its many cities are noted for their luxurious noble palaces, immensely tall towers, and the squalor of their sprawling worker class homes.

Many distinct nationalities can be found in the Heartlands. Most speak some form of Pelorian language, whether it is the refined Dara Happan speech or some barely comprehensible farmer argot. The various nations were separate political entities before the Goddess was born. The Lunar Way tore these barriers down and encouraged internal migration. This has caused some nationalities to become ubiquitous throughout the Empire. Most typical is the Lodrili peasant who has spread far beyond the traditional confines of Dara Happa.

## Dara Happans, People of the Sun

The Dara Happans are the heirs of Yelm's original cosmic empire that lay upon the mighty Oslir river valley at the center of the Heartlands. Yelm made the laws and rules that govern the cities even today. Their Golden

As a young woman she turned a legion of faithful warriors into fanatical soldiers for the Red Goddess. Her Bloodspillers were put to the test during the conquest of Sartar where she led them to scale up the sheer cliff face to storm the Sartarite capital of Boldhome. Although JarEel and the Bloodspillers fought admirably during the siege, JarEel considered the victory an empty one as Humakt gravely wounded the Emperor. The burden of that mistake, she contended, was hers to bear.

Five years ago she led a magical conspiracy to capture and dismember the Pharaoh of the Holy Country. Redeemed in her own eyes for this success, the accomplishment was a major boon for the Empire, as the Pharaoh had continued to thwart the Lunars for a decade.



Not all of JarEel's challenges have ended in death. According to her own accounts, her most pleasant challenge was the revolt of Beatpot Aelwrin. Aelwrin, a savage horse nomad who had been made into a Lunar kitchen slave. Aelwrin armed himself with kitchen utensils and led a revolt that ravaged half of Kostaddi. JarEel quickly crushed the revolt and captured her young opponent, who resolved to kill himself rather than peel another Imperial potato. JarEel took it upon herself to teach right action to the young man. Aelwrin recanted after long, private hours of persuasive argument and physical instruction. He and JarEel are now inseparable.

JarEel is hard and quick, and immensely powerful after all the feats she has performed. Most agree with a Lunar monk's description of her: "Friendly and happy, clever and beautiful, holy and deadly." One poor monk, FodAriam, was reduced to scrawling pages of poor doggerel after a chance sighting of her.

JarEel is currently busy in the Heartlands, debating against the Keepers of the White Moon and seeking to show them the error of their ways. She hopes to convert them to the philosophy of the Red Goddess instead, thereby establishing the wisdom of the Moonsword throughout the Empire.

Age heritage has conferred on them marvelous magics, and they administer their cities so well that they are the envy of the whole world. When Sedenya conquered the Dara Happan Empire she altered their upper classes, but made no efforts to replace the ancient traditions. Instead, the Emperor encourages Dara Happans to rule cities all over Peloria and beyond. The Dara Happans co-operate with this as part of their pious duty to uphold and extend their empire over the world and bring back the Golden Age. Dara Happans can be found on both sides of the Oslir River from Jillaro to the White Sea, as well as running isolated cities throughout the Empire.

Dara Happan civilization is patriarchal, urban and rigid. Their culture is modeled on the mythical government of Heaven. The Nobles are descended from Yelm, prestigious professions are restricted to hereditary castes, and a few dozen ranking families hold most wealth with family connections in the imperial government.

Dara Happans mock the other Pelorians for their barbarous clan ties and take pride in their families, the basis of their perfect social order. Heading the families are the Patriarchs, living incarnations of Yelm the Father and masters of Life and Death over their own family. Family membership is limited to those within four generations of patrilineal descent from any of the Patriarch's ancestors. Inability to prove family membership is a mark of a base Pelorian.

By Law, women are mere chattel, though indispensable. Sons are favored over daughters, brothers over wives, and fathers over mothers. Polygamy is frowned on, but the only punishment is to have many wives. The Dara Happans do not practice primogeniture; instead the patriarch chooses his heir from among his male relatives.

Dara Happans consider the City to be the perfect way of life. Yelm built the first cities and chose the first citizens, the ancestors of all Dara Happans today. Those born in Dara Happan cities to Dara Happan parents are considered to be Dara Happans. Everyone else is Pelorian, even if they were born in the Oslir valley and are descendants of Yelm. The Dara Happans ridicule Pelorian villagers as ignorant bumpkins and scorn anyone who lives outside city walls.

The Dara Happans love tall towers stretching into the sky. They love symmetry, and their cities have concentric streets joined by radiating main roads which lead to the palace in the center. This form was maintained even after the city of Yuthuppa was divided by the Oslir River's change of course in the Dawn Age.

Dara Happan society is extremely class conscious. The highest ranks are the *Nobility*. Their privileged position is their heritage from Yelm. These positions are largely ceremonial now, as the real power has devolved onto the Satraps and their functionaries.

Beneath the Nobility are the *Ten Sons and Servants*, the middle rank of the Dara Happan social order. Most people call them the *Tenth*s, even though many new positions have been added since that time. They are the bureaucrats of the social order.

Below the Tenth's are the *Commoners*, the urban citizens. These used to be ethnic Dara Happans, but early in his reign the Red Emperor allowed Pelorians to become commoners. This triggered a brutal civil war as the Dara Hapan commoners rose up to protect their meager privileges of birth. They were defeated, and the flood of eager Pelorians soon subsumed the old commoners. The surviving nobility and the tenth's were unchanged by this, as their positions are hereditary.

Due to the exclusive, hierarchical nature of Dara Hapan society, commoners and women are denied any significant opportunity to improve their status. Many important offices and priesthods are restricted to the nobility and the tenth's. Sedenya, however, bars no one from learning her mysteries. Since Sedenya is a Goddess of the Middle Heavens, learned jurists declare that, according to ancient Dara Hapan precepts, an initiate of the Goddess is in the class of the tenth's.

The supreme ruler of Dara Happa is the Emperor. Before Sedenya came, the Emperors were all Dara Happans. The Red Emperor is their legitimate successor. Now accepting of his Lunar attachments, Dara Happans consider it sacrilegious to disobey him or to criticize his conduct.

Dara Happa is divided into territories each ruled separately, from its capital city. At the top is the *Overseer*, a noble who wears a three-pronged crown as a sign of his authority. Although the overseers have imposing magical powers, their temporal authority has been assumed by Lunars. Consequently, they spend most of their time in the undisturbed contemplation of their own greatness. The only surviving responsibility that most of them exercise is their ability to hear court cases.

The tenth's perform most of the civic administration but only receive a minor portion of any revenue they collect, the lion's share going to the nobility. Reformers have attempted to reduce the tax burden by disestablishing the nobility but their efforts have failed, for the tenth's require the sacrifices performed by the nobility to empower their own magics.

There are many official posts in the tenth's. Some are common, some are obscure and some are obsolete. By custom an official employs members of his family, and nobody else, as assistants. Most assistants simply perform the official's duties for a certain area. A few are scribes, and one or two are lictors, responsible for punishing crimes within the official's jurisdiction. Last but not the least is the proxy, a wretched scapegoat who is punished for the official's misdeeds. Here are some of the common posts.

The majority of commanders in the Imperial Army were *Polemarchs*. Worshipers of Yanafal Tarnils superseded them after the Goddess was born. The Polemarchs now only command those regiments raised in Dara Happa proper. The Urban Polemarchs are responsible for the maintenance of public order. They have the authority to raise garrison regiments and collect levies for their maintenance. Large cities often have a hierarchy of Urban Polemarchs.

## Glamour from Above (pictured at right)

By Jim Pavelec

Humans seek a way to their goddess Sedenya, and see the easiest route through the city of Glamour that she built. It lies near to the great crater that marks where she left from, and in the center of the city is a great tower. From that tower arches a span of silver to the lip of the crater. It touches there at Moongate, a splendid palace and guard house through which lies (through magical transport) the surface of the red moon overhead. Here is the view from Moongate, looking at the great silver tower and the city spread out around it.

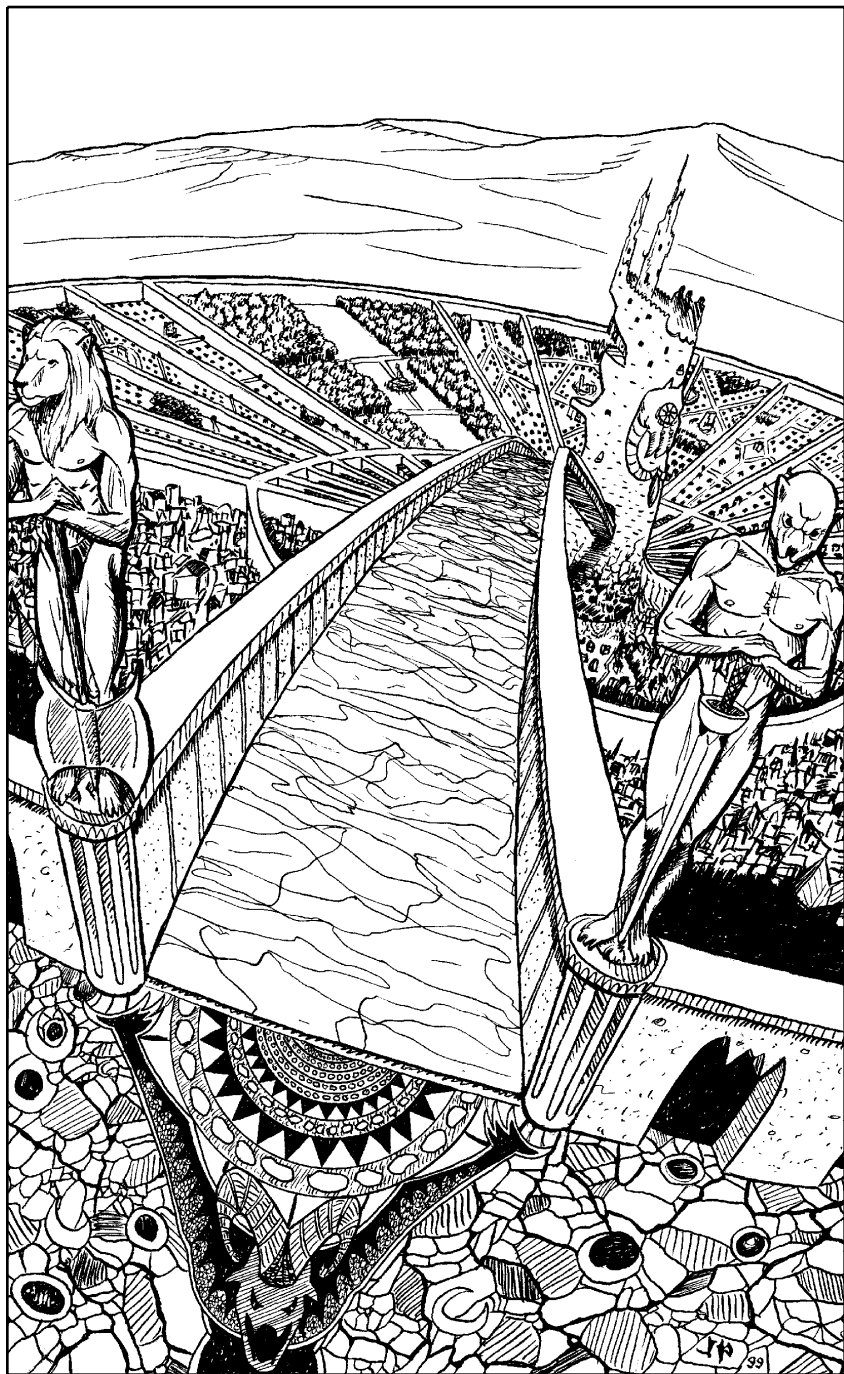
---

The FOREMEN, distinguishable by their crossed staves, are hated and feared by the commoners and peasants. The Foremen oversee the *corvée*. They determine who to summon for the day's work and what public works they should do. Assistant foremen, affectionately called THUMPERS, supervise the day's laborers in their tasks. To denote their authority, the Thumpers wield batons to prod and cajole. The law forbids the whipping of commoners.

The WHEELERS have an assortment of responsibilities, but past reforms have split them into many different posts. The three most common types are the COINERS, ASSESSORS AND WAGONERS. The coiners are responsible for the gold coin of the Empire. They assay gold, mint golden wheels, pursue counterfeiters, and act as bankers, although only for gold, never silver or other base metals. The assessors supervise the markets, assess goods, auction contracts for tax-farmers and arbitrate in market disputes. They do not collect taxes themselves, as they would have to handle inferior coinage; commoners handle the physical collection of taxes. Wagoners are responsible for the wagons within the city. The wagoners can be seen directing the traffic in the city, collecting imposts for the goods carried, and checking wagon wheels for perfect roundness. This last duty seems strange, but the wagoners explain that if inferior wheels are permitted, then spiritual pollution and horrible calamities will result.

The TOGA-MEN were formerly commoners appointed to assist nobles in their duties. With the preponderance of Pelorians in the commons, the toga-man became an inherited position and is now considered one of the tenths, although grudgingly by some. The toga-men all meet in the forum to debate issues of the day, and are widely ignored. They act as expensive advocates before the court, but they cannot act for peasants.

The TRIBUNES are responsible for policing the behavior of the bureaucracy of the officials of the tenths. These officials themselves cannot be punished; by definition they can do no wrong in the execution of their duties. Instead the tribunes punish the proxy. The tribunes summarily impose most punishments for infractions of their regulations. Commoners can appeal to a noble against an official's punishment. They must prove why the punishment should not be carried out. If wealthy enough, a commoner may appoint a toga-man as an advocate. Peasants are forbidden to appeal. Duties such as performance of *corvée* and payment of taxes cannot be appealed, as they are duties, not punishments.



If a crime is heinous enough, such as murder, rape, or sacrilege, the tribune metes out summary punishment to peasants. If the accused is not of peasant rank, the case is tried before a noble. The tribune prosecutes while a toga-man can be hired to appear as advocate. Tribunes also bring charges against the tenths before the nobles. In case of a death penalty, the judge traditionally waits one day before pronouncing his sentence.

The Dara Happan religion is solar in nature and revolves around Yelm, Emperor of the World, his sons and concubines. They consider all other religions to be aberrant cults of outlaws and misguided souls. *The Dara Happan looks upon Sedenya as Rufelza, the servitor of the Sky.*



The Chief God is YELM THE EMPEROR. His worshippers are the nobility and the patriarchs and only they can make sacrifices to him directly and benefit from his spiritual power. Other Dara Happans can only witness these sacrifices and must gain Yelm's blessings through the mysteries of Antirius and Dendara. These mysteries emphasize absolute obedience to the nobility and the patriarchs as living representatives of Yelm himself. Dendara, worshipped by women, is Yelm's Good Wife.



DAYZATAR, aloof and remote, is Yelm's Older Brother and God of the Heavens. During the Gods War, he retired beyond the Sky and now can only be contacted from atop the impossibly tall towers of Yuthuppa. He is too remote for most worship and the star watchers of Yuthuppa worship Buserian, the first Priest, instead. Buserian showed the Priests how to call upon the more reachable heavens for aid and also showed them how to write so that they could record celestial phenomena for all time. His initiates are the scribes of the Empire.



LOKARNOS is the Wagon God and inventor of the wheel. He used to be the God of Merchants, but the Lunar ETYRIES has displaced him in their affections. He now survives primarily as the patron of the Wheelers.



OSLIRA is the Goddess of the River, conquered and tamed by Emperor Murharzarm. Her worshippers are the rice farmers of the valley who sacrifice to her for annual floods to fill their rice paddies.

## The Darjiinians, People of the Heron Goddess

Darjiinians come from ancient Darjiin in the southwest Heartlands and are found in the Satrapies of Darjiin, Doblian, Sylila and Kostaddi. They claim descent from the Great Goddess SurEnslib and have resisted the imperialism of Dara Happa for millennia; sometimes violently, but more often gently, always seeking to maintain their own traditions in the face of overwhelming disapproval.

Since being militarily overwhelmed by the Dara Happans, the Darjiinians have been in the Empire but they define themselves in contrast to their rivals. The Darjiinians intentionally practice archaic rites disturbing to the staid Dara Happans, such as the infamous Great Sex Hunt of Dorkath. The Hunt is a

flimsy excuse for an three day orgy with free wine on tap, made available through a magical plumbing system. The Darjiinians organize themselves into clans that include everybody within six degrees of kinship of the *Manimat*, or clan leader. Unlike other Pelorians, the Darjiinian clans transcend the imposed Dara Happan class system and all Manimati are considered nobles, even if most of their kin are peasants. Women have no social class and can consort with whomever they please; they even practice polyandry, a liberty unthinkable in Dara Happa.

Darjiinian government is communal. The Manimati are heavily limited in what they can command others to do and ultimate authority is vested in the clan congress. These meetings take place under the guidance of the clan priestesses of SurEnslib. All social classes are represented, but the male delegates other than the Manimat are either chosen by lot or by the priestesses. Since there is only one Manimat in the clan, he must attend every congress. Women may attend these congresses if they choose, but most leave this to the priestesses. Depending upon the importance of the congress's agenda, the size of the congress varies at the discretion of the priestesses. Mundane decisions usually require only four men and the Priestess, but the whole clan attends for important decisions.

Dara Happans slander these congresses as debauched, frenzied orgies. However, the elaborate courtship rites that take up so much of the congress's time are needed to magically recreate the oneness of the Green Age. Decisions are made in the Green Age, where words and even thoughts are unnecessary. At the end of the congress, when everybody has returned to the Now, the Priestess announces the decisions and all the participants recognize them as being the best decisions possible. For decisions involving two or more clans the Darjiinians have a joint congress ritual, but it is difficult to perform. If the slightest antagonism exists between the clans then the congress will exacerbate this and the many members of the congress will be eaten by the Beast with Many Mouths, a dreadful spirit. For such reasons, the Manimati are delegated to deal with other clans. The Darjiinians have avidly embraced the Lunar mysteries to resolve disputes between clans.

Darjiinians worship SurEnslib, her lovers and sons. Outsiders know SurEnslib as the Heron goddess but SurEnslib is far more than that. To her worshippers she is a manifestation of the Great Goddess, just as Yelm is the Great God. The Darjiinians long ago learned that the best way to resist Dara Happa is to emphasize those traditions that are condemned by Yelm. In this way SurEnslib becomes Yelm's Other. Her worshippers cannot be overcome by his high rules and distant powers, but only ruled through understanding and acceptance.



All women worship SURENSLIB and can call upon the magics of her sons and lovers. Men worship one of SurEnslib's sons or lovers as appropriate to their station.



The Manimati all worship MANIMAT the sun god. They scoff at the Dara Happan claim that he was an emperor-in-exile.



**W** The Boaters worship YESTENDOS, the god of boats. Once merely makers of reed craft, they are now the only people who can make the magical Moon Boats that can sail through the air, propelled by light from the red moon.

## The Pelandans, People of Art

The Pelandans live around Lake Oronin and Carmania and scattered pockets can be found in the Karasal, Silver Shadow, and Darjiin Satrapies. In the Golden Age, Pelanda was a fabled land of many city-states, and even now their cities inspire the viewer. Many famous artists, art styles, and fashions have come from Pelanda. History has denied self rule to the Pelandans; the Dara Happans ruled them from afar, then the Carmanians conquered them and took away their liberties. The Lunars liberated only half of the Pelandans, leaving the other half in servile serfdom to the Carmanians. Nonetheless, they find solace in their art and manufacturing, much of which adorns the houses of Dara Happa.

The Pelandans are justly famous for their cities and their art. A Pelandan identifies himself by his home city; such as Ulawar, home to the Oldest temple to the Love Goddess Uleria; Othens with its Oracle of Turos the Shaker; or Tawenos, where the Bull god lives. Only outsiders call them Pelandans, after the city of Pelandre which first united the cities in the Storm Age.

The Pelandans have a society with six classes. The **FIRSTS** were the kings of the cities, positions now held by Carmanians or Lunars. There are no more Firsts. The **SECONDS** are the nobility, rarely found in the Carmanian-ruled cities. Most Pelandans outside Carmania are **THIRDS**, the class which include artisans, crafters and freehold farmers. The **FOURTHS** are unmarried laborers, transients and resident foreigners. The majority of Pelandans in Carmania are **FIFTHS**; pitiful serfs. The **SIXTHS** are slaves.

All members of a family belong to the same class. Membership in a family is based upon four generations of matrilineal kinship with Viturosi, the family head. Class migration is possible but requires the severance of old clan ties and adoption into a new sponsor clan. The **Fourth**s have no clans, meaning that no sponsor clan is required to join it, but **Fifth**s and **Sixth**s must be manumitted by their owners before joining the **Fourth**s.

The Pelandans grow barley, with rice and wheat as supplementary crops. Their favorite farm beasts are cows and pigs. Lunar corn plantations have become more numerous since the continued success of the Kalikos expeditions have reduced the severity of the winter weather. The Maize cult is making inroads among the Pelandan **Fifth**s.

"Art was invented in Pelanda," say the Dara Happans. Pelandan cities have long been noted for their beauty and civic splendor. Buildings are often painted bright colors, and parks are laid out for their aesthetic appearance. Statues are common, and include some that were self-made and others from among the first sculptures ever made. Each city has its favorite styles, distinguishable by natives or experts. Dara Happans often adopt one city's fashions as a season's fad. The residents quickly make inferior products to export, cashing in on the faddish market. The cities still under Carmanian control are, by comparison, dingy, and dull.

Most free Pelandans hate the Carmanians with a passion. The strong influence of the Carmanians within the Empire causes the Pelandans much anxiety and the unpopular decisions of the Emperor are denounced as hierophantic plots to enslave all Pelanda. Every summer the free Pelandans hold Crimson Day Parades to celebrate the victory of Sedenya over the Carmanians at the Battle of the Four Arrows of Light. They also hold days of mourning commemorating the failure of the Blood Kings War to liberate the rest of Pelanda. They bitterly curse the memory of Aronius Jaranthir, the father of the Carmanians, for keeping their kindred in serfdom.

Pelandan political life is centered upon the Ket, or the City-state. Every Pelandan clan within the boundaries of the city has a right to speak in the local Assembly of the Ket. In free Pelanda, these are rowdy affairs, while the Carmanians use them as instruments of oppression. The assembly determines what each clan will contribute to the city in terms of labor, produce and taxes. Those failing to meet their obligations become vulnerable to the Wrath of the Blue King, dreadful magical curses invoked by the Logicians at the request of the city rulers. The assembly is presided over by the *KetTurosi*, a priest to the patron deity of the assembly. The KetTurosi is responsible for keeping order, selecting speakers and taking the votes. The voting procedure has, since ancient times, been stacked in favor of the interests of the Upper Divisions. The Lunars and the Carmanians exploit this by exercising their powers as Firsts to influence the votes. The Seconds and Thirds often follow their lead to avoid reprisals.

In Carmania, the Seconds and Thirds are handpicked clans of collaborators and quislings. The assemblies have no power and the Carmanians rule the towns through their own institutions. Instead of the Assembly, the Carmanians simply summon the Pelandan clans to inform them of their obligations for the coming year.

The Pelandans worship the Seven High Gods, so named for their meeting place on the top of Mount Jernotius. The chief of the High Gods is Jernotius the Liberator. He can be both male and female, as she chooses. This gives him particular insights, which she communicated to other deities. The essence of these insights, codified as the Jernotian Way, is that no deity can always win or always lose; cosmic justice is maintained through balance. The Pelandan looks at the Moon and sees Natha the Balancer.

The Jernotian Way can only be learned through great self-restraint, austerity and penance. His devotees, always few in number, are called the mountain sages. To help those unable to learn the Jernotian Way through self-discipline, the Prophet Idomon showed people how to worship the other High Gods. By worshipping these divinities one can hope to attain balance.



**TUROS** is the Men's God and is famous for raising mountains, making earthquakes, liberating Oria from Hell, defeating enemies and presiding over the assemblies. Many Pelandan gods worshipped in specific rites, such as the KetTurosi and ViTurosi, are aspects of Turos.

## Lunar Culture

Pelorian culture is what most people practice, being the members of the Empire rather than rulers of it. Lodril and Oria are at its core, and practitioners are farmers, kinship centered, hedonistic, and polytheistic. Most Pelorians plow or farm in rice paddies and maintain close ties with the goddesses of plenty. They live with their collateral relatives, being less interested in having a common ancestor than a common living relative. Pelorians love life and look upon austerities, especially religious austerities, as misguided and unnecessarily difficult. They love to eat and drink, often exercise loose sexual morals (compared to their overlords), and prefer to obey local tradition over imperial laws. Pelorians recognize many deities, and regularly participate in worship of a dozen or more deities in order to help themselves along in life.

*Continued on next page . . .*



ORIA, Turos's wife, is the Great Mother, the Women's Goddess and is invoked to bless crops and herds. The other High Gods are worshipped, but are not as widely popular as these two.



BISOS is the god of free men and nobles worship, his wife is ESSES, Father Bull and Mother Cow respectively. Bisos is important in Carmania as a loyal servant of Idovanus. For this reason his worship is encouraged by the upper class of Pelandans in Carmania.

Of minor interest are the LOGICIANS. During the Gods War the Blue King imported these magicians from the Land of Logic in the Far West. They served him faithfully as his arcane enforcers and remained to plague Pelanda after he was killed. Because of their connection with him they are often called the Blue Wizards, though this causes confusion with the Blue Moon School. They are amoral sorcerers and only through adherence to the Jernotian Way can the Pelandans withstand their magics. The magic of the Logicians is different than the Carmanian Viziers' magic. When the Carmanians arrived in Peloria, the Logicians challenged the Viziers to a duel. They won the contest and were nearly exterminated for their pains. Since the coming of the Goddess they have been protected and patronized by the Lunars. They can be found loafing around in city marketplaces.

## Carmania, The Western Reaches

Carmania is a rolling land of moderately peopled farmlands dotted by many old castles that dominate the adjoining cities. The Carmanians ruled over all Peloria before the coming of Sedenya. Since that time they have been confined to the western reaches of Peloria. Although they accept Sedenya their traditions are little changed. Carmania is not a Heartland Satrapy. The Carmanians of Peloria originated in Fronela and migrated here when their ancestors would not submit to the vile God Learners. Carmanian culture includes many elements of Western culture such as feudal government and worship of the Good God, fused with native elements such as the worship of local deities.

### What is the History of Our Empire?

Now we always have fight against the monsters. Yet it was not always so. In the beginning, Yelm's empire was all peace and plenty. Justice was the rule as Yelm exercised the righteous order of the sky. But past the edge of every light is a shadow, and in the umbra of Yelm's glorious light lurked the Rebels.

As it says in *The Glorious ReAscent of Yelm*, the Emperor was murdered. As is detailed in *She Blesses Who Reads This*, Sedenya was ripped asunder by the Rebels. As both books agree, she woke her father and rekindled the universe in hell. The sun rose, and Yelm's Justice set the other gods into motion to free humans from the monsters that ruled the world.

First Yelm sent Kargzant the Wanderer whose worshippers rode horses and drove chariots like the nomads of Pent still do today. They were harsh and cruel overlords, but they had to be tough enough to resist the monster armies. As the monsters and their hordes of bestial savages poured north, Kargzant's horse riders met their head on in war and destroyed them in waves. At last their greatest army gathered against all Kargzant's men. As Plentionius the Historian tells us, both sides were destroyed in the fighting.

Emperor Khordavu rallied the empire and set Yelm upon the Great Altar once again. He united the people and ended rule by the Kargzant tribes. The sun got brighter and even the monsters surrendered to Emperor Khordavu. He made peace. But his sons and descendants were weaker, and monsters crawled again in dark places.

Emperor Khorzanelm fixed everything for a while. He even founded the God Project in Dorastor where wise and powerful men reassembled a new god who finally bring the monsters to heel. Some monsters seemed converted beforehand and even *aided* the Project. From this project the god Nysalor was born. The birth was so miraculous that even Yelm stopped in the sky to gaze in wonder at the new god.

*Continued on next page . . .*

As is the western custom, the Carmanians impose a strict caste law. Serfs are descended from the Pelandans conquered by the first Carmanians in the Imperial Age. Their wretched status is justified on the grounds that their conquered ancestors were all Spolites, an infamous shadowy Empire in Pelanda. Any relaxation of Carmanian firmness would only lead to the resurrection of the Spolite Empire, with its attendant grisly sacrifices. The Upper Castes are the preserve of the descendants of the Carmanian conquerors and those deemed worthy of admission to their ranks. All Carmanian males are born *Hazars*. Originally the knights of Carmania, they are now joined by the urban middle class and the landed gentry. When the Ban fell and brought a century of peace, most Hazars put away their arms and armor, or even sold them to collectors. The Thaw is making many realize the folly of their ways.

A few Carmanians are destined for higher status. If a Carmanian youth shows the required talents, then he may be chosen to become a *Karmanoï*, a member of the Lord Caste, or a *Vizier*, a member of the Wizard Caste.

Nysalor guided the empire. Under his auspices we conquered our enemies to the south and brought to peace to everyone. But at the edge of every light is darkness and Nysalor's was no different. From these shadows came Gbaji the Destroyer, known to his friends as Arkat. Palangio the Iron Vrok, the best hero of the Empire, killed Gbaji and threw him into a deep hell [423 ST]. But Gbaji came back stronger than before. Palangio raised an army to kill the second coming of Gbaji, but he was defeated and eaten [440 ST]. With no one to stop him, Gbaji killed Nysalor, cursed Dorastor, and gave our Empire over to the monsters to rule [450 ST].

Despite the death of Nysalor, we again grew strong in the light of Yelm. The Great Councilor Ordanestyu educated a new dynasty who expelled the monsters and regained control of the Empire [459 ST]. We regained our legacy and got strong enough to send Kastok [c. 565 ST] with an army to harry the horse riders in their own home plains of Pent.

Again, the monsters plotted against us. They created the Empire of Gloom from Spol [630 ST] and we needed a new weapon. Emperor Denesiod used the New Light [690 ST] to defeat them for a time, but they released the poison of the Carmanian religion upon us. The Carmanians seized the western parts of our empire [725 ST] to rule as their own, then were converted back to the light by our Yelm.

The monsters were relentless. They sent dragons against us, and forced humankind into their Empire Without Friends. The dragons they summoned destroyed our lands and then placed a foul dragon as our Emperor [878 ST]. The Dragon Sun ruled for many years before the hero Karvanyar slew him [910 ST] and restored Yelm's Justice to the Empire. Karvanyar became Emperor and, with the aid of the Carmanians, warred against the EWF for years.

Six generations later Emperor Kumardros and the Carmanians joined forces to at last defeat the Enemies Without Friends [1120 ST]. An army a million strong marched southward...into a trap. The Dragons were waiting for us, even the Dragon Sun who we thought was dead. The EWF ate the whole Imperial army in what we call the Dragonkill War. Many children grew up without fathers afterwards, and many women lived alone. The Carmanians took advantage of our sudden weakness and conquered the Empire [1174 ST] and with treachery overcame good Emperor Vinyartu. The subsequent Carmanian emperors abused the powers of Yelm to oppress us for many years.

This Carmanian tyranny was so bad that seven conspirators gathered together to summon the worst enemy of the Carmanians that they could find. These seven succeeded in unleashing both that greatest enemy and the greatest blessing at the same time: Sedenya, the Red Goddess and She Who Frees Us [1220 ST]. Our Red Goddess first handily defeated Carmanian attempts to destroy her, then proceeded with many miracles such as converting the whole tribe of savage nomads called the CharUn [1228 ST],

*Continued on next page . . .*

Then Sedenya left us to find her self or the Great Self. She was gone so long that the people thought she had failed or abandoned us. The Carmanians took advantage of her absence to strike back at the Empire. The weak despaired, the strong worked magic. Sedenya returned riding atop the Crimson Bat and foiled the Carmanians with madness and death. The Carmanian army was obliterated at the First Battle of Chaos [1232 ST].

Full of her Self, the Red Goddess then warred with the Old Gods at the Battle of Castle Blue [1245 ST] in a bid to win their acceptance. She was successful and the Old Gods recognized her at last and then hailed her as one of them. Sedenya then rose triumphantly into the sky as the Red Moon, where still she watches over her beloved lands.

The Red Goddess left behind Takenegi, the Moonson, to rule our empire in her stead. Takenegi ruled peacefully for many years with the aid of eminent heroes such as Aronius Jaranthir, who converted the Carmanians to the Lunar Way [1335 ST], and Hwarin Dalthippa, who acquired Sylila [1326 ST] and conquered Saird [1347 ST] for the Empire.

The Red Goddess is the power of cycles, and her empire is destined to follow a cycle of power and weakness. Moonson, our beloved Emperor, must also follow the liberation cycle set by the Red Goddess. Like all Emperors he has a hidden shadow foe, which is called his Other. As if on schedule, Sheng Seleris appeared and conquered Dara Happa. The years of his rule were the years of the Empty Emperor [1375 ST], when darkness appeared at noon.

As before, a new power of light restored the world. From among the folk came the Lunar Mysteries, as realized and taught by Great Sister. Moonson was empowered by this and, with his secret household he fought and destroyed Sheng Seleris. The empire experienced a renaissance as the New Monks taught the Lunar Mysteries and demonstrated the useful magic of the Lunar way. During these exciting years HonEel appeared and gave us maize [1468 ST], then established the Orayan Sultanate [1480 ST] and convinced the Pentans to make peace [1486 ST]. HonEel also converted Tarsh to adopt the Lunar way [1490 ST] and did other great deeds before she before sacrificed herself to save Oraya from a Pentan Invasion during the Nights of Horrors [1506 ST].

Recently the Red Emperor declared that to mark the completion of the current cycle he will present the Goddess with Orlanth chained to Yelm's Chariot. Almost no one worships the god anymore. Already Sartar [1602 ST], Pavis [1610 ST], and Heortland [1619 ST] have fallen to the Empire and only the city of Whitewall holds out. The great and luminous hero there, named Tatus the Bright, has promised that it will fall this year and that Orlanthi will have no worshippers left in Dragon Pass.

### **Who are the People of Our Empire?**

Our glorious empire is destined to rule the world, for we are the vessel of Yelm's Justice and Sedenya's Power. It is our solemn duty to bring into the light those misguided rebels who do not acknowledge the authority of our emperor.

*Continued on next page . . .*

MEN were made to be the bearers of Yelm's light and for many years, they enjoyed a privileged position in our Empire. But the Goddess showed us that WOMEN may also bear the light. The position of women has improved within the Empire ever since.

LUNARS are those who worship Sedenya and the mysteries of Taraltara to bring the light to the unenlightened. Anyone who believes that "We are all Us" is a Lunar in their heart, for the blood of the Goddess runs in us all. It is the religion that is dominant in the empire, though not everyone worships her.

The ARISTOCRACY wields Yelm's justice within the Empire. They have this power as the direct descendents of Yelm. The Aristocracy keep the forces of rebellion and disorder at bay, and preside over sacrifices to Yelm. They appoint PATERII from among commons to serve them on a local level.

The COMMONERS are everyone else. They worship Lodril and Oria and are most often farmers. They identify themselves first with their local family and tribe or clan, guild or village or temple or sponsor. Many are not really Lunars since they don't worship the Red goddess.

The IMPERIAL CITIZENS are a cut above ordinary people. They are franchised members of the Empire with special status and responsibilities. Most aristocrats are imperial citizens, and some commoners too

We call those who refuse Yelm's justice REBELS. They are a danger to our empire. It is our duty to subjugate the Rebels before they can cause further destruction. The Pentans and Orlanthe are the greatest Rebels. The nomadic PENTANS are the progeny of Kargzant the Wanderer. Expelled from the Empire many times, they have refused their destiny and still want the empire. The savage ORLANTHI are sons of Orlanatus, the murderer god. They emulate their god by practicing murder—a privilege for which they richly pay the victim's kin. SLAVES are subjugated Rebels, and their descendants.

NONHUMANS are our friends as well. Those that have accepted the ways of Sedenya are our friends, and some of them are even citizens. Now we enjoy peaceful coexistence with the Digijelm, the Underground Men, the Wood Men, and the Broo. Those not worshipping Sedenya are our enemies.

Carmanian women are born into the cloistered *Caram*, or women's caste. A woman can now aspire to a male caste through the mysteries of Sedenya, although the concept is quite shocking to their male counterparts. Male Carmanians can be forced into the *caram* caste as a humiliating form of house arrest.

Aronius Jaranthir converted the Carmanians to the Lunar Way three centuries ago, but they are not part of the Heartlands. At first many thought the Emperor was punishing them for their misdeeds. But separation from the Heartlands preserved Carmania from the onslaught of Sheng Seleris and helped them to defeat him when no one else could. The Carmanians enjoy their autonomy, and know that they are the backbone of the Empire.

The titular head of Carmania is the Eye of the Padishah. He is an Imperial appointee, and wears a mask of a human eye to denote his status as Watcher of the Satraps. The current appointee is Palamtales, a canny, capable and untrusting administrator. He receives the homage of the four satraps in his court at Kitor. It should be noted that the Carmanian satraps do not have access to the Lunar Inclusion magics available to Heartland satraps; those powers are the prerogative of the Padishah's Eye. Carmanian satraps rule their fiefs using their traditional customs.

By law, only a karmanoi may hold a fief. Unlike the Heartlands, the karmanoi do not use clan or family connections to assist them in their rule. They rely instead on vassals bound by oaths of fealty in exchange for non-hereditary fiefs or stipends. Some vassal relationships have become so permanent that the vassal is part of his superior's household. A web of such ties is termed a *House*, and almost every Carmanian belongs to one. A *Great House* is one that controls a satrapy, while a number of lesser houses struggle for independence under the guidance of their ruling karmanoi.



CARMANOS revealed the religion of Dualism. The Invisible God created two beings to oversee the world of humans. Idovanus the Good God was overcome by Ganesatarus the Bad God, but since the Dawn Idovanus' forces have been gaining power. *The Two Book* is their great grimoire, whose pages are black on one side and white on the other, and which has two front covers but no back cover. Carmanism is dominant in the West Reaches of the Lunar Empire. The Carmanian looks at the Red Moon as the Balance between Light and Darkness as she moves both visibly and invisibly through her Seven Phases.



All Carmanians believe in IDOVANUS, the good god and lord of truth. He made this world and wars eternally against Ganesatarus, the father of the lie and the evil master of matter. Truth is of crucial importance to the Carmanians, for if they do not adhere to the truth, then the lie will wax and multiply, obscuring any contact with Idovanus. Although everyone respects Idovanus as the greatest of the Gods most people are not pure enough to approach hi and so worship lesser gods which have been approved by the magi.



GANESATARUS the Deceiver is the god of evil, an embodiment of lies and the devil. He was the patron god of the Spolite Empire and even now the peasant rites are heavily infused with his error. By keeping to the truth, the Carmanians keep the peasants in check. He is also called Fronalako the Devil Sorcerer and Yargan the Vile God. Just as Idovanus made gods to help people in the world, Ganesatarus created many demons to mislead people into the lie. The power of the lie is such that it can even corrupt the good gods. Only the magi can perceive the full extent of the lie and all Carmanians pay strict attention to customs and restrictions in both religious and everyday affairs.



The VIZIERS are the learned class of Carmania and the masters of all branches of knowledge. They are the scholars, loremasters, sorcerers, teachers, judges, astrologers and scribes of Carmania. Viziers are picked or volunteered from pious Carmanian families. Although the Carmanians originally came from Loskalm, they have a highly ambivalent attitude towards the practice of sorcery. The God Learners, using their superior sorceries, expelled the Carmanians from Fronela and later the Pelandan Logicians demonstrated that the Carmanian sorceries could be used for evil ends. Upon investigation, the viziers found that their own sorceries proceeded from Fronalako, an evil servant of Ganesatarus, and not directly from the Good God as they believed. They had been corrupted by the Lie and this was the cause of their reverses. To cleanse themselves, the karmanoi and the hazars abandoned their sorcerous training and worshipped only the divine servants of Idovanus. The viziers are allowed to practice sorcery, for their superior moral perception allows them to distinguish between the pure sorcery of Idovanus, and Fronalako's debased perversion. For all other Carmanians, sorcery is forbidden.

Above the viziers are the MAGI. They are not senior viziers, but a separate order of wizards renowned for their magical puissance. They alone among the Carmanians are pure enough to worship the Good God, Idovanus, directly. The magi are chosen from infants who were either born in magically auspicious times, or demonstrated acute magical talent while in the cradle. Candidates are secluded from the outside world in the grim Temple of Idovanus at Brinnus where they are taught the secrets of the magi. They are taught how to use the *Ersoon*, a firestick or a wand with a glowing tip, to work their magics and how to ascertain the designs of Idovanus by observing the motions of the Sun, the glowing tip of Idovanus's *Ersoon*. The magi do not work sorcery for the study of derivative arts inhibits their communion with the Good God.

The magi have a supervisory role over the viziers and priests in Carmania. They monitor religious matters, investigating and regulating as appropriate. The highest of the magi, the HIEROPHANT, flies up through the Sun and beyond to find out which gods are acceptable to the Good God and which are not. It was during one of these trips that the Hierophant discovered that the Lunar Way was acceptable to Idovanus. The Carmanians submitted to Sedenya after a century of resistance. The magi were untouched by the submission, and they regulate the Lunar temples just as they would any others.

The priests of the lesser gods are not viziers or magi, but are members of the castes of hazars, karmanoi or caram, depending on their status and sex.

The Carmanians used to worship gods of light and darkness. Appreciation of light and darkness is important in Carmanian philosophy as a means of discovering the truth. Both are pure—they exist uncontaminated by the lie. There are false lights and false darks but the magi can discern the lie within. Before they were converted to Sedenya the Carmanians maintained a balance between light and dark, worshipping neither one, nor the other, nor a formless, grayish blend of the two, but a clear distinction between the two with the subject standing in the middle and knowing the difference.



The riddling mystic NYSALOR was an incarnation of Sedenya (more specifically, Rashorana) who was slain by Arkat over a thousand years ago. Nysalor's secrets were hidden from dragons and emperors for centuries. Nonetheless, at odd times, their typically incisive questions would appear in documents. Practitioners studied certain paradoxes in an attempt to achieve a state of mystical awareness known as Illumination. Since these paradoxes were formulated as cryptic questions, the Illuminates are vulgarly known as Riddlers. Credulous barbarians foolishly believe that listening to a Riddler's questions can taint one with chaos. The Philosophy is still taught within the Empire by the Order of Day. By ancient tradition, they teach only from public agorae in city squares, refusing to ever teach under a roof.

Now these cosmic principles have been subsumed by the Lunar Way; light and dark are seen as embodied in Sedenya's balance and phases, while the Seven Mothers often replace the Carmanian equivalents. Yanafal Tarnils, for example, has replaced Humakt as the main war god. Most Carmanian houses still practice their ancestral rites but have added a Lunar veneer. The Carmanians ignore the Lunar message of oneness, preferring to seek Idovanus through the tried and true method of light and darkness.

## Rinliddi, The Bird People

The Bird People of Rinliddi are descended from Vrimak the High Flyer, the Bird of Yelm. In the Golden Age they were allies of Dara Happa and famed for their avilry, men mounted on large flightless birds. During the Great Darkness horse-riders from the east exterminated the bird flocks and most of their riders. The Emperor is making great efforts to reestablish the avilry and several dozen flocks of avilry mounts can be found on the plains of First Blessed Satrapy. Only time will tell if he has been successful.

With to the destruction of the avilry only the Nobles could keep true to their ancestors' ways. Everybody else was forced to become peasants and serfs to survive, losing sight of their avian ancestors. Even with the advent of the Lunar Empire most Rinliddi have turned to Sedenya instead of attempting to resurrect their dead traditions. Those ways are meaningless without the Avilry. With the efforts of the flock farmers beginning to be successful the ancient Rinliddi are returning. The New Birds have become populous in the countryside, while the Lunars make up the majority in the towns and army. Most Lunars do not care for the ancient ways.

The Rinliddi group themselves into Nests. Inclusion in a Nest is determined by geography, not kinship ties. At the center of the nest is the *Addi*, or Pillar, which is used for various Rinliddi rituals. Worship shows that these pillars are the stumps of the World Tree that used to reach into the Sky. During worship ceremonies the New Birds fly to the branches where their ancestors once lived.



Many people believe in the NEW WHITE MOON MOVEMENT: that when the light of the Goddess has spread over the whole world, the Red Moon will become White. Originally this was expected to be Zaytenera, Natha's Full Moon aspect. Recently a different White Moon is being prophesied. It is the New White Moon. In the past few decades prophetic madmen and shyster saints have sprung up in increasing numbers, preaching the imminent coming of this New White Moon. They are often bizarre. The Whitefaces of Jillaro attempt to gather converts by chalking their faces white and performing complex but silent maneuvers that hint at another reality. The White Noise Movement gather in huge groups and make shushing sounds for hours while performing intricate maneuvers.

These flocks of inspired rabble are not a new phenomena. Such people have been around since the Red Moon first rose. These preachers are not formally organized. Most are too isolated to meet with others. In the larger cities the preachers often completely ignore each other. What is disturbing is that their rants have acquired a tenor of urgency, a note of alarm and, worst of all, a message of rebellion. Some scholars have collected their proclamations attempting to divine the deeper message of this New White Moon. To date they have found a farrago of nonsense, contradictory doctrines, inane ramblings and a few cryptic statements that seem important but defy clear decipherment. Only one clear message is apparent: the cosmos will be different and better for everyone who is not in power today.

The preachers of the White Moon all seem to agree that some tremendous deed must be performed to bring about the White Moon, but they all differ on its nature. The Fiscal Anarchists of Raibanth chant "Out of the Red!" They work to destroy the love of money that debases humanity and start riots when they throw money away in the streets. They incite others not to pay taxes or corvée. This has led to tax revolts and their current leadership are in hiding. The Pale Shadows demand that lunar shades be grafted to spirits of light and darkness, and that breeding programs for them be started to make the cosmos lighten up. The Hungry Eyes say that the mobs must be fed. The Snowy Falls say the stars must change.

The Emperor has sanctioned the expenditure of massive magics for people to travel to the past and bring the avilry back, and this has had some small success. However, many of the ancient customs of the Rinliddi Bird People are still lost and much that is known is clearly redundant in the modern world. Continued effort is needed before the Bird people are robust enough to fly strong again.

As part of the effort to bring the Bird people back to life, the flock farmers of First Blessed Satrap have won the right to restore titles used by the ancient Rinliddi. Impoverished peasants and petty landowners have found themselves

endowed with such grand and imposing appellations as Bright Eagle Lord or Great Scratcher. Equally pretentious insignia accompany the titles, so ceremonial feathered headdresses can be seen bobbing over the bent backs of farmers in the fields. These new leaders have come into conflict with the entrenched Lunar authorities as they try to perform their ancient duties. Many fear a full-blown dart war could break out soon, and wonder if the Paradisal Aviator will ever reappear.



**VRIMAK THE ALL-SEEING EYE** is the Supreme God of Rinliddi. Long ago the Paradisal Aviator, in his plumage of bright blue, red and yellow feathers, would meet with the All-Seeing Eye to receive from him divine guidance, then return filled with the blessings of Vrimak. Such a ceremony has not taken place for many centuries and the Satrap of First Blessed hopes to restore it soon. But the rituals of the Paradisal Aviator are only gradually being recovered from the nobility's hereditary Vrimak rites.



Rinliddi peasants worship **BASEKORA**, the ancient earth goddess. After the horse riders destroyed the birds, the Rinliddi were at their mercy. Only Basekora's secrets of survival saved them from extinction. From hidden strongholds in the hills around the Hungry Plateau the peasants survived to reoccupy the fields once again. Basekora is the last link that most Rinliddi have with their ancestors. Through this link the Bird People can hope to live again.



Most people dwelling on the Arcos River worship **DUTUKKOS**, an ancient hero famous for taming the river.



In the effort to bring back the Bird People the peasantry have been encouraged to also worship **AVARNIA**, the Great Bird Mother, the ancient ancestress of the Rinliddi. Most find her useful only for raising plump quails. With vast farms of quails subsidized by the Emperor, most Pelorians can afford to have a quail in their pot every Full Moon.



Another Rinliddi deity has had a big impact within the Empire and beyond as well. The infamous **CRIMSON BAT** is, in fact, an avatar of the ancient Death Goddess of Rinliddi. In her quest for her Self Sedenya found the Bat and taught it its Self. The Bat grew extra eyes to see its newfound inner knowledge and became the steed of the Goddess. It accompanied her back into the world and helped prove her rightful place in the cosmos by destroying the might of the Carmanian Empire at the First Battle of Chaos. Since that time this huge monster, the size of a small town, has served the empire. This, at least, is the official version. The Crimson Bat, or something very like it, has been encountered around Glorantha since the Greater Darkness. The Bat is widely feared as a monstrous demon that devours the body and soul of its victims. The mere presence of the Bat has won several major victories for the Lunar Empire. By Imperial decree it is forbidden to feed within the Heartlands and instead patrols the Provinces



## Son of Death

By Heather Bruton

Shargash, the Dara Happan Underworld God, still rules the great city of Alkoth. He lives there, as much as the God of Death lives, and his people are in a half-world of life and death within the walls. When war calls then the drums of Shargash pound, and people seize their weapons and magic implements to march to war. Anyone may be seized by the passion. They walk away from their families forever, who do not mourn this, but feel blessed to have had the attention of Shargash at their hearth.

and outlying areas. Wherever it flies the locals avidly hunt down criminals, down-and-outs, and foreigners to propitiate its ferocious hunger. Some mystics claim that the eternity of torment that victims suffer while being devoured by the Bat liberates them totally from the ties of this world. Nobody is willing to test their theories.

## Kostaddi, the Rich Earth

Kostaddi is best known for the Hungry Plateau. The top of this plateau is a bleak wasteland and the only people capable of living there are the Sable Riders. They settled the Plateau from distant Prax at the request of the World Council during the Dawn Age. Since nobody else desired the land the Sable Riders have lived there ever since. They field the famous Antelope Lancer regiments, for the Emperor's forces. Kostaddi is a typical satrapy and even contains a sizeable proportion of Dara Happans. It disgraced itself in the War against Sheng Seleris when it renounced Sedenya and worshipped Sheng instead. Because of this treason, the Emperor allows the Sable Riders to rule the satrapy with his personal blessing. The Kostaddians have revolted several times but those revolts have always been crushed. The memories of Duke Raus's recent failure to persuade Rone not to revolt still hurts – Rone fell and Raus was exiled to a distant land.

Most Kostaddians are humble farmers, growing barley, rice, maize and goats. Kostaddi has many cities under Dara Happan rule. The highest class in which native Kostaddians can be found is the commons. At the top of Kostaddi society is the Sable Tribe who take great pleasure in treating the city-dwellers like filth. The Kostaddian's traditional leaders are their peasant councils. Their rulers are the Sable Overlords and the Dara Happans who inhabit the towns. Legend remembers that Emperor Ovosto came from Kostaddi, but his memory is only invoked on Anarchy Day, when a peasant is crowned Emperor for a day and the Dara Happans are forced to be the servants of the Kostaddians. The day's celebrations end when the Emperor is poisoned and the normalcy of the Cosmos is restored.



**GERENDETHO** is the local earth god, his rites still popular with local farmer. He appears as a goat.



**SENKANA** is the wife of Gerendetho and present in the barley. As other crops were introduced other deities were too, though these two have persevered.

## Oraya, The Eastern Satrapy

Oraya is the newest Satrapy, founded by HonEel only a century ago. The Emperor persuaded HonEel to settle there in an effort to solve several problems in the Empire. The first was to create a bulwark against the still-potent Pentans, nursing their wounds after the defeat of Sheng Seleris. The second was to resettle Arrolians fleeing the ravages of the White Bear Empire. The third was to keep HonEel occupied. The settlement of Oraya precipitated a war with the Pentans but the Satrapy survived, even after the Nights of Horrors that killed the Emperor, HonEel, most of the Lunar Army and nearly all the Pentans.

After the Nights of Horrors the vast Redlands outside the borders of the Empire were left empty. The nomad Pentans would not reenter them because of the Horrors, but no such fears inhibited settlers from the Lunar Empire. Independent farmers gradually settled the area. The Redlands are not formally part of the Oraya Satrapy, but with the recent discovery of iron in the Von Hills, their ragged independence will likely end. More disturbing than Lunar taxes, though, is the appearance of strange nomad tribes. They are ignorant of the Nights of Horrors or any treaties based upon it, and look very hungry.

The Orayans have a variety of backgrounds. Most were either fleeing the burden of the Empire, or exiled here for rebellion. A number of settlers were forced to move here after persecution for heresy by their erstwhile neighbors. Those incapable of fitting in Orayan society are strongly encouraged to move on to the Redlands. Most Orayans are surly, independent farmers from the Oslir valley and Pelanda. They group themselves into villages and communes, retaining a habitual distrust of outsiders and tax collectors. They are of all origins and a bewildering cacophony of tongues is heard in the fields and meeting halls. The towns are largely dependent upon trade with the villages and communes for survival, as most lack any authority or ability to requisition corn. Because of this, Oraya is far less urbanized than other Satrapies. Downriver, Rinliddi controls trade. Vast *Latifundia*, Lunar-owned slave estates, dot Oraya; one of the few satrapies where large-scale slavery can be found.

The Satrap of Oraya fields a vast army of prison guards and does whatever he pleases. Most towns voluntarily donate him a large portion of their revenue in the hope that he will leave them alone. He cares little for ruling the satrapy, preferring to split his time between overseeing his own latifundia and the Imperial court. The Orayans and the Redlanders brought the Lunar Way along with their other Heartland traditions.



**DENEGORIA**, the Goddess of Savage Freedom, revealed herself when HonEel invoked a great power to oversee cooperation between the many deities of the migrants.



**VIUROS** is the most popular god among the farmers and was imported from Pelanda by HonEel. He is the husband of Denegoria and his priests oversee the rites of many less powerful deities.



**HONEEL** herself is worshipped as a women's goddess. The Emperor's edicts against the sacrifice of humans in her corn festivities was never widely obeyed here. Indeed, many people in the empire who were punished for defying the edict were expelled here, and continued to practice human sacrifice. To enrich himself through the corn trade, the Satrap has decreed that the corn rituals must be practiced in his latifundia.

## Sylila, The Barbarian Satrapy

The Sylila Satrapy was settled by Hwarin Dalthippa, the Conquering Daughter. It is unusual in that it is the only Heartland Satrapy whose inhabitants were not Pelorians but hill barbarians. Sylila is the only Heartland satrapy whose natives were originally hill people of Orlanathi origin. They have become heavily influenced by the Lunar Way and have adopted many Pelorian practices. Even so, their origins are still apparent. Their clans are formed according to ancient Alakoring customs. Sometimes the Sylilans meld Heartland and Alakoring customs; their clan chiefs wear trousers underneath their togas, much to the mirth of Pelorians.

The Sylilans grow the traditional crops of barley and wheat, although corn is becoming popular. The farmers use the Barntar scratch plow and attempts by the Lunar bureaucracy to make them use the Pelorian deep plow have failed, because the latter is unsuited to the Sylilan soil. Sylila is less densely populated than other Heartland Satrapies. The valley of the Erinflarth river was once known as DaraNi. The land was a major battlefield in the Dawn and Imperial Ages, but the coming of the Goddess has brought it a hitherto unknown period of peace. The people here distrust Alkoth due to memories of its brutal rule and conquests of the region since the Dawn.

Centuries of Lunar rule have withered away any tribal authority that once existed and power has shifted into the hands of the leaders of the towns and cities, most of them Lunars. The Lunars of Sylila scorn the Orlanathi customs and govern using Pelorian models. Jillaro, the capital of Sylila, is the center of the Lunar Way in South Peloria. The Sylilans are descended from Orlanathi stock. They have retained portions of their ancient cults. The Sylilan looks at the Moon and sees the Mistress of the Star Bear.



**ODAYLA THE BEAR** was worshipped long ago. The Sylilans know he was tamed and ridden by the Goddess.



**HWARIN DALTHIPPA**, the Conquering Daughter and founder of their Satrapy, is worshipped. She conquered the provinces and created the Matrimonial Tribute, paid by the provincial kings to the Satrap of Sylila. Due to the Emperor's foolishness, her memory has been slighted in the provinces and they grow troublesome.

## Darsen, Land of Women

Darsen is not a political region, but a social one. It lies in within the Karasal Sultanate in the Northwest Heartlands and is rather hilly. It has been the Land of Women since the Green Age, and many prehistoric shrines to nearly forgotten goddesses are there. The Darsenites are the caretakers of the Women's Tribe that lived here during the Green Age. Unlike elsewhere, men never conquered the women's tribes of Darsen. The



Darsenites developed special magics to negate the men's innate hubris. Surprisingly, the Darsenites do not practice polyandry even though their men are less free than Darjiin or Esrolia. They fear that if they permit this, their magics will become impotent.

Darsen has no large cities, the land is too hilly to support intensive agriculture. Instead the Darsenites survive by herding sheep and pigs, and growing roots and other tubers. Small towns, ruled by Dara Happans and Pelandans, dot the land. In Darsen, women belong to women's' societies which they hold to be more important than government. The head of each clan is the *Crone* and men are assigned secondary leadership roles, if any. Even foreigners in the towns are compelled to obey the Crone. The Croness cooperate with each other and there is little need for the Lunar Way in Darsen. The supreme matriarchal authority is the *Denorex Council*, which meets every forty-seven years. The next meeting is in eighteen years. Although the matriarchs are subject to the Satrap of Karasal and his minions, the presence of the Great Sister within his Satrapy hinders his rule over them. If the Croness are displeased with his decisions, they can take their complaints to the Great Sister in Graclodont to have his decisions overturned. The Darsenite women keep and practice the most ancient rites of Peloria. They worship the Hundred Goddesses, any one of which they can contact in their ceremonies. Most Pelorian women's' secret rites resemble the Darsen practices.

The Dara Happans tolerate Darsen despite their own patriarchal ways, for they recognize Ursturn as Yelm's Divine Seed. When Yelm was murdered during the Gods War, it crept out of his corpse as a tremendous serpent and ravaged the earth for many years until the Goddesses of Darsen tamed it. The Lunars rule Darsen through the Goddess Addi, the stick. She confers powers of authority and leadership among the Deneron Council on her bearer. The stick was lost for many ages until Valare Addi retrieved it. Since then the Goddess Addi has always supported the Lunar Way.

## The Provinces

The Lunar Provinces are located in the region of rough hilly ground of southern Peloria where it nears the Rockwood Mountains and Dragon Pass. The land is cut by several rivers, especially the Oslir, and is rich with forests and wild animals. Virgin woods dot the land. Five Kingdoms and one chaos land make up the Lunar Provinces.

AGGAR is the most wild, being drained by the Forantin River and occupied by the Tarkarlings Tribe.

The Kingdom of VANCH and the Queendom of HOLAY used to be part of Saird, a famous kingdom of Dragonslayers in the Imperial Age. The Kingdom of Saird fragmented after most of its men were slain in the Dragonkill War. The old capital of Saird, Mirin's Cross, is now the headquarters of the provincial government. Holay is noted for its famous Queens, incarnations of the Red Women whom the Orlanthe believe to be Vinga.

IMTHER is a small province comprised of the Imther Mountains and surrounding territory. It is especially valuable because its native rulers have a personal, non-transferable trading relationship with the mostali of the Imther Mountains. Both Vanch and Holay have been adding much of the lowlands of Imther to their territory.

TARSH is the richest of the kingdoms. A sixth land is far more lunarized than any mentioned above, but it will never be a province. It is TORK, the Mad Sultanate. Its inhabitants were all driven mad by the sight of the Bat and imprisoned here by a hero long ago. At times they break free of their confines and ravage the surrounding lands. The last time this happened was during Sheng Seleris's invasion, when the Mad Sultan himself and a large horde of madmen broke free. They killed the Emperor and devastated the Empire before entering Dorastor. A careful watch is maintained on the borders of Tork to see that they remain secure.

The Emperor's authority is asserted over these tributary lands by the Provincial Overseer. The Kings and Queens are enthroned according to their own ancient practices, but pay set tributes to the Provincial Overseer. The type and amount of tribute is different for each kingdom; Imther pays its tribute in Copper and Bronze while Holay pays corn and red pottery. Many lesser tribes also obey the governor under simpler arrangements. Several other barbarian lands are also subject nations, such as Sartar, but not official provinces. The natives of Western Peloria generally follow Alakoring Orlanathi cultural patterns. Most, however, have come under one or another form of Lunar influence. In general, the further north and east one travels, the more civilized the tribes and clans become. Vanch is so mixed it is unique. Everyone around them say they are thieves. The natives readily adapt to whatever is useful from the hodgepodge of Orlanathi, Lunar and neighboring influences. Since the time of the Conquering Daughter it has been the most Lunarized of the provinces, yet only uses those secrets that the Vanchites find useful. They even favor raccoons as pets. By and large, the kingdoms follow the normal civilized Orlanathi organization structure, overlaid with Lunar liberalism.

Struggles for dominance exist within the provinces. Holay, through its mysteries of the Red Woman, holds the rites of the Land Goddess that formed the basis of the Kingdom of Saird. The province lacks the power to re-establish Saird, and the queen is kept away from the potentates of the other parts of ancient Saird by the Provincial Government. Both Vanch and Holay are consuming Imther piecemeal, and they are eyeing Balazar. Tarsh ruled Aggar, Holay and parts of Balazar three hundred years ago. Phargentes, the previous king of Tarsh, sought to restore these lands to Tarsh by abusing his post as Provincial Overseer. Even now Tarsh uses its wealth to buy up land in those places hoping to affect a border adjustment, but it is opposed by Sylila, which seeks to recover the provinces for itself.

At the top of the Lunar Provincial Government is the Overseer, Appius Luxius. He is an Imperial appointee, directly responsible to the Emperor, and has held his post for thirty-five years. Three assistants serve under him: Ivex Devouring Dog, General of Procurement and Disbursement,



The Emperor begat six-armed YARA ARANIS, keeper of the crimson web, to defend the Lunar Way in the wars against Sheng Seleris, though it cost him dearly. As dire foe of the Pentans, she is especially pleased by the sacrifice of horses. Yara Aranis was first worshipped to terrify the Pentans but has since then acquired the even more important role in the Empire as Keeper of the Crimson Web. Her temples, called Temples of the Reaching Moon, act as anchors for the Web. Spider-like Yara Aranis weaves the Crimson Web over the empire out of Glowlines, crimson strands of lunar energy. She waits at the center of the web ready to pounce upon any disturbance, be it sacrifices at her temples or foreign magicians trying to sneak into the Empire. Either way, she scuttles upon the hero planes to feed. The Glowlines are too faint for most people to see clearly, though many discern a crimson haze in the night sky. Some outsiders think the Glowline is a magical rope tied around the empire to keep the moonlight in. Lunar initiates and devotees are taught how to draw upon the Glowlines to enhance their magics. Learned sages know that it is not the Glowlines that strengthens them, but what flows through the Glowlines. The sacrifices consumed by Yara Aranis do not feed her, for she is an incarnation of the Great Goddess and needs no nourishment. Instead the sacrifice strengthens the invisible Reaching Moon. The unseen energies of the Reaching Moon suffuse the Glowlines and are easily usable who knows the right prayers.

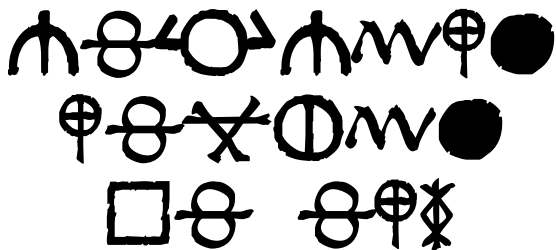
responsible for collecting taxes; Tatus the Bright, General of the Provincial Army, in charge of the formidable military force fighting in the south; and Icilius Overholy, General Guide for the Lunar Spirit, responsible for all matters spiritual. All have extensive bureaucracies of *buseri*, scribes trained in the Buserian Schools, to implement their decrees. Hwarin Dalthippa, the Conquering Daughter subdued the Provinces over three centuries ago. She imposed the *Matrimony Tribute*, which the Provinces paid to Sylila. The Sylilans, as heir to her secrets of conquest, easily pacified any revolt within their matrimony. The kingdoms were never integrated into the Heartland, even though they shared the same Orlanthi heritage as Sylila. The intrigues of jealous Satraps prevented the Satrap of Sylila from annexing the provinces, and if the kingdoms became Satrapies in their own right, Sylila would have forfeited the Matrimonial Tribute. The Sylilan Satrap's veto ensured that the kingdom's status remained unchanged.

Problems developed when HonEel converted Tarsh to the Lunar Way. The Tarshites refused to pay the Matrimonial Tribute to Sylila, rightly claiming that Hwarin Dalthippa had never conquered them. The situation came to a head when conservative Tarshites expelled their Lunar king and threatened to liberate the rest of the provinces. The much-vaunted magics of the Conquering Daughter were useless against the rebellious Tarshites. The Emperor's response was to create the Provincial

Government. He manifested a portion of his powers and appointed an Overseer to wield them. The first Overseer was Phargentes, brother to the exiled Tarshite king. When the king was killed in liberating Tarsh, Phargentes inherited the throne. With the combined authority of king and Overseer, Phargentes re-established Tarsh as the great kingdom of the south, using his imperial authority to exact tribute from the other kingdoms. Only his protestations of fidelity to Sedenya prevented his deposition and execution. Since the death of Phargentes, the Provincial Overseer has been the Emperor's creature and the leading bureaucrats have all been Heartlanders, to avoid the problems evidenced by Phargentes. The cessation of the Matrimonial Tribute was a major blow to the Sylilans and directly led to the destruction of their satrapal clan in a brutal dart war. Although the ErrioUnit, the new satrapal clan, were initially satisfied with their realm, a recent shortage of tax revenues has caused them to revive claims for Matrimonial Tribute.

Each of the kingdoms must raise local regiments, trained and commanded by loyal officers of the Provincial Army. They are usually geographically identified, such as the Goldedge or Slavewall Regiments from Tarsh. Most units, foot and horse, are equipped with their cultural weapons, though of excellent quality. No large magical units are present in the Provincial Army.

Although the people of South Peloria are Orlanathi, most no longer worship Orlanth directly. Instead they worship a son or aspect of him such as Barntar the Farmer, Odayla the Bear or Voriof the Ram. Some conservatives in the remote parts of the provinces still worship Orlanth openly, but they are too ineffectual to oppose Sedenya. Despite the Lunar attempt to substitute Molanni for Orlanth among the tribes folk many barbarians under the Lunar thumb have simply dropped storm worship, retreating into their worship of the Earth Goddess Ernalda. To convert the provinces the New Monks created the Church of the Seven Mothers, or the Provincial Church. Instead of worshipping the Goddess directly, worship of the Mothers of the Goddess is emphasized, drawing on parallels between the Seven Mothers and the Orlanathi Lightbringers. The provinces have responded to such a degree that Lunars are almost as common in provincial cities as in Dara Happa. The only flaw is that they are worshippers of the Seven Mothers and their understanding of Sedenya is superficial at best.



## Lunar Allies

Although the Emperor is supreme in the Empire, there exist several nations faithful to Sedenya but not subject to the Emperor: the Lunar Allies. They live in the north and co-operate with the Empire at their pleasure. Each of the regions has accepted the Lunar Way as a cloak around their native beliefs. Their lands extend north to the White Sea, a frozen region inhabited by trolls. The Sea of Ice extends southward to meet the north-flowing rivers of Peloria at the Thunder Delta.

The CHARUN are a tribe descended from Pentan horse nomads enslaved by the Goddess at the battle of Seven Horses. After fifty years of allegedly loyal service (several histories speak of them sacking Glamour), the Emperor rewarded them with Erigia as a land grant. He cheated the CharUn, for the land was an Elf Forest. Frustrated, they spent years to cast a massive spell, the Skyburn, to scorch the forest of Erigia with Liquid Fire from the Sky. The tribe suffered heavily battling the surviving Elves but finally won control of the land. They have since adapted to live in the tough region. But life is bleak, and many CharUn leave their bitter land when still young. The primary employment for CharUn braves is the Cossacks, light cavalry regiments in the Imperial Army.

The CharUn are Pentan nomads. They are a Pure Horse tribe, meaning that they do not herd cattle. They live off of the bounty of horses and no other animal. The CharUn organize themselves in the traditional manner of Pentans. Women have a much greater influence here than in Pent, due to the influence of Sedenya. The CharUn worship Kargzant in the nomad manner. They are also fanatical worshippers of Sedenya and are willing to commit any atrocity in her name.

EOL, land of the thrice blessed, is a taiga inhabited by primitive reindeer herders that shun cities. They became a Lunar ally after the Emperor formally apologized for terrible atrocities committed against them by Lunar troops. As a result of their compensation they considered they had received a Third Blessing. Thereafter they called themselves Thrice Blessed, instead of the old name of Twice Blessed. The Thrice Blessed people are simple reindeer herders. They refuse to build in stone or to acknowledge personified deities. They migrate about in their cold land in clan groups, tinkering at odd crafts and gathering at prehistoric monuments once a season to worship Air, Fire, Water, Darkness and Earth. The Thrice Blessed people acknowledge the wisdom of a Council of Queens, whose membership is unclear, but whose authority is sought at each season's festival. The best known Queen is Mrs. Flint, with whom the Lunars must deal to hire the Thunder Delta Slingers. To address her, visitors must speak to a wondrous rock which holds up the roof of her strange house. She gives everyone a handful of salt when they leave. The Thrice Blessed have their own particular nature religion, and are willing to say almost anything about Sedenya which keeps them safe and happy.

Southwest of the Heartlands and the Provinces live the free Orlanthei of TALASTAR. They are not Lunar Provinces, being neither rich enough nor

Lunarized enough to warrant inclusion. Several strongmen claim to be kings, but most are simply glorified clan chiefs. In the south, the Kingdom of the Bilini is the largest political entity. Their king is Bolthor Hairybrecks, reviled for his interest in Lunar dancing girls when he should be driving off the numerous raiders from Dorastor. To the west live the Brolians, said to be so savage that they have neither farms nor metal-working. The people of Talastar are Orlanthe and they resisted the influences of the Empire of Light and the EWF. Many hope to say the same about the Lunar Empire one day. The Talastar are organized in the traditional Orlanthe manner. The Talastar are tougher fighters than one would normally expect for impoverished hillmen. The primary reason for this is the close proximity of Dorastor, a major chaotic hellhole. Apart from the major raids that have been serious to be cause concern within the Empire (the last raid was led by Wowander and his Stag riders thirteen years ago), there have been innumerable minor raids of broos, werewolves, scorpion folk, gorp and other, unclassifiable, horrors.

As a result of White Shirt Day, thirty years ago, the Talastari are officially considered to have accepted the Goddess into their hearts. This acceptance was mostly superficial; the majority of the recipients were more interested in the gift of a clean white shirt than the teaching of the Red Priests. Most Talastari still worship Orlanthe although there is very bitter feuding between the Appeasers, who make propitiatory sacrifices to the nameless horrors within Dorastor, and the Traditionalists, who feel that the only good chaos is no chaos.

DORASTOR, the land of doom, was the land of the Empire of Light until it was razed by Arkat the Destroyer, a monotheist fanatic from the far west. After Arkat the land lay dormancy and lifeless, but its native chaos was awaked by the God Learners researches eight hundred years ago. Now it is an active pit of evil commanded by Ralzakark, King of the Broos.

BALAZAR is a coarse and inhospitable land north of Dragon Pass. Balazar lies between the Rockwood Mountains and the Elf Sea. It is unfit for agriculture, covered with shrubs and copses of trees. It is dominated by the Balazarings, descendants of the hero Balazar who colonized the area over five hundred years ago. They survive by pig farming in and around the three squalid citadels erected by Balazar and his sons. The Votanki, simple hunter-gatherers, are the indigenous people of Balazar.

Semi-nomadic horse nomads make their living in JARST. They are related to the Pentans, but have been partially civilized by the Orayan Satrapy.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN


**Maniria**


**M**aniria is the region of the south central coast of Genertela that is uninhabitable by humans. It is south of the Lunar Empire and the mountain borders of Ralios. In the eastern part is the Holy Country of Kethaela; in the west are the forests of Wenelia; occupying the north is Dragon Pass that cuts a wide swath through the Rockwood Mountains. Settled by a mix of Orlanthei tribesmen, animal nomads, and inhuman creatures, Maniria's people are as volatile as the notorious Dragon Pass.

### Kethaela, the Holy Country

This deeply magical land passed into human control only three centuries ago when the beloved Pharaoh, Lord Belintar of the Harshax, swam ashore from the Closed Oceans, killed the Uz demigod Ezkankekko, and overthrew the Kingdom of Night. Under the Pharaoh's blessed tutelage the six lands of Kethaela—Caladraland, Esrolia, Shadow Plateau, Heortland, God Forgot, and the Rightarm Islands—blossomed as never before. But the climate of peace and plenty was destined to not last. Agents from the Lunar Empire slew the Pharaoh and with his passing the six lands drift into disorder; it's only a matter of time before the Lunar Empire expands south into Kethaela.

Kethaela's land of volcanoes is CALADRALAND. Caladraland is named for the supernaturally massive volcano that rises into the sky, its imposing bulk a matter of worship for the people living on its slopes. (The smaller volcanoes dotting the land are worshipped according to their measure.) Calandra's awesome fury can redden the face of a man standing on the Solung plateau nearly thirty miles away, and the hot ash of his wrath can be intentionally directed against invading enemies. Calandra's lush wife is Asrelia, the deep earth goddess, and their children are the teeming jungles that blanket the land.

Calandrans as a rule dislike cities, preferring to dwell in villages in the jungle. Farming technique is limited to slash-and-burn agriculture, yet the limited commerce of Caladraland has still led to the growth of small towns around the Low Temple. In the High Temple lives the King of the Mountain, who rules all Caladraland. Also called Champion of the High Temple, the king controls the only route to Caladra's Mouth: if the clans cannot feed Caladra with their sacrifices, the lava-scarred priesthood curses them with misfortune in the summer's Flowery Wars. All the clans therefore give proper respect to the king so they can do likewise to Caladra.

Summer is a dangerous time to travel in Caladraland—it's the time of the Flowery Wars. It's through these bloody but ritualized conflicts that the clans gather sacrifices for Caladra: losers are thrown into Caladra's Mouth, as are Ditali and Esrolan captives taken in raids. Typical weapons for Caladran raiders and skirmishers are the bow and javelin, though their best warriors

## Tarsh Exiles, Fugitives from the Red Moon

When HonEel converted Tarsh to the Lunar Way many accused her of having murdered King Pyjeemsab in order to set herself as regent for their unborn child. When the Tarshite court bowed in homage as the ancient crown of Tarsh was placed over the head of Phoronestes, still within HonEel's illustrious womb, the traditional tribes rebelled and slaughtered any Lunar supporters in their ranks.

The Imperial Troops present for the coronation made short work of the rebellion and many rebels fled to the land around Wintertop. There the good defensive terrain and the presence of the Temple of the Shaking Earth allowed them a place of refuge.

The Tarsh Exiles have become a harsh and ruthless people, some even rejecting plow and herd for the way of the sword. They often serve as mercenaries, but are known to turn to raiding and looting in hard times. The Exiles are fiercely independent and have fought against both Sartar and Tarsh when they tried to absorb the Exiles into their kingdoms.

f Maran Gor the Earthshaker is the chief goddess of the Exiles. Her devoted initiates have taken strict geases never to till the land or to herd cattle so that they may better fight their enemies. The High Priestess of the Shaking Earth is so ponderous that she had to be pulled about in an oak cart drawn by six blind cave oxen.

also wield a short sword. Their magic can cause their weapons to burst into flame that harms foes but does not touch the weapon. Generally they try to avoid close combat as armor is unsuitable for the Caladrans to wear comfortably and still be able to skirmish.

During the Imperial Age twin God Learner priests from Slontos seized control of Caladraland. Despite strenuous opposition from Ezkankekko and the High Temple priesthood, these God Learners somehow managed to tame Caladra. To calm the boiling rage of the God Learners reunited him with Aurelion, Caladra's twin sister who was far overseas. The twin priests built the original Low Temple without the help of humans, and there taught the Caladrans their mysteries. They showed the people how to find peace and calm by reuniting with their own spiritual twin.

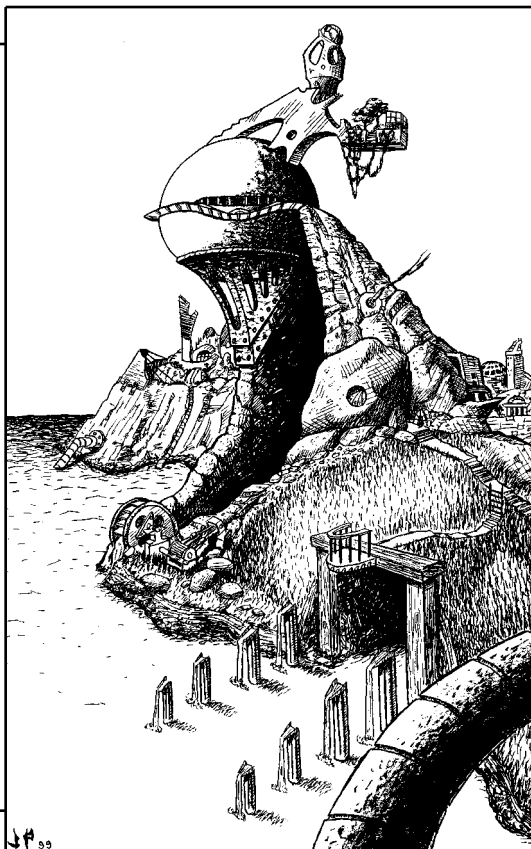
The other notable contribution of the twin priests was the annexation of Porthomeka in the attempt to marry Sky and Earth to bring back the Golden Age. The Closing isolated the Twin Priest cult and the Caladrans reverted to their older worship of Caladra without his twin. Porthomeka has remained under the rule of the King of the Mountain. Its culture is still recognizably Esrolian, even infused with a large dose of Sky worship. The Porthomekans themselves choose to remain part of Caladraland; apparently the payment of heavy tribute to Caladra is preferable to the rule of Esrolian queens in the minds of many men.



## City of Wonders

By Jim Pavelec

Belintar was a strange being from an unknown place who swam ashore from the impassable ocean. He made friends and overcame foes and finally even overthrew the Only Old One, ruler of Kethaela who had ruled for centuries. He installed himself as Pharaoh and oversaw all of Kethaela for many lifetimes, ruling from the City of Wonders. Here we see the Tower of Presence, a notable landmark where Belintar went to meditate and to work his private magic. Since his disappearance the city has been nearly deserted



ESROLIA is the land of women, a rich land whose bountiful crops feed one of the most densely-populated areas in Glorantha and still manages a sizeable grain export. Almost two-thirds of the Holy Country's population lives in Esrolia.

Esrolia is very urbanized. It is dotted with numerous towns and small cities and includes Nochet, the largest city for a thousand miles in any direction. It is quite cosmopolitan and is not considered Esrolian, despite the Council of Queens that rules the city due to the many foreign communities. These communities have their own leaders who are responsible to the Queens for keeping the peace and payment of taxes.

Before the Gods War the Esrolians were Heortlings. Their king caused the deaths of so many men in the disastrous Sword and Helm War that the Ring of Women seized power. The Ring vowed never more to suffer the insanity of men's rule and all its grief. Since then, the Esrolians have been conquered many times but the Ring has never lost power. Because of this, modern Esrolian society is based around the extended family headed by a matriarch.

Her word is law within the family. Most Esrolians consult with all the adult women of the family before making important decisions. Polyandry is permitted but only the wealthier women can afford more than one consort. Esrolian men cannot own property or hold office and are legally the wards of either their wife or their closest female relative.

Esrolia is ruled by a number of queens, heirs of ancient rites that used to exist in the old tribes. The precise number of queens is uncertain, and new ones are often made and old ones often die out. Queens are all members of the ancient earth goddess religion. Among them respected individuals are titled Matriarchs, and they receive tremendous admiration, support and obedience from others. The Esrolians are proud that their queens' rule is consensual, communal, and non-coercive. They often trumpet that the vices of rule by aggressive, war-loving male kind are avoided by refusing to allow them positions of rule.

The queens ally themselves into several factions, each of which jockeys to control the lioness' share of Esrolian political power. The factions are organized around Year Fathers, an important though impotent ceremonial position important to the local religion. The Pharaoh, when alive, held almost every Year Father position in Esrolia, erasing factionalism to the betterment of all. With the absence of the Pharaoh partisan politics has returned. The strongest factions today are:

The **Red Earth**, a pro-Lunar faction organized around the new god Estangus, an avatar of a Dara Happan star god called Son of the Throne. Queen Hendira leads this faction, which calls upon the powers of blood, the red moon, and the red earth farms of the upper Malthin and Eagle Rivers.

The **Old Earth**, whose annual meetings are held on Necropolis Isle in the lower Malthin River. Their Year Father is Fethel Bav, a son of Argan Argar. Led by Queen Varadis, the Old Earth seeks to reinstate the Rites of Darkness which prevailed before the arrival of the Pharaoh. Varadis is supported by the nearby Uz of Shadow Plateau, the priestesses of the Asrelia cult, and half the mobs of Nochet City.

The **Warm Earth** faction worships Erdana, the son of Caladra that pushes up the crops every spring. Queen Faladusa supports a cautious policy which patiently awaits the return of the Pharaoh. Many merchant queens from the coastal cities support her, as do thousands of farmers, especially in North Esrolia.

The **Basket Faction**, rally around a Year Father named Bezarando, a son of Barntar. Their main interest is establishing a strong military presence to maintain their preferred state of isolation. Yet Queen Irminga refuses to support the navy, considering it too outlandish for good earth people to respect.

The **Two Sisters** faction, led by Queen Velsarada, worship Dida, a son of Esra the Grain Goddess. This faction is centered on Dizbos, and hence are primarily concerned with maintaining peace with the barbarian lord Greymane.





Despite the military leanings of several Year Father factions, the bulk of the Esrolian army, composed of expendable men, is armed with long spears and shields. Instead, the Esrolians rely on defensive actions—their land is crisscrossed with ditches, walls, and fortifications, including the huge wall that runs between the Skyreach Mountains and the Shadow Plateau. This the Pharaoh and queens conjured with a huge magic at the Battle of the Building Wall. The Lunars tried to storm this wall, but were driven off with heavy losses.

The Esrolians do have elite troops, however. Mostly women, the best of them are a battalion of Babeester Gor axe-maidens: grim, moody viragos hardened by a hellish brew of fermented mansblood. The axe-maidens are normally scattered as guards throughout the earth temples of Esrolia. But in war, allied Queens gather their axe-maidens into a fierce company.

Ernalda the Earth Mother is the Goddess Supreme, worshipped by all women. Her temples sometimes include shrines to her relatives, such as Ty Kora Tek, goddess of the underworld; Babeester Gor the Avenger; and the Five War Daughters. Esrolian men worship a wide variety of men's gods, consorts of the Goddess. The most common are Orlanth, Lodril, Argan Argar, Flamal, and Magasta.

HEORTLAND is located atop a tall plateau in the eastern region of the Holy Country. The land is a pleasant farming region despite occasional troubled tempests following down from the Storm Mountains. Orlanthi farmers of the Hendreiki tribe inhabit the land while Malkioni dominate the cities. The Lunar Empire has mounted many assaults, both direct and subtle, on Heortland. The death of the Pharaoh brought new hopes to Lunar plans, with total victory seemingly imminent. Last year Heortland was successfully invaded and occupied by the Lunar Army, with the exception of Whitewall, where King Broyan maintains a heroic resistance.

The Hendreiki are the descendants of an irrepressible Heortling tribe that was founded during the Gbaji Wars. They survived invasion by the Malkioni God Learners by clinging to their ancient freedoms and remaining true to them. The Malkioni have commanded the valleys and towns of Heortland since the Imperial Age. They are subjects of the King and perform trades considered beneath the dignity of the Hendreiki. Recently they have begun to demand a greater voice for themselves within the Kingdom.

While the Pharaoh ruled he changed many things but left their love for freedom intact. Although their leaders have become increasingly Malkionized, the Hendreiki still remain free Orlanthi. For example, the warriors of the Hendreiki are not thanes but western-style knights. But the knights are not nobles, just another of the free classes. Before any noble can be appointed he must receive

### Goddesses of Esrolia



Ernalda



Asrelia



Ty Kora Tek



Babeester Gor



Maran Gor



Voria

## Not Monsters, But Not Human

For many years after the Dragonkill War Dragon Pass was empty of humans, making it a safe haven for the inhumans who were elsewhere sorely beset by humanity.

In the valley of Dwarf Run lives Isidilian the Wise, one of the ancient QUICKSILVER MOSTALI. He is a pleasant fellow, noted for his whimsical distribution of gifts to visitors or his unusual objects for hire, such as the Stone Men, the Cannon Cult and the Alchemical Transformer. He is infected with the dwarf diseases of the Openhanded and Individualist Heresies.

At the head of the Creekstream River is Skyfall Lake, overshadowed by a perpetual thunderstorm. The TROLLS of the lake know that the thunderstorm is caused by a hole in the sky. They sometimes encounter big monsters that have been washed down from the sky when fishing. Cragspider the Firewitch rules the local trolls. She has a great following among trolls and trollkin, and she controls a Black Dragon.

The DURULZ are a race that look like flightless ducks, having feathers and a beak but arms and hands instead of wings. They are brave and wage constant war against the undead of the nearby Upland Marsh. They ply the Creekstream River with their boats and carry or escort much trade along it. They are currently in hiding, for the Lunar governor has declared them all to be rebels and placed a generous bounty on their heads.

In order to bring back the Golden Age, the EWF created some new creatures and recreated many extinct ones, including centaurs, minotaurs, satyrs, and manticores. The Golden Age did not return but their creatures, the BEAST FOLK, did. They live in Beast Valley and meet once a year amid the standing stones of the Wild Temple to dance in bloody and spectacular ceremonies. Although the Beast folk largely live without governance, they can summon the demigod Ironhoof from another world to lead them again.

The despicable TUSK RIDERS live in the Stinking Forest. These half-trolls ride fearsome battle-boars as large as buffalo. They live as raiders and mercenaries, notorious for their cruelty, treachery and savagery. Humans fear the Tusk Riders most because of the human sacrifices they regularly make to appease their god of the bloody tusk, performed at the Ivory Plinth.

Many huge animals like DINOSAURS roam Dragon Pass. These are dragonewts that have attempted to change their natural progression and failed. Local Gray Sages believe the nature of the failure determines the type of dinosaur that the dragonewt mutates into. For example, Trachodons are the result of damaged dragonewt eggs that hatched; brontosaurus are caused by dragonewts attempting to mature themselves too quickly; while Dragonewts that are consumed by hunger mutate into terrifying Allosaurs. The failures breed true, although the offspring do not normally have the sentience or malevolence of their parents.

the approval of the Hendreiki beneath him. Bondage is so abhorrent to the Heortlanders that fewer slaves or serfs exist there than in most western countries.

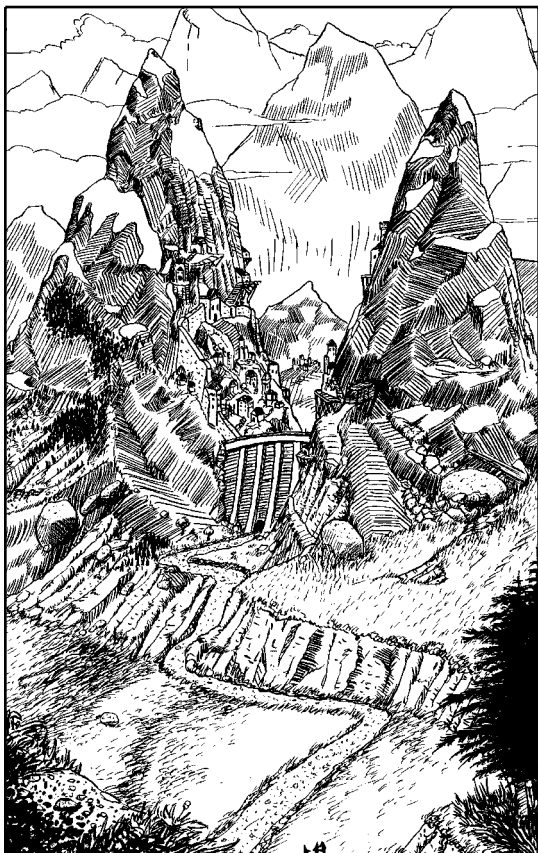
When Ezkankekko lived, the Hendreiki were a clannish folk with a king who protected their freedom. The king was chosen from among the Larnsti, a magical brotherhood of wanderers Hendreik founded. When the Pharaoh came, he proved that King Andrin was an unjust ruler and slew him, whereupon the Hendreiki disintegrated. The Larnsti were unable to contact their founder Hendreik and whenever they tried to appoint a king, he was killed. Civil war ravaged Heortland and many clans fled to Dragon Pass to avoid the fighting. Finally the Pharaoh admitted his error and brought King Andrin back to life in a grand epic, restoring peace to the Hendreiki. But the king had changed and clans continued to cross into Dragon Pass rather than submit to the "Pharaoh's slave."

King Andrin reformed the Hendreiki. This had been done twice before and so was not new. He apportioned Heortland into Marches and appointed Barons over them and four Earls to oversee the barons. Since these nobles wielded Hendreik's Freedom, his successors would be found among them and not the Larnsti. The silence of the Larnsti was worrying enough but the king then announced that sheriffs, schooled in Larnsti magics, would replace the clan chiefs. The clans were perplexed—on one hand it struck at their clan traditions, which the God Learners had never done, but on the other they were unwilling to do without the blessings of the Larnsti. They changed and were glad that the working of the sheriffs was quiet and unobtrusive, like that of the Larnsti. Yet with hindsight, the sheriffs were not fully-fledged Larnsti for they could only change the clans in one way—by adopting Malkioni ways.

Since the recent conquest the Lunar Army enforces martial law in the cities. Malkioni are being made sheriffs over the Hendreiki, as they care nothing for Hendreiki customs and are all too willing to obey their new masters. In some places, Malkioni nobles have been appointed—such as Baron Sanuel in Volsaxiland.

All clans are obliged to provide the king with knights and footmen for military service. The sheriff has the responsibility of appointing the men to fulfill this obligation and to provide them with arms and armor. By royal decree, the sheriff himself is forbidden to serve in the army, even though he is a knight. One of his tasks is to prevent the land from falling into anarchy when the army is away. This provides Heortland with some modicum of order despite the recent conquest. One further protection formerly enjoyed by the Hendreiki is almost gone: the ancient Spirit of Hendreik that has protected them from conquest.

As Orlanthi, the Hendreiki worship Orlanth and Ernalda as the king and queen of the gods. In addition, the old regime worshipped Free Hendreik as the god of liberty who ensured the freedom of everyone in Heortland so that they would never be conquered. They even bought slaves and manumitted from their owners so that the presence of an unfree person would not pollute their land.



## Boldhome

By Jim Pavelec

An impossible city was built over a century ago, so that a prophecy would be fulfilled. Prince Sartar, the First among all the tribes of the land, scaled the cliff face and clambered atop Thorgier's Cow, which now lies to the right of this picture. He leapt from there to Two Wink Peak and then to Delar Peak, all of the time reciting the Prophecy of Quivin. That way he claimed the city and activated its prophesied powers. These protected the city until the Lunar Empire stormed it at great cost. The imperial occupation government now occupies it.

Hendreik's secret lay in that he was a worshipper of Larnste, the god of motion. By remaining unfettered in thought and deed, no one could ever subdue his people. Although Hendreik embodied freedom, the Larnsti were not restricted in the mysteries of the god they chose to study. Their god was lamed while trying to stamp out a horror. When his foot landed, the horror bit him and Larnste's infected ichor dripped from his wound into the Print, forming the infamous Foulblood Forest. Because of this wound, the god and his followers who once traveled throughout the whole world now cannot leave Heortland. Only one man, Sartar, managed to negate this curse—but once he left Heortland he could never return.

A shadowy brotherhood devoted to Black Arkat exists in Heortland but its temple location is hidden. Its human worshippers are the eyes and ears of Ezkankekkko in the land. The brotherhood was proscribed under the Pharaoh. But now that the Pharaoh is gone, the Black Arkati are becoming more active.



## Orlanthi Culture

Before Time began the Orlanathi peoples lived in Dragon Pass. During the Dawn Ages they spread into Peloria, Ralios, and Fronela, forming the region dubbed the Barbarian Belt by the God Learners. The Orlanathi are now found throughout the western highland regions of Genertela.

Orlanthi culture is individualistic, familial, decentralized, and polytheistic. They value the heroic tradition over those of society or empire. Personal achievement is highly valued and individuals are encouraged to gain tremendous power. Familial loyalty is paramount and clan membership is universal and unquestioned. Any organization larger than clan is temporary and dependant upon the good will and friendship of the participants. Tribes and religious organizations are ruled by council, with kings having sacred and political roles but without the power to command. They recognize many deities and though they share the worship of the high gods, individuals often worship lesser deities with no less passion.

Here are the commonly held views of an average Orlanthi warrior.

How did we come to be?

In the beginning was the Emperor. He enslaved everybody to serve himself. Orlanthe slew the Emperor and freed us. He married Ernalda and together they made the customs and rules for us to live by. King Vingkot was our first king, and he was Orlanthe's son.

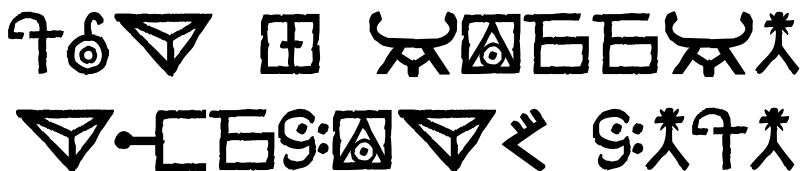
But Orlanthe and his kin broke his laws and brought about the darkness. Orlanthe said this should not be. He left his people under the protection of the Vingkotlings and went westwards to find the Grand Order.

Vingkot's heirs perished in the disastrous War of the Sword and Helm, leaving his people defenseless in the darkness. Only Heort saved us all when he fought the whole corrupt cosmos at I Fought, We Won. Through his heroism he united most of the Orlanathi again as the Heortlings. He forged many friendships with the Elder Races, including an alliance with Ezkankekkko, the troll ruler of the Kingdom of Night.

Orlanthe fought his way into the Underworld with the help of his companions, called the Lightbringers. After many trials they entered the Land of the Dead and made peace with the Dead Emperor. Together with many other gods, they swore the Cosmic Compromise and ended the rule of Chaos, then restored the Emperor back to life again. Orlanthe sent the sun to rise at the Dawn [0 ST].

*Continued on next page . . .*






At the Dawn we were allied with the Elder Races in the World Council of Friends. We tried to be everybody's friend. But in Peloria the Horse Riders betrayed the Compromise and brought war to everyone again [167 ST]. In sadness, the World Council of Friends moved to Dorastor to become the High Council of Genertela [200 ST] to fight the Horse riders better.

The High Council finally defeated the Horse Riders [230 ST] and the liberated Pelorians mimicked friendship towards us at first, but later they treated us with scorn and war raged again. After centuries of trouble Lokaymadon, an Orlanthe in the High Council, decided to make a new god to bring back the lost peace by using a pseudo-cosmic egg that had been found in Dorastor [340 ST].

But to bring about this peace he did so many evil things and oppressed our people so severely that he made an Emperor. To make this new god he made the Sun Stop, where the celestial fire ceased its movement across the sky and thereby allowed chaos back into the world [375 ST]. The resulting god was Gbaji who, with Pelorian help, conquered us all [397 ST]. All seemed lost until Harmast Barefoot quested past the edges of the world to find a liberator. By following the Lightbringers' path he found Arkat [427 ST] and returned him to the world of the living. Arkat liberated us from Gbaji's tyranny [440 ST] but he then betrayed us by becoming a troll [447 ST] and placing us under the yoke of his troll friends. He then went to Dorastor to fight Gbaji [450 ST] but it does not matter to us who won.

People chafed under troll rule. The hero Jerem fought the trolls many times but could not defeat them. Finally Vistikos learned how to speak to dragons as we had never done before, and received the secrets of EWF [573 ST]. Many people say EWF stands for Empire of the Wyrms' Friends but it really stands for . The Dragonspeakers used EWF to kill the trolls in the Tax Slaughter [578 ST] but they went on to bigger plans. They planned to use EWF to awaken the Grand Dragon and bring back the Golden Age. To make sure Orlanthe would not object to this, they summoned Arangorf the Inner Dragon to beguile him.

The Dragonspeakers' power was so great that they made our old troll masters pay tribute [782 ST], repulsed the God Learners from Esrolia [842 ST], and even conquered Peloria [878 ST]. Their hubris was so large that the Dragonspeakers formed the Third Council and demanded that we should worship them as Gods [889 ST].

*Continued on next page . . .*



But the Dragonspeakers did not understand EWF correctly, misused its power and so brought disasters. First came the Two-Year Winter of Dragon Pass [907 ST] in which harvests failed and trolls ravaged everywhere. Then the Dragon Sun, Emperor of Peloria was murdered [910 ST]. The Dragonspeakers reached into Ralios but Alakoring drove them out and then flew over the Rockwood Mountains into Aggar and freed the Orlanthe there by killing Drang the Diamond Storm Dragon [920 ST]. Alakoring even showed our god Orlanth how to avoid Arangorf's wiles and would have killed all the Dragonspeakers there and then, but the elf lord Tobasta Greenbow slew him for an ancient slight.

Finally the Inhuman King had enough. He engaged secret magic and in one night all the Dragonspeakers were assassinated [1042 ST]. Afterwards the Pelorians sought vengeance against the allies of the dragons and attempted to exterminate the dragonewts in vengeance. The dragons ate them all in the Dragonkill War [1120 ST]. Afterwards Dragon Pass was abandoned by humanity.

The Pelorians then introduced Chaos into the world again [1220 ST] so they could break the Compromise and restore Yelm's authority. Shepelkirt rose into the Sky [1247 ST]. Under her baleful red light, her son became the Red Emperor and plotted to enslave us.

Ezkankeko survived the Dragonspeakers' downfall and took many Orlanthe under his yoke. He was strong and friendly but the mysterious stranger named Belintar swam ashore [1313 ST] and announced that he would free the land from Darkness. He slew Ezkankeko and governed the liberated lands as the Holy Country with himself as Pharaoh. Many Orlanthe did not like this and settled around the Quivin Mountains of Dragon Pass again [1325].

The Red Emperor sent his conquering daughter to enslave the Orlanthe of southern Peloria. So terrifying were her conquests that Arim the Pauper fled into Dragon Pass [1330 ST]. He married the sacred queen of the Kerofin Temple and established the Kingdom of Tarsh, vowing to oppose the Lunar Empire [1340 ST]. Tarsh opposed the Empire for well over a century before HonEel the Artess corrupted it from within [1490 ST]. She failed to enslave the rest of Dragon Pass because Sartar had organized the Quivini tribes into the Kingdom of Sartar [1492 ST].

Dormal, at the Pharaoh's command, broke the curse of the Closing [1580 ST]. He sailed westward to the Malkioni lands [1581 ST] while the Pharaoh sent another fleet eastwards to Teshnos [1586 ST]. The Eastern Fleet tried to contact Kralorela but was sunk for their pains [1587 ST]. Thereafter the Pharaoh announced that he would seek no more overseas conquest.

*Continued on next page . . .*

The Red Emperor grew bored of his Tarshite playthings and became jealous of Sartar and the Holy Country. To sate his malice, the Lunar Empire conquered Sartar [1602 ST] in a brutal campaign. They then invaded the Holy Country but the Pharaoh destroyed the Lunar Army at the Building Wall Battle [1605 ST]. For a while, the Empire seemed stalled, save for a minor skirmish in Prax [1610 ST]. Starbrow raised Sartar in revolt but the Lunars savagely crushed this [1613 ST]. Then the Pharaoh disappeared [1616 ST]. The Empire took advantage of this by invading Heortland [1619 ST] and now only Whitewall remains defiant against his crimson horde.

Who should I trust? Who should I distrust?

You should trust your kin. To wrong your kin is evil. To fight them is kin-strife and is the most evil thing a person can do. If your kin are evil you must denounce them and exile them. Your closest kin are your family. You should treat both men and women as equals to yourself. Although men and women do different things, think in different ways and behave differently, Orlanth and Ernalda decreed that they should be valued and treated the same. Thus the women have equal voice as the men do in our deliberations and there is no shame attached to a women doing man's work, fighting or being a chief, or a man doing a women's work, cooking or sewing.

Families bound by common ancestor are a clan. We live in clans because that is the mark of a free people. Since our wives must come from the other clans, their families are our kin and so we should not fight them. Our clan owns all the land that we farm or graze our cows and sheep upon. Nobody ever owns land but gets certain rights such as using a pasture based only by clan consensus. Since there are so many families in the clan we cannot settle all our disputes over the dinner table. Therefore we appoint a chief to listen to the clan's internal problems and to guide what the clan does. Our chief is not the Emperor's hireling and he is honor bound to listen to us. He usually consults widely before making his decisions and so we should respect what he says. However chiefs have been known to make bad decisions before and you should always stand up for yourself.

Sometimes the clan allies with other clans. Since Alakoring's time, we have always consecrated such alliances by forming a Tribe with a Rex, or Tribal King, as a ruler. To ensure that he is not the Emperor's creature, the chiefs appoint the tribal king. However the King cannot tell the chief how to run his own clan. Alakoring says a clan may leave a tribe at any time, although some bad kings try to prevent us from doing so. Sometimes many clans and tribes form a kingdom or confederation. The leaders of these groupings variously call themselves warlords, princes, firsts or even kings.

*Continued on next page . . .*

You should distrust strangers for you do not know what they are. Any strangers that you meet must be brought to the attention of the chief so that he may decide what the clan does with them. Many strangers are good Orlanthi that you do not know. You should use the greeting so that they identify themselves. That way they can be trusted to follow Orlanth's rules on meetings and no fighting will occur. If they do not respond to the greeting, then they are foreigners and you should be careful.

Guests are outsiders who accepted the hospitality of our clan. Both parties must swear a solemn oath not to harm each other. If this is broken, then Orlanth will be very displeased for his laws have been broken, and he will help punish the wrong doers.

Foreigners are ignorant strangers for they do not know Orlanth's Laws. We should take offense slowly for they do not know our ways. But if they are our enemies, we should fight them using fair means or foul and do our best to kill them.

Elder Races are intelligent non-humans that do not follow chaos. They should be treated as foreigners.

Outlaws were once Orlanthi but are now foreigners, either through their choice or because they have wronged their kin. Their lives are miserable because they have no kin to support or protect them.

What am I supposed to do?

First and foremost, you are yourself. Umath said, "Nobody can make you do anything," and Orlanth intends you to live that way. You should look after your kin first and yourself second.

Orlanth says that the mark of a great man is the Six Virtues: Courage, Wisdom, Generosity, Justice, Honor and Piety. You should be brave for your kin needs your bravery to protect them against the seven dangers: strangers, foreigners, enemies, hostile gods and spirits, disease, hunger and chaos. You should be wise so that you will not fall to the tricks of our enemies. You should be generous and share your wealth with your kin and your friends. That way you will be popular and reinforce Orlanth's laws.

To be just is to be willing to settle your disputes through peaceful means. If that fails, then you must try to take revenge. To be honorable means that you must be honest, keep your word whether on oath or not and be willing to keep Orlanth's laws with each other. If you will not have honor, then we will not want you.

You should be pious towards our Gods and must honor their holy places.

Around the western end of Mirrorsea Bay is an archipelago known as the Leftarm Archipelago, or the Isles of GOD FORGOT, so-called after the wails of its natives at the Dawn, bemoaning the loss of their god. They did not understand what had befallen them and developed new understandings of the Cosmos to make up for their loss. When the God Learners contacted them the People whom God Forgot bloomed with new mysteries unveiled before them. They raised the fabulous Machine City in the Imperial Age. But the spiteful Elder Races united and destroyed the Machine City, condemning the natives to their current dull existence.

Recently their inventiveness has again flared to life. In particular, Leonardo the Inventor has created many strange contraptions, such as the pedalcopter and the mobile fortress. He refuses to build more than one of anything for he considers duplication to be the error that doomed the Machine City. All his inventions work—some better than others.

The main city of God Forgot is Refuge, a stronghold on the south coast. Casino Town is open to visitors and was the place where the God Learners bankrupted visiting demigods into revealing their secrets. The marvelous games are popular and the house makes a fortune parting money from the stupid. Debtors are given a free trip to Machine City, courtesy of the House. The Pharaoh broke the bank of Casino Town and God Forgot has since been one of the six lands of Kethaela.

The Greater Archipelago, or the RIGHTARM ISLANDS, is the right arm of the goddess Esrola wrapped protectively around her child, the Mirrorsea. The isles vary in size according to the tides and most of them are surrounded by salt marshes with twisted channels that change weekly. The inhabitants are mostly fishermen who ply the coast and bay for their livelihood. They work closely with the Ludoch mermen that live under the nearby waters. Since human sailors are more evident to outsiders most people think of the islands as being run by human admirals rather than the merchief who is the real ruler, sending commands from beneath Troll Channel.

The islanders worship Choralinthor, the local sea god of the Mirrorsea; and Magasta, the king of all the sea and water gods. They also worship Golod the fish father, Diros the Boater, and Pelaskos the Fisher.

The troll stronghold of the SHADOW PLATEAU is a great ancient mesa that Ezkankekko forced Caladra to make. Caladra also made the marvelous City of Black Glass on top of the plateau but that has been black dust ever since Belintar slew Ezkankekko. All that remains now is a land of ghosts, black sand swirling on top of the Plateau, and a great bubbling tarpit where the city center once stood.

Trolls still live inside the plateau and in the nearby Troll Woods. They are concentrated in Styx Grotto beneath the Lead Hills, a range that is the remains of a massive monster that Ezkankekko sent to kill the Pharaoh. The Pharaoh allowed trolls of the Shadow Plateau to be one of the six lands of Kethaela. Many humans fear that with the disappearance of the Pharaoh, Ezkankekko will rise from Hell to seize control of his ancient domains.

## Wenelia, The Old Tribelands

Wenelia is a thickly forested land where Orlanathi farmers are careful to avoid the inevitable war that erupts if they settle too far north into the elfish Arstola Forest. The sea currents of the south warm the land, making the coast subtropical. The major regions of Wenelia are Ramalia, Pralorela, Smelch, and the Three Step Islands.

Most Wenelians are Orlanathi. Their rulers, the Trader Princes, are Malkioni nobles descended from the Ralian knights that built the Old Wenelian Road to Kethaela. Over the years they founded many strongholds to protect the caravans and soon ruled the local Orlanathi. Their dominance was made palatable by their willingness to worship the pagan gods in their own unusual manner, their impartiality when dealing with the clans and their arcane magics in combating the trolls, the dragonewts and even the horrors left over from the sinking of Slontos.

The Opening enfeebled the trader princes; ships now carry the cargo once laboriously hauled along the Old Wenelian Road. The source of their wealth has vanished and so too has their authority among the Orlanathi. The center of power has shifted to the towns along the New Coast whose leaders scorn the trader princes. Orlanathi kings now rule most of Wenelia and of the trader princes, only the Prince of Bastis is left. Under the influence of the Pharaoh and the Quinpolitic League, the coastal city-states, each governed by a council of guilds, are organized to co-operate.

Orlanth and Ernalda are the major gods of Wenelia. Because of the ancient boar-people ancestry of the Wenelians, Orlanth is venerated throughout Wenelia as a boar. A few clans depict him otherwise; Greymane's clan, for example, is famous for their leonine traditions.

The fire clans of the Ditali are actually Caladrans who fled from the Flowery Wars. They resist the rule of the Ditali knights and have been a source of grief for the ordinary Ditali. The Prophet of the Spear leads them. He claims to be from the great Northern Volcano and a descendant of the Grandfather of all Mountains. When the Caladrans mocked his message he cursed them of not being worthy of Caladra. He has chosen the fire clans as his true people and intends to return them to their ancient home. The Prophet of the Spear has taught his people much unusual magic, such as how to reach Caladra without making the sacrifices at the Mouth.

The land of the boar people, RAMALIA is a grim hilly kingdom confined by the New Fens in the north, the Trachodon Marsh in the west, and the Mournsea to the south. The oppressed peasants are all Mraloti, descendants of the ancient Hsunchen Boar-folk, while their lords are Malkioni refugees from the Duchy of Slontos, a land now drowned beneath the cursed Mournsea. The lords worship Chaos, a choice they made when the Closing isolated Slontos. They abandoned the God Learner creed, and by this perverse deed they survived the disasters that destroyed the God Learners everywhere else.

The Ramalians fear the sea so much that any shipwrecked people or venturesome traders are immediately reported to the warlords, who quickly rush to destroy what they consider to be demons in human form. Only caravan merchants from the nearby Quinpolic port of Khorst amidst the Trachodon Marsh can enter Ramalia and hope to survive. Most forms of commerce are illegal except to the Royal Family.

The nobles exploit the peasantry with ruthless savagery. Their officials, the Axemen and the Taxmen, make the peasants' lives one of constant torment. Corrupt sorcerers have perverted the ancient Malkioni institutions into energy sources that benefit only their kin. The nobles are immortal at the expense of their peasants. It is rare to find a peasant older than thirty without gray hair. On the other hand, King Paruzal is so old that most people believe he was among the original Slontan refugees that first seized control of Ramalia centuries ago.

PRALORELA is a land of the hsunchen deer-people. There are actually several tribes of territorial deer-people in those woods, including the Damali who follow the brown deer and the Alekki who follow the moose. The most common tribe is the red deer people.

SMELCH is a nation of pirates that worship the demon Ulvakorius. When Dormal landed here they attempted to kill him and keep his secrets of the Opening for themselves. When that failed that murder they formed the kingdom of Alatan and attempted to seize naval supremacy. The kingdom was eventually destroyed by an alliance of the Holy Country and the Duchy of Pasos, although individual pirates still ply the region.

The THREE STEPS ISLANDS are the lair of the infamous Wolf Pirates whose rapacity exceeds even that of the Smelchites. Led by the infamous Harrek the Berserk, the Wolf Pirates have raided far and wide even reaching distant Teshnos and Pamaltela. Since the destruction of the Holy Country fleet and the brutal sack of the Rightarm Isles five years ago, the Wolf Pirates have dominated the coastline of both Wenelia and the Holy Country.

## **Dragon Pass, Land of Unrest**

Dragon Pass consists of several lands. The Kingdoms of Sartar and Tarsh are the most important. The Grazelands are a kingdom controlled by nomads who follow their ancient ways. Black Horse County is the land of a famous mercenary. The Upland Marsh is a terrible morass of land and water where lives a king of the undead who, mercifully, meddles little with people around him.

In the Imperial Age Dragon Pass was the home of the EWF, an empire that ruled large parts of Genertela with the aid of the Dragons and their kin. But the empire's magics failed and their allies betrayed them. When their former subjects dared to exact revenge the Dragons ate all humans they could find in the Dragonkill war. For many years afterwards humanity feared to enter Dragon Pass.



## ☸ The Storm Pantheon ☸



The Storm religion is the religion through most of Maniria and large parts of Ralios and Peloria. It is characterized by the worship of Orlanth, the Storm Father and Ernalda, the Great Goddess.

☸ Orlanth is the king of the storm tribe. He knows something about almost everything, be it fighting, judging, poetry or farming, though he wisely also welcomes specialists to his house. He is the king because he is a great leader, a mighty warrior and a loving husband. All Orlanthi know his leadership made the storm tribe into the greatest of all the tribes of the gods. Everybody has heard of how he fought his way into hell to make the Cosmic Compromise that brought back light and life to the dead cosmos. He is unafraid to do so again. And nobody doubts that his undying love for Ernalda is the secret that keeps him alive.

Orlanth used death for a noble end, to change the world. Then when the world needed it the most, Orlanth defeated death and brought life back into the world. Because of his mastery over death he is able to make the afterlife a pleasant existence. Men and women spend their time in halls feasting and drinking and, after some time, leave the Great Hall or Loom House and be reborn.


Orlanth's tribe includes his kin, and also many non-kin who joined. His tribe includes his first son, Barntar the farmer; his elder brother, Grim Humakt; and even includes Eurmalt the Trickster, notorious for having been expelled from several other tribes.


Orlanth taught people his Runes to bless them. Many Orlanthi tattoo themselves with Runes so they are never far from Orlanth's presence. The Runes harness the power of the gods.


☒ Ernalda is the great mother of life. She is the source of all spirituality, peace, and fecundity. She releases the power of growth every spring and collects it in the autumn. She rules the storm tribe and its worshippers alongside Orlanth, her husband. When she married Orlanth, she brought in her own earth tribe as her dowry.


† Humakt is Death. He is the unyielding fate of all living creatures, both mortal and divine. To his barbarian followers, Humakt is a frightening but necessary agent of eternal change who can be used in a noble and courageous way to preserve the world.


*Continued on next page . . .*


 Urox is the god of untamed animal power and passion. His wild and intense fury could even defeat chaos and so this berserk god led the war of the Great Darkness. He even fought the Devil to a standstill and trapped him under a mountain of Adamant.


 In the great darkness, Babeester Gor leapt from her mother's corpse to hunt down oath-breakers and kin-slayers that had brought about the War of the Gods. Her worshippers guard the important temples to the earth goddesses.


 Chalana Arroy, the white goddess, is one of the Lightbringers. She knows how to heal and cleanse all wounds and diseases and even brought the Sun back to life in the Great Compromise. To harm her white-robed healers is sacrilege.

 Issaries is the speaking god, the explorer and the lord of trade as well as one of the Lightbringers. He oversees all trade among the Orlanthe and guides the stranger in a strange land..

 Bearded Lhankor Mhy is the knowing god and one of the Lightbringers. His worshippers are the Lawspeakers that remember the oral laws of the clans and the gray sages that seek knowledge in all things.

 Odayla is the god of the hunt. He lives in the wild and discomforted when under a roof. He is often portrayed as a bear, never as a dog, and is a great foe of the wolf.

 Yinkin, father of the shadow cats, is Orlanthe's half-brother, both beings sons of Kero Fin the Mountain Mother. Yinkin served Orlanthe well, and so his shadow cats serve the Orlanthe humans. Where other folks have dogs, the Orlanthe have the alynx.

 Sartar himself was deified as the protector of the kingdom and his worship maintained the marvelous roads and city walls within the kingdom. Since the conquest, rituals to him have been suppressed and the roads and walls fall into disrepair. The Lunars have attempted to halt the decay by conscripting Sartarites into repair gangs, but this has only cause more grumbling and nostalgia for the good old days.

Over three centuries ago brave explorers discovered that the Pass was safe and—more importantly—empty. Settlers from both Kethaela and the Pelorian highlands moved in and built homesteads over unfathomable ruins. Bustling kingdoms soon thrived in Dragon Pass. But nobody befriended the Dragonewts in their many cities and the EWF was never restored.

Now the Lunar Empire has conquered most of Dragon Pass. Dissent burns bright within many hearts and some are rash enough to seek help from any corner in their struggle against the Red Moon. Normally they would not have much hope of victory but the Hero Wars have begun.

The rebel KINGDOM OF SARTAR was formed from a confederation of Orlanathi tribes, nearly all Heortlings from the south. Twenty years ago the Lunar Empire conquered Sartar in a brutal campaign, virtually unrivaled in its horrors. A Lunar puppet sits in Boldhome and pretends to command the loyalty of the tribal kings. Lunar control over the countryside has been harsh. Chiefs friendly to the Lunars have been foisted upon many tribes. Stern laws force recalcitrant tribes into rebellions which are quickly crushed. Lunar officials get rich with forfeited lands and fines. Rebellion continues to smolder among the Sartarites. Although most youths have never known anything other than the Lunar occupation the spirit of freedom burns brightly, awaiting only fuel to rise and scorch away the oppressors.

The inhabitants of Sartar are Heortling Orlanathi. They migrated here from Heortland three centuries ago for a variety of reasons. Some refused to acknowledge the new Pharaoh while others were driven out by one of the wars that afflicted Heortland. Most simply left because of the availability of unoccupied, fertile land.

Sartar united the land a century-and-a-half ago. He traveled to all of the tribes and made peace and friends whenever he could. Sartar revealed to the warring tribes the secret of the City Ring. This allowed them to meet on neutral ground and trade with each other without fighting. Sartar then fulfilled an ancient prophecy by building the city of Boldhome in a single night in the presence of the twenty-four tribes. There and then they hailed him as Prince of the Quivini. Afterwards many honored him by calling the land Sartar.

Before the fall of Boldhome the Prince of Sartar commanded the tribes. Sartar organized many tribes into confederations and gave them the cities of Jonstown, Swenstown, Wilmskirk, and Duckpoint to profit from. He built Boldhome to be the city for the whole kingdom. A few tribes, such as the Colymar and the Lismelder, never joined a City Ring. The Far Point tribes under Aldachur joined the kingdom nearly forty years ago after Tarsh defeated the exiles at the Battle of Grizzly Peak.

The Lunar Conquest changed all this. Prince Temertain is an impotent puppet, scorned by all. The City Rings still exist, but are treated by the lunar authorities as a means of controlling the constituent tribes. The military rulers often ignore the City Rings in running the city and enforce their orders by Lunar troops. The Lunars have been inciting various clans to swear alle-

giance directly to the Prince to weaken the traditionalist tribes. They also give military and financial support to friendly tribes in their battles with others.

Thieving tax collectors roam Sartar at will, terrorizing the people and disrupting their attempts to organize. If the clans rebel at this treatment then punishment is swift and harsh. Many still remember with a shudder the fate of the Maboder tribe. They rose in rebellion, but in retaliation most of the tribe was killed, enslaved or forced to flee to Prax. Those clans that remained were forcibly incorporated into the Lunar Way. Lunar settlers from Tarsh and Aggar took their vacant lands.

Although all Sartarite men are capable of fighting, only the kings and their thanes are full-time warriors. Some women also fight, as evidenced by Queen Kallyr. Most Sartarites live under the shadow of armed conflict and military preparedness is high. It is difficult for them to train in large numbers for the Lunars send troops to disperse them.

Like all Orlanthy, the Sartarites worship Orlanth and Ernalda as the king and queen of the gods. However the Red Goddess is challenging Orlanth and Ernalda's position and her troops occupy most cities. Numerous temples to the Red Goddess and her Mothers are under their protection. Those who sacrifice to the new gods receive the support of the Lunar forces.

The KINGDOM OF TARSH is the largest country in Dragon Pass and an imperial ally to boot. It is the richest of all the Lunar provinces and has recently taken over part of northern Sartar as its own. Once a bastion of Orlanthy conservatism against the Lunar Empire, it was converted about a hundred and fifty years ago by the Lunar demigod HonEel, who married the king and bore him an heir. Since then, Tarsh has actively spread the Lunar Way throughout the rest of Dragon Pass.

Despite the Lunar kings, the lives of most farmers are virtually unchanged from that of their ancestors, except for their worship. On the other hand, the people of the towns and the river valley are thoroughly lunarized. They mock the traditional ways and many follow slavishly the latest fashions from Sylila. The people of Tarsh are of Alakoring Orlanthy stock; recognizably different from the Heortling Orlanthy of Sartar and Heortland. The Alakorings migrated into Dragon Pass from the north.

The capital, Furthest, is the center of culture in Tarsh. When Phargentes became king after destroying the wicked usurper Palashee, he ordered the reconstruction of Furthest. The finest architects and sculptors were imported from Sylila and Saird and Phargentes ordered them to spare no expense in building the finest city in the world. Such much marble was used over the next few years that the central city seems to be carved from a single block of stone. Most cities and towns attempt to both imitate and rival Furthest in its splendor. However the cost of matching the king's extravagance has exhausted the coin of many benefactors and many of these projects are now embarrassingly incomplete. This has turned many cities into a patchwork of old Orlanthy longhouses alongside new marble-clad buildings.

Although Tarsh is now part of the Lunar Empire, the Emperor's authority is rarely asserted here. Instead power resides in the person of the king, who governs by virtue of descent from the hero Alakoring Dragonbreaker and his descendent Illaro Blacktooth, a famous hero who fought against the Lunars. This is typical for the Lunar Provinces. The Orlanthe have potent magics that allow them to revolt against the Emperor and their mythology is rich in such attempts. Therefore the Lunars govern through native Lunarized kings who command the traditional tribes by virtue of their indigenous kingship rites. Even officials from the Heartlands take care to obtain a warrant from the king before exercising their authority. However, the Emperor's authority is not wholly absent. The king is responsible to the provincial overseer at Mirin's Cross and pays him money, goods, slaves, and obedience.

Once the clans were organized into tribes whose leadership provided the nobility of Tarsh. Now the tribal kings are no more, and Lunar grandees rule instead. The cities are governed by its leading citizens who intrigue in politics, trade and vie with each other for popularity. Regrettably, many practice the Lunar custom of Dart Competitions for political advancement.

The current peace of Tarsh is not wasted and the king spends regally on the army. In charge of the army are the Phargentites, a faction of warlike nobles. They are well educated having been schooled in the Light of Action at the University of the Provinces. Like all Lunar provinces, Tarsh maintains several regiments trained and commanded by the officers of the Provincial Army.

A truncated Orlanthe Pantheon is the faith of Tarsh, significantly altered by the Lunar Conversion. The chief casualty is Orlanthe, foe of the Red Goddess. Only the most remote farmers still worship Orlanthe and initiate their young as the Second Son. Here and there, one might find voices of the Thunderer wandering the land. In the more cultivated parts of Tarsh Orlanthe is not worshipped. It is obvious to all that he has been conquered by the Red Goddess and the Orlanthe do not worship losers. But his sons, Barntar the Farmer, Hantrafal the God Talker, and Odayla the Hunter are still worshipped for they are still useful to the Tarshites and do not bear the stigma of their father's defeat. Likewise many of Orlanthe's erstwhile companions are worshipped. For example, Ernalda, despite being Orlanthe's wife, is especially revered in Tarsh. HonEel proved that Ernalda was the Seventh Mother, the She-Who-Waits, and this was instrumental in converting Tarsh to the Lunar Way.

Those Tarshites who seek to understand the Red Goddess worship the Seven Mothers, the conspirators who reunited the Goddess. Temples to the Seven Mothers are commonplace in Tarsh and controlled by the provincial church. The Seven Mothers are usually worshipped together but worshippers who study and obtain a certain level of sophistication commonly devote themselves to one Mother or another. For example, most army officers worship Yanafal Tarnils separately.

## Kallyr and Minaryth.

By Heather Bruton

The rebel leaders plot and scheme, hiding in the countryside amidst their people as the Empire uselessly searches cities for them. Kallyr is a great warrior leader and has traveled into the Sky World, from whence she gained a star crystal that is imbedded into her skull now. Minaryth is a Lhankor Mhy sage who has heard the voice of ancient Sartar that spurs him on. He is an expert at seeing Truth, organizing men for desperate causes, and reading ancient manuscripts.



The GRAZELANDS, ancestral home of the pure horse people, are an anachronism caught in the wrong place. They are a nomadic people confined to a lush valley avidly sought by land hungry aggressors. They have survived

due to two things: the changes wrought by the Feathered Horse Queen and the ancient magics invoked when the tribe first found safety in Dragon Pass.

The Grazers were once the Pure Horse People, a proud and aloof tribe that roamed the Pentan steppes. They went south seeking the prophesized Horse Queen that would heal their maimed steeds and return them to the Sky. They did not find her, but settled in Prax as allies of the EWF. Nearly four hundred years ago the Praxians almost destroyed them at the battle of Alavan Argay and the survivors fled to Dragon Pass. Instead of the haunts and the heroic deaths the Grazers expected, the land was nearly deserted—all they found was peace. Ironhoof, the centaur Lord of the Pass, ceremonially adopted them with a ritual of rebirth that renamed them the Grazers and gave grazing rights over the lowlands that were not reserved for the Beastmen.

The Grazers still manifest the same unbending traditionalism that led their ancestors from Pent. As faithful worshippers of Yu-Kargzant the Sun, they do not herd cattle and spurn cities as pits of magical pollution. Where they differ from the traditional tribes of Pent is their worship of the Feathered Horse Queen, and consequently the greater influence of women. The Grazers do not see this as strange for their queen was prophesized to bring about such changes and that is good enough for them. When all their prophesized changes are complete their horses will have wings, claws, and fangs and the Grazers will fly into the sky with them when, as they say, the Sun Bells ring.

The Grazers keep Orlanthe serfs, which they call Vendref, descendants of luckless early Heortling immigrants into Dragon Pass. The Grazers do not maltreat the Vendref because they grow grain for their horses, but they do isolate the Vendref clans from each other and keep the trading posts they run under strict control. The worship of Orlanth is forbidden to the Vendref, so they worship Barntar and Ernalda; Vendref merchants worship Kanestall Onehand. Some Vendref even worship the Grazer gods hoping that one day some of their descendants may be free.

Most Grazer men are excellent fighters on horseback, maintaining the martial traditions of their ancestors. The Sun Chief maintains a Sacral Band of Archers, known as the Golden Bow troop, as part of his retinue. Their shafts are so magical that they can even wound insubstantial spirits.

BLACK HORSE COUNTY is the holding of Sir Ethilrist, a famous mercenary captain who fought for and against the God Learners in Ralios during the Imperial Age. Sir Ethilrist is most famous for his successful invasion of the Underworld, which took him the better part of three centuries. There he learned how to tame the famous demonic black horses and used them to form the Black Horse Troop when he returned to the surface. Sir Ethilrist served the Red Emperor faithfully and received this valley as a land grant. He still hires himself and his troop out as mercenaries though he prefers to write his rambling memoirs at the fortress of Muse Roost, a large castle that he has filled with treasures and luxuries that he has won down through the centuries.

THE UPLAND MARSH is the demesne of Delecti the Necromancer, one of the chief magicians of the EWF. As assassins hunted the leaders of the EWF he sent his spirit into a freshly slain corpse to elude them. Since then he has unlied a furtive unlife, his spirit remaining within a corpse until its rotting flesh can no longer sustain him, then looking for a new one. Delecti created the marsh to save himself and his followers from the True Golden Horde.

Deep within the terror-filled swamp are many acres of ruined buildings, each packed with his undead guardians. The swamp is not safe for the living; an undead killer whale patrols the waterways. Only duck refugees from the Lunar Empire inhabit the marsh and know secret wisdom which helps them avoid Delecti's creations. Accusations of being Delecti's creations are met with angry squawks of denial.

# CHAPTER TWELVE

## △ Dragonewts △

**D**ragonewts are the neotenic offspring of the dragons. They are peculiar creatures who continually reincarnate and metamorphose, ever striving to achieve dragonhood. They are an enigmatic race, misunderstood and mistrusted. All dragonewts are four-limbed, bipedal, tailed, left-handed and have opposable thumbs. They do not refine metal but use bone, stone (especially flint) and wood for weapons and tools. Only special leaders wear armor, although all stages wear trinkets, jewelry, and bits of cloth.

Their language includes visual, auditory, olfactory and empathic components. They are not conscious of their own language and cannot teach it to others. Regular contact between dragonewts and outsiders is usually assigned to one individual in a group, who tries to act according to human expectations. He learns to understand human languages, speaks haltingly and hissingly, and to communicate through writing. Sometimes he will own, or be, a surgically-altered interpreter that can better speak human words. Such interpreters inevitably become outlaws.

A dragonewt is not like other creatures. It is born once but dies hundreds of times; each time it dies, its soul reanimates a new body grown from the same egg, laid in some distant past by an immature dragon. When a dragonewt dies, its body is discarded and the soul returns instantly to the egg. After some days, the reborn newt emerges, personality intact from the leathery unchanging egg, more or less ready to pick up its life from when it died. The time spent in the egg varies with the moral development of the dragonewt. For them, death does not exist—it is merely an interruption in life. Some dragonewts cut themselves off from the cycle of their heritage and are known as outlaws. When an outlaw – one who has ceased to believe in the dragon way – dies, it is not reincarnated and never reappears. No one knows where its soul goes.

Dragonewts have four distinct stages of growth though their precise shape alters while within each stage.

The **SCOUT DRAGONEW**T—sometimes called the crested dragonewt—is small and has an arched crest upon the head. A vegetarian, it prefers leaves and fruit. It usually serves as a slinger or skirmisher. Originally dragons taught hatchlings the Dragon Way and many infants grew quickly to maturity. The crested dragonewts still around are slower, and are still developing through the dragonewt cycle.

The beaked, or **WARRIOR DRAGONEW**T is much larger than the scout and is carnivorous. Its tail reaches the ground and the skin is coated with scales and spikes. The warrior dragonewt is most often found as a guard or a hunter in dragonewt nests. Many warrior dragonewts ride upon creatures



called demibirds. These are feathered, beaked and lay eggs, but their bones are solid, and they have vestigial arms, not wings. Dragonewts breed these monsters, which are not found in the wild. The demibird is fearless and carnivorous, adding to the fearsome reputation of the dragonewt warrior.

The NOBLE DRAGONEWT, sometimes called a tailed priest, leads and represents lesser dragonewts—this stage is expert at living peacefully with the outside world. Frills, spines, wattles, and other decorative adornments have replaced the natural armor and weapons of the previous stage. Noble dragonewts are omnivorous and some ambassadors to humanity are recorded as having become formidable gourmets.

RULER DRAGONEWTS—sometimes known as a full priest dragonewts—are almost never found outside their own nests. One is usually found in each small nest and several in a town cluster. Their community functions, diet and powers are unknown. Some have turned into immense dragons in order to defend their nests. The appearance of a ruler resembles that of a noble, but their bodies and especially wings grow increasingly large with age.

Presumably a ruler meditates upon the secrets of dragonhood in preparation for the final metamorphosis. Such a dragonewt will, one day, awake to find itself a full dragon. It then will depart from its nest, to go wherever dragons go. Sometimes a ruler dragonewt refuses to enter dragonhood. It remains on earth and becomes a dragonet or Inhuman King. The reason for doing this is unknown. Nor is known the full extent of its power, although a full dragon reportedly is capable of thinking enemies to death and shaping the land as humans shape clay. There are less than ten such creatures in the world; one is known to reside in Dragon Pass and a few in Kralorela.

DRAGON'S EYE is a conglomeration of inhuman architecture in Dragon Pass. It is one of the few ancient strongholds of Dragonkind to survive from before the Darkness. Here lives the Inhuman King, a true dragon incarnated in a lesser body.

FANZAI is also called the Dragon Isle. The Kralori often come here to pay their respects to the local dragonewts. The dragonewts generally ignore them but not always. Three dragonewt cities are found on Hum Chang.

RYZEL is a complete dragonewt land along with its own Inhuman King. They hunt throughout Maniria but only hunt for humans within their own land.





## Planner of Mayhem

By Heather Bruton

The dragonewts are a frightening and strange force in Glorantha. Dragon Pass is their ancestral home, according to Orlanthei legend anyway. Here is Planner of Mayhem, a splendid warrior of the breed, who is well known in Dragon Pass. He is often seen leading a band of dragonewts through strange rites, and often most disturbingly stops to speak into the minds of humans who he sees. People who undergo this communication complain afterwards of heaviness that they feel in their minds, and they are all afraid that they have been infected by some dragonewt power. People are, rightfully, frightened from this.

# CHAPTER THIRTEEN

## ♂ Wastelands ♀

**B**etween the fertile lands of Peloria and Maniria to the west, and Kralorela to the east, lie The Wastelands. This was formerly home to the great spirit named Genert and the garden spot of the continent. The Devil slew Genert and all his kin before blasting the Garden into a desolate waste. The land never recovered and is now a grim chaos-infested waste, where only wiry desert weeds grow. The Wastelands are now fought over by two nomadic peoples: the horsemen of Pent and the animal nomads of Prax. In the north are the plains of Pent; south are the range lands of Prax.

### Pent, The Great Plains

Pent is largely grassland broken by a few rises and many wild rivers. Its natives are ferocious horse riders, feared and hated by the Pelorians to the west, the Praxians to the south, the Kralori to the East, and the Uz to the north.

Over two centuries ago Sheng Seleris united all the Pentans to conquer the known world. The resulting Seleran Empire lasted seventy-five years before Sheng was cast down in the Far West. His people, who loved him then and love him still, mustered a huge horde with many exotic allies to invade Peloria and free him. The resulting battle was afterwards remembered as the Nights of Horrors by the few Pentan survivors, who each took a hundred wives that year. Nearly all the children died the next year, for there was nobody to protect them. The Horrors weakened Pent for over a century, and only now are the Pentans as numerous again as they once were. Increasing strife over pasturage means that the Pentans are once again on the march for new land.

The Pentans have a special abhorrence of hell, and know where the Hellcrack lies, a huge fracture deep into the earth. Here the first Uz crawled to the surface world during the Gods War. Their ancient heroes killed most of them but the survivors live in the far north, where they are protected by the cold.

The fierce horse nomads of Pent live harsh, brutal lives on the steppes. To survive they organize themselves into patriarchal families, where everybody owes obedience to their fathers and older brothers. In return, men must care for their wives, unmarried sisters and daughters, and mother. Loyalty to their leaders unto death is a cardinal virtue among the Pentans and failure to obey results in exile and an unpleasant death.

The families trace their genealogy to find kinship with other families. A group of families united by common ancestors is a tribe. Tribal loyalties are paramount in Pent; tribes share certain secrets, customs and spiritual duties. Tribal membership is only marginally less important than immediate fami-

ly contacts, and tribesmen who have met only minutes before generally trust each other. All tribes are split between traditional or modern practices. Traditional tribes herd and eat horses exclusively, while the more numerous modern tribes raise herds of cattle, sheep and goats.

All Pentan youngsters are treated the same by the family. Upon reaching maturity, however, men and women are initiated as Riders and are taught how to hunt, herd, and breed. Riders are expected to prove themselves as raiders and herdsman. When they have mastered those skills are they are made Warriors; though this often takes several years to achieve. Warriors are shown how to use their lances and are taught killing magics for their bows. After twenty years as a Warrior, most men are made Leaders and can order other members of their family around. Elders of the tribe chose selected Leaders to be tribal Chiefs, after putting them through formal and informal tests of bravery, leadership, and spiritual maturity. Finally, all men who have survived a lifetime on the steppes become Elders and can sit around all day and do nothing except impart their wisdom to others.

Women Riders herd and hunt with their male counterparts until they are married. Thereupon they become Mothers and are confined to the campgrounds. They remain confined until their children become Riders, whereupon they become Teachers. Teachers can order Riders around, and relish the opportunity to break away from their stultifying confinement in the camps. Like the men, women who survive into old age become Elders.

When warring with other people, the Pentans have called upon exotic allies from places in Pent otherwise unknown. A famous example is the mysterious sorcerers of Orathorn. Their magics destroyed the entire Lunar College of Magic at the Nights of Horrors, and a byproduct of their spells caused untold havoc; yet they were unknown before then.



Most Pentan men worship Kargzant, the Sun, and depict him as a flaming horse racing across the heavens. His elite warriors can transform themselves into blazing fiery horses. Most men can wield his golden bow and fire shafts with unheard-of accuracy.



Hippoi is the goddess of the women and is also the Horse Goddess.

The Council of Elders makes all decisions. Wisdom, experience and magical power are all respected. The chiefs of some tribes brook no dissent, claiming divine inspiration; other chiefs listen to their warriors and leaders before making decisions. Large gatherings often require great council and long deliberations, but once decided all dissent is ended in favor of tribal unity.

Slaves are common. They may be taken from another tribe or from foreigners during the incessant raiding. Male slaves are not permitted to marry and are often gelded. Female slaves automatically become Mothers when they become pregnant, and have all the rights of Pentan women after bearing their first child.

## Waha, the Great Khan

The tribes people all know they are descended from giants. Outsiders equate the giants with the generation of gods who lived with Genert, Father of the Continent, whose garden grew upon this land. When the Waha shamans listened to this theory in the Second Age, they agreed that the stories were similar, but said that the God Learners were wrong in thinking them gods, for they were only giants. Nonetheless, some of these giants are also worshipped as gods, heroes, and spirits.

Waha is the giant of the plains of Prax. He appeared among the leaderless people of Prax during the great darkness and taught them new ways of survival and made the Survival Covenant between man and beast.

When the Sun rose at the Dawn Waha did not retire as other giants did for he was stronger than they. Throughout the Dawn and the Imperial Ages he could be found leading his people into foreign lands and plundering them. Other giants were annoyed by this and sent their worshippers into Prax to force Waha to retire. Although Waha was surrounded and forced to assent, he tricked them. He made the other giants swear that they would never again send their worshippers to conquer his lands. Then Waha revealed that their oaths did not bind him if he used another name, so he raids using the name of Jaldon Toothmaker.

Magic was learned in ancient times from the Horned Man. Waha's people speak to the spirits and giants from lost ages. By using these spirits the Praxians can work magic. The Tribal Khans can even summon their tribal founder to aid the tribe in battle.

*Continued on next page . . .*

The Pentans rely on their favorite spirits and the Elder Spirits. Shamans are intermediaries with their gods. Shamans exist outside the Pentan caste structure and are capable of many terrible magics. Joloi Maskoss, always awake in both this world and the Other, can call stars down into her hand, curse an arrogant man with permanent pain and even cause a herd of cattle to drop dead at her command.

The Four New Winds are a new cult. These Gods were previously the four enemies of the Wind. They are West King Wind, the South Rage Wind, the North War Wind, and the East Sting wind. The Redlanders have identified these gods with Orlanth, Humakt, Storm Bull, and Gagarth respectively, a mixture of Orlanthi and Praxian storm deities.

Several unusual Pentan tribes are known. The WOMEN WARRIORS reverse their gender roles. Men are the Fathers and Teachers and care for the children, while women partake in raids as Warriors and Chiefs. The RED HAIR tribe are a Lunar tribe created by oaths sworn in the aftermath of the Nights of Horrors. All Pentans must send their red-haired children to the

When people die the spark of life inside them goes underground to the land of the wondrous dead. There they live tending the ghost herds of Eiritha and prepare them for eventual rebirth among their people.



Waha showed us which giants and spirits were useful to know and the rituals for determining whether a strange spirit is friend or foe. These divinities are now known as the Nomad Giants or Nomad Gods.



Eiritha is the herd mother and Waha's mother. She is the source of the beasts of the plains. Without her secrets the Praxians could not herd their beasts and starve to death on the plains.



Storm Bull is the desert wind, the source of the righteous cleansing fury that scours flesh from bone. He is Waha's father and the progenitor of the beasts. When the Devil came to destroy Prax Storm Bull fought him to a standstill and finally imprisoned him under a massive mountain of Truestone. Now Storm Bull blows over the wastelands, slowly cleansing them of chaos.



When Death first killed its victim was Daka Fal. Now he is there to show the living how to recognize dead people and how to send their spirits to the proper place. His knowledge can be used to call one's ancestors back from the dead.

Red Hair Place to be raised in that tribe. The Red Hair act as Lunar enforcers on the plains and guards for their caravans that cross Pent from Peloria to Kralorela and back again.

## Prax, Home of the Animal Nomads

The Animal Nomads are a bizarre conglomeration of feuding tribes. All of them are noted for their exotic steeds. Their ancestral homeland of Prax is the westernmost portion of the Wastelands. Unlike other parts of the Wastelands, Prax is relatively fertile and some parts of it grow good grass every year. Their traditions require them to make occasional returns to Prax. An Animal Nomad cannot be a Khan without having hunted chaos in a Devil's Marsh near the Block, for instance.

Animal Nomads are noted for their strict gender roles. Women maintain the forces of life and own the tribal herd animals, cooking wares, living tents, and tools necessary for their tasks. They are responsible for tending the herds, raising children and all healing. Men are keepers of the forces of death and own only their captured beasts, their weapons, and travel tents. Men are responsible for herding the beasts, killing and butchering animals, protecting them from raiders and monsters, and raiding other tribes.

## Animal Nomads

The Beast-riding nomads of Prax and the Wastelands are an ancient and widespread culture. They are proud of their way of life and distrustful of foreigners. They wander through a wide range of territory, tending herds of their own and captured animals, skirmishing with neighboring tribes, hunting and joyously meeting with others of their own tribe.

They are chronically short of raw materials but know how to make all sorts of things from their herd beasts, including bone weapons, and the plants of the plains. The Sable rulers of Kostaddi were originally from Prax, though they have made some compromises in their new land.

What has happened to our land?

The dead giants lived in a paradise. Rabbits came freely for the eating. If you dropped a seed, you had to spring back when the tree grew with much fruit. But the dead giants failed for they tried to deal fairly with the Devil. The Devil slew the dead giants, blasted the land and killed everybody he could find. He made chaos monsters to turn the earth into stone, so that the dead giants' paradise could not return. Only Storm Bull and his friends fought, and Storm Bull finally imprisoned the Devil beneath the Block.

Waha is Storm Bull's son. He came out of the soil into a world of darkness and chaos. People still walked the earth, dazed and dying of stupidity. But Waha the Tracker showed us new ways to live. Waha Khan-of-Khans freed the daughters of Eiritha from evil spirits so that we could have herds. Waha Father-of-Khans founded so many families of his own blood. Waha Killer-of-Chaos cleansed the land to make it safe. Through Waha's deeds, the yellowbellied god felt brave enough to come out of his hiding hole and began to shine on us again [0 ST].

*Continued on next page . . .*

The family is the basis of nomad society. Many families often travel together, usually in clans united by bonds of blood. These clans are loose and informal organizations which change according to need and appeal of the families. The male leader of the clan is the Khan. He rules in matters of war with the advice of the clan elders. These elders are responsible for selecting the Khans successor. The female clan leader is the Queen, literally the high cow priestess, and is the authority in matters of home life. High Khans and High Queens exist for each of the tribes, but their authority goes no further than the sound of their voices, except when they are present at the Paps, the holiest place in Prax.

Offenders against the clan are subject to a variety of punishments, the harshest of which is Banishment. A banished person cannot eat the flesh of their tribal animal, speak their secret tongue or communicate with any tribal members, under penalty of retribution by frightening spirits. Deprived of their secrets of survival, many die or are forced to become outlanders.

But the Outsiders still survived. Their decadence made them good only for robbing. They tried to make us stop raiding them many times but every time we have beaten them back. Sometimes they were so impressed at our prowess that they even hired us to fight in strange lands [230 ST] and gave us many outsiders to pillage. But those among us who did so fell into the same decadence of the Outsiders while we who remained here have always been strong.

The dragons made horses, horrible beasts with ugly growths on their backs, enter our lands [620 ST]. But we harried them so hard the dragons had to take the field to protect their allies [740 ST]. But Waha appeared with an army of giants and drove them off [800 ST]. He then went on an orgy of raiding the surrounding lands. Then Pavis forced Waha to retire [831 ST] and built the Land-within-a-wall. He was so strong that he enslaved many horses and forced them to wear stripes as a sign of their servitude.

Bereft of Waha's leadership, we could do nothing while the Pavisites wallowed in luxury. Then Jaldon Toothmaker appeared [924 ST] and unified all the Tribes to besiege the Land-within-a-wall [927 ST]. Using great magics, he ate a hole in the wall and plundered Pavis' land and the dragons could do nothing about it. Jaldon raided the dragons for many years before he finally realized that his end was near. He gathered together the tribes into the True Golden Horde and told them he wanted to die in one last raid. With their aid, the loot of all Dragon Pass would be burned on his funeral pyre to allow him to protect Prax from further invasion. As planned, the True Golden Horde killed all outsiders in Dragon Pass and gathered the greatest pile of loot ever. But they took the wrong river out of the land and were eaten by a passing Red Dragon [1120 ST]. Jaldon still waits by his pyre and even leads armies to find out what happened to his plunder.

*Continued on next page . . .*

Every male Praxian is a warrior. Life in the Wastelands is a grim struggle for survival and there is little room for those that cannot pull a bow or wield a spear. Only rarely do beast riders from different tribes cooperate; the trigger is usually some outside invasion such as the Horse Riders of Pent or the Lunar Empire.

The religion of the Animal Nomads is as harsh as their lifestyle. They know that their land was a paradise until the Devil destroyed it. They praise the mighty Storm Bull, the Desert Wind, for killing the Devil and imprisoning its corpse beneath a titanic block of Truestone. Storm Bull blows over the remains of Genert's Palace and his Berserkers likewise scour the wastes for any chaos to kill. Eiritha is the ancestral mother of the beasts of Prax, wife of Storm Bull, mother of Waha and the woman's giantess. She, alone of Genert's kin, escaped the Devil's slaughter, for she had been buried beneath the earth. Because of her survival, the beasts can roam Prax and the Wastelands.



The Kralori took advantage of our weakness to loot the Plateau of Statues [1124 ST] and trolls likewise seized the Land-within-a-wall [1237 ST] but without the protection of the dragons, the last of the Praxian Horses were rounded up and slaughtered [1250 ST]. Through cursed magics the Pentans remained alive.

When the Outsiders dared to live in Dragon Pass again, they tried to repeat their old tricks. First they reintroduced the Horses into our land although the Bastards herded cattle this time [1420 ST]. Then they build a new city right next to the Land-within-a-wall [1550 ST]. Now the Lunar Empire has invaded [1610 ST] and dreams of bringing back the Devil to destroy us all.

Who are the people that roam our land?

Our tribe is the best in the world. We are dispersed among many clans and families. Our clan always helps each other in times of need. Other tribesmen are our friends, but they are only obliged to help us in an emergency and you must always pay them back. Women own the cows and serve life. Men own weapons and serve death. Together we bear children and calves and protect each other from visible and invisible harms.

Other Tribes obey Waha's Laws but they are all treacherous, seeking to steal your animals and enslave you. We High Llama are naturally superior to all others. The Morokanth are despicable, the Impala perfidious, the Sables are sneaky and the Bisons are brutes. They are only our friends when we are allied for wars against the outsiders. Otherwise you should raid them for their beasts and slaves.

Outsiders live beyond Prax and the Wastelands. They are many peoples but they are good only for robbing. Never trust them, lie to them when you wish, kill them in secret and take their goods.

We are at war with the Horsemen of Pent. A ridden horse is a mark of an outsider and an enemy. You must never touch a horse, not even to eat it. But you should kill them and their riders wherever possible.

Chaos is evil. Everything that is bad is from chaos. Outsiders use chaos magic to harm us. We must kill chaos at all times.

How should I behave?

You must be brave for if you are not, then we will not survive the wastelands. You must respect Waha's Laws and the Survival Covenant. If you do not, your beasts will not survive and you will starve. You must be cunning for we can not survive by brute force alone. And most of all, you must kill chaos.

Even though Storm Bull defeated the Devil the dazed and confused Animal Nomads starved, for there was nothing left to eat. Man and beast lived together and ate the same food, but the destruction of the Garden meant that both starved equally. Waha, Storm Bull's son, saved them by making the Survival Covenant. Each tribe was given a trial; those that failed would be able to live on the sparse plants of the Wastes. Those that succeeded would live off of their less fortunate brethren. In all cases except the Morokanth, humans won the contests, and became Riders. Accusations of cheating have flown between the Morokanth and the other tribes since the Dawn.

The Animal Nomads are divided into several tribes; each associated with a certain beast upon which it is utterly dependent for existence. Waha, their ancestral hero, showed them how to live like this when he made the Survival Covenant. Their beasts provide everything that is needed for life and nothing is ever wasted. Animal Nomads raid other tribe's herds for food, preferring to spare their own animals from the cook-pot. They freely raid outsiders, whom they consider ignorant scum unworthy of existence. Horses are taboo to them, and they would never touch a horse, not even to eat it. The Five Great Tribes are the Sable, the High Llama, the Impala, the Bison and the Morokanth. They are called Great because the majority of nomads found in the Wastelands come from these tribes.

The riders of the SABLE ANTELOPE are the strongest tribe due to their current alliance with the Lunar Empire. During the Dawn Age several Sable clans migrated from Prax to the Hungry Plateau in Peloria. In modern times they accepted the Goddess and their warriors became the famous Antelope Lancers of the Lunar Army. When the Lunar Empire invaded Prax eleven years ago the Antelope Lancers persuaded the Sables to join them and fight alongside the Lunars at the Battle of Moonbroth. With the Lunar victory the Sables have been able to use their ascendancy to expel other tribes from Prax and into the Wastes.

The HIGH LLAMA TRIBE is aloof and arrogant, much like their lofty steeds. They did not fight at Moonbroth, thinking that the presence of the Lunar Empire would not make much difference. They were proved wrong when the Sable Riders expelled them from Prax. Many now thirst for revenge against the Sables.

The BISON RIDERS are the toughest of the Great Tribes, like their surly steeds. They opposed the Lunars at Moonbroth and the Sable riders have been busy expelling them.

The IMPALA RIDERS are diminutive, fecund pygmies, notorious for their swarms of skirmishers. They too opposed the Lunars at Moonbroth and have suffered for it.

The MOROKANTH do not ride their beasts. They are intelligent quadrupeds and too big to ride their unintelligent herdmen. When Waha made the Survival Covenant, the Morokanth were the only tribe where the animals became the masters and the humans servants. The other tribes



claim that this is because the Morokanth cheated, while the Morokanth claim the opposite; that the humans cheated in all the other tribes. Although the other tribes hate them, they consider the Morokanth to be humans and the herdmen to be beasts. The Morokanth did not fight at Moonbrothand so the Sables have not yet moved against them. All Animal Nomads fear raiding the Morokanth, because captured raiders can be magically turned into herdmen and eaten.

Along with the Five Great Tribes are several independent tribes of Animal Nomads roaming the plains.

The RHINO RIDERS were one of the Great Tribes at the Dawn, but have dwindled over the years. They rarely eat their own beasts because they are so few, and survive in family groups as hunters and gatherers.

The UNICORN MAIDENS are a tribe of women who reject their traditional Eiritha lifestyle. Celibate Unicorn riders dominate the tribe but many women ride their own tribal beasts and seek fathers for their children by raiding from other tribes. Girl children are highly prized, but boys are left to die in the wastes.

The ZEBRA TRIBE was originally the cavalry of the city of Pavis, created in the Imperial Age. After Jaldon sacked Pavis the Zebra Tribe was scattered and became known as the Pavis Survivors. They adopted the nomadic practices, never forgetting their city of birth.

Although the Animal Nomads dominate the plains, many other nomadic tribes can be found there. Most of them do not follow the Survival Covenant and survive by hunting and gathering, though a few are numerous enough to live by other means. Here are the better known tribes.

The BASMOLI BERSERKERS are hsunchen descendants of the giant lion, which was slain by the Waha. They still survive by hunting and gathering but they are always glad for an opportunity to fight the people who killed their giant.

The BABOONS are intelligent, shifty, flea-bitten monkeys with a taste for horseflesh. A common sight in Prax, they worship Grandfather Baboon, the Primate of the bygone Monkey Empire. They tell the tragic tale of how their empire ruled the whole world. But demented apes, sick of fleas, went bald and adjured their primacy, thus bringing about the catastrophic Giants War. These naked apes now deny their crime but reveal their terrible burden of guilt by wearing clothes to cover their baldness and maltreating the Baboons wherever possible.

The MEN-AND-A-HALF are Agimori from far Pamaltela. Although human, they are well over six feet tall and inured to fire. They are the remnants of a vast army led by Balumbasta that marched north to fight Chaos. Balumbasta was enslaved and defeated by the Uz and his army was forced to disperse to survive. Nevertheless they remember their old tra-

ditions well and the Men-and-a-Half form a pike-armed force that can withstand the charge of Bison or Rhino Riders.

The TWO-LEGGED ALLIANCE is a confederation of three tribes of pygmies that ride upon two-legged beasts. One tribe rides the Bolo Lizard, a running dinosaur; another rides the Ostrich; but the third is obscure. Although they all claim to be unrelated to each other, their small status on the plains means they have to band together for self defense and are often found near each other.

The OASIS FOLK live around the scattered water holes raising dates and some grain, which is almost always stolen by one tribe or another. The Oasis Folk claim to be descended from the original giants who inhabited Genert's Garden before the Devil destroyed it.

No gazetteer of Prax would be complete without a mention of the BASTARD TRIBES; the POL-JONI, the AMBERS, the POTORS, and the ANSILS. Animal Nomads despise the Bastards, who ride the detested horse. They worship Eiritha as their cattle giantess and the men worship Orlanth. The Bastards originally came from Dragon Pass.

The Praxian culture uses a very ancient method for the recording of ancient wisdom called the Waha Ropes, of which there were many different varieties and uses. She Who Ties is the spirit who taught this system of the Ropes to Waha in the time after his great birth before the Dawning, at the place of nets. It is on Waha's pathway to the grasslands of the giants. The best-known type is used to record pathways throughout the Wastelands by having, in a very specific order, knots which denote critical events, beings, or places from a traditional myth or legend. It is usual to find one or more ropes hanging from a rock, or even a spear, at the natural approach to an area. The punishment for destroying, removing or changing a Waha Rope is a slow, and painful death, including the ritual disowning of the perpetrator from all normal Praxian life. Should the perpetrator not be caught or escapes his or her captors, they usually wind up in the dead place or as a Gagarth worshipper, outcast and outlawed from the ways of Waha and Eiritha forever.

It is important for travelers to know several of the basic knot types to avoid dangerous sites. Travelers are recommended to avoid anyplace marked with any knot which includes Chaos, Sacred, or Giant.



## Pentan Nomads

The Horsemen of Pent are noted for their fierce loyalty to their ancestral leaders. They are found mostly within Pent although the CharUn live in Northwestern Peloria and the Grazers live in Dragon Pass.

Pentan culture is nomadic, surviving upon the rugged plans by following herds of cattle and sheep. They value horses above all else, even their kin. They are a hardy and warlike people, contemptuous of immobile urban people and farmers of any kind. They worship a variety of gods and demonic spirits, as suits their immediate needs.

What is our history?

In the beginning we were a peaceful people. Then a great hole opened up in the earth and monsters crawled out. They even invaded the sky and warred with the gods. Our mother goddess, Hippoi, had her fangs knocked from her jaws, her claws torn from her feet, and her golden wings from her back. The great hero Hyalor saved her from death and formed an alliance with her. She changed her name and identity and now she is called Horse.

Finally Kargzant could stand this no longer and went into the monster land to destroy the source of the monsters. He was not seen for many years and when he emerged, he was much weaker than before and nobody recognized him. Josad the Elder recognized Kargzant's plight and made the first sacrifices of horses, monsters and slaves to strengthen him. Kargzant grew brighter after that and soon felt well enough to go into the monster land again.

With Hyalor's steeds we were safe from the monsters. Every monster that we killed, we offered to Kargzant so that he became brighter. We drove the monsters away to the edges of the world and even conquered Peloria, the western edge. Finally Kargzant became so bright that even the monster people at the edge of the world had to admit that he had come back [0 ST]. Kargzant now descends into the monster land every night to make sure that the monsters can never come again in force.

Due to our great strength, the Monster People developed cunning and expelled us from Peloria [230 ST]. We would have returned in strength to crush the Pelorians but they revealed their trick. They had corrupted the Pelorian horsemen into herding slave monsters, called cows. This was an affront to the Pure Horse People among us who could not accept breaking Hyalor's alliance. War broke out between us and blood stained our land for many years. Kargzant even stopped in his course to counsel peace to us but this only caused renewed fighting when the Pure Horse People claimed he had been bribed with the sacrifice of cows [375 ST].

*Continued on next page . . .*

Finally we were so weak, that the Pelorians dared to invade our land [c. 565 ST]. But they could not tell one tribe from another and nearly destroyed the Pure Horse People. The few survivors fled south seeking the prophesized Horse Queen to save them. No longer was there any disension among us and we drove the Pelorians back to the edge of the world. But without the Pure Horse People, we could not conquer them.

The Pelorians plotted to raise another monster into the sky. The CharUn opposed them at first but were seduced into supporting them [1228 ST]. With their support the Red Moon rose into the Sky [1247 ST]. When the rest of Pent saw this, AgartuSay vowed to conquer it one day. He tried to make a name for himself by leading a horde into Kralorela but the Yellow Emperor enslaved him [1250 ST].

Many years later AgartuSay returned [1355 ST] but his name was now Sheng Seleris. He claimed that Jolaty had enlightened him with the truths of good slavery that allowed him to defeat all monsters. If he had our support, he could conquer the whole world including the Northern Ice, the Southern Desert, and the Emperors of the East and West.

To prove his power to us, he led us to conquer the Iron Forts [1356 ST] which had never been done before. For seven years, we raided the Kralori mercilessly with the aid of the Boshani. Then Sheng Seleris mustered the great horde that was so huge that it even had women warriors and men riding bisons and sables. He then overran many lands and then challenged the Yellow Emperor for the right to rule over all Kralorela. But the Yellow Emperor tricked us into returning our rightful conquests [1363 ST]. Enraged, Sheng Seleris invaded Chern Durel, the Wastelands and even the jungle people of the far south, seeking magics to confound the Yellow Emperor. Finally Sheng Seleris invaded Peloria [1375 ST]. Sheng was so strong that nobody could fight us. The Red Emperor went into hiding and sent demons before Sheng Seleris finally defeated him [1415 ST].

Sheng then invaded Kralorela again with help from the rest of the world [1442 ST]. The Yellow Emperor could do nothing against our Great Glory of Revenge and fled. The Sky People then acclaimed Sheng Seleris as their Emperor and they gave him his own stellar palace to live in [1444 ST]. Sheng then vowed to conquer the monsters of the sky for them and landed on the Red Moon [1449 ST]. But the rebels of the sky cast a great spell to pull his star down [1460 ST]. Sheng still lives but he is buried in the far west where we can never reach him.

*Continued on next page . . .*

† III □ G R □ O ◐ ✕ III



Bereft of our great leader, the Red and Yellow Emperors expelled us from their lands. They even drove us from lands that they had never ruled before [1486 ST]. We fought against this injustice but after the Nights of Horrors [1506 ST], they killed so many of us that we could fight no longer. But because we had killed the Red Emperor and most of the Pelorians in the same battle, nobody thought it shameful to agree to peace.

Recently the Bronze-Sworded Prophet has arisen among us. He has persuaded the Four Winds to become part of Kargzant's tribe. Many tribes have thus worshipped the Four Winds and are preparing invade Peloria to free Sheng Seleris.

Who are the people under Kargzant's Light?

Our tribe is the greatest in the world. We should always trust our tribesmen.

Men are born to fight and lead. Women are born to tend the horses and bear children.

Other Tribes are untrustworthy and raid us whenever they can. We raid them in reprisal.

Monster people live at the edge of the world. The Praxians of the Southern Wastes ride upon many monsters and are jealous of our steeds. The wretched Pelorians and the sniveling Kralori live in the west and east in many cities. They cannot fight very well but they worship monsters to fight for them. The Trolls of the North are cowards that hide from us in the day and attack us by night.

How should I behave?

Be brave, for Kargzant honors the brave.

Listen to your elders and chiefs and do not argue with them. They have lived in Kargzant's light longer than you have and are much wiser for it, and they know many more dead people than you do.

Be loyal to your tribe, to your friends and to your word. If you die defending these things, then Kargzant will call you into his celestial tent where light, happiness and laughter shall be your reward forever. Care for your horses and respect Hyalor's pledge. If you do not, then you will not be safe from the monster people and other tribes.



## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

## ● Uz 大

*Also known as: Digijelm (Pelorians), Trolls (Western), and Dozaki (Kralori).*

Trolls are thickset, with snouts and fangs or tusks. They usually have gray skin, often mottled in with some other shade, such as orange or green. All trolls are larger than the largest human and females are larger than male trolls. They try to be fat, and their powerful muscles are often concealed under a layer of blubber. Their height is partly concealed by their typical slouching stance. They are hairy, even rather shaggy, and their scalp hair is often thicker than that elsewhere on their bodies.

The trolls have a powerful appetite, always chewing on something. They can eat almost anything, although their least favorite foods are feces, rocks, and air (the last because it gives bad wind). To humans, their well-known gluttony seems to destroy any capacity for higher thought, such as appreciation of fine art or civilized oratory, that they might have. Instead they are crude, vulgar, and spiteful.

Because of their underworld origins, the trolls are active during the nighttime. They make their way not by using their eyes, which are much weaker than ours, but through a dark-sight that they share with some bats. They hate light in all its forms. Although even sunlight causes no direct harm to most types of trolls they avoid it, and trollkin and cave trolls are adversely affected by any light.

At first, in their primal underworld home, all trolls were huge and powerful, but the trials of the Gods War and Time has caused numerous subspecies to appear. The following types are those that are well known throughout all troll populations worldwide. Other exotic troll types are known, such as the bat trolls of the Blue Moon Plateau, the snow trolls of Valind's Glacier, the sea trolls and the hot trolls of Pamaltela.

The MISTRESS RACE trolls were the original trolls. They are close to their ancestors, and can wield frightening powers, like killing with a glance. Only a handful of these monstrous creatures are left in Glorantha, much to the distress of the trolls, but for which all others give thanks.

After arrival on the surface world, DARK TROLLS replaced the Mistress Race as the leading troll type. About a quarter of any trollish community consists of dark trolls. Many wild troll families consist only of dark trolls. Both great trolls and trollkin are born to dark troll mothers although the reverse is never true. Dark trolls are the most intelligent of them all and generally worship Kyger Litor and other deities.

TROLLKIN are the produce of the Curse of Kin, caused by the curses of Gbaji. Trollkin are puny, degenerate creatures and mockeries of the mighty troll frame. They may be found living in dark troll communities or on their

own. These stunted mutants usually have twisted bodies, and often deformed bones or faces. They are half the size of an adult human, but look even smaller due to their usual cowering squat. They are the lowest of troll society and most are even not considered proper trolls. Trollkin can form up to three quarters of a troll community.

**GREAT TROLLS** are another recent breed, created in an attempt to break the trollkin curse. They are gigantic in size, but of limited intellect. They are always male and usually are slaves. They are popular as bodyguards.

**CAVE TROLLS** are a monstrous bestial species descended from trolls mutated in the Gods' War. Although other trolls do not consider them to be true trolls, they do not persecute the species. Cave trolls are often used by dark trolls the way humans use dogs. Left to themselves, they live like wild animals.

Trolls prefer to live underground in caves, burrows and simple scraped holes. They do not excavate extensive networks like dwarves, but may enlarge upon an existing cave system. When not enough caves are available trolls live in tumble-down villages composed of crudely constructed huts and shacks made of piled stones or un-tanned animal pelts. Trolls are nearly immune to cold and their shelters reflect this innate toughness.

## History of Hurtplace

*(We wish to apologize for the appalling diction from our selected troll historian. Many trolls can actually speak human tongues excellently but they are too verbose or too secretive about their history.)*

At first Uz dwelt peacefully in Wonderhome, a place of total darkness. Everyone had their choice of things to eat, depending only on how far they wanted to walk between meals. But then Death came. Uz fought against Death but he burn many Uz! No more were we Uzuz [mistress race]. Uzko [dark trolls] fled to Hurtplace [the surface world] and lick burns. We settled in many places and hunt many others. Then Chaos come, try to take from Uz. Uz fought back and finally kill chaos.

Hoomanz, dwarvez, and elvez beg us. They want Death to come back to burn Chaos. Uz saw a trick to make Uz to leave Hurtplace. Uz refused. Finally they give in to Uz. They promise Death's arms and legs be broken, that Death shine only half the time and that Death allow uz back into Wonderhome. Uz agreed [0 ST].

Although Death come back, Uz still mighty. Ezkankekko friends with so many hoomanz, dwarvez, elvez and dragonootz that he form Council of Friends to keep track of his friends. To north, uz find death worshippers. Council try be friends but death worshippers want to kill instead [167 ST]. That was fine by uz and so uz did.

## ● Kyger Litor, Dark Mother of Uz ●

Kyger Litor is the mother of the trolls. She knew not the Golden Age as she blissfully dwelt with her children in Wonderhome, a vast expanse of hell. When the sun entered hell it scorched all Wonderhome and forced Kyger Litor to flee. In revenge, Kyger Litor and her children invaded the surface world and conquered most of it, a period known to humans as the Great Darkness. The Devil and his spawn invaded Glorantha, but Kyger Litor's children defeated them or drove them off into remote places.

Kyger Litor permitted the return of the sun at the Dawn, provided the pathetic humans gave Wonderhome back. But the humans have reneged on their oaths, cursing her children and seeking to kill them altogether. Kyger Litor has fought back, as always, and the Bright Empire and other foes of hers have ended up as food. The humans are still ascendant but they are blind to Kyger Litor's presence in their own shadows. They are food.

As goddess of darkness, Kyger Litor and the trolls are heirs to the both the order and pattern of the darkness that humans will never know. Through their hidden lore, they are capable of magics that strike fear into human hearts.

Death is the fiery sun that forced the trolls out of Wonderhome. It circles heaven and hell in a day and a night and even now trolls shy from its fiery presence. Through Kyger Litor's might they are no longer burnt by the mere touch of the sun as they once were and look forward to the night of the Black Eater that will devour the sun and create a new Wonderhome on the surface world.

*Continued on next page . . .*

Uz war against Death hoomanz and soon uz eat them all [c.230 ST]. Many slaves ruled by death hoomanz now free. Uz ask if they want to be friends? They said yes but they lied for they also death hoomanz. More eating.

Finally Council worry too much about fighting and decide to make new god to bring peace. Uz discover he was a Death god and withdrew from Council of Liars [365 ST]. It broken after that and since people no longer friends, 'newts and fart-hoomanz also quit. Dwarvez and elvez start hitting Uz and Broken Council makes peace with Death hoomanz and decide to make Death stronger. Uz really mad by that and Uz decide to summon Black Eater. Uz magic was so strong that Death was forced to stop in sky by Uz [375 ST]. Broken Council sent Gbaji at Uz [379 ST]. He cursed Uz with Womb-biter and since then Enlo [trollkin] always has been born to Uz.

**N** ZORAK ZORAN is the Lord Demon of the legions of death, the mightiest of the demons of hell. The strongest troll worships him for he grants them the battle frenzy. He is the mindless explosion of fear and frenzy that finds its justification and satisfaction in unlimited violence. Although he kills enemies he often kills his worshippers too. His enemies all fear him for during the Great Darkness, Zorak Zoran wounded a god and ripped fire from him. Through this act he and his worshippers can wield fire, a feat otherwise impossible to trolls.



ARGAN ARGAR, son of night, is worshipped by Uz seeking to extend the power of darkness upon the surface world. They are often found as merchants and translators but were the ruling clique in the Kingdom of Night.



XIOLA UMBAR is Zorak Zoran's twin sister and embodies brute compassion just he embodies destruction. She protects the weakest Uz and the trollkin too.



ZONG is the god of the hunt whose prey is everything from the smallest gnat to the largest dinosaur.

The darkness spawned everything else in the world as food for Kyger Litor and her children. Many gods, including most human gods, have revolted against this fate but the darkness will devour them for it is far older than they will ever be.

But Arkat was one of Uz. He disguised himself as a hoomanz [375 ST] and plunder their secrets and showed Uz how to use them. Then he takes off his mask [447 ST] and kill Gbaji [450 ST]. Arkat gives Uz control over hoomanz everywhere west of Great Waste. After Arkat leave Uz, Elvez and dwarvez war against Uz but Uz eat them. Then Hoomanz start to fight Uz everywhere.

In West, hoomanz try to kill all Uz in Guhan but they fail. They would like to attack Halikiv also but it too far away, although latter Retter Enlo-face kill the Queen [1366 ST].

In East, Dragon-hoomanz war against ShanShan Uz and dwarvez. Uz make friends with dwarvez. But dwarvez betrayed Uz to Dragonz. Uz flee and dragonz eat dwarvez [570 ST]. Then Dragon-hoomanz chase us out of Chern Durel into Koromandol [768 ST].

In Middle, Hoomanz discover how to speak to dragons and make Youf [573 ST]. Youf then eats Uz [578 ST]. Ezkankeko of Shadowlandz survives by kissing their feet. Cragspider attempt to break the trollkin curse [732

ST] but only breed Uzdo [Great Trolls]. Youf so strong that they make Uz of Shadowlands and Dagori Inkarth pay heaps pay heaps [782 ST]. But Youf fail in end. Dragonewts hire Uz from Blue Moon Land to kill Youf [1043 ST]. When hoomanz come to kill dragonewts, dragon eat them too [1120 ST]. No more hoomanz in Dragon Pass. Uz happy.

Soon Dragonootz mad at Uz. We fight them but they win and burn Uz [1222 ST]. Ezkankekko forced to give hoomanz more power because he has too few Uz left. But Dagori Inkarth not worried and even seizes Walled Pavis [1240 ST]. Belintar then appear. Ezkankekko fight him but his hoomanz betray him and Ezkankekko killed [1318 ST]. Belintar-maggotpus then rule over Shadowlands.

After sulking from Dragon Eating, Death-hoomanz make Red Death appear [1247 ST]. This affront to Uz and it even force hoomanz to enter Dragon Pass [1250 ST] where Uz once had been safe. Dagori Inkarth declare war on Death-hoomanz over Red-Death [1335 ST]. But war ended after Bina Bang from Blue Moon Land claim to Uz that what look like Red-Death is actually Red Moon. Elders convinced, war ends and Bina goes home [1442 ST]. But many Uz still not convinced.



The BLUE MOON PLATEAU is reportedly a fragment of the Blue Moon that crashed on Peloria. Trolls friendly to the Lunar Empire live on it, unlike most trolls who despise the empire's chaotic associations. They worship the Blue Moon and are governed by the Emperor's Cousin. Numerous Bat Trolls haunt the Plateau.

DAGORI INKARTH is the oldest troll settlement on the surface world, originally dug out by the heroes Gore and Gash. Within it lies Sporewood, a vast fungi forest, and many great and holy places.

Outlying tribes live in the ELDER WILDS. They are disorganized and in constant war with the elves.

IN THE ERRINORU JUNGLE live jungle trolls, tolerated by the elves. Pamalt wounded their ancestress and they can no longer endure cold.

Trolls originally settled GUHAN at the bidding of Arkat after the Chaos Wars. It is now a very strong troll land and its human neighbors fear its future intervention in their wars.

HALIKIV is one of the oldest troll lands in Glorantha, settled at the same time as Dagori Inkarth.

KOROMANDOL is known only from a few ancient explorers' notes. The Uz here were expelled from Chern Durel after losing a war with exiled mandarins.

# Uz

By Heather Bruton

In the Gods War the Uz, or trolls, dominated much of the world. They are Underworld beings, creatures of the Darkness that fled from the Underworld when Kyger Litor was driven out by the dead Yelm. They fought against chaos, for they were born out of it and impervious to many of its effects. Few humans appreciate that sacrifice. Much later, at the end of the Dawn Age when Gbaji the Deceiver stalked the world, the uz saw chaos again and fought against it.

Again tragedy struck when Gbaji cursed the race so that their females began to bear stunted mutants instead of proud uz. These mewling wretches are called trolkin and are now more numerous than the elder race.



Many trolls in NORTH PENT hunt and hide from the nomads of the southern steppes.

Trolls colonized the TARMO MOUNTAINS during the Great Darkness. Although it never forged a political unity like many Genertelan troll lands, it is quite strong and raids both Umathela and Tarien.

Allegedly a million trolls hibernate in VALIND'S GLACIER waiting for some future battle of doom. The snow trolls here wear furs from white seal lions giving rise to rumors that they are white and furry.

The trolls of the YOLP MOUNTAINS are friendly to the Lunar Empire but not political allies. They are known to guard at least one part of Gbaji.



Mothers are divine. Mothers are blessed. Mothers are everything; heart and soul of Uz. Mothers are life. Males are here to serve Mothers by giving them food and respect. Males do everything Mother wants or else. How to be worthy Uz? Obey Mother. Have plenty of healthy children and no Enlo. Eat.

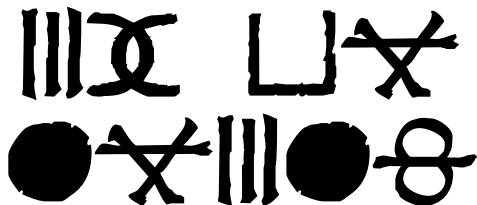
*Who are not Uz?*

Enlo miserable things. Not Uz. Four kind Enlo. Values are good for something and so treat nicely. Warriors are good for fighting. Workers good for serving Uz. Food good for eat.

Kru Mur, (Killer Intoxicants, dwarfs) are foes that take Uz homes and have made evil iron to hurt Uz.

Kre Uru, (Fighter Woods, elves), we also call Kre Gosto, (Fighter Stick Foods), are not foes for they make our food quickly and in plenty. They are also very nice to eat.

Zin Mala, (Weapon Meats, humans) or Ured Kobo, (Servants of the Hurter) are enemies because they grow so quickly and steal Uz best huntlands for themselves. Bite them fast, bite them hard, and bite them again.



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN



**K**ralorela, the Dragon Empire, is a vast and densely populated land that lies between the ShanShan Mountains and the sea. It is divided into three regions. The easternmost portion is the Prodigious Isle of Hum Chang, divided into two immense provinces. The Gnow Chang Hia or the Hundred Rice Islands dot the inland sea of Suam Chow, which is all that is left of the Seven Drowned Provinces that were flooded during the Gods War. West of Suam Chow is Vaska Long, the Western River Lands that contains nearly half the population of Kralorela in its five provinces. West of that lie the home of the mountain people, the great Shan Shan Mountains.

Dragons rule Kralorela. At their head is the divine dragon emperor, Godunya. He combines the wisdom of the sages, the might of the dragons, and the nature of his subjects to create a most perfect government. Godunya is far removed from the lives of ordinary Kralori and only through the Imperial Adorations can they know their place in him.

Emperor Daruda in olden times divided Kralorela into fifteen provinces and appointed the Xia Ko, the exarchs, to govern them. The exarchs are dragons in their own right. However, they rarely assume draconic form for it slows their spiritual progress. Daruda's heirs created new exarchs as the need arose. Now over a hundred exist, including the Exarch of the Dragon Roads, the Imperial Chamberlain, the Abbot of the Faithful Dragon School, the Ambassador to the Blue Dragon of the Deep and so forth. Whenever a vacancy occurs, the local mandarins take special tests to see which one of them will be promoted. Pontifexes, or bridge-exarchs, govern the seven flooded provinces.

The ten greatest exarchs are the Ko Xia Ko, the archexarchs. They have responsibilities that span the empire and supersede other exarchs. The best known are the Archexarch of War; the Archexarch of Divine Affairs, the police of the Sky Gods; and the feared Archexarch of Hell, the Judge of the Dead. Others are more obscure for their exotic duties rarely impact upon ordinary Kralori.

Every exarch has a constituency for which he is responsible to the emperor. The constituency is normally a grouping of citizens of a province, soldiers of an army, criminals, bureaucrats, eunuchs, or any other Kralori social grouping that requires an exarch to oversee. The exarch is responsible for constituting a portion of his constituents' Imperial Adorations into dragon. The Constituted Dragon is never manifested, for its constituents are not sufficiently aware. Instead it sleeps and the exarch communes with its dreaming consciousness for the greater good of its constituency. They can become aware of gross spiritual disturbances within the dragon and take measures to dissipate these disturbances before they manifest. To avoid the Constituted Dragons impinging upon one another, every year the exarchs form the Circle of Infinite Power. This places the Constituted Dragons within the Imperial Dragon and prevents demarcation disputes among the Exarchs.



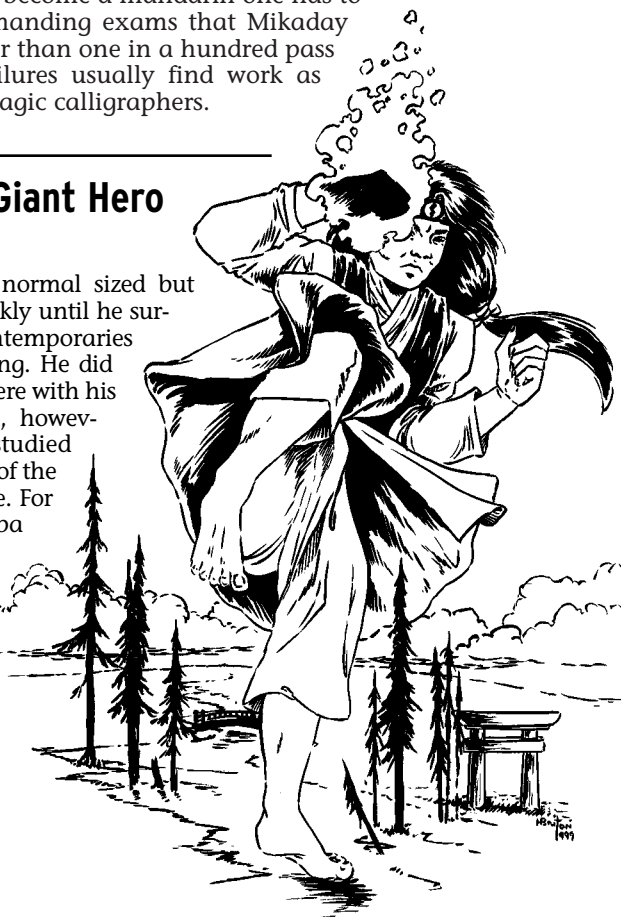
Beneath the exarchs are mandarins, correctly known as Hsin Tu. Emperor Mikaday created them to serve as bureaucrats and judges of Kralorela after he disguised himself as an ordinary farmer and observed that the exarchs could not govern effectively. First Mikaday wrote down his laws on stone obelisks in every town for all to see. He wrote them down in elegant dragon writing, composed of complex emblems of a higher reality that can be seen as markings on the scales that cover every dragon.

By writing them down thus, Mikaday hoped that the Kralori would understand the laws, obey them, and draw closer to the Cosmic Dragon. They did none of these things for few could read the dragon writings and even fewer could understand their higher meaning. Mikaday did not despair but summoned all the locals that could read the dragon writings at every town he visited. Then he tested them upon every possible meaning of dragon writing and dismissed those that gave wrong answers. The few people left he ordained as the first mandarins and prescribed their duties. To this very day, to become a mandarin one has to pass the same demanding exams that Mikaday administered. Fewer than one in a hundred pass all the exams. Failures usually find work as scribes, poets, or magic calligraphers.

## Kui Hui, The Giant Hero

By Heather Bruton

Kui Hui was born normal sized but grew incredibly quickly until he surpassed all his contemporaries and still kept growing. He did not let his size interfere with his personal dedication, however, and he has studied under Master Chon of the Hua Lochow lineage. For ten years Graba Kartak the lobster demon terrorized the shores and bridges of the Suam Chow until finally Kui Hui overcame it in combat. He was rewarded by the Godunya, and is now among the foremost mystical warriors of Kralorela.



## Can Shu, The Lord of Ignorance

Can Shu was the Exarch of Wanzow province. When the great western fleet sailed into the Suam Chow Can Shu was not afraid of the foreigners and welcomed them at the docks of Lur Nop. He hoped that the Opening would transform Wanzow from a dreary backwater into a land of riches. His rival exarchs did not share his hopes and they poisoned Godunya's mind against the foreigners. The great western fleet was sunk and Can Shu was disgraced and exiled to Chern Durel for his friendship with the devils.

Can Shu was so enraged at his treatment that the desire for revenge consumed him utterly. He renounced the draconic path and became an antidragon. Many other exiles sought to dissuade him from this evil path; Can Shu fed them to the Huan To. Can Shu's treachery was made worse by his perversions of the secrets of the exarchs. The Adorations to the Dragons were promulgated in Chern Durel with Can Shu as the sole beneficiary. Every new village that he conquered made him stronger. Other exiles tried to oppose him but they were killed, enslaved, converted or forced into hiding. Within ten years Can Shu was absolute master of all parts of Chern Durel that could be ruled. He crowned himself Glory of Ignorance in an elaborate ceremony in Hsingdar, the Fortress of Benightenment.

Since his coronation Can Shu has been destroying the enchantments laid upon Chern Durel by the ancient exarchs. He has reconsecrated the Temples to the Black Sun by lighting the fires that burn but cast no light, and he has freed the Amethyst Dragon of Greater Chaos from its prison. Now he is hunting down the ghost of Sun Storm's Third Eye in Jankley Bore. When he finds it, the Sun of Ignorance can be liberated from its shackles of wisdom. Then Can Shu will march upon Kralorela.

The mandarins perform the same duties that Mikaday prescribed; to learn the laws and apply them to the people. They are responsible for, amongst other tasks, collecting taxes and duties, keeping the peace, investigating crime, and ordering public works. They are even called upon to arrange marriages and settle family arguments. The mandarins no longer stand court before the stone obelisks as they did during Mikaday's reign but commit their writings to paper. This frees them to attend to all matters within their jurisdiction.

Due to the difficulty of the examinations, there is roughly one mandarin for every thousand Kralori. To help them in their duties, the mandarins appoint assistants as needed. Mandarins are responsible for paying their assistants' fees and tutoring them in the dragon writings. In general, the mandarin is obeyed not because he is the mandarin, but because he has proven himself to be wise and consistently gives wise decisions.

Mandarins' authority is limited. Their support is strongest among the landed gentry and the literati and weakest among the urban poor, for whom the Cosmic Dragon has seemingly done nothing. Consequently every city has a District of the Four Vices that is off-limits to the mandarins and block wardens and provides a refuge for tongs, thieves, cannibals, foreign devils and even the occasional Huan To.

The mandarins accept these limitations as customary and most simply do not care about what goes on in the forbidden district. If a Kralori lays a complaint that he had been robbed in such a district the Mandarin will be more concerned about what a supposedly respectable citizen was doing there in the first place. Similarly, night is viewed as a time when all Good Kralori should be in bed.

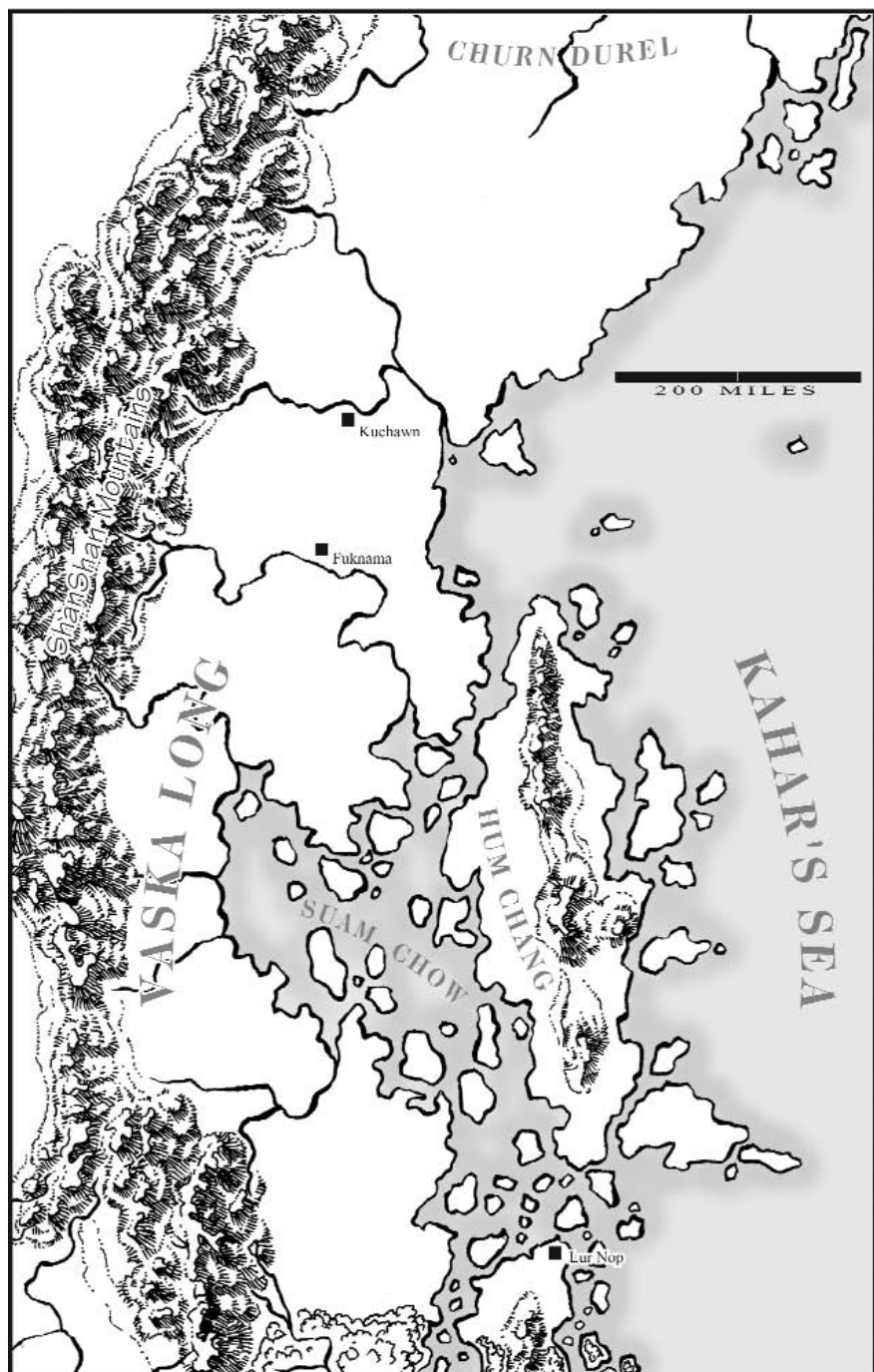
The most common assistant is the village headman. He makes sure that the village performs the Imperial Adorations, acts as a spy upon other villages and denounces potential troublemakers to the mandarin. Block Wardens perform similar functions in the cities.

The ancient dragons declared that males are superior in wisdom to females. The mandarins know that in truth many males are as foolish as women are. Hence when listening to divorce cases and other battles between the sexes, they take great care in listening to both sides. However when disputing with women, they are not afraid to let their superior wisdom show through.

Several orders of female sages exist. The most famous is the School of the Extraordinary Fair Feminine Legalists that was founded by the Eight Sisters of Justice. These women seized control of Fuknama after successive mandarins had proven themselves to be paragons of corruption and incompetence. They set up a regime of good governance virtually unknown in Kralorela at that time. When the last of the Sisters died and control of the city reverted to the mandarins the exarch continued to hire the Disciples of the Sisters as an adjunct to his legal system.

Although the Circle of Infinite Power creates harmony in his Empire Godunya sometimes appoints people from outside the established hierarchies of mandarins, the palace or the army. This is done in cases of institutional failure, such as the time when the generals repeatedly failed to expel the ShayTunn from Boshan. Godunya appointed Imolo Wen, a student of the Faithful Dragon School, as the commanding general. Over the past century the number of these appointments has steadily increased, and a large number have been eunuchs of the palace. Anonymous pamphlets accuse them of having improperly persuaded Godunya into making these appointments for their own corrupt purposes.

The Four Vices run wild outside Kralorela. Humans living in those places are so corrupted that they are actually devils but do not know it. Consequently the travel of foreign devils within Kralorela is strictly controlled. Foreign sailors are prohibited from sailing the Suam Chow and must dock at the port of Lur Nop. Praxians must trade at the Iron Forts while Pentans and Lunars may trade only in Shiyang province. No foreigner can travel outside these provinces without a special permit.



## Religion of Kralorela

Kralori religion is draconic in nature. Great dragons created the world. They made people to inhabit the world. They made the gods to lead people to good rebirths and eventual dragonhood. They made the demons to drive people back to towards the dragons, or to punish those who would not.

The ultimate goal of Kralori mysteries is to become a dragon, a transcendent being who is far beyond mortal comprehension. Some monasteries teach meditative methods to do this directly, and occasionally a person succeeds and a dragon departs from the sacred grounds and departs entirely from Glorantha. Some, on missions, remain behind. The Emperor Dragon and some others have delayed their ascendance to the Cosmic Dragon so they can teach others the draconic mysteries. To do this requires accepting a number of limitations on their being, such as not assuming draconic form for example. If their existence becomes too burdensome, Dragons release themselves through the rite of utuma and from the mortal shell rises their true self. In various ways everyone worships the emperor, mostly indirectly. The Emperor, Immortal Godunya of Wisdom Beyond Transcendence, also receives devotional worship from hundreds of thousands of people. Others are devoted to other emperors in a mystical union.



**DARUDA** founded modern Kralorela about a hundred thousand years ago. He drove out evil, made the latest Celestial Beings to help humans, and established the customs of Kralorela.




**EMPEROR THALURZNI** is the patron of Kralori Alchemists. He could make anything, such as the race of beings made of gold or the speaking cake. But his secret was to reveal how to balance you inner elements to achieve everlasting life and wisdom.




**VAYOBI** is the Dragon of War. When Sekever, an evil monster, overthrew him he dived underneath the ocean to meditate with the Blue Dragon. After centuries of introspection he accomplished his power and rose to confront the evil one. He appointed generals and admirals to establish the imperial army and navy. Today the many warriors of the Imperial army and navy are all proud to be the scales of the Dragons of War.

*Continued on next page . . .*


Seven War Dragons defend Kralorela, each manifest as an army or a navy. Emperor Vayobi made the first dragon of war to defend his lands and subsequent emperors have emulated his example. The Circle of War co-ordinates the activities of the war dragons. Centered upon the Archexarch of War as the emperor's representative, the Circle of War uses the same harmony as the Circle of Infinite Power to prevent the dragons from clashing with each other. Controlling these dragons are special


 THRUNHIN DA, the Blue Dragon of the Deep, lives beneath the sea east of Kralorela. She is revered all around the sea and everyone seeks her deep wisdom and fears her angry fogs. Depending on her mood, she can reward them with gifts such as the Rice Mother or devastating floods.

The dragons made people for reasons that humans do not know, and which are not naturally understood. Wisdom says people are the beings who can become dragons. All Kralori worship their ancestors and maintain close family ties that are formalized by centuries of tradition.

 APTANACE THE SAGE is the founder of civilization. He begat fourteen hundred children who took up the roles of the entire social classes and occupations of humanity. His massive Instructions to his children, a seven hundred thousand-verse poem, are still followed by the Kralori today.

The gods of Kralorela are not dragons, but were created to protect people and to direct humans towards draconic wisdom. The dragons made them because most people couldn't understand the cosmos. A large number of little deities are known, and these given here are widespread with several great temples. All temples are subject to the Archexarch of Heaven.


 HAN MAJANG, the First Minister, was made from the thought of the Archexarch of Heaven. He appointed the sun, then the other celestials to oversee time and space and the divine records.

 HALISAYAN is the Good Wife. She was born a humble washerwoman in the City of Hsiang Wan, where her greatest temple stands, and her humility caught the attention of Emperor Thalurzni who married her. He rewarded her unfailing wifely devotions with the Pill of Immortality, and since then she has ruled the Summer Land Heaven.

*Continued on next page . . .*

exarchs called generals. Their powers are different from other exarchs for they make their troops move as a dragon moves his limbs. As long as their generals live Kralori forces are never lost or incommunicado. Generals are individually very powers and if needed they can manifest the attributes of their war dragon, such as spitting fire or growing wings.

No mandarins assist the generals. Instead authority and some draconic power is vested in subordinate officers called talons. They commune with their war dragon to know what their superior expects them to do. This breaks down at the lowest level since many talons cannot commune to understand what their regiment is supposed to do.

 BODKARTU is the Goddess of Secrets and Forbidden Lore. She protects her sister, Halisayan, from devils and the bad emperor, as well as answering the prayers of oppressed mortal women. She strikes with disease, poison, strangulation, and mysterious disappearances. Emperor Thalurzni forbade her worship except in the eight temples that are necessary for Halisayan to live. The Archexarch of Heaven tolerates her worshippers, saying, "We would gladly embrace a thousand Bodkartu to retain Halisayan's delightful embrace." Nevertheless, open worship is forbidden and shrines to her are destroyed wherever found.



Miyo is the goddess of Kralori farmers for she provides her people with everything necessary to live. The foreign devils are pitied that they do not know her and are forced to consume abominable provender.



Kralori who are not sufficiently virtuous to qualify for the Excellent Palace of Pleasant Reward are judged by Udam Bagur, the Archexarch of Hell. He sentences them to be purified by devils until they are ready for rebirth. Living relatives often bribe the devils to work faster in purifying their kindred.

Kralori who are guilty of some wickedness can still hope to escape the Archexarch through the ritual of utuma that sunders their draconic nature from their corrupt body and sends them to the Palace. If done incorrectly however, the spirit could become entrapped as a ghost unable to find the way to Summer Land Heaven and too good for hell. Many such ghosts are maddened by their inability to escape and only cannibals offer them any consolation. Even more tragic are the tortured dead who committed utuma correctly after the False Dragons slew Emperor Yanoor, but did not know that the Palace had been destroyed.



*SHANGHSA followed Daruda's path but could not reach the Cosmic Dragon for he was continually disturbed by the intrusion of the chattering masses into his mediation. To enlighten them so they would no longer be a disturbance, he founded the Immanent Mastery School that allowed one to achieve draconic status much faster than the traditional Darudic discipline.*

While founding the school, ShangHsa fell into the Error of Impatience and destroyed his draconic self. This tragic flaw was transmitted to his students so that while they could easily become Dragons, they had no contact with the Infinite and so were False Dragons. ShangHsa compounded his original mistake by teaching it to foreign devils. They became the Immanent Masters and used their teachings to kill Emperor Yanoor and conquer all Kralorela, creating the False Dragon Empire. ShangHsa was their False Emperor and ruled for three and a half centuries before being cast down by Godunya along with the False Dragons.

*Continued on next page . . .*

Following a military emergency caused by the wars against Sheng Seleris, Immanent Masters and their disciples are found in the Dragons of War. Most have been forcibly conscripted by the military police, as their magics are easy to learn and give quick rewards. The generals have reportedly assured Godunya that the Immanent Masters are monitored constantly for subversion, but the mandarins remain unconvinced.



*SEKEVER AND THE HUAN To Sekeveran cosmology states that the Cosmic Dragon devolved himself so that he might embrace the Ultimate, a course that attained completion in the reign of Emperor Sekever. But the lesser dragons formed by this devolution could not understand its purpose and so reversed it, marring the bliss of the world. Since that time, Dragons oppress Kralorela by preventing it from reaching the Ultimate.*

Sekeverans reach the Ultimate through performing crimes and other abhorrent deeds. They defend their actions by saying that thinking of them as evil is a sign that one is still a prisoner of draconic thought. So strong is this way of thinking that even simple criminals cannot reach the Ultimate. Only the Tongs, organized brotherhoods, can show the way and they exact a high price for their guidance. The road to the Ultimate starts with theft and vandalism. Many seekers become bandits while a few are marked out by the Tongs to commit arson or random acts of torture. Once a Sekeveran thinks nothing of slitting people's throat for a few groats, he or she is then inducted into the life of occult crime. Many become Cannibals, who propitiate the Tortured Dead and keep them fed; others spread disease while a few devour minds.

*Continued on next page . . .*


The rank-and-file, called scales because of their stout scale cuirasses, are heavy infantry equipped with long spears or crossbows. Most also carry bucklers and shortwords. Many formations of specialist troops, such as engineers, rocketeers, military police and surgeons exist and are attached to regular military formations as needed.

The navy has huge oared barges that can easily be linked together to form a floating island where men can fight as if on land. This tactic is necessary because of the thick fogs from Kahar's Sea that blankets the Suam Chow. Some war barges are so massive that cavalry can charge across their decks. Because of the huge number of oars required, zombies are often used to row these barges.

The civilian mandarins have a very low opinion of the dragons of war and can recite by heart a long list of their flaws. The generals are blind to spiritual disturbances within their dragon and accept any magic to win (Imolo Wen was a rare exception). They callously equip the scales with demonical magic despite their power to warp men's souls. Immanent masters tutor scales in the false dragon magics. Naval



Through these cosmic abuses, the Sekeveran gradually loses humanity to become a demonic Huan To, the Sekeveran Mandarin. They can take hideous forms and can excrete a special poison that turns men into mindless ghouls. Loyal Sekeverans are immune to this poison and drinking it is a test of faith. But the dragons hate the Huan To and destroy them whenever they can.

 UN LO, the Cosmic Dragon, committed utuma and dismembered itself to create the worlds. As a result of this everyone has Cosmic Dragon Nature. Many Kralori and all foreigners do not understand this nature and abuse it to create feeble cantrips. Godunya shows the Wise how to meditate upon their draconic nature and become closer to the Cosmic Dragon. As a result of their meditations many have attained cosmic sagacity. They are so powerful that their mere existence thwarts the plots and schemes of foreigners, even of foreign dragons.

Utuma is the means by which the Cosmic Dragon created the world. Ignorant people perceive it as Death and make useless sacrifices to ward against it. When death inevitably comes for them their error condemns them to a futile existence as a tormented ghost in various hells before being reborn. The dragon emperors have taught for centuries that Utuma is merely a change in spiritual perspective that allows one to transcend the mortal world and fully behold the Uncreated Cosmic Dragon.

However, most Kralori are not wise enough to comprehend Utuma without help. Those who are well meaning and highly moral are preserved from suffering after death. They wait peacefully in a special spiritual room in the Emperor's own palace until the emperor performs his own utuma. Then the deceased denizens transit in a great golden wind to the Summer Land Heaven of the far eastern world where they remain for many years, sending blessings to their descendants who worship them. They will be reborn after a cycle of pleasure.

## The Bridge of Light and No Light (pictured at right)

By Simon Bray

The wide shallow Suam Chow Sea is in the center of Kralorela. One time it was all land, but the people betrayed their master and so the vile seas flooded in. The waters purified the space and now the seas are rich with life and provide great food for the natives.

Emperor Godunya, the current spiritual and secular ruler of Kralorela, has led in the construction of many great bridges that span the sea. The first of these immense spans was begun shortly after he took office. Since then seven have been built, despite interruptions, granting hundreds of miles of bridge to house shops, apartments, markets and even temples. Godunya never speaks of his plans for these, but many have discerned that it is a long-range project to raise the sea again and restore the ancient land. Many believe this will occur when Godunya ascends to full draconic liberation in the near future.



marines use hsunchen magics to turn into orcas to fight against the merfolk. Most damning of all, they cite the ineffectiveness of the dragons of war in combating Sheng Seleris and ShangHsa.

Godunya has declared the teachings of Heseroon Marn the Faithful Dragon to be the official combat discipline of Kralorela. Heseroon Marn denounced ShangHsa's teachings and taught a new method that maintained fidelity to the true emperor. He fought against the Immanent Masters with the war cry *Always Faithful* for over a century before being executed. But Godunya resurrected him to teach the faithful dragon to others.

## ❖ Kralori Culture ❖

Kralori people are found, naturally enough, in Kralorela and nearby lands, but rarely elsewhere. They consider outsiders to be inferior and dangerous, and tend to remain close to their homelands. The culture is founded upon draconic mysticism at its deepest level and encompasses all which is practical and less ethereal with benevolent and paternalistic oversight. It encourages social participation at the expense of personal individualism. It recognizes itself as the center of a cosmic hierarchy, and that outsiders are inferior and dangerous. It values refinement over quantity, manners over power and subtlety over brutality.

What is our history?

In the beginning was the land of splendor. It was a land of happiness in which people walked on pavements of gold and lived off a sublime radiance from the skies and thought these to be no great matter. The devils hated us then and tried to destroy our paradise.

*Continued on next page . . .*

Heseroon Marn did not endorse any one style as superior but said, "Let a hundred schools contend with each other." He gathered together many disciplines including the Sun Boxers, who could strike blows at a distance, the Drunken Sots and even the Dragon Dreamers who made their own dreams become dragons. His school knew so many ways of killing that the Immanent Masters ruefully called his followers the "army of every death."

Heseroon Marn provided unity to his school by teaching the dragon style. He would not teach this to anyone until they had proved that they could become dragons through four other styles. Then he showed them the secrets of the dragon style that took the secrets of whatever styles they had mastered and forged them into a fifth invincible style. Because they had become dragons in five different ways, the masters of this school were also called Five Dragon Warriors. Only twenty masters are allowed to exist and all guard the emperor.

Students of the dragon style patiently wait for a chance to prove themselves by working for the exarchs or in the army. A famous example was Imolo Wen, the founder of the Terrible Swift Sword discipline. While waiting for a vacancy, he enlisted in the army, rose to the rank of general and conquered Boshan before he became abbot of the school.

To cause the Kralori woe and suffering, Sheng Seleris loosed devils into the land. Despite his death, these devils have not yet been banished. The most common devils are the Moon People that pollute Shiyang province. The Red Gardener of Kuchawn is their leader and claims to have been Emperor of All Under the Moon until Sheng Seleris enslaved him and brought him here. Impostors now squat upon his throne. When asked if he ever wants to go back, he shakes his head while gazing mournfully at the moon and blinking back the tears.

We survived through our Dragon Emperors. Daruda brought back the dragon magics that had been forgotten since Metsyla's time. Thalurzni balanced the elements by expelling the Gang of Four to Ignorance. Mikaday made laws and ordinances to show us how to live righteously. Vayobi made the dragons of war to drive away our enemies. Vashanti created the web of righteous knowledge to unite our civilization under one government. So great and enlightened were our emperors that when Yanoor came to rule us his radiance was so great that even the foreign devils could finally see the light so brightly that they thought they had lived in darkness before then [0 ST].

Yanoor was a wise emperor. When he meditated upon the Dragon's Eye, the sun stopped in the sky waiting to hear his decipherment [375 ST]. He created the Circle of Learning [550 ST] that allowed us to win victory at the Warring Ford [560 ST]. Yanoor would still be with us today but for the actions of one man, ShangHsa may-his-name-be-cursed!

ShangHsa may-his-name-be-cursed conspired with foreign devils and taught them the secrets of Immanent Mastery. Yanoor was forced to flee prematurely to escape his snares [768 ST]. Many distraught peasants committed suicide the next day hoping to join him. You can still hear them wailing at nighttime for they are the tortured dead. Our mandarins were not so foolish and fled to vile Chen Durel, land of the cursed Ignorants. There they expelled the inhuman rulers and set up the Kingdom of New Wisdom to preserve the last secrets of the Dragon Emperors from the Immanent Masters

The Immanent Masters appointed ShangHsa as the False Emperor [770 ST] and persuaded him to do many evil things. He burned the books to stop people quoting the wisdom of the sages to criticize his new learning. Heseroon Marn raised the Army of Every Death to oppose ShangHsa [945 ST] but though he fought for a generation he did not succeed.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Chern Durel

Chern Durel, literally "Bliss in Ignorance," is a bitter and wasted land of rolling hills and twisted woods. Ruins of inhuman civilizations dot the land, apparently forgotten until some secret cult meets and peoples it with adulating hordes, mobs of sacrifices and flocks of lost and hungry dead. Recently Can Shu has united the land under his leadership and prepares for war against his former colleagues. The people of Chen Durel are proverbial among the Kralori for their stupidity. They shun literacy, numeracy, abstract thought, money and hygiene. They are ruled by their emotions to such a degree that they know nothing about the value of treating people nicely. Their technology is crude, poorly made and utterly archaic—they refuse to use the plow, the mill or even metal tools. Most Ignorants wear untanned furs or skins. They grow maize and many will not touch rice or other superior crops from Kralorela.

But the ancient power of Great Daruda prevailed. A great man was in hiding and, with his dragon powers, sought to reassert the ancient ways. ShangHsa's misrule caused the dragons began to rise against him. The Blue Dragon of the Deep flooded the Suam Chow and sank every ship that sailed beyond [960 ST]. The land was devastated in the Earth Dragon's Awakening Shudder [1051 ST]. The Storm Dragon ravaged half the cities with a typhoon from the east and the Fire Dragon moved and razed the crops and trees in the north. The conflict culminated when all dragonkind returned to Kralorela. ShangHsa summoned his forces, and all GloranthaGlorantha watched as dragons woke through all the worlds and converged for war. All that was draconic but false was destroyed and the Mandarins returned from Exile to restore the land to Splendor. This is called the War in Heaven [1120 ST].

When the burnt lands grew back overnight, and the Suam Chow withdrew, and the knocked down houses grew into gardens, and the broken earth revealed great treasures, then the Exarchs suspected the True Emperor was alive. They spoke to the souls of the dead, who said they had no worries for they saw their emperor who would take them to the Summer Land. The Exarchs sent out searchers everywhere until Godunya was at last found, sitting amid the ruins of dead giants. They brought him home, and he was honored to become the Emperor of Kralorela [1124 ST]. Godunya then returned the pace and blessings of the dragons to Kralorela. He built his great bridges to start to raise the provinces that had been destroyed by ShangHsa's misrule.

All would have been well save for Sheng Seleris. At first he was a horse rider from Pent. In his ignorance he tried to conquer our civilization but Godunya humbled him so that he meekly became a slave [1250 ST]. After a few years as a common slave Sheng Seleris joined the Saka Morn sect so he might learn from his error and become liberated. Everyone was astonished that a foreigner seemed to be a natural at integrating the secrets of the cosmos. After a hundred years of meditation Sheng Seleris was offered the final temptation: the bliss of eternal Liberation or the horrible burden of the World. To the surprise of everyone he chose the World [1352 ST].

Sheng Seleris tried again to conquer Kralorela but Godunya defeated him in the Right to Rule Contest [1363 ST]. So he then conquered the outside world of foreign devils and beast peoples and brought them back to war against us. He was so powerful that he finally overcame the selected might of the Dragon Empire in the Battle of All Widows After a Week [1442 ST]. Sheng Seleris even tried to seize the Emperor so that Godunya was forced to disappear as Yanoor had done. But Godunya was prepared for this and he followed the way back into this world [1460 ST]. Sheng was finally cast down from his stellar palace and flung deep into the earth. Godunya resumed his rule as Dragon Emperor and we soon forgot the horrors that Sheng Seleris had caused.

*Continued on next page . . .*

Godunya gave permission for the Blue Dragon of the Deep to relax her ban on ships [1589 ST]. Many Foreign Devils had been waiting for this and invaded Kralorela by sea. But Godunya was prepared and ordered their fleet sunk. Now Godunya has pledged to end war [1621 ST]. No more shall we suffer the ignominy of conquest by foreign devils.

Who are the inhabitants of our glorious civilization?

The greatest among us are the sages, people seeking wisdom by meditating on the cosmic dragon. Only a few of us are sages for most of us have obligations this lifetime other than to meditate. Every few centuries we are blessed by a great sage whose presence insures enlightenment and liberation. We are especially blessed because our own dragon emperors have been great sages who have sacrificed their own liberation to help us.

Mandarins are the sages of peace. They are the pillars of our civilization and we do what they say because they are wise and we are obedient. It is fitting that we obey wise people. They do not seek to study wisdom for its own sake, but use it for our benefit.

Martial artists are the sages of conflict. They use their wisdom to confound and destroy the enemy. They are either the greatest of the Sages for making such sacrifice for us; or they are the worst, for they are trapped into this world to fight.

The patricians are the landowners and the urban elite. They are good people honored for their place in society, but they do not have wisdom and thus they are not our rulers. The days when they ruled were the days of Emperor Metsyla and look what happened to him!

Workers are good people and this lifetime work hard and with obedience to keep their place within our splendid land. Most worship our Rice Mother to grow food for the rest of us. Others are artisans or professionals who heal, teach, settle arguments or entertain for a living.

*Continued on next page . . .*

They are utterly unaware of the role of intercourse in procreation. The Ignorants mate with anything to satisfy their base urges, even farmyard animals or trollkin slaves. They do not recognize kinship and are incredibly inbred. The strongest, whether male or female, rules the family which includes their sexual partners and whatever children they rear. The elderly and grown children are kicked out of home to fend for themselves. The Ignorants are usually ruled by Kralori mandarins who have been exiled for some malfeasance or another. Foreigners have often received fiefs, including recently a few Pentans and Lunars of late.

Soldiers fight against the enemies within and without our empire. Courageously, they volunteer to contact the outside worlds and so are infected by the vices of their enemies. Thus normal people should avoid all contact with them whenever possible. Their existence is necessary for some foes are too base to be confronted by our martial arts sages.

Delinquents are idlers, ruffians and layabouts. They are drawn to the cities like flies to a corpse. Their craft work is shoddy and inferior to a country artisan's goods. Many fall into vices and study with the Immanent Masters or the Sekeveran Tongs.

Hankalo were once our relatives but refused the draconic way and got lost. They are all the people that live between us and the rising sun.

Hsunchen and Nichung are the Beast Peoples of the mountains and the plains. Our scholars recognize two types. The Hsunchen are the most numerous. They live up in the mountains of the ShanShan and worship many beasts and take their forms. Then beyond the mountains are the Nichung who roam the wastelands. Some ride wild animals, while others ride horses. All beast people copulate with their animals to gain their unwholesome magics.

Chestelo are the devils, which includes all the peoples that live between us and the setting sun. They are the worst type of foreigners for they have given themselves to vice so completely that they cannot recognize virtue. There are many nations and tribes of western devils, such as the Storm People, the Dozaki, the Moon People and the Sorcerers. All are equally despicable and worthy of their destined self-destruction.

How should I lead my life?

Above all everything else in the world you should seek to be wise. Wisdom is not the bookish learning but awareness of the cosmic dragon that is obtained through proper studies. The truly wise are with the cosmic dragon. If you cannot be wise, then you should attempt enlightenment. This gift from the sky gods allows you to avoid the four vices. Be warned that enlightenment teaches only a small portion of the cosmic dragon and does not allow you to be wise, to be close to other people or to search your inner feelings for their truths. Through these flaws the devils can destroy you if you do not heed the sages.

You should refrain from the vices of materialism, ignorance, sensation and illusion. If you succumb to vice then evil ends await you. You must respect your parents and not bring them shame. They have lived a happy life and have brought you up to do the same. If you shun their life in favor of a life that offers more money or glory, you shame them by implying their own lives are worthless. Seeking wisdom, either as a student to sit the examinations or as a disciple to a sage, is not shameful but a source of happiness to your parents.

Chern Durel was initially settled only by Uz and monsters. After the Immanent Masters took over Kralorela many exarchs and mandarins fled to Chern Durel. The exiles expelled the Uz rulers and tried to educate the Ignorants in the draconic path and make a new Kralorela. Although they failed miserably, they did manage to preserve the last draconic secrets from the false dragons. The exarchs are gone, returned to Kralorela when Godunya became emperor. The mandarins they left behind did their best to maintain the draconic institutions but their lack of draconic wisdom resulted in a land of feuding petty-states.

Most of the laws imposed on the Ignorants were intended to reform them, but now act as punitive taxation. As an example: under the Uz the Ignorants served their own dead to their rulers to eat. The mandarins tried to ban this practice by levying a heavy fine if the dead were not cremated. Now the mandarins simply send tax collectors to show up at the funeral, take the fine, and leave the last meal to be devoured by pigs, vultures or trollkin.

Can Shu has raised a vast army for his upcoming war. Most soldiers are Ignorants armed with sticks and stones, but contingents of Pentans and even exiled Lunars are quite numerous. Can Shu has even been recruiting warriors from the Uz of Koromandol.



ZereL Fan is the primary god of Ignorance. His worshippers claim that he changes his shape according to his moods; he can storm, rain blood, or even turn black. Once his moods raged across the whole world but Emperor Shavaya learned to pacify ZereL Fan by summoning the Solar Storm, the most powerful mood, and enlightening it. The Blood Sun required annual rains of blood for bountiful growth. Now still consecrate the fields with human blood before the corn can sprout on the barren rocky soil. The uz favored the Black Sun and made tremendous sacrifices to it so they could go out in the day and not be afraid. The Black Sun is still popular, for the uz imbued it with their secrets such that it rivals the quiescent Solar Storm. The Ignorants say that there are three other faces of the sun, but they have not been seen in millennia and the Ignorants cannot remember their nature.

Other gods are worshipped. The emperors expelled many gods to Chern Durel, where they are avidly embraced by Ignorants, a sure sign of their perfidy. The first gods expelled were the Gang of Four: the Shadow Cancer, the Secret Waters, the Earth Eater and the Star Permutator.

## Hsunchen Mountain People

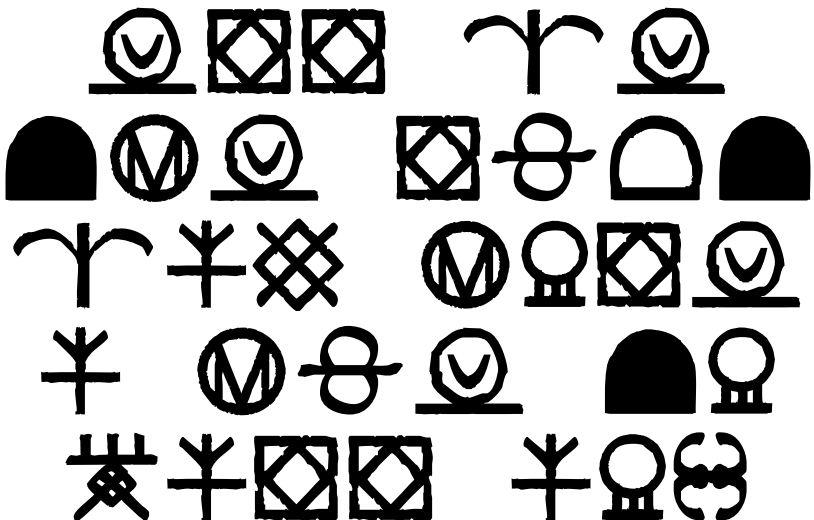
The ShanChen mountain tribes who inhabit the Shan Shan mountains have never been fully conquered by the Kralori. They continue to follow their ancient ways that allow them to become beasts. They are called hsunchen. Dominant tribes of hsunchen beast people are the Bat, Deer, Yak, Eagle, and Tiger. Rarer tribes, such as the Cloud Leopard tribe that lives in the clouds and preys upon Wind Children, are seen from time to time.



The BAT PEOPLE of the Fethlon jungle are divided into two tribes. The Day Tribe lives by day and worships the Fruit Bat. They are the sworn enemies of the Night Tribe which hunts by night and drinks blood. Clans of each type are scattered through the mountains and foothills. The DEER PEOPLE are found in the ShanShan foothills and are famous as skilled hunters. The YAK PEOPLE raise herds of their ponderous beasts in the ShanShan highlands. The EAGLE PEOPLE live in mountain aeries and use their kinship with eagles to find prey from a great distance. The TIGER PEOPLE are everywhere and move through all tribal lands.

▽ Hsunchen are traditionally hunter-gatherers living in small villages. The size of these villages depends upon the tribal beast; the Tigers being the smallest while the Deer are the largest. Because of Kralori expansion, many hsunchen villages have been forced to take up pastoralism. The Yak People have the most extensive herds while others are forced to herd pigs, sheep and hens. This is considered deeply shameful by many tribes. The tribes fondly remember the times, less than two centuries ago, when Sheng Seleris depopulated several Kralori provinces.

∞ The hsunchen claim their ultimate ancestor was Korgatsu, whom they call the World Dragon. Some have attained close communion with their World Dragon through rigorous austerity. They are known as the Horned Halfbeasts, for when fully empowered the people grow large arching horns which nearly touch above their heads. They are so magically powerful that they can resist the greatest Kralori warriors and sages. They are the protectors of the Hsunchen against the Kralori.



## CHAPTER SIXTEEN


**Verenela**


Verenela includes all lands south of Kralorela. Its regions include the Kingdom of Teshnos; the island nation of Melib; the Sofali Islands, including Trojang; Fethlon, a jungle inhabited only by elves; and Fanzai, a large island in the west.

### Teshnos, Holy Land of Fire

Teshnos is a flat forested savanna irrigated by several large rivers and dotted by countless villages, modest temple-cities and magnificent palaces. Jungle gets thicker going eastward, and the land gets more hilly going north. Few outsiders would disagree with the Praxian adage, *Teshnans are pretty women, weak warriors, and powerful magicians.*

Teshnan civilization is based on a hierarchy of spiritual age and purity. When a Teshnan dies a young child is identified as the new incarnation and inherits all possessions, debts, obligations, marriage partners, and criminal guilt. An exalted few remember their previous incarnations, while the rest only know of their accomplishments through the flame-poem, magical inscriptions in the flickers of their life flame. Since Teshnans can change sex between incarnations, they judge a person by the life-flame and not by external appearances.

Four ranks of spiritual age are recognized, based on the mastery of Chal's three teachings. Most people progress only through generations of patience. Teshnans studying the first teaching are trying to find themselves. They are rice or barley farmers or herdsman. Their life is one of common drudgery and they are spiritually unfit to handle wealth. They give their surpluses to the priests. Students of Chal's second teaching are the red-robed priests found in the countless temples throughout Teshnos. They perform numerous sacrifices to find themselves in their god. The nobility of Teshnos studies the third teaching. Most live in opulent luxury and the greatest among them live in sprawling palaces containing harems, menageries, jewels, and hundreds of servants and bodyguards. Those mastering all Chal's teachings are zitr, or sages, and they have seen the celestial flame. There are less than a dozen zitr in all Teshnos.

Some people in Teshnos do not study Chal's teachings at all and are collectively called the unflamed. The GOONDAS are strong, dark, naked tree-dwellers with shaggy orange hair. They are notorious for being mischievous troublemakers, drunken hooligans and thieves. Goonda chain-gangs sweeping the streets are a fixture in every town.

The BABADI are beardless, dark-skinned dwarves. The God Learners believed they were fashioned from different clay than the Mostali of the west. The Babadi are the source of the Teshnan prayer wheels and the Sacred Mirrors in the Temples of Somash. For a small fortune they supply other curios, such



## The Serpent and Elephant

By Heather Bruton

Each year in an icy pass in the ShanShan Mountains a combat occurs between a great champion war elephant from Teshnos in the south and a battle serpent from the mountain people of the north. This fight has been going on since before Time began. The results grant a year of good luck to the winners and bad luck to the losers.

as levitating daggers that can hunt their targets from afar. Unlike Mostali elsewhere, they will not handle iron or diamond and they know nothing of explosive devices.

The FETHLONI are yellow elves from the Fethlon jungle. They once were very friendly with the Teshnans, but their friendship has been very strained ever since the Seleran Empire exterminated the jungle priesthood.

THOSKALI hunters inhabit the same stretches of jungle as the Fethloni. They make a comfortable living by performing unclean tasks for the Teshnans, such as tanning, in exchange for beer and other foodstuffs that cannot be found in the wild.

The King of Teshnos is Pubnashap, the Vessel of Light and scion of the Chalite Dynasty. Upon the death of his predecessor through choking upon a toe, Pubnashap was identified among the orphans, in the manner of King Bulthshasam, first of the Chalite Dynasty. He is the avatar of Zitro Argon. His predecessor was an avatar of Solf and his successor will incarnate whomever the Wheel of Governance deems auspicious, although an incarnation of Furalor is overdue. The King is so esteemed that special zitrs, collectively known as the Wheel of Governance, divine his will to avoid disturbing him. Currently Garusharp and the other great priests of Teshnos are members of the Wheel. The Wheel's prime concern is that the gods receive their ordained sacrifices. Garusharp communicates the Wheel's decisions to the temples of Somash through the sacred mirrors. The Temples of Somash are the closest that Teshnos has to a government. The duties of Somash priests include seeing that all other temples perform their obligations.

Defending the Vessel of Light and his land is the responsibility of a special order of Somash priests, the Ovansaru. These physically imposing warriors are clad in black and gold armor and primed with fiery combat magics. Their armament is even more impressive when you consider that outsiders cannot wear anything heavier than leather in Teshnos' humid climate. Their fortress is in the temple of Somash the Victorious at Thokistan.

The Ovansaru are really little better than armed police. Teshnos has no real need of an army; when Praxians, hsunchen or amazons raid, the Ovansaru man the walls of the cities until the Priests can summon fire from the sky or the invaders are bought off. The last time the Ovansaru fought was during the sack of Gio. Despite the near passivity of their victims, the Ovansaru only killed one in every three. The remainder was spared out of individual acts of kindness.

The best defense Teshnos has against invaders is the jungle. Virtually no part of Teshnos is further than a half a mile away from unbroken jungle. Chal showed the Teshnans how to please the spirits of the jungle with their sacrifices. In return, the Teshnans are rewarded with a satisfying lethargy that exudes from the jungle. The presence of hostile intruders fills the jungle spirits with fear and they respond with all sorts of malign sendings ranging from fever or the runs to the dreaded Eat Alive, that devours all flesh from the extremities inwards.

The SOFALI ISLANDS include most of the islands sought and east of Teshnos. They are mostly thick jungle with only elves on their interior. On the islands small village of Sofali can be found. They are Turtle People who fish the waters and generally live lives of idyllic peace. They can turn themselves into sea turtles and have no need of boats. However, they are also hunted by the ferocious amazons who kill them to make turtle soup and tortoiseshell combs.

TROWJANG is the largest of the Sofali Islands, and unlike the others is inhabited by the Marazi, a fearsome tribe of amazons. In the Imperial Age Trowjang was noted as a civilized land of women living under the benign rule of red-skinned demigods. Between the Closing and the Opening the demigods disappeared. Only the amazons know what happened and they refuse to say. The fabulous cities and tombs of the Imperial Age are now overgrown by jungle and the amazons take grim vengeance on any man who dares to plunder them.

The Marazi have no men among them. In the time when women and gods walked together, they chose to marry the god Tolat because mortal men had failed them so miserably and so consistently. They were given the land of Trowjang as their home, and they have lived there ever since.

Most women live in simple huts that are abandoned as they move from hunting site to fishing site to raiding site. They hunt wild animals, gather wild plants from their jungle and raid passing ships. They are notorious as pirates. A sizable minority lives in small villages in the center of the isle and raises yams, pigs, and children. The villagers are known to the outside world primarily through the beautiful hardwood charms that they carve and trade for export.

Most of the Marazi are born on Trowjang. They have a rite of adoption that allows any women to join their clan and many amazons are of foreign origin. No free men live on the island. All men who land there must be killed, enslaved or wear the visitor's collar which both demeans and protects them.

The amazons have no rulers and need none. The disputes that consume so much of the outside world are absent from Trowjang. There are no wars about property; the simple lifestyle ensures the amazons are satisfied with what they have. There are no wars about women, for obvious reasons. Their raids are co-operative efforts and anyone who disagrees with the majority is free to leave.

The people of the east have a special fear of the amazons. Rumors of what they do to defeated opponents so terrify the soldiers and sailors that both Kralorela and Teshnos have formed special women's battalions in case they are forced to fight the amazons.



## Chal

The Three Teachings of Chal the Seer are the basis of the Teshnan cosmology. Before Sheng Seleris, many other ways to enlightenment existed besides the Chalite Teachings. Sheng destroyed them all, leaving too few zitrns to guide Teshnos. Many fear that the prophesized Time of No Zitrns, a perilous time of calamity, is drawing nigh.

Chal's first teaching is that at the heart of everything there is a flame. He showed the Teshnans how to see this and listed the five fiery forms. To understand his first teaching, one must learn the form of one's life-flame.

Chal's second teaching states that the individual life-flame is not a fire that burns in a form, but the fiery form itself. He showed how to witness this by sacrificing to the spiritual fire. Chal prescribed the methods and the duties that the sacrificing priest must perform. To fully comprehend the second teaching, one must realize the illusion of one's self.

Chal's last teaching shows how each of the fiery forms are merely one Celestial Fire. To complete the teachings of Chal, one must perceive all five fires to be One. Having accomplished this, one is enlightened and need not be reborn again. The five fiery forms are simultaneously types of fire, modes of spiritual mastery, and divine beings. Chal prescribed different rituals for each teaching.

Although there are only five forms, there are more than five types of reverence in Teshnos. Many priests specialize in a certain sacrificial rite or a certain duty, such as the Ovansarus who devote themselves to Somash's military arts. Many reverences were lost during the Seleran Empire and are only now being rediscovered.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## Tolat, Lord of Life and Death

The amazons worship Tolat, the Blood Red Planet. Their relationship with Tolat is supremely important, for it is through him that the amazons reproduce. The annual assembly at the Temple of Uxorial Ecstasy is attended by many amazons as possible. Here, and in every village where the women remained behind, the wedding vows are taken by the residents and their god, who beds down with every amazon that night.

MELIB is a pleasant isle, home to two peoples: the Gachi and the Ashurtans. The God Learners had a major base on the island but it was destroyed at the Closing. The Closing sapped the spirit of the Gachi and made them wretched serfs for the Ashurtans. The Opening revived the Gachi, causing widespread strife as they tried to throw off their masters. In the resulting confusion, Harstar of Gio seized power and made himself



ZITRO ARGON is first of the fiery forms, his devotees are meditative ascetics who do not sacrifice.



SOMASH is the Sun, the most powerful god of Teshnos. He is the patron of warriors, poets, healers and administrators. His path requires fidelity, purity, and truth.



SOLF is the polluted fire, the burner of unclean substances. He is the volcano, burnt out due to decadence. His worshippers practice sexual deviance, gluttony and abuse numerous intoxicants including alcohol, opium and psychedelic spices. Ideally, they should die through these excesses. Solf even teaches the death of the self. The death of the self must be strictly licensed for, if uncontrolled, it leads to massive depopulation as devotees transmigrate into new bodies.



CALYZ is the fire of men, the friendliest and most accessible of the forms. His sacrificial fires burn within domed kilns with a small, narrow, opening. This is appropriate for Calyz is the patron of both metalworking and cooking. His devotees are expected to have many children.



FURALOR is the destroyer. Her fire is the funeral pyre and to her goes everything that disappears from this world including souls, rotten stuff, misplaced items, forgotten thoughts, and lost causes.

supreme ruler. Harstar has ruled Melib for thirty years and has ensured peace by playing the Gachi and the Ashurtans against each other. Since the destruction of Gio, he has been consumed with thoughts of revenge. He is marshalling his forces for an invasion of Teshnos.

In the God's Age Melib was the heart of the Zaranistangi Kingdom of Sechkaul. The Zaranistangi were Artmali settlers. They were drowned when the Ashurtans, an exiled sky people, summoned a tsunami and claimed the island. Ashurtan raiding fleets menaced Teshnos, but Hisgoranstor of Gach repelled them. He invaded Melib with the aid of an army and a navy from his homeland and made the Ashurtans his slaves. But in the hour of his victory, Hisgoranstor unwisely mocked the long-dead Artmali.

Although the Zaranistangi were dead, their shades still walked the Isle. They exacted their revenge by sinking the invasion fleet at anchor, stranding the Gachi. A humbled Hisgoranstor apologized for his slights and vowed that he and his people would worship the Gods of the Artmali as their own. The appeased shades shared their lore with the Gachi. Because of this the Gachi are sometimes called the Zaranistangi.



The Ashurtans were once sky people, but their land fell to Glorantha during a War in Heaven. They can never go back, and in their grief they have vowed to destroy the whole world. Most Ashurtans are pirates and bandits, but some serve Harstar as torturers, tax collectors and slavers. The Ashurtans are found throughout the Eastern Isles but Melib contains the largest population. They form nearly one-fifth of the Melibi.

The Gachi are the major ethnic group of Melib. They live in the manner of the ancient Zaranistangi and their clothing is crude compared to their kindred Teshnans and Kralori. They grow no rice, preferring yams, and eat no flesh of birds or mammals but love to devour fish, insects and mollusks.

Roughly one tenth of the Melibi are from foreign lands, mostly Teshnan rice farmers who followed Harstar. They mainly live in and around the port of Dosakayo, on the site of the ancient the God Learner capital of Svalakswal. Dosakayo is a vital trade port for commerce between Teshnos and the lands of Kralorela, the Hinter Isles of Vormain, Teleos, the Eastern Isles and even distant Heortland, whose people actually founded the current port.

The capital of Melib is the port of Dosakayo, a sordid pit of corruption, vice and drug consumption. Harstar wields supreme power in Melib and has preserved his regime by playing on the hatred between the Ashurtans and the Gachi, just as the God Learners did. The minority Ashurtans are employed as functionaries of the realm, yet Harstar encourages the Gachi to mistreat them wherever possible. Both have equal significance at his court: little to none. Harstar prefers the advice of his companions, who are all outsiders. When fighting breaks out between the two peoples, Harstar channels the conflict towards eliminating anybody with too much power or popularity.

Harstar has been preparing for an invasion of Teshnos since the destruction of Gio, and has a sizable standing force. Most of his warriors are Gachi footmen who paint themselves blue befoXre entering battle. The Gachi have managed to summon a few magical teleporting Lopers from the other side. They promise Harstar more Lopers if he will be their king and take up Tolat's Sword. Harstar's Ashurtans troops have all kinds of evil magic at their disposal. They have told Harstar that all he need do is sacrifice every Gachi to them and he will have invincible troops prepared to follow him to the ends of the world.

Harstar has a sizable navy, mostly Ashurtans privateers. Their preferred tactic is to summon tsunamis against coastal villages and pick through the remains. Harstar's flagship is a Haragalan Tallship, crewed by hand-picked Teshnans.



Tolat is the main god of the Gachi. The holiest place in Melib is the Temple of the Sword. Dengbalu, the first Zaranistangi king founded it to hold Tolat's Sword. Though the temple has been destroyed and rebuilt

many times, Tolat's Sword is still there. Only a king who knows the right secrets can take it out of the temple. Harstar, like the God Learner kings before him, does not know these secrets and cannot wield the sword.

Other Zaranistangi deities worshipped by the Gachi are Emilla the Blue Moon, Artmal, and the adoptive ancestors of the Gachi. Outsiders disappear in Gachi lands every seventeen days and the Ashurtans allege that the Gachi sacrifice humans to the Blue Moon. The God Learners believed them, for they had seen similar practices in their wars against the Loper Warriors in Slontos. To avoid being sacrificed by the Gachi, outsiders are advised to pray to Turvenost. This Melibi King attempted to stop all sacrifices to gods and goddesses and was drowned for his pains.

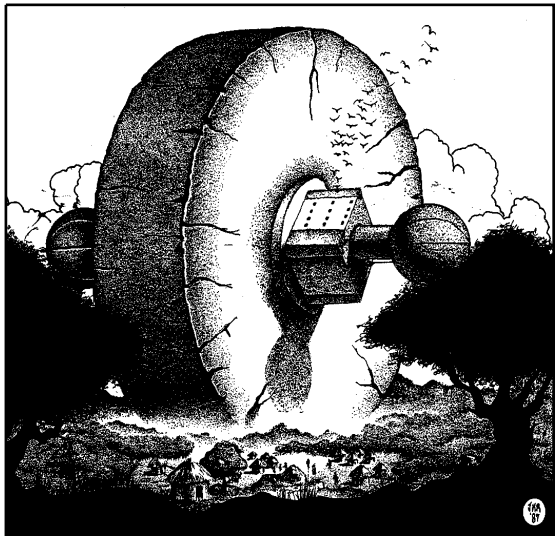
The Ashurtans have no gods. They lost all contact when they left heaven. They tried to sacrifice humans like the Gachi do, but no god answered their prayers. Without gods to guide them, they indulge in all sorts of vile sorcery, evil arts and communion with unclean spirits.

FANZAI is a large mountainous island which is dominated by a chain of mountains that runs down its center. The northern part is the Kralori province of Fanzow. The south is occupied primarily by yellow elves.

## ∞ The Juggernaut

By Kevin Ramos

The Gods Age has left many strange things in the world. The Juggernaut is a small city housed in the axle of a titanic wheel that rolls slowly across the world crushing everything in its path. It can turn, though no one knows how since no outsiders have been inside it and no one has ever convinced them to turn it for a reason. It just sometimes changes course. It rolls over land, up hills and mountains, and even deep underwater. It was once in Pamaltela, disappeared under the sea for centuries, and was perhaps sighted even traveling across the sky. Now it is in Genertela gain, spreading terror before it and leaving sorrow behind, answering to no man or god known.



# CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

## W Oceans

**W**ater surrounds the floating lozenge of Glorantha. Sramak's River, the elder ocean, swirls endlessly around the world. Branches of it whirl inward between the continents, creating oceans. In the center of the world, Magasta's Pool swallows the world's waters in a gigantic, bottomless whirlpool.

### The Cosmic Whirlpool

At the center of Genertela is a huge maelstrom into which all the waters of the world flow: Magasta's Pool. The whirlpool averages 130 miles in width. Around the whirlpool is the Benaran, or Homeward Ocean. Sailors on it can see the surface of the water tilting downwards towards Magasta's Pool as they sail its edges. Once sensing such a tilt every sailor turns upwater as fast as possible to get out of the downward flow. Ships caught in its currents are doomed to drop through the bottomless hole into the Underworld and are never seen again.

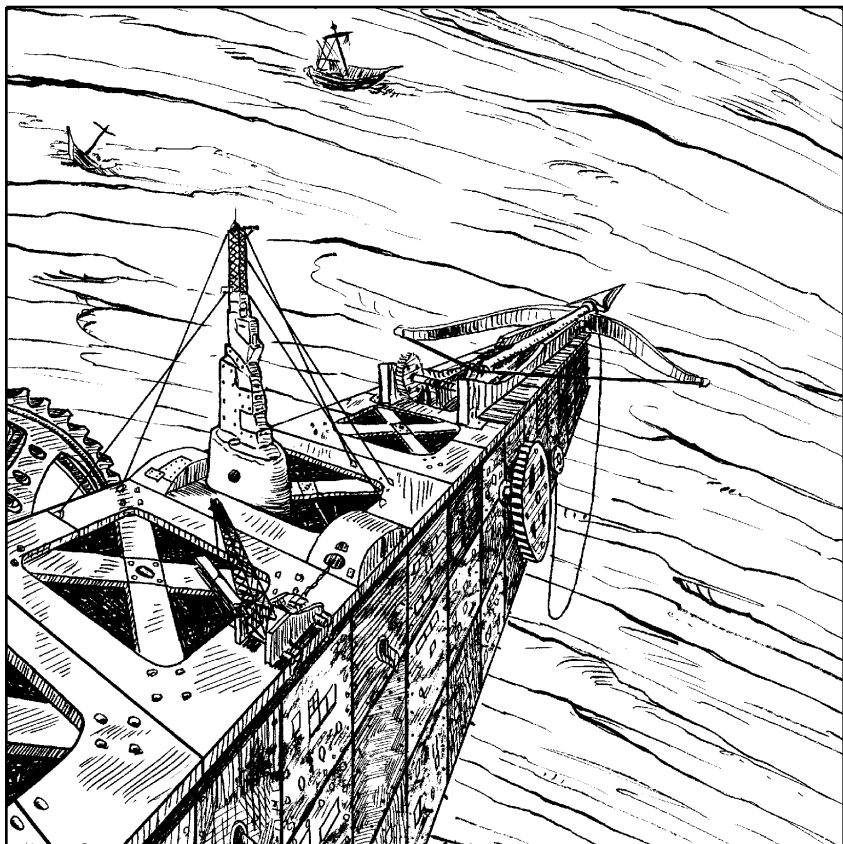
Though ships caught in Magasta's Pool are doomed, sailors can try to escape the pool by heading for Nowhere Island. It's a large dry area where nothing ever grows. It lies exactly on the boundary of Life and Death, so nothing that is there ever grows older or dies. A mournful collection of lost people are there.

The bottom of the whirlpool is in the deepest depths underneath the sea, in the underworld of waters where only tremendous spirits and awesome gods reside.

### The Oceans and Seas

Though many people use the terms interchangeably, properly the term *ocean* in Glorantha only applies to a body of water which has direct contact with Zaramaka, the Primal Water that preceded Sramak's River. This contact is attainable only at the edges of the world or through the deep rifts which break through the earth and descend all the way to the Underworld. Seas are large salt-water bodies which wash over the earth, but have no direct links to the endless deeps.

Many of the oceans and seas have great currents, called doom currents, which flow from Sramak's River towards and around Magasta's Pool in the normal counter-clockwise direction. These usually flow far beneath the surface but, at times, rise from the deep and rage, swollen and angry, across the surface of the ocean like a mountain of water or a giant serpent. Any ship caught by such a flow is swiftly destroyed or carried to Magasta's Pool, unable to escape unless very sturdy, well captained, and extremely lucky.



## The Iron City

By Jim Pavelec

A huge whirlpool roars in the middle of Glorantha. All the waters of the world go there eventually, and the maelstrom sucks them all down into the Underworld where they feed the rivers of Hell. Any ship caught in their sweep is doomed, and nothing made of mortal materials will even survive the trip downward, but be crushed and tossed to be fish food long before they reach bottom.

The whirlpool's sides are pitched vertical in its depths where the swirling water spins around and perched from that water are two dry sites. One is an island where ships have wrecked, and the crews still live upon it without food or water or entertainment, stuck upon the horizon of life and death. Opposite is a tower, red like rusty iron, of titanic proportions. One time the shipwrecked people sent a signal to the red tower by building a huge replica of themselves. In return they received a mile long crossbow bolt. They are hurriedly dismantling their replica, and the iron tower is reloading their war machine.

## Triolini

Also known as: Merfolk (Malkioni)

These are aquatic creatures, whose lower bodies are tailed but who have arms and hands, are the direct descendants of the gods. The merfolk vary in appearance and are commonly called by names which shore folk confuse with local animals. The merfolk can be divided into two types: Cetoi and Piscoi. Both descend from niiads. The Cetoi allied with the storm gods, usually through marriage. They are generally friendly to surface dwellers and sailors. They are mammalian with dolphin or seal-like hindparts. The Piscoi had niiadic ancestors who fought the storm gods and failed. They are generally quite hostile to surface dwellers. Piscoi are fishlike, with scales and fins. The Cetoi are most numerous in shallow waters as that is where their food is found. They only visit the deeper waters to entreat with the mysterious demigod Niiads that rule them, while the Piscoi tend to stay in the deeper waters far from land.

Of the Cetoi merfolk, LUDOCHS are called one of the two great merfolk, since humans see them more often than any other. Their tail skin is smooth and slick, like that of a porpoise, and their flukes project sideways. Humans cannot speak their language, but the Ludochs are skilled linguists and can quickly learn almost any spoken language simply by listening carefully. The wisest among them have learned to write the local dialects to communicate with humans. Ludochs are naturally gregarious and gather in schools which tend to be as large as local conditions allow. These schools are highly organized and engage in many complex group activities. The larger a Ludoch school is, the less likely it is to co-operate with humanity despite their friendliness. On the other hand, many individuals have shown devoted friendship to sailors and loyalty to death. The sage Ordidus attributed this to the increased presence of the Elder Gods in larger populations. The ludochs hate and fear the Malasp, who are portrayed as evil and demonic in all their myths.

*Continued on next page . . .*

## The Western Waters

Where Sramak's current comes out from under the vast Glacier of Valind, the Western, or HUDARO OCEAN separates and moves towards the land. It is a chill sea with many icebergs and carries its coldness to the Banthe and Kereneth Seas. Oouri merfolk are plentiful here.

The great current of the BANTHE SEA washes in from the Western Ocean carrying icebergs in its frigid waters. The main current passes north of Jrustela, entering the Homeward Ocean somewhere northeast of the Kumanku Isles. A secondary current runs southwards into the Kereneth Sea. The sea is full of life. Many species of whale and other large animals thrive in the krill- and oxygen-rich water. This cold sea is the source of many peculiar creatures, such as ice fish, walrus, and giant puffins.

Ludoch live in the warmer waters of the Togaro Ocean, the Marthino Sea and along the south coast of Genertela. Four large and organized kingdoms are know. Off the coast of the Holy Country is one that cooperates with local fishermen. One in the Dashomo sea is at war against a malasp kingdom. Two in the Eastern Isles are largely indolent and peaceful.

OUORI are plump merfolk, sometimes called the walrus people, although they have no tusks. They look gross and flabby but are graceful and quick in their frigid habitat. Though naturally shy they are the most friendly and easygoing of all merfolk. They normally do not trust strangers and are quick to flee, stampeding into the water when a boat nears them on the shore. But if a human can gain an Ouori's trust, it will spread to the entire herd. The trust lasts until it is broken, which only humans do. Ouori have no material needs. They wear no clothing, use no tools and build no buildings. Their primary interests are in eating, which takes up half their time, and lolling about in great heaps in the sun. Only in mating season do they become aggressive. Then the dominant males become belligerent and territorial towards other Ouori males. After the month-long rut, everyone becomes one big happy herd again. They have the simplest social system. No one commands respect except that which they accumulate through age, experience and expressed wisdom. The herd acts as a whole, but only after long debates.

*Continued on next page . . .*

West from Seshnela and Fronela is the NELIOMI SEA. Icebergs occasionally float southward. The Neliomi Sea contains the fog-shrouded SEA OF BRITHOS that hides the graveyard of the island of Brithos, or perhaps the island itself. No one has managed to penetrate the fog and return with information regarding the island.

Between the Banthe and Neliomi Seas are the RED ISLANDS. These volcanic isles rose between the Closing and the Opening. Rationalists say that these volcanoes cause the huge fogs that plague the area. A red-skinned race of men inhabits the isles, their origin unknown. Periodically, they sail forth in a bloody orgy of looting and rapine. They are driven by some crazed inhuman fury. Many sages have seen a pattern between the outbursts of the Red Islanders and the phases of the Red Moon, although others are contemptuous of this theory. One or two sages claim they are the feared Red Vadel, but the Brown Vadel profess no knowledge of them.

The KERENETH SEA is sometimes called the Brown Sea for its turbid and shallow waters, hardly more than half a mile at its deepest. It derives from the Western Ocean and its waters are very cold. Humans rarely sail these waters, but tales tell of vast Sargasso seas, populated by unusually monstrous creatures.

The SWERMELA SEA lies between two great marshes and is full of gigantic leeches. They attach themselves to whales, krakens, and passing ships. Though these monsters are found all over the world they concentrate in this place, perhaps to breed, leading to its other name: the Sea of Worms. Other than the leeches life here is dominated by their food: great swimming reptiles, dinosaurs, and the Dwerulan merfolk.

JRUSTELA was once a large continent, the home of the God Learners. The God Learners' investigations into the Forbidden led to their complete extermination, and the Jrustela itself was shattered into many pieces at the end of the Imperial Age. The archipelago became a refuge for Elder Races seeking a haven free from humanity. They made peace with each other and thrived in the security of the Closing. Vadeli sailors brought the Opening to Jrustela. They founded settlements and set up the Orange Guilds to control commerce between Jrustela and the outside world. Many people now populate the little cotes in the islands, but all are in the League. Their control over the area allows merchants and pirates from Ygg's Isles, Pasos, and Afadjann to trade peacefully in Jrusteli ports.

Of curious interest in Jrustela are the many races of insect-like creatures called Timinits. None are truly intelligent, though the Arachans are extremely clever.

MALASPS are one of the two great kindred of merfolk. They are generally hostile to surface dwellers and they plot both subtle deceptions and overt aggression against coastal nations. Unlike most Piscoi, Malasps have never been known to deal peaceably with humans. They are violent and predatory, hateful of all things which breathe air – perhaps hating themselves the most of all. Malasps believe that might makes right. The leader is always the strongest and toughest in their schools. Their fierceness is found in both males and females and even their young show a combative nature.

Malasp are plentiful in the Brown and Dashomo Sea and feud with the Ludoch over the Marthino Sea. Originally they had no social groups larger than clans, but they were forged into a kingdom by the Gods of the Deep to destroy Jrustela at the end of the Imperial Age. They have retained their enforced unity and are now led by Terthinus, Voice of the Deep. Most Malasp follow him and they control the Dashomo. One of his means of rule is to provide weapons and tools to the previously primitive Malasp.

YSABBAU are an uncommon type of merfolk. They are hideous; large, spined and scaly. They hate humans more than any other type of merfolk and seek to destroy all ships and sailors. People are lucky they do not often collect into large groups. When there are not enough Ysabbaus to attack a ship, they cut fishing nets, plant barnacles and ship worms on the hull and break up the rudder or keel. They can raise huge waves, command sea spouts and send monsters. Seamen of Glorantha curse the Ysabbaus for an astonishing variety of calamities.

GYNDRONS are deep sea mermen. They are huge scaly beings with large tails and several fins. The Gyndrons are the only merfolk that still breathe water. They suffocate in air and cannot endure fresh water for long. The deepest depths are their natural home and humans rarely see them. All merfolk are in awe of them, for their ancestress actually defeated and plundered the storm god that attacked her.

The ZABDAMAR are different from other merfolk. Zabdamar females look like beautiful women from the waist upwards with glitteringly scaled tails. Their males appear to humans like toothless walruses except more ugly.

## Zabdamar

By Heather Bruton

Several distinct races of merfolk inhabit the oceans. In Kahar's Sea live the Zabdamar, perhaps the most strange of them all. The males are ugly bestial creatures while the females appear, to the distress of many sailors, like beautiful human women. Their grandfather is Kahar, a storm god whose wooing of their grandmother, Harantara the Dragon of the Deep, was a cause for the downfall of the old world. The zabdamar can swim in the fog that hovers over their home ocean as if it was water, and sight of these creatures frolicking overhead and beside a ship has driven many sailors mad.



Humans have tried several times to use some breeds of Timinitis for domestic labor, especially the large beetle-like Lucans to clear forests, and species were exported to Pamaltela. Controlling the Timinitis was found to be impossible every time. Only the Blue Vadeli succeeded, but that secret is lost since they are an extinct people.

SLON is called the Dwarf Land and contains the largest population of Mostali in Glorantha. They live underground of course, but rule over many human cities on the surface that are populated by slave descendants of Malkioni captured in the Storm Age. These humans ape their masters and pretend to be Mostali. Slon insulates itself from the southern lands by the Wall, a colossal edifice the height of a tall hill. The interior of the Wall contains stairways, barracks and mounted ballistas with a view out of a firing embrasure. It was built to keep out the Giants and their fierce megasaur steeds, but it also prevents the human slaves from escaping into the wild. Inside the Wall the soil has been degraded by so many Mostali abuses that it is cracked hardpan and totally unfit for agriculture. The humans are dependent on tasteless Mostali nutritional sludge for subsistence. Beyond the Wall is a cool foggy jungle of enormous dark trees where the dinosaurs roam. Many tribes of primitive Jaskali peoples worship these dinosaurs as gods.



The VADELI ISLANDS are the last fragments of the terrible Vadeli Empire that once dominated the world. The Vadeli are universally condemned for their odious habits; they procreate through incest and eat their own children to achieve immortality. They are evil descendants who deliberately defy the laws of Malkion.

The Vadeli were divided into three *skins*, or tribes. Each skin possessed magical strengths and weaknesses. When the Vadeli all worked together, the strengths complemented each other and the weaknesses canceled out, making the Vadeli all-powerful and invulnerable. The Browns, or Commoners, were the first and largest tribe. The other tribes were the Reds, or Warriors, and the Blues, always the smallest of the three tribes.

In prehistory the Vadeli attempted to take over the whole world and very nearly succeeded before they destroyed the entire continent of Danmalastan, leaving only Brithos where Zzabur himself resided. The Reds and the Blues were all drowned in the massive cataclysm. A few dozen Browns survived and found refuge on the Old Vadeli Isles. Their rickety boats are now found nearly everywhere in the world.

The frigid KENIRYAN SEA north of Peloria is reportedly connected to the outer seas by a subglacial waterway over 650 miles long. No mermen live here. It is also known as the White Sea, from the number of icebergs calved from Valind's Glacier.

## The Eastern Waters

The SSHORG SEA is the main body. Deep underneath live the gods Endaralath and Ermanthver who wage relentless war against the land. It is the source of several doom currents. Five drowned empires decorate its sea floor.

The DINISSO SEA lies north of eastern Pamaltela. It is the center of the seas ruled by Estingitorox, a powerful ludoch merman. The Marthino and Maslo Seas are branches of this sea. Dinisso is the mother of a terrible creature called the Mother of Monsters.

The DASHOMO SEA is placid, full of fish and other sea life. The Hroarilli tribe of Malasp merfolk, led by the frightening demigod Terthinus, Voice of the Deep, live here. They have taken control of the local shipping, demanding toll from all who pass by and tribute from the ports. The City of Flaurine in Umathela scoffed at their demands and was devastated. Now the Orange Guilds, the Umathelans and even Fonritan dhows pay tribute whenever they cross the Dashomo.

Also called the Sea of Fog, the KAHAR SEA is blanketed by fogs both natural and magical. Life is thin in the depths of this sea; the lack of light suppresses the plant life on which all else depends. This ocean is the home of the Zabdamar merfolk and they alone know the special secrets of the fog, for Kahar was their ancestor.

Also called the Ocean of Terror, the TOGARO OCEAN was the first great body of water to invade the land. This ocean is extremely warm, washing in from

## Magasta, King of the Sea Gods

All sea creatures, great or small, owe their lives and deaths to Magasta the Churner. He is the moving force of life in the waters and made the great whirlpool in the center of the world to destroy the stagnation. His vast family personifies the tremendous primal forces of the sea, but Magasta directs them.

During the Storm Age Magasta and his minions ruled much of the world. His rule is widely remembered in human lore as the Flood. Since that time humans and their gods have beaten back the seas but Magasta is always ready to pour into his old domains whenever they relax their watch. His last such conquests occurred at the end of the Imperial Age, when he flooded Jrustela, Seshnela, Slontos, and perhaps Brithos. Many fear that the sea is nearly ready to drown the rest of dry land again. They are correct.

The Ocean ebbs and flows with moving currents. Humans know only physical flows while the Merfolk sip from hidden spiritual currents to work magic. Magasta knows the name of every one of these secret flows, for they end in his pool, and he makes their names and locations known to his worshippers. The merfolk know that there is nothing for them after death. When they die, their minds, bodies and spirits are dissolved by Magasta's Pool before it reaches the unknowable primal waters. From that secret place, their essences will one day reappear in the mortal world. Most merfolk struggle against this grim reality but the pull of Magasta's Pool has always been stronger.

Of the many spiritual flows in the Ocean most are simply mindless torrents that anybody can use. A fearsome few are not and demand divine honors and sacrifices from those that seek to drink from them.



**PHARGON** is The father of Tritons and, by extension, ancestor of the merfolk. He lives in the deeps, mutable and ever-flowing.

*Continued on next page . . .*

Sramak's Ocean where it exits from the Burning Seas. Sometimes the currents carry in patches of boiling water. In the Togaran depths, life is active and plentiful. At the top of the food chain is a type of armored carnivorous fish. Along the coast of the Eastern Isles and Tortugax are two powerful, organized kingdoms of Ludoch mermen. The interior of the Togaro is the spawning ground of the hideous Ysabbau merfolk.

TELEOS is a large, lightly populated tropical island that lies between Magasta's Pool and the Sshorg Sea. Its interior is rough, mountainous jungle. Most of its population lives on the coast, trading with their inland kin. Six primitive human tribes, each with a different skin color, inhabit different regions. The colors are blue, green, orange, purple, red, and yellow. All have black hair and blue eyes. Except for their skin color, to outsiders the six tribes exhibit the same culture; all speak the same language, wear the same types of clothing, hold



**BRASTALOS** is Magasta's concubine, a storm goddess captured by him during the Gods War. Her wind is the doldrums, the calm at the storms center, and sailors curse her appearance for she plots to send them to the watery grave.



**DALIATH** is the keeper of deep wisdom, a magical well of knowledge hidden at the bottom of the Ocean. Those that seek to drink it must pass his son, Nelat, to be purified of all corruption. [I hope his rune looks like a trilobite]



**DROSPOLY** is the cold and selfless end of all being. It resides at the bottom of the ocean where the water is freezing cold, and devours everything that falls into its maw.



**LORION** is the sea that conquered the heavens in the Gods War. The sky looks blue in the day because of his conquest.



**MANTHI** and **NATEA** are king and queen of the seas, ruling the waves for their abysmal master, Magasta.



**TRIOLINA** is the mother of life and everything alive in the ocean can claim her as an ancestress. For this reason, she is one of the greatest sea deities.

The ocean created dry land to provide it with food. But the **DRY GODS** revolted against their fate and brought about the Gods War. Even now, they refuse to worship the ocean as they were made to do.

identical religious and social festivals, and maintain a single world view and morality. However, each of the six tribes perceives despicable traits in the others and speaks disparagingly of them in the worst manner. To make matters worse, each tribe says completely different things about why the other tribes are so repulsive. Despite their complaints, they have no history of inter-tribal warfare.

The Teleosans only marry within their skin color, but their children can be any of the six colors. They find this repugnant, and hold the Child Trade Meeting every spring. All the parents with children of the wrong skin color travel to the exact center of Teleos and, under the supervision of native dragonewts, trade children until each is matched with parents of the right color. Inequities do result. Often one color of child is predominant in a given year, leading to some families giving away children and not receiving one in return, and others leaving with two or three children when they only brought one.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN



**V**ITHELA, called the Eastern Isles, was once a massive continent that reached from Kralorela to the Tortugax archipelago. But five cosmic wars tore Vithela into many pieces. Vithalash is the largest piece of the old continent, home of the High God Vith. It is said to be a veritable paradise upon earth. Sadly, it is reachable only through the Door to Vithela, and the demon Oorsu Sara killed everyone who knew its location. The other remnants of the Vithelan continent are the 100,000 islands that surround Vithalash. The following descriptions are of islands that are well known to the outside world, but the East Islanders themselves speak of even more spectacular isles further to the east, such as Memb and Fornq.

The Islanders know of the mystical path, and the God Learners claimed that the Mystical Liberation was first taught in Vithela. The Greatest Mystic of the East Isles is Mashunasan, whose learned powers saved the Cosmos from utter degradation at the hands of the demon Avanapdur. In their wars against the demonic Andins, who still dominate some of the islands, the East Islanders developed the first martial arts. Through their discipline, they can strike killing blows with their bare hands and other unusual feats.

The HANFARADOR ISLANDS are a confederation united by their eternal wars against the demonic Andins of the Arandinni Isles. The Hanfaradorans worship Vith and Laraloori, prefer cinnamon and hot peppers to all other spices, and have annual hat fashions determined by their queen. They loathe and hate the residents of the nearby Arandinni Islands.

Although there are many islands populated by Andins in the Eastern Isles, the ARANDINNI ISLANDS stand out because they are united through their common hatred of the Hanfaradorans. They worship Vith and Gebkeran and their king is Dech Oru, the Gouger of Flesh. Humanoid, the Andins are much larger than humans and have scaled skin and horns. Slow of wit and speed, nevertheless they are not stupid. They practice monstrous sorceries, lately creating stony creatures to be their slaves and soldiers.

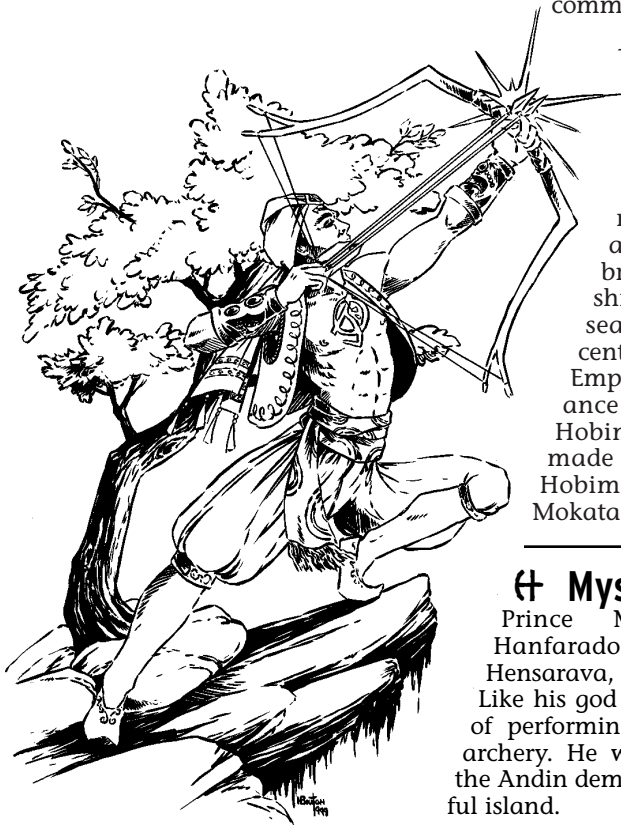
The latest round of wars between the two nations are called the Mockery Conquests. From his lair on Seldanu, Dech Oro has mustered an armada containing many exotic races and creatures never before seen. The creatures mock the Hanfaradoran's defenses.

The HARAGALAN COMMONWEALTH has been the leading naval power in the Eastern Isles since the Opening. Haragala is noted for its white sands and large port of Champaya. Now an ambitious family of warlords, led by Trader Jadilulo, seeks to make Haragala the center of the world. Haragala's naval might lies in its Tallships; swift sleek ships with tall,

masted towers. In combat these ships rely on their magic, rather than ramming or boarding. Their towers afford the crew a superior view of the ocean and they are able to direct their powerful sunscopes with terrible effect. They use triangular sails when cruising, but use oars in battle.

Jadilulo always talks of invading Vormain or Teleos, but his Tallships usually operate as pirates within the East Isles, under the guise of customs Enforcers. As pirates go, they are benevolent ones, never taking more than half a ship's cargo. Trader Jadilulo has taken responsibility for defending almost half the Eastern Isles against any foreign aggression.

The inhabitants of HOMAGO are always polite and friendly to visitors. East Islanders say this only helps conceal their duplicity, for the Homagoans are notorious cannibals who hunt their fellow islanders, and serve them up as the main course in their gluttonous rites to their god, Saliligor. The Homagoans do not deny that they are cannibals, but say they only eat their relatives as a sign of kinship. Since they are kindred to the fellow East Islanders, they have invited them to dinner but have been rebuffed. Therefore the Homagoans are forced to hunt them down in Eat Relation wars to prove to them their common kinship.



The jeweled isle of MOKATO is all that remains of a ruined city of the gods. The crystal spires of the city are now mountain peaks, and their dazzling brilliance can be seen shining from far out at sea. Mokato was the center of the Eastern Seas Empire under the guidance of its wise god Hobimarong, who never made a mistake. Hobimarong told the Mokatans make an alliance

### ☩ Mystic Archer

Prince Meran Durav of Hanfarador is a devotee of Hensarava, the Great Bowman. Like his god the prince is capable of performing incredible feats of archery. He will need these when the Andin demons attack his beautiful island.

with Tamanjary to oppose the Waertagi. Their early victories were so complete that the Waertagi Admirals claimed "their ships are constructed entirely of magic, without any physical matter". The Waertagi made an alliance with an army of VormainoVormaino émigrés and struck Tamanjary, sinking it with heavy losses. were about to move against Mokato when the God Learners challenged the Waertagi in their home waters. With Tamanjary gone, Mokato was sole master of the Entire Eastern Seas. Even Memb and Fornig paid tribute to the court of the Golden Breath in Mokato.

When the Closing struck the Eastern Isles Hobimarong spoke again, ordering the Mokatans to renounce their Empire and never leave their isle; by their sacrifice, they saved the Eastern Isles from destruction. The Mokatans remain on their island, fearing that leaving will bring back the Closing, this time to destroy the Eastern Isles. The few Mokatans emissaries who leave the island must adhere to incredibly strict taboos lest the Closing return. Mokato is still a center of finance, learning, luxury, old songs, dream magic, and the nostalgic remains of former glory.

There are numerous East Isles inhabited by Keets, a race of bird folk. They dominate several island chains, the KEETSLANDS, are a minority in several others, and migrate through most of the rest. Their original home was Keetela, destroyed by the Sshorg Sea during the Gods War. The Keets were driven to the East Isles after conflicts with the merfolk.

The vicious Ratuki race of Shark-Hsunchen infests the northern East Isles. They are the Ratuki, and their base is the Leviathan, the Island Beast. The Ratuki enslaved the Beast and steer it by commanding sharks to bite at its flippers.

VORMAIN is a legend shrouded in a myth encased in obscurity. Even as early as the Gods War, it isolated itself from the world and forbade all visits by foreigners. Its subsequent history is marked primarily by the disappearance of those who attempted to investigate it. Piratical worshippers of the barracuda-like Tsankth and the Telask-worshipping warrior-nobles of the Hinter Isles are the only Vormaino found beyond its shores.

To keep everybody away, the Vormaino carved out a large empire in the East Isles. They call conquered islands the Hinter Isles; the rest of the world is referred to as the War Islands. The commoners of the Hinter Isles are more like ordinary East Islanders than Vormaino. They give sincere service and tribute to the Vormain warriors who have ruled over them for centuries. The soldiers and governors of these isles are all exiles, forbidden to return to Vormain upon pain of death. They receive communications from Vormain by visual signals, carrier pigeons and one-way couriers. Questioning them about their home is a sure route to a quick and painful death. The descendants of the exiles talk more freely, but cannot talk about Vormain from first-hand experience. No one is really sure what native Vormaino are like except through second and third hand experiences in the outer isles.

Kralorela has sent, and lost, many expeditions to Vormain. The most spectacular was the Great Army, including many Animal Nomads with their wild beats, which drowned half mile from the Vormain shore when a hurricane sprang up from nowhere. The most regretted loss was that of Fen Watha Too, a great poet who traveled from the underworld to give all his lovers one last kiss after trying to visit Vormain. The most unusual was Kuang Brang, who flew over Vormain in his bird machine. He crashed into the ocean near his pickup ship. Before he could report anything, he died of razor wasp wounds. The best-documented visitor was Handal Faarman, a god learner surnamed the Invisible Tanisoran, who sent carrier pigeons out every dawn for twenty-six days before succumbing to some unknown fate. His accounts describe a land of large beautiful cities, colorful but solemn people and spirit guardians whose colors and functions are known, but whose names are not.

## Vithelan Religion: The Great Refusal

Vithelan religion and philosophy are pervaded with the Great Refusal. Meditation and intense fasting and other hardships provide certain mortals and immortals with mystical powers they use to sever all connection to the everyday world. The world, they say, is nothing but magic which stands between a person and that which all wise men seek. They refuse the temporary pleasures of ordinary life and live a life of asceticism to achieve that state, which they call Durapdur.

### The High Gods

The High Gods are still in contact with the Great Beyond of the ultimate, and are so ancient that only a few people remember them, though the few who do still worship them with ancient rituals have access to potent powers. They are the co-creators of the world, are manifestations of all that is permanent in the world and ancestors of all beings.



**VITH** is the Ancient Father, who ruled wisely during the High Gods Age when the world was still being made. He is the father of the most powerful races of the world. At the end of the High Gods Age Vith departed his palaces and riches and retired to live with just his two wives in the farthest east of the world.



**LARALOORI** is the Bright Mother, progenitrix of the gods, and the wife who sits at the right hand of Vith. Her home is in the sky, the stars are her thoughts. All of her children are immortal and manifest the unchangeable principles of the universe by which people live good, long and happy lives.



**GEBKERAN** is the Dark Mother, progenitrix of the Antigods. These are a wide variety of underworld and sea deities, demon races, foul human and semihuman peoples, sorcerers, underworld monsters, disincarnate spirits, ghosts and other things which exist without contact with, or knowledge of the Durapdur. She sits on Vith's left side.

### The Gods

Beneath the High Gods are the race of powerful immortals called gods and goddesses. They receive worship and are in every way like the other deities of Glorantha, except that some of them follow mystical practices.



YOTHENARA is the Vithelan Goddess of Love. She is the Mother of Life, and with multitude of forms of her husband as creatures of nature she filled the world with the profuse forms of Vithelan life. Her kidnapping was the cause of the First War. She is also the mother of Govmeranen.



HENSARAVA is called the Great Bowman and protected the heavens from many foes. He was defeated in battle by Akorgat and driven away in shame. He then studied with Darja Danag and after obtaining the bolt, he returned to the heavens and slew Akorgat and cleansed the sky world. Hensarava is visible in the night sky as the great constellation of the Bowman.



KARKAL is God of Fire and the oldest god of war, worshipped extensively throughout Vithela by humans. He is called Lord of Burning and Friend of Humans. Karkal favors human beings, whom he allowed to tame fire, leaving the other mortal races in the cold. Karkal is also one of the bravest war gods of the Vithelan gods, and has often led their armies to defeat hordes of demons and antigods. He is a son of Vith and Laraloori. Sacrifices are made to him for strength and victory in a hand to hand fight.



KABALT is the Liberating Bolt, a mystical force to which many Vithelan martial artists are devoted. It leapt into being to protect Mashunasan, the Great Mystic, and is in that way a manifestation or Durapdur, the mystical Source. Darja Danad is the teacher or human form of this mystical path, revered by those who seek the mystical, yet martial lifestyle.

### The Little Gods

Thousands of small, minor and petty deities exist in the East Isles. Every island has its own special deity to which most islanders sacrifice. Most peacefully tend to the local needs of their worshippers, some are almost impossible to contact, some are ambitious and others just simply bizarre.



LUMAVOXORAN is the patron god of Haragala. The Haragalans extend his protection of the isle to their ships by always carrying a bowl filled his magic waters.



HOBIMARONG is the God of the Jeweled Isle of Mokato and has never made a mistake—how else, his priests say, would the Eastern Isles have dared resist the God Learners when Mokato called for their war fleets to muster?



## Mystics

Mystics are found in many places in the East Isles and have spread from there to other places in the world. These ancient seers founded schools which continue to teach the methods of liberation, so individuals may reach Durapdur. Here are some of the most famous.



**MASHUNASAN** is the Great Sage of orthodox mysticism. His method was Unrealization, neither seeking nor not seeking Durapdur, the Great Mystery. He faced Oorsu Sara, the World Destroyer, by doing nothing, whereupon Kabalt, the Great Bolt, appeared spontaneously and destroyed the destroyer.



**NENDUREN** is the Great Sage of the unorthodox unification mystical systems. His method was Stillness, and he identified a series of beings to contact through meditation, and taught methods to merge with them in a methodical approach to Atrilith, the Great Self. When the World Destroyer came to him it was absorbed harmlessly.



**LARN HASAMADOR** is the Great Sage who is neither orthodox nor unorthodox. He said he sought Nothing and taught his method this is called Immotion. He wandered around and taught, and disappeared at some time no one knows.



**DARJA DANAD** is the man who first discovered the way to contact Kabalt. This is the origin of the mystical martial arts which are now widespread in the east. He taught others and led them in the Austerity War that cleared the East Isles of demons.



**HELLA** is the goddess of the realm of dreams, the realm of illusions. Everything in it is false but thanks to her it is not cheerless but often delightful, is not only terrifying but is also instructive, and is not only delusional, but may also lead to truth. Her particular foe is Avanapdur, Lord of Nightmares.

### Antigods

Many beings and creatures are antigods. The most powerful are equivalent to the gods, called Noble Antigods, some of whom are given below. The category includes entities who embrace a huge spectrum of actions. Creatures and beings of evil, ignorance or extremes of almost anything (including piety and asceticism) are included among the antigods. Also, anyone who has worshipped them for centuries tends to be counted among them too, making hundreds of minor races. What they all share is a lack of connection to the Durapdur.



**VENPERESHA** is the noble antigoddess of all sea animals, worshipped by aquatic creatures and sailors throughout Vithela. She once won a kick ball



## The Monastery of Immortality

By Jim Pavelec

The islands are dotted with monasteries teaching the paths to enlightenment and immortality. This is the Temple of the Jade Dragon, wherein dwell the followers of the Jade Path, an order of mystic monks to whom the world is an insubstantial veil of lies. Subsisting only on a handful of rice per day, they spend their time in contemplation.

game against the creatures of the land, who afterwards had to allow hurricanes to rage across the land as a result.



**HESEZJAGU** is the malevolent Keeper of the Underworld who collects souls and bodies of the drowned, the murdered, the exposed, the foully sacrificed, and whomever was not get proper burial rites. When their relatives desperately ask for “any god” to help them Hesezjagu sends ghosts to invade their world. He is a dread enemy of Festatu.



**EZRAN** is called the Evil One, the Father of Cruelty, and the Defamer. He invented all harmful magic, including those which others call sorcery and chaos. The gods have taught many Feats which defend against his magic.



**BANDAN** is King of the Andins, a widespread and powerful demon race. He was the son of Vith and Gebkeran birthed him in a cave, and raised by black suns that fed him blood and terrifying desires. King Bandan was once betrayed by Arlu, queen of the hungry monsters, but reformed himself and has hated Arlu ever since.

## CHAPTER NINETEEN

## ♀ Pamaltela ♂

**P**amaltela is the southern continent of Glorantha. Pamaltela is largely tropical and subtropical in climate. Two huge aldryami forests dominate the northern coast, separated by the human land of Fonrit. The interior is a huge plain divided among Tarien, Jolar and Kothar. Huge swamps, hundreds of miles wide on both the eastern and western coasts are inimical to humanity and are not navigable by ships.

Chaos ravaged Pamaltela but the continent fared better than Genertela because Pamalt, the continent's ruling god, survived the onslaught. Relative peace and plenty continue in the land and the humans of the interior live a lush, pastoral life. The Elder Races are still powerful here—dwarves, innumerable elves, and a variety of isolated and obscure creatures. Human cities exist only along the northern coasts.

### Fonrit, The Land of the Great Ones

The large and heavily populated peninsula of Fonrit thrusts north between the Dashomo and Marthino Seas. The Fonritans call themselves the Torav, which means “great ones” in their language. Everyone else calls them the Slave People. The Toravs are the descendants of tribes led here by Garangordos. They conquered the blue-skinned natives and set themselves up as rulers. Over the years extensive intermingling has taken place between the two races. The poorer people generally have bluer skins and are condemned to worship crippled gods. They are among the worst treated slaves in the world.

Garangordos succeeded in conquering all Fonrit and placing it under his rule, but was assassinated before he could consolidate the many lands to be the empire that he had dreamed of creating. The assassin was one of his sons who did not live long before he was torn to pieces by his other seventeen brothers and sisters. The siblings then divided the land between them and founded the ancient Seventeen Cities which form the basis of Fonrit today. Regrettably, without Garangordos's leadership the Seventeen Cities soon grew to hate one another; wars are frequent. Unity seems impossible. Only by summoning the shade of Garangordos can the original unity be regained. Summoning Garangordos requires seventeen separate and lengthy rituals, one for each of the Seventeen portions of his kingdom. The last time this happened was over three centuries ago, during the Yranian Leapers' conquest of Fonrit. The Leapers worshipped the forbidden planet called Yran; they used its energies to do many impossible things, like making the Blues revolt against their rulers. The Leapers were unstoppable but abruptly vanished long ago—“to pay off their pledge,” the rumor goes. Many Torav believe that recent disturbances among the Blues mean that the Yranian Leapers are active again.

## Ompalam

"Life is slave to the body as without the body there is no life." Many Fonritans interpret this truth to mean that there is nothing for them after death. Others insist that death shears them of whatever worldly illusions they have to prepare them for life in the abode of bliss. All agree however the Life is a blessing from Ompalam and that death too is also a blessing. Magic is the result of subjugating oneself to Ompalam. By crushing the innate illusions of freedom one's soul draws nearer to Ompalam and becomes filled with a mere fraction of his omnipotence.



All Fonrit worships Ompalam the All-Powerful. He is the power of the cosmos that is and all life operates according to his desire. He is so immense and mighty that humans can scarcely comprehend him. Instead they understand him by acknowledging that they are his worthless slaves and obey him without question. By doing so they are blessed by his presence and draw comfort from it. "Tis better to be a slave of Ompalam than to be the king of the jungle" is a common adage in Fonrit.



The worship of DARLEESTER THE NOOSE is compulsory in Afadjann. His power is such that any worshipper who dares to think about harming the Jann feels a choking presence in his throat.



GARANGORDOS THE CRUEL conquered and enslaved all the Artmali of Fonrit, exterminated all the Aldryami there and began the worship of Ompalam. Garangordos guards all his many temples now, and punishes anyone in Fonrit who does not obey Ompalam or his Kanaharim.

Although Ompalam is all-powerful, he permits the existence of lesser gods and spirits who have acknowledge his authority. Many of these, such as Darleester the Noose or Garangordos the Cruel, are more accessible and actually receive more worship. Every city of Fonrit has its own favorite gods whom, they claim, are the most beloved of Fonrit.

Many gods do not recognize Ompalam and persist in foolish freedoms. By believing oneself to be free one severs any ability to feel Ompalam's presence. The cosmos appears to become a more horrible place and the Fonritans are appalled at the self-inflicted sufferings of the foreigners.



Garangordos established the worship of Ompalam, the god of slavery, who taught, “Life is slavery,” and “As the body is slave to the spirit, so is humanity to the gods.” Garangordos claimed that in the Golden Age everyone was a slave to the emperor, but evil people used free will to liberate themselves from the confines of their bodies, which led to the Gods War, a terrible disaster for everyone. All men are ultimately slaves of Ompalam; this is reflected in the state of mankind in Fonrit: by law every Torav is either a slave or a slave -holder.

The cult of Ompalam is dominant in the seventeen cities of Fonrit now, but each city has a variant interpretation of the details of its execution. In Fonrit’s earlier days the Kanaharim, or Judge-Priests of Ompalam, were the interpreters of law and custom. Now no two Kanaharim’s laws are exactly the same, but all have the same purpose—to sublimate one’s free will entirely to Ompalam and thereby attain spiritual perfection. By their observance of these laws, the Kanaharim and their followers are able to perform magic.

Most Toravs find it impossible to live by the Will of Ompalam alone and so worship lesser gods—called the small divines—under the guidance of the Ompaharim. The Kanaharim proved that the Ompaharim are slaves of their gods, who are in turn slave to Ompalam. A few wicked Toravs practice sorcery, a practice that relies on free will rather than submitting to Ompalam’s order.

Fonrit’s dozens of city states are dominated by two empires, Kareeshtu and Afadjann. Golden Kareeshtu, ruled by the Great Tond, is a strong naval power. Their warsails have deep keels and special rigging that make them much faster than the usual Gloranthan sailing ships. With their small size and great agility the Kareeshtuans prefer to swarm larger ships with waves of warsails whose sailors board and capture foes. Golden Kareeshtu feuds bitterly with Afadjann, a land power with a powerful army, but a small navy. The army has won extensive domains in Umathela for Afadjann. Kareeshtu is currently the stronger power, but fortune is fickle in Fonrit.

## The Northern Mountain Chains

Three high Pamaltelan mountain ranges bisect the continent and separate the northern coastal cities and jungle from the vast plains. Originally this was a single vast mountain range called the Fensi that was raised by the god Balumbasta to keep out elves, trolls and dwarves. However during the Gods War two huge gaps were made through it. At one a chaos army smashed through them and the other was created when the stone was mutated into monsters.

The westernmost range is the Tarmo, stronghold of the Jakaraki Uz. When Moorgarki led his army against Pamalt Jakarak protested and hid with his own people. Pamalt struck down Moorgarki and took his powers, thus creating the weakling race of Pamaltelan uz, but Jakarak and his people escaped and remained true uz.

 Pamaltelan Shamanism 

Earthmaker made the world and everything in it. He also made the giant spirits who shaped the world. Pamalt was the only old giant that everybody knew and so they chose him to be their leader. Pamalt keeps the land alive and his worshippers, the Agimori of Pamaltela, are devoted to aiding their giant ancestor spirit, accepting their share of his responsibilities in their own lives.

Vovisibor, the filth that walks, tried to destroy the giant spirits, and slew all that tried to fight him. Pamalt made all the gods work together, and together they defeated what they could not defeat alone. We call this Pamalt's Necklace.

When Earthmaker was alive, he would do anything that anybody asked of him. Then Bolongo slew him and nobody could ask him anymore. After punishing Bolongo the giant spirits tried to bring Earthmaker back. But he had been changed into a fiery horned serpent and only a few giant spirits could even bear to see him. Seeing this, Earthmaker showed Pamalt how to recognize spirits, how to summon them, to befriend them, and how to command them as well. Because people were less wise than Pamalt, he made the Right Footpath so people can travel the spirit world without fear.

Earthmaker was the first to die and because of that, everybody dies. At first, Pamalt made the right footpath so that it led straight to Earthmaker. But since Earthmaker dwelt such a long way away, many were sad at leaving their family and friends far behind. Pamalt then drew new routes in the right footpath so that the spirits how visit their loved ones without frightening them and are eventually reborn among them.

Most Agimori peoples recognize the giant spirits. Because Pamalt is their chief, the other giant spirits are all part of his family. Worship is given to them as needed, but people pay as much time to small local spirits as they do to these grater ones.



ALESHMARA is the leader of women, the keeper of the sacred basket of life and the ruler of Pamalt's family. She dominates the goddesses, and even Pamalt usually does whatever she wants.



FARANAR, Pamalt's wife, is the source of all that is good for wives. She owns the tent, hut, baskets, garden tools, babies, water jugs, fermenting jugs, stoves and ovens and other domestic materials that make life pleasant.

*Continued on next page . . .*



**BALUMBASTA** is the Strong God. He is so strong in arm that Pamalt asked him to make the Fensi Mountains to protect his people from the northern demons but he is not so strong in the head given that Pamalt had to explain what he wanted.



**CRONISPER** is the wise elder of Pamalt's family. He remembers all the songs, paints and where the wisdom roots are buried.



**NORUMA** is the great shaman who found Earthmaker after he had been killed. He also shows people how to live with spirits.



**RASOUT** is the hunter of the veldt. Each of his worshippers will, at least once in their life, see the Runthing—the prey which can never be caught.



**VANGONO** is the warrior of Pamaltela. He is master of the spear and can breathe three types of fire. He is always at Pamalt's right hand or in the midst of slaughter. He is the reason why both sides in war always reap destruction and his worshippers are destined to die in battle.



**BOLONGO** is the Fool who cannot tell right from wrong. He slew Earthmaker with a knife and is the source of all our miseries.

The central range is the Mari Mountains, inhabited by Dwarven heretics. They were loyal dwarfs but were cut off from their kin for so long during the Gods War that they developed their own ways.

The easternmost is the Palarkri where many strange creatures from the mythic age can still be found. It is the last refuge of the Jelmre, a diminutive, lemur-like race with attenuated, foot-long fingers, and huge eyes and ears. They have been hunted down through the ages for their magic, which they can store in crystalline form and give to others to use.

## Interior Pamaltela, The Idyllic Country

A vast savanna fills the interior of Pamaltela. Pamalt's plains are not grasslands, for the grassy plants can not grow in the soil here. In the mythic days Pamalt rejected the grass goddess, favoring instead the many clover-like plants that instead cover his lands.

Pamalt's Plains are a thousand miles wide by three thousand miles wide. Torrential storms fall in the east, seasonal rains in the west. The tempera-



ture ranges from pleasant semitropical in the north to blistering desert in the south. Many rivers drain the land, most of them flowing southward to the Nargan Desert that spreads across most of the southern continent.

The human inhabitants are nomads and pastoralists. They are called, collectively, the Agimori, or We Who Die and Come Again. They worship Pamalt as their maker, and follow his rules, which emphasize domestic happiness and courtesy to strangers. They have divided into four distinct cultures which acknowledge their common heritage.

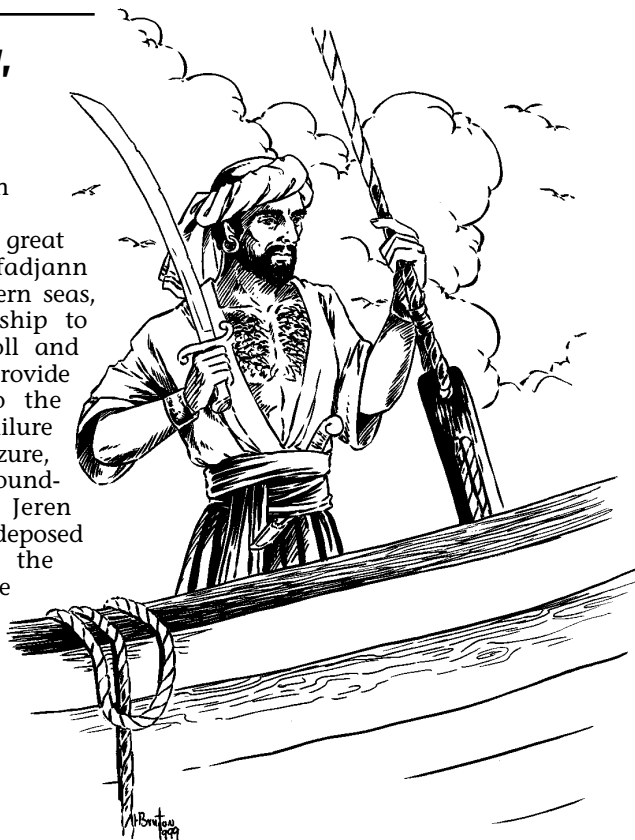
The centrally located ARBENNAN are the most familiar to outsiders. They occupy Jolar, the central region of the plains. Traders regularly visit the lands from the northern coasts. During the Imperial Age the God Learners even tried to set up the Six-Legged Empire here, but were overthrown by the famous warrior Hon Hoolbiktu. Recently Ivi Kange formed the Arbennan Confederation to counter the perceived threat of the Kresh.

The DORADDI peoples occupy the eastern lands called Kothar. They are the most sedentary of the Agimori and live in many large and pleasant vil-

## Jeren Darow, the Pirate Admiral

By Heather Bruton

Pirates from the great empire of Afadjann swarm the southern seas, boarding every ship to collect tribute, toll and tariff, and then provide a safe escort to the imperial ports. Failure to pay incurs seizure, slavery and impoundment. Admiral Jeren Darow, son of a deposed Jann, is among the most notorious. He is said to have made a deal with the savage mer-men, to deliver humans to them in exchange for free passage for his ships.



lages along the many rivers that flow to the continent's interior. They are the heirs to many of the most holy places of the oldest gods of Pamaltela. Almost half of the people here don't move from their homes, either seasonally or for curiosity.

The KRESH are the newest nation of Pamalt's people. They first appeared abruptly in Kothar four centuries ago when Engerofo showed up with his great wagon and got the first of thousands of volunteers to join his ways. Now hundreds of huge wagons move around the countryside like moving towns. They have no draft animals but pull the great wains themselves. When a Kresh caravan enters an area the Kresh may, by customs established by Engerofo, demand meat, information, and protection. In return the Doraddi receive tokens that they can trade with the current or any other Kresh caravan for special gifts like fine hardwood, gossamer cloth, or exotic foods and fruit out of season. Although the Kresh worship Pamalt and have many customs exactly like the Doraddi, outsiders openly wonder where the wood comes from to build their vast wagons, and know they must be worshipping another god in their secret rites. The Kresh have not yet entered Jolar or Tarien, whose residents have only heard rumors of the moving towns to their east.

The TARINTS of Tarien are the fourth nation of the Agimori. The western area has the most difficult living conditions, being too dry for trees to grow or most rivers to run year-long. It is plagued by giant animals, for within it are the caves from which come the herds of giant animals every year; yet creatures smaller than a human are rare. Finally, centuries of hostilities against Slarges have made people so desperate that they've forgotten many of Pamalt's rules. The tradition of generosity is still maintained, but the Tarints even make war upon each other, a concept unthinkable to the Arbennan who settle disputes with communal shouting wars.

The Tarints fear the SLARGES of Wongarissi, a bipedal reptilian race that herds huge animals and works metal, two marvels unknown to the Tarints. The Slarges are very hostile towards all humans and are largely unknown outside of this obscure area. Most Gloranthans know only rumors: they are reptile-like, stupid and like wild beasts. But metalwork indicates some higher magic or technology. Some Umathelan sages speculate that the Slarges have a huge civilization hidden within their territory.

## Elf Coasts, the Infested Tropical Paradise

Along the coast north of the sprawling Errinoru Jungle live the humans of the Elf Coasts. The elves consider the humans to be an infestation, and vice versa. The cities are small at best, and generally spread around the Maslo Sea.

The people are not indigenous but rather come from the legendary city of Thinobutu, which is now deep underwater. The Thinobutans escaped and for a while lived on the Tortugax Islands. They built boats and eventually settled along the Maslo Coast, the Loral and Kumanku Isles, and Kimos.

Although the Thinobutans are widely scattered they still have many cultural features in common. They greatly fear the supernatural, especially the wandering ghosts and demon followers of the Suralavu, the ancient underworld god from whom they escaped. They always make ornate idols to whatever trouble is facing them and sacrifice pigs, dogs, and occasionally people before these graven images to keep their gods sleeping. They hire foreign magicians, such as Fonritan sorcerers, to interact with the arcane world on their behalf. In times of great need the Thinobutans can make special idols to work great magics, but this is rarely done for fear of awakening the gods. Some tribes have deliberately forgotten the rituals to wake their idols.

The Mother of Monsters is the primary infestation of this pleasant place. It is a titanic horror that swims, writhes and occasionally burrows along the tidal margin of the coasts. From where it stops spawn hordes of chaos creatures. It appeared during the Closing. Now every city has to prepare for war against the Mother's brood every time she comes near.

The shores of the Maslo have a number of small cities that are divided into two realms. The older cluster of cities is on the Elamle peninsula. They have been elf-friends ever since Elamle-Ata made peace between the humans and the jungle elves at the Dawn.

The younger kingdom on the Onlaks peninsula is led by Hoom Jhis, the Dynast of Flanch. The Flanchites hate elves and struggle unceasingly against the Jungle. They are a great naval power and their huge catamarans can be seen in every port. The people of both realms are friendly to outsiders, but harbor suspicions about the other's relationship with the elves.

When the Thinobutans settled the peninsula of KIMOS they found that their old enemies the Gorgers had fled to this land before them. The Gorgers have a painful psychic aura that affects everyone in their presence. To counter their psychic powers the Kimotans summon powerful elemental deities to wreak devastation from a great distance. The Gorgers retaliate in kind and the clash of the elements is so powerful that the geography of the land changes without warning. Volcanoes erupt, rivers burst their banks, forests appear overnight and howling cyclones demolish day-old mountains.

Both the Kimotans and the Gorgers practice a unique magic invoked by carving and coloring patterns on stone or earth. Other Thinobutans knew this magic but considered it evil and chose to forget it. A Kimotan family may spend years carving a mountain to create a gigantic sculpture with the power to suppress weather or to summon angry spirits. The Kimotans claim that when the Gorgers are finally conquered they will shape the whole of Kimos into a gigantic sculpture but they have not revealed the purpose of this magic.

Kimos is rarely visited by sailors for the natives consider foreigners to be sacrificial victims at best, and devils at worst.

The ancestral Thinobutans settled many other places at various times, but the LORAL ISLANDS deserve special mention. During the Closing the abuses of the God Learner Empire caused the Monster Isle of Zis to appear. The Monsters swam from Zis to the rest of the archipelago and ate all the humans. Since the Opening no human has survived sailing through these waters. Known monsters include a flying turtle, the seventy-two headed Green Pyrohydra, an immense chimpanzee, and a magnificent giant butterfly that is courted by a ship-eating dragonfly.

## Umathela, the Western Cities

UMATHELA is elf territory, with seven human enclaves along the north western coast of Pamaltela. Many ruins of previous human empire litter the forests. Umathela was part of the God Learner Empire and was famed for its great colleges. God Learner exploitation first killed off many ancient races and species, then caused the massed resurrection of others. At the end of the Imperial Age a mighty army of Elves and trees marched on the humans and destroyed them. The souls of the magicians were trapped within torture trees and their bodies fertilized the poison bushes and thorn ivy which still blanket the ruined cities.

The Elf forests of ENKLOSO and VRALOS sprawl over most of inland Umathela. The forest is mostly evergreen woods in Enkloso, deciduous in Vralos. The forest becomes more open as one travels to the east until the nearly treeless Fonritan uplands are reached. The only people living in the woods are the Hendarous, or Obedient Ones. They primitive storm worshippers are obedient to the Woodland Judgments, which are the ancient laws of the forest imposed by the elves.

The humans suffered further after the Closing isolated them from the outside world. The War against Silence and the Eight Season Wars both left Umathela devastated. The Cult of Silence, founded by the Wordless Prophet centuries earlier, was originally a contemplative religion that excised physical and psychic organs to ensure blissful, guaranteed peace. Its tenets became perverted and formed the creed of the Stiflers, a debased religion of drug-crazed fanatics. The Stiflers forcibly converted many people to Silence and turned large parts of Umathela into wastelands, known as the Lands of the Silenced. The Stiflers were finally cast down after an Afadjanni invasion and the rise of the Clamorers, speakers who claimed a superior understanding of the Wordless Prophet's original antiparables. Most Clamorers afterwards reformed and became Sedalpists during the Season Wars. Devotees of the original Cult of Silence can still be found, but they are generally objects of pity.

Yranian Leapers followed the Afadjanni armies and all Vralos ended up in under their control. After the defeat of the Leapers the Season Wars began. Every winter armies of green elves and storm-worshipping forest dwellers devastated the forts and storehouses of the Afadjanni, and every summer Afadjanni armies razed enemy strongholds and burned forests. The Elves eventually won all the Eight Season Wars, but they had to concede the liberty of the surviving humans to rule themselves.

Thirty-five years ago the Vadeli Oabilites came to Umathela with the Opening. Claiming to be gods, they fooled some locals easily conquered the rest. Their short-lived Empire of New Oabil gradually extended across much of the Pamaltelan Coast before their fleet was destroyed at Oenriko Rock by the Flanchites. The Vadeli rulers were mostly killed or ejected, but their trading fleet still controls a fair portion of the trade between Umathela and Jrustela.

Both the eastern and western coasts of Pamaltela are vast swamps. HORNILIO, in the west, is a vast goblin-infested bog covered by a shallow, brackish marsh. It is devoid of humans, the goblins are organized under Queen Kargan Ilor, who fought in the Gods War. SOZGANJIO, the eastern swamp, is mostly unknown, even to the humans that live there. Three different human kingdoms exist on isolated islands within its vast reaches. All are descended from the same hero, Pan Chaku, who invaded the swamp during the Dawn Age. All three believe that they are the only surviving humans in the world.

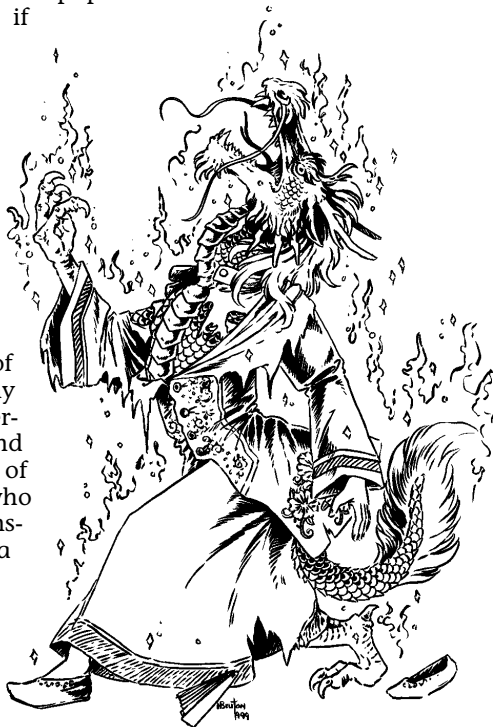


## The Cult of Immanent Mastery

By Heather Bruton

The mystics of Kralorela teach that a dragon lives within everyone. Anyone in populous Kralorela can be tested to see if they are sufficiently draconic to be administrators, and those who also pass the tests of loyalty and literacy receive high posts and many honors. Their imperial duties are to benevolently oversee the land and its people, and to deliver swift justice upon those who deserve it.

In the Imperial Age the God Learners conquered the land of Kralorela and infiltrated many of its cults and schools, then perverted them to their own use and interpretation. The Cult of Immanent Mastery was one, who taught the way to quickly transform into the physical form of a dragon. They overcame all foes until they were confronted by their inner dragons, activated by Godunya, which devoured them from inside.



# CHAPTER TWENTY

## ↳ The Outer Limits ↳

Other worlds exist in Glorantha, just past the human realms. Humans teem in the center, clustered on fragments of continents. But outside of those areas lie other regions which are inimical to mortals, for they are inhabited by demigod races and creatures made of more powerful stuff. Therein often sit the abodes of many lesser deities as well as summer houses, hunting lodges or other temporary residences of the greater deities. The regions which are dangerous to humanity are called the hero planes and are of two types, the Outer Hero Planes and the Otherworld Hero Planes.

The Outer Hero Planes exist at the edges of the mundane world. They are far outside the center of the world, far beyond the regions inhabited by humans. Four of these regions are known, one lying in each of in the cardinal directions. They are Altinela to the north, Theyela to the east, Sakum to the south, and Luathela to the west. These regions can be reached by superhuman efforts on the mundane plane. It is possible to sail to any of them, as long as the ship can withstand the forces of supernatural weather, such as the burning waters of the south which surrounds the islands of Sakum. Also, the crew must be able to survive the monsters, voracious raiders, and divine guardians which are there to make the way difficult. And finally, the captain must be able to navigate through terrain whose very geography often changes.

### Altinela, Beyond the Glaciers

North of Genertela lies Valind's Glacier. This immense ice sheet covers the entire northwestern quadrant of Glorantha, and the ice shelf extends far out past the edges of all land. There lies the prehistoric Uz empire of Boztakang's Land, where the trolls fight off the Ice Demons. Hidden within its vast icy wastes is the Palace of Valind the winter god.

North of the ice lies Altinela, surrounded by the mountains of the sky, and a shore upon the great River of Sramak. Prince Snodal, a mortal from Fronela, once visited there. He said it was "built of vibrant stone whose radiant life drove off the cold. A great garden surrounded a tree which bore ten kinds of fruit every day, and from the garden one hundred varieties of vegetables. The towers were numerous, being along the wall and amidst the city buildings; but they were low and squat, to resist the winds which occasionally penetrated defenses and blasted the city. A harbor was enclosed, its occasional ships protected by a wall that was floated into place."

Of the people there, "They were children of gods, though I never heard their parents' names except from them. They were tall and handsome, always very strong, and so pale that they sometimes looked translucent. They ate no meat, but used beasts only as sacrifice to their gods who were,

they said, the High Gods. They said they knew Malkion but not Hrestol, and though they allowed me to worship in my own way they cared nothing for my magic.”

The Altinae exist to combat the chaos that continually seeks to follow the path of Wakboth into Glorantha. At times the seas north of them mutate into something else and across or through it comes the latest wave of monsters. Residents rally to cast it away. The chaos things pause at the fortress, whose residents battle them into nonexistence. Such is the duty of the Altinae. Some Altinae have been seen in human lands but only Prince Snodal has visited their lands and returned. When he returned, he wrote his experiences down in his journals and these are kept under lock and key in the Royal Archives of Northpoint. Snodal’s great son, King Siglat of Loskalm, was half-Altinæ and Seshnegi scholars have wondered whether his famous dream, the vision of Ideal Loskalm, sprang from his childhood memories of Altinela.

## **Theyela, the Land of Dawn**

Past the easternmost islands of Vithela, across the measureless Ferezed Deeps, is the land of Theyela. It has been visited only by a handful of Vithelan mystics. It is centered upon Dawngate, the City of Morning Light. Buildings are tall bright expanses, lying upon radiating byways and backed by resplendent parks. At its center is a great harbor, and in its center is an island made of gold. In the center of that island is the Gate of Dawn, which springs open every morning with a thunderous clang to release the sun. From it too, with less clamor, rise the other good planets of the Sunpath. The residents are golden-skinned immortals whose voices are pure song, each impersonal and faceless, forever singing to keep the universe alive.

## **Sakum, the Burning Regions**

The entire central, southern portion of Pamaltela is the huge, lifeless Nargan Desert some four thousand kilometers across. It is swept by acidic windstorms, blistering heat, and occasional clouds of poison that are dozens of miles across. Only filthy chaos things, cast-off bits of Vovisibor, live there, feeding upon the poison minerals and each other.

Further south is Sakum, the land of fire and living fire that dances upon sand and stone. Only divine plants, each of which is named and glorified with dances, live there. The beasts, each fiery by nature, are as powerful as demigods. The people most common there are the Agitorani, made of dry earth. They chose immortality over Pamalt’s gift of making children. In the center of the Agitorani lands are the holy Enmal Mountains, and amidst them is Um, where the most ancient gods of Pamaltela live. The Bomonoï, beings of pure flame, live here.

The fires of Sakum move and sweep back and forth, changing the lands and its elements by fiery whim. It includes the Boiling Swamp and the Sea of Fire, so hot that it is sometimes the Sea of Steam, all shifting and turning into each other. No boat has sailed here since the Artmali Empire was

destroyed in the Gods War. The burning water is carried counterclockwise by Sramak's River and enters the fringes of human land as the boiling Togaro Ocean.

## Luathela, the Land of the Sunset

Luathela is in the far west and surrounds the blood-red gates of dusk where the sun sets. All worshippers of gods, shamanic worshippers, and mystics see this as the gates of death, leading to the underworld. When they arrive they are quickly escorted by the Luathans to the underworld gates, which can never let anyone out. They all see Luathela to be a land of monsters, mad spirits, and noble but aloof Luatha natives.

The Malkioni know otherwise. Here, according to their scriptures, was the Black Pit of Introspection where Zzabur's first human students underwent their final test to become purified enough to know the Invisible God. They see that the sun and planets daily sweep the heavens of worldly dross and then shed them here. These energies become the dreams that plague madmen and poets. However, whoever transcended their introspection was able to unite with the Invisible God. Malkion taught all to venerate the Invisible God, so now those ordinary people also go to the Black Pit at death, but if they were faithful then they pass out of the world to solace.

The Luatha are violet-skinned demigods, five meters tall, well formed and graceful. Most wear beautifully decorated clothing and armor, and sing rather than speak to strangers. They are utterly silent among themselves, and even perform their powerful sorcery without words. They are extremely hostile to outsiders, and philosophers speculate that their choleric nature results from their failure to rid themselves of their impure emotions and reach solace.

## Otherworld Hero Planes

Otherworld Hero Planes exist which do not correspond to the material world of Glorantha. Each of the three Otherworld contains within themselves a hero plane, or the equivalent of a hero plane. They are the sky world and the underworld. Lying deeper or father from those Hero Planes are other higher worlds.

Looking up from the human world are several apparent layers of phenomena. First is the Air and its attendant weather. Beyond that is the visible sky. And past that is the SKY WORLD.

The Realm of Air or Storm was created by the god Umath who separated the primeval Sky and Earth to make a home for him and his sons. Umath was powerful and turbulent, and though he was destroyed by Shargash his sons rule this realm, which is turbulent and unpredictable even when the general pattern is known.

The God Learners discovered the Great Storm. After decades of study they determined that Glorantha's weather could be explained as one vast circular storm that sweeps through the world every year. This storm, termed



by them Worlath's Storm, is weakest at its center, which are known to sailors as the Doldrums. The winds grow stronger and stronger as one moves farther from the center until the great hurricane winds rage at the edge of the world. The winds move in a clockwise motion, spinning from north to east to south to west to north again. Local winds can change this at any time, of course, but these are general trends.

The doldrums are easiest to track. They appear at the Stillburst at the beginning of the year, south of Magasta's Pool. They move counterclockwise, sweeping over and becalming Teleos, passes along southern of Genertela and is over Luathela at the year's end. There the God Learners believed, but could not prove, that the Storm descended into the Underworld, following the Lightbringers Quest, before emerging out of Magasta's Pool in the New Year. Most winds, they showed, were caused by clockwise winds blowing around the Storm's center.

The God Learners noted other storms that did not obey Worlath's Pattern. The most important winds of this kind are the unpleasant dry Storm Bull Winds that blow out from the Wastelands. This is the Praxians Storm Bull blowing to cleanse his blighted lands of all chaos. The Vithelan Veldru winds are another powerful storm which regularly disarms the typhoons which would otherwise constantly cover them for long seasons.

Each year the whole visible dome of the sky tilts on its Dawngate-Duskgate axis. In the Golden Age it was motionless, but Umath broke the northern pillar to set it in motion. Two gods now annually tilt it back and forth to balance it. Kalikos is the key deity of then north, while Erindamus is the southern god.

When the sky is tilting to the south it spills some of its celestial waters upon the lands of Sakum. This causes a general cooling of the sky and subsequently the world, replenishing the Burning Sea and warming the southern lands. Coincidentally, this is also the time when the sun is weakest, being pale yellow and cool instead of bright gold and hot.

## The Visible Sky

The visible sky dome of Glorantha appears to be one vast dome. Once it was all bright, like starlight, but from the War of the Gods it was flooded out, cast down, or hidden away to be what we see now. Dayzatar is the sky.

In the daytime, Yelm the sun rules the bright blue sky. The only other visible bodies are Sedenya the motionless red moon, and irregular Shargash. When Yelm descends to the underworld then Xentha, goddess of night, pours out with her black cloak. At night can be seen thousands of stars as well as a number of planets. The stars are holes in the sky through which Dayzatar's light leaks through, becoming visible as pinpricks of light in the night. They are fixed in place and appear to move only because the whole sky dome moves. Thousands dot the sky; many are clustered into

constellations. Some constellations are recognized across the whole world while others are only recognized locally.

The Starseers of Yuthuppa have provided Glorantha with the most information about the Heavens, so we use their nomenclature here. The night time sky is divided into five regions: city, river, fields, forest, and desert.

In the center of the sky is the CITY. Here reside the three brightest stars of the sky—Polaris, Arraz and Ourania. Dayzatar thought Polaris into existence to be the center of the heavens about which the other stars revolve. He is the only motionless star in the sky, at the hub of rotation. Arraz is the king of the Sky People. Ourania also sprang from Dayzatar's mind as the virginal queen of heaven. She is the most easily contacted of the city stars for from her right eye comes the goddess Sulpa, that hears all prayers born on wings of tears while from the left eye comes the goddess Musa, who brings the light of wisdom directly into the minds of the Inspired. Many other City stars are collectively known as the servants.

From one end of the sky to the other, the CELESTIAL RIVER arches overhead. This undulating swatch of light has the greatest concentration of stars and constellations. In the Gods War the celestial river flooded the sky dome so it is blue now, and not gold as it was during the Golden Age. However, Polaris, Ourania, and Dayzatar released their divine powers and would have destroyed the river, except that it transformed to be able to exist in the sky world. Thus this water is now fiery, as the God Learners demonstrated when they summoned it to destroy the Waertagi during the Imperial Age.

LORION is the first constellation found in the river. The Starseers say Lorion the water serpent invaded the sky in an attempt to devour Dayzatar but was wounded and released its waters across the sky. At the other end of the river is the throne of the planet Lightfore. At the very start of spring, Lightfore rises from the throne precisely and Starseers believe this action sparks the regeneration of the cosmos.

The DRAGON is the most prominent constellation within the river and lies in pieces near the city. This was the mighty sky dragon that stalked the world before being slain and left to rot in the river. Its green head star is now found adorning Orlanth's Ring.

Half the sky is dead, called the DESERT. It is nearly devoid of stars in part because of Urbudud, the Sword, known to the Orlanthi as Humakt. During the Gods War, he cut the rim of the sky loose from its bindings to make it turn. Then he went across the Sky, striking down whoever displeased him and leaving behind only Desert. When Lightfore reappeared in the sky after the Gods War, he bound the Sword to its current location.

The other half of the sky has many stars. The quarter farthest from the Desert is called the FOREST for it is fairly dense with stars, mostly too small to be fairly recognizable and named. The most prominent constellation here is the celestial hunter, who has many names. When monsters

roamed the heavens during the Gods War, he hunted them down and slew most of them. The rest fled into the forest and can be seen there hiding from the hunter. Between the Forest and the are the Fields. A moderate number of stars appear here, irregularly placed.

Some stars are known as BARBARIAN STARS as they don't follow the regular pattern of the other stars. They don't circle the sky on the dome at all. They are the stars of summer and winter. In summer, the fiery seasonal stars rise from the south, energized by the Burning Sea. Most prominent of these stars is Pamalt's Spear that is tallest at the height of summer, pushing the sky dome to its northward summer tilt. In winter the icy stars rise in the north, empowered by Valind's Glacier. The best-known constellation here is the Ice Palace that grows continually brighter as it rises into the sky until it is the brightest object there until its light is overcome by Kalikos, after which it starts to fall below the horizon.

Many celestial bodies are not attached firmly to the sky dome. The most prominent bodies of this kind are the planets. Most planets travel from east to west along one of two pathways, the Sunpath and the Southpath. The Sunpath is defined as precisely the path that the sun traverses in his daily travels. Almost every race and nation honors the sun as a life-giving force. To the Pelorians, it is their Emperor Yelm, to the Orlanthis it is Elmal, and to the Vithelans Maluraya, the Viceroy of Day. The Malkioni merely consider the sun to be a natural body and know that a great wizard, Ehilm, learned the secrets of its brilliance but refused to share these secrets with others, and so was absorbed by it.

The beginnings of the SUNPATH can be discerned some time before Yelm rises by the appearance of the Dawn Star, Theya, rising from the Gates of Dawn. The end of the Sunpath can likewise be discerned after Yelm sets by the descent of the Evening Star, RAUSA, towards the Gates of Dusk in Luathela. The length of the day varies from summer to winter, as does Yelm's appearance. In the height of summer, he is a bright blinding gold

---

## Enstresa, Star Lady

By Heather Bruton

Immortal races inhabit the divine realms and other worlds. The people of the sky world include the Star Women, an immortal race of beings whose purpose is to serve heroes of the Sun that reach heaven. Some of them are wives to celestial gods.

Enstresa is a well-known member of this lovely race, and many have sought to obtain her graces and attention, either through marriage, heroism or even seduction and kidnapping. All have failed, to their eternal damnation, so that Enstresa's Legion of Spurned is known to inhabit their own special hell from whence they longingly gaze her way each day as she traverses the Underworld. She is destined, believe many, to marry the greatest hero of the age, who is yet unknown.



that blazes high in the Sky. In the depths of winter, Yelm is a sickly pale yellow that hangs low and limps across the sky. On a few frightening occasions in historical times he has been so dim that stars were visible in the daytime.

When Yelm sets, he traverses the land of the dead to rise again the next day. Many people fear that he may not make this dangerous trip and so offer nightly prayers to the planet LIGHTFORE, a prominent yellow body that follows Yelm's daily path every night, rising when he sets and setting when he rises. Because of this, the travel of the little sun is believed by the Starseers to mark out Yelm's passage through the land of the dead.

Blue ULERIA crosses the sky in a third of a day and then promptly rises again in the east. The Starseers thought it to be so full of life energy that it was incapable of entering the Land of the Dead. Many Pelorians worship her in orgies to stave off the approach of death. But the Orlanathi claimed this planet to be Mastakos, their god of motion, and could duplicate to a lesser degree his Great Leap from west to east.

White DENDARA is widely recognized as being the wife of Yelm. It travels much lower in the sky than does other planets and is worshipped by the Pelorians to control the weather.

Pale LOKARNOS used to be the timekeeper of the heavens by his surefooted appearances. However the abuses of the cosmos wrought by humans has aged Lokarnos greatly and he now wheezes and staggers across the Sky, taking much longer than he used to. His time to cross the sky has changed several times since history began.

The SOUTHPATH is a regular, but highly mobile, pathway across the sky. Its eastern end is called the Eastern Mouth while the western place where the planets set is called the Dodging Gate. Both these gates move back and forth along the horizon in different patterns and at different rates. For centuries even the Starseers did not know the patterns of these.

The Southpath planets are different from the Sunpath in a significant way. The Sunpath are celestial bodies which travel into the Underworld. The Southpath bodies are underworld bodies which travel into the upperworld.

The most notable of the Southpath planets is blood red SHARGASH. He is large and is quite discernible even in the day. Many fear him as a god of destruction although some perversely worship him as a blood-drenched fertility god. The greatest place to dare to profess his worship is hellish Alkoth within the Lunar Empire, and Melib and Trowjang where he is known as Tolat. The Starseers make propitiatory sacrifices to keep Shargash asleep for he can destroy the world.

The other Southpath planets are less well known because the irregular nature of the Southpath makes them very difficult to study. ARTIA is a tiny red light that is viewed as a destructive goddess. The Crimson Bat, the

stead of the goddess, is traditionally re-summoned from this planet whenever it has been killed in battle.

The yellowish-white **TWINSTARS** travel close together and are very obscure although the Lunar Empire and the Sable Riders do worship them.

**RUFELZA**, the red moon never moves, day or night, from her place in the northwestern sky. Day and night the visible face of the moon wanes from full moon to new moon and then waxes again to full moon. When the moon is full, it is completely bright red and visible day and night. When black, the moon is visible in the daytime but not at night, except by blocking out the stars behind it. The moon takes a week to cycle through the phases, when one place is experiencing a crescent, another sees the black phase. Most Genertelans usually recognize the moon as a manifestation of the Lunar goddess, whose initiates can visit the moon and learn much wisdom.

**ORLANTH'S RING** is a constellation, although with an unusual path. It appears dramatically well above the horizon like a flash of lightning, although Starseers have claimed that it comes out of a tiny flaw in the sky that they call the Pit. The Ring takes a week to travel slowly upwards into the celestial city causing much havoc before disappearing for another week. Because it travels upwards as the Sky turns, it traces out the Storm Rune in the heavens. The Ring has seven orange stars and one prominent green star called the Dragon's Head. The Starseers say this used to be the planet Umatum before Shargash shattered it in defense of Yelm's Empire.

The **BLUE MOON** is normally invisible to the Starseers but its movement can be inferred from the effect on the tides. When the tides slowly creep up over a period of one to six days, the Blue Moon is believed to be climbing along the sky dome from hell to the celestial city. As it reaches the Polestar, it plummets rapidly through it down through to Magasta's Pool and is visible as the Blue Streak, the tides also dropping precipitously to their lowest point. The moon then travels through the Underworld to the eastern sky and begins the ascent again. During the Gods War, the Blue Moon was a much more prominent body and its inhabitants even conquered much of Pamaltela.

**KALIKOS** rises and sets in the north every night and generally wars against the Winter Stars when they are visible. It is worshipped by many northern peoples and widely credited with ending the Great Winter and halting Valind's Glacier. Since the Lunar Empire began sponsoring its worship, winter in Peloria has become much more mild.

## The Sky World, Heavenly Realms

The Sky World is often called heaven. It is the celestial realm where divine and semi-divine entities live. It is the world which is beyond the visible sky. Its normal area is like the hero plane, but amidst it are the realms of the gods and high gods as well. It is the realm of celestial archetypes. The

sun never passes overhead in the sky world, for the realm is too pure for any god who descends into the underworld nightly. He has a palace, of course, which he visits. Furthermore, the planets never pass through here either, though they all have a palace too. It is the realm of the stars, the sky gods, and of the Sky People. Dayzatar rules the sky world, and presence is visible as the constant source of light. Another sky is also visible far up and above the sky world, being the sky of the sky, or aetheric dome. It is never dark or blue, but the pure color of light.

The geography of the sky world is like that of the sky dome. A single great city stands in its center, while a winding river of light divides a sparse desert from the fertile fields and forests. The stars can be seen to be the homes of various deities, either high or low. The constellations are collections of divine sites, such as the Hunter constellation locating his hunting lodges in the sky world. The Sky People are the ordinary denizens of the world. They are much like humans, but they are made of light and fire instead of all the elements.

## Below the World ●

Glorantha's main earthen body is a gigantic cube measuring thousands of miles along each edge. This once perfect cube was shattered in the Gods War, but pulled back together through the efforts of the Great Compromise. Now its surface is over washed in places by salty seas, but much of it is inhabited by humans and known as the Surface world.

Under the Surface World are other realms. The Most Shallow is anyplace that can be reached by digging, even including the incredibly deep dwarf mines that are miles beneath the surface. Extensive caves and tunnels are still in the shallow earth.

Gamataler is the name of the Hero Plane inside the earth. In this region live the demigods of the earth, often in caverns so large they are like kingdoms. Those Hero Planes can provide access to the Gods World of the earth deities. The race of beings which live here are the Likiti, who are much like humans, except they are made entirely of earth instead of mixed elements.

A large number of realms are under the earth and waters. Collectively, they are the Underworld, but a tremendous variety of places exists there, many of which are mutually exclusive and even hostile to each other. Most of the realms simply do not have any contact with each other. Some of these are hero planes, where the demigod rulers lord over their petty domains. Others are the residences of gods and even great gods.

When mortals are stripped of their material body their spirit usually goes to one of many lands of the dead. Different cultures have their own versions of these worlds, but in general those of the underworld are gloomy and the inhabitants are faceless, ruled over and protected by the various gods and goddess of death. Most humans know the underworld as their land of the dead. At its center are the Courts of Silence where resides Daka

Fal, judge of the dead and the first human to die. Every soul will stand before him to be judged—the virtuous receive the support of their gods, the wicked stand alone. Daka Fal determines where the soul will spend the rest of its sojourn—some are destined to spend their time in feasting halls or paradises of various kinds while others are hunted by demons. Eventually the soul will be reborn to the world of life although very few will ever remember their previous lives. No Malkioni are ever found in hell or summoned from there, for solace lies elsewhere. This has not stopped pagan sages from using their non-existence in hell as proof that the Malkioni way destroys men's souls.

Many cold and shadowy creatures live in the underworlds. Sometimes the gods are indiscernible from the monsters. Some of these realms are inhabited by races of creatures which can be summoned to the world for evil intentions. Gods live in and rule the underworld. The biggest and probably best known is Lodril, whose command extends through parts of all of the underworld planes. However, other deities who are less powerful overall are nearly invulnerable in their own lands. Thus Deshkorgos, though defeated by Lodril, is still commander of his own realm.

HELL refers to palaces of torment. Many such places exist, for almost all mortal races are troubled with those who would do ill to their own folk. For them torments are made. Some hells are the heavens of others. Thus evil trolls are sent to the sky world, a place of light and fire which is torture to them. Other hells are those where people and souls are trapped, often unfairly, by chaos or darkness deities.

## The Higher Realms

The HIGHER WORLDS are those of transcendence. They are important in the magic of many Gloranthans but their perception of these places depends entirely upon their magics. Worshipers of gods like the Orlanthe and Pelorians perceive the Higher Worlds as the homes of increasingly powerful gods and demigods until the land of the ineffable High Gods is reached. The Malkioni understand these Worlds as being increasingly abstracted worlds in which all difference and individuality is gradually erased until one arrives in the Joy of the Invisible God. The Kralori know that these places are temptations to be ignored or refuted before one can truly understand reality. Since the highest worlds have no contact with each other, each of these can be proved to be true. Nonetheless, each are mutually exclusive.

HIGH GODS are those which are in contact with the highest spiritual ideals and powers, usually manifested as controlling the powers of life and death, the great mystery or some other ultimate secret. Many high gods have these secrets, although they are usually incompatible with each other. Thus Orlanthe and Ernalda have the secret of life and death, as does Yelm, but they have different religions to express their secrets. The realms of the high gods are considered to be worlds, but no one ever goes there and comes back sane.



SOLACE is the afterlife of the Malkioni who believe in the Invisible God. It is unique in that souls which go there can not be reached by anyone, either necromancers or holy men. The promises of Malkion the Prophet claim this is the Solace which they claim through their loyal veneration of their God.

Even saints, who are venerated almost to the point of worship, can not be reached directly after their deaths. Instead their commands and teachings provide magic for their followers. They also work through signs and omens. In many places relics of the saints provide even more power for their worshippers, and provide impetus to a thriving market of fake relics.

One popular form of mysticism strives to unite the entire world into one's own GREAT SELF. Different schools and methodologies for this exist, and all of them provide incredibly difficult tests and methods to achieve the unity. These individuals often become incredibly powerful, but mythologies are full of stories of people who sought this and failed, always becoming terrible demigods of destruction and evil as a result.

The mystics of Vithela claim the ultimate is an unknown and non-manifest reality which they call DURA PRADUR, or a number of other names and descriptions. Such mystics are generally orthodox in their meditation and seek to avoid or refute the world which ordinary people take to be real. They provide a region of great calm when successful, and are even capable of canceling out the magics around them. Dura Pradur is not a realm, however, which is known, knowable, or even reachable by any normal means. Furthermore, once accomplished it is of no common value, and ordinary people consider its pursuit to be a waste of time.

"There is nothing so wondrous or blessed as CHAOS, from which we spring or are molded" runs an ancient earth song sung during the sacred time. Before all was the formless protoplasm from which Glorantha came into being, from disorder into a condition of order. But the Gods War weakened this order, and allowed chaos to re-enter the world. It still seeks to re-unite the world with the nameless void, threatening the existence of Glorantha and its deities. Though chaos itself is formless, amoral and without structure, mutual corruption of chaos and order occurs at the weakened seams of the world where chaos leaks in. This corruption is embedded and manifested as potent forces of evil and destruction. The battle against chaos is integral to the mythology of Glorantha; without it, the world as it exists is not understandable.

## Chaos ☉

Intelligent mortal beings naturally fear chaos. Atrocities against nature are easily recognized, such as the evil tap spells, condemned by most Malkioni, that transmutes a victim's mind, soul and body into cheap magical power for the sorcerer. But chaos also includes good, at least according to the Lunar Way. Through the goddess, the Lunars can overcome fear and resist the soul-blasting temptations that their attitude risks. Most Gloranthans do not believe their claims and consider the Lunars to

be chaotic. They would war against them but the Lunars are too powerful and exceedingly vicious—when attacked, they defend themselves.

The living manifestations of chaos naturally parody the kinds of life of Glorantha, since they represent corruptions, perversions, or reorganizations. Of the chaotic races in Genertela, the most common are the broos, ogres, and scorpion folk.

In ancient times, the BROOS were just another Beast people, no more evil in themselves than trolls or sylphs. But they gleefully assisted their progenitor, Ragnaglar, in releasing the devil into the world. As a result of Ragnaglar's insane act the broos are corrupted with chaos. Chaos has warped their fertility into something truly horrid—they can father children on anything, including humans, cattle, dogs and goats. Normally the spawn lives off the host's body and eats its way out when it is ready, usually killing the host. The new broo usually takes on the features of its host although the broo's original goatish heritage is still apparent with their prevalence of cloven feet and horns. Few broos are born from aggressive carnivores such as lions or pythons, not because such hybrids are impossible but because of the difficulty of impregnating such beasts. One hermit of the elder wilds claimed to have seen an allosaurus broo but this horror was never confirmed.

Broos live at the edge of other cultures for they are hated by all living things and killed on sight. Even the famed wild healer of the Rockwood Mountains, who worships Chalana Arroy, is regularly hunted whenever sighted, even though he has saved lives, resurrected good folk and bestowed blessings on strangers. Their vile habits and biology sadly ensure their survival over the centuries. Broos worship their ancestress Thed, wife of dead Ragnaglar. They also worship Mallia, the goddess of disease and are immune to her festering spirits.


OGRES claim to be the original humans and hold secret contempt for their inferiors. Others say they were humans who were corrupted by chaos in the great darkness. Ogres hold a dark and evil view of the cosmos, claiming that their god Cacodemon is the Creator, temporarily taking refuge in this world to reform it to its original image. Ogres live among humanity, concealing their true natures except when they feed on inferior humans. They are noted for their attractive looks that help them seduce unsuspecting humans into carrying future ogres.


The chaos breed known as SCORPIONFOLK are left over from the great darkness. More scorpion than man, these creatures resemble a centaur, with the chest, arms and legs of a man but the abdomen, tail and six legs of a scorpion. Scorpionfolk are found in deserts and small mountain villages. They live by raiding and hiring out to optimistic employers who forget their employees' chaotic nature.


Scorpion folk society is based upon servitude to gigantic queens, who perform most of the breeding. Most scorpion folk are exceedingly stupid but many have some degree of cunning and magic power that marks them


out from the rest. They too were once as stupid as the others but gained their cunning and magics from numerous victims devoured in horrific rituals. Sometimes the Queen devours exceedingly powerful victims alive so that they are reborn as Scorpionfolk. Most victims go mad through this experience.


There are numerous Gods of chaos; living, dead and in-between. Some work to corrupt society, some to cheat death, some to corrupt individuals.


 PRIMAL CHAOS isn't so much a god as a condition, a protoplasmic blob of unformulated possibilities.


 BAGOG is the scorpion demon that invaded the world during the Greater Darkness. The race of scorpion-people, hybrid man-scorpions, are descended from her and the unfortunate fathers that she ate.

 When the DEVIL was crushed underneath the Block, many psychic fragments known as Cacodemons escaped. They cause havoc throughout the world and Ogres worship them for the destructive magics that they can give.

 GBAJI is the Deceiver, the Evil that looks Good. He very nearly destroyed the world at the end of the Dawn Age and even to this day, his wicked lies conceal just what he was supposed to have done.

 MALIA is the Mother of Disease and only broos and other filthy creatures dare worship her openly. Victims of her dread touch often secretly worship Malia to alleviate their suffering – but such worship only spreads her disease and makes her stronger.

 VIVAMORT willfully sacrificed his own soul to gain immortality. Because of this empty and hollow entity, vampiric corpses rise from their graves to feed upon humans. [or any living creature? And I assume it's the worshippers of Vivamort that reanimate. Where do zombies come from?]


# CHAPTER TWENTY - ONE

## The Future of Glorantha

Glorantha is a place of cycles. The Great Compromise set them in motion, and the world has never escaped them. Even history has cycles. Sorcerers may claim that time is linear and mystics claim that there is no time, yet they, too, are subject to cycles.

The clearest long cycle of Gloranthan history is the destruction that spreads world wide every five centuries or so and marks the historical ages. A thousand years ago the Gbaji Wars devastated most of Genertela and left changes which still affect, and even often dictate, the ways of the world. Five hundred years ago nature and the dragons cleared out the powers that had previously performed their own worldwide ravaging during the Second Age. Now it is the end of the Third Age.

It is the time of the Hero Wars, and plots are already afoot. No one knows how it will end, but many are taking great preparations to make sure that their ways survive the coming destruction, and will help to shape the world that comes after.

The Elder Races have plots that they have been preparing for a long time.



The ALDRYAMI want their primal forest back. They long for the green leafy expanses and untrodden fields of the Green Age, before the mostali or uz devised ways to destroy the trees, and before human beings infested them. They have been saving Elf seeds for a long time now, and they are deciding where to plant them to raise an army. Expeditions have been sent from each of the Great Trees, and are trying to get to distant forests with strange parcels and secret messages. Serandarn the Ironwood, the greatest elf hero alive, marched from Teshnos across the desert to lead an army. Against whom?



MOSTALI war ships made of iron have begun sweeping the seas near Slon of all other shipping and, with more difficulty, of all mermen as well. They have finished a couple of machines that they've been working on for many years, and wait only for the right moment to reveal them. In Dragon Pass Isidilian the Wise has told humans that his kin have made a tunnel now exists that goes for two thousand miles underground, and that reinforcements have marched from there to prepare for a great assault. But to where, and against what foe?



The UZ want to eat and to wreak havoc upon the beings that have tormented them since they came to the mortal world. Odd and disturbing reports have come that a troll army is hidden amidst the endless ice wastes of the northlands, feeding only on ice to whet their appetites.

Humans have detected the cycle too and are preparing themselves for the struggle.

**A** In Fronela the KINGDOM OF LOSKALM has spent a century and a half incubating an invincible kingdom based upon morality and ethics, ready to right the world. Instead they must confront the Kingdom of War, commanded by a demon from someplace unknown who leads an increasingly powerful army of cutthroats, brigands and pillagers that has not yet lost a battle. The war would have sprung already, except that Loskalm detected activity from the Gates of Banir, and have paused.

**A** In SESHNELA a powerful king and a powerful cleric have joined forces so they can mutually conquer all the reluctant provinces nearby. "On God, One church, One King!" they cry as they roll over reluctant barons, rebellious provinces, and independent city states. Together they are unstoppable, and they both fear only one thing: the creature of shadows that haunts their private dreams and stirs distrust between them.

**G:** In SARTAR, in Dragon Pass the god Orlanth as been crushed, save for a pitiful handful of rebels. Only something as powerful as a true dragon could change this conquest. That's why the Imperial commander is nervous, of course, since the dragon-worshipping Kralori have come to set up a temple, and from the red moon far overhead come warnings of the wyrm, of the monster, and of the dragon.

**X** The LUNAR EMPIRE sprawls across the continent, encompassing many immortals and cultures. The Moon Powers cried, "We are One," and everyone saw themselves reflected there, and joined. The Moon and Goddess absorbed cults, cities, lands and empires into the pleasant moonlight. Yet inside, lit by the Seven Moons, the empire is not One at all. Many peoples, many gods and goddess, and even many governments compete ruthlessly against each other. Even the Lunar Religion is not one! The emperor is drunk again on the blood of unicorns, and the sun drips blood on the provinces. Only JarEel, fatherless daughter of the Moon, might save them.

**T** In PRAX a nomad horde is gathering around the White Bull. A legendary hero has returned, and now bison and high llama stand side by side with the other nomads. The most wise to the east, west and north have seen this coming storm. None knows where it will fall to earth, howling with the blasting sandstorm at their backs.

**W** In the east isles of VITHELA the demon navy has set sail again. They set up temples on every island and demand that the natives include worship of their god. Whoever resists is sacrificed on the altars, and the sun turns red and drips blood upon the isle. Upon the islands nearby the heroes have heard of

this, and they have begun to gather their forces for battle. Yet everyone has paused, for they have heard that the Great Phoenix has laid two eggs instead of its usual one, and no one dares to war until they have learned what it means.

And even the gods and spirits beyond the world, it is said, have prepared. The Compromise has been broken before and they will be prepared this time, to strike hard and fast with everything they can muster. The name Nysalor has been bandied, the sounds of Wakboth have been heard.

The explosion of the Hero Wars started with the conflict between the barbarian rebels of Sartar and the occupying empire of Dara Happa, called the Lunar Empire. The fuse is lit.

The rebels, called Heortlings, worship the great god Orlanth and his wife, Ernalda. They are tribal and fiercely independent, and resentful that the empire has invaded their homelands to destroy their god. They have suffered invasion, conquest and many savage suppressions since the Empire invaded, but are still undefeated in spirit and effort. A new generation of warriors is of age now, ready to throw their lives into the Hero Wars.

The Empire, meanwhile, strives to bring its peaceful rule to the wild and unreasonable barbarians. They are an urban and sophisticated culture, worshipping Sedenya, the Red Moon goddess, and the celestial family of Yelm, Emperor and sun god. For centuries they were invaded by barbarians, but about four centuries ago the Lunar goddess came to the world and reorganized the ancient empire. She tamed its ancient brutality, loosed its social rigidity, and freed women and many of the underclass to have opportunity and recognition in the world. The Empire is inclusive and enclosing, willing to encompass anyone who will simply accept Sedenya. Orlanth refuses that simple thing, and so is a foe.

Furthermore, another power is present nearby. The Seshnegi, a western power whose people are moving towards Dragon Pass, have entrenched themselves here, too. They are neither Imperial nor barbarian. They worship a single God who gives them terribly effective powers of sorcery. Small in numbers so far, they might be helpful to barbarian or empire, but only for a short time. Indeed, everyone fears them because they so despise all other gods but their own, and also have armies nearby. And everyone fears the powers of the east, where the draconic Kralori Empire sits, coiled upon itself and watching events in the mythic land of Dragon Pass.

Ordinary people are fearful, as they should be. These are dangerous times. Soon nothing will be normal.

## It is the Hero Wars.

“Where will you be, when the hammer falls and the skies grow dark? Where will you be when the ancestors howl for aid, and the living look for leaders? Where will you be when the Hero Wars begin?”

— The Great Question

# About The Authors

## Greg Stafford

Greg Stafford discovered Glorantha in 1966 and began a life long creative effort to explore and popularize the world. In 1974 he began his first game company, Chaosium, and published the first Gloranthan game the next year. It was *White Bear and Red Moon*, followed in '77 by *Nomad Gods*, another board game. In '78 *RuneQuest* was published, a revolutionary and popular roleplaying game also based upon Glorantha. Since then he contributed to dozens of supplements and hundreds of articles on Glorantha. *Glorantha* and *Hero Wars*, a new role playing game, continue the Greg's lifelong commitment to Glorantha.

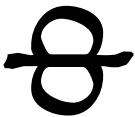
Greg is also game designer, develop and author of *Pendragon*, the award-winning game on Arthurian Roleplaying and its supplements; five other board games, and another six roleplaying games and books.

Greg was born in 1948, is married to Suzanne Courteau, and has three children: Noah, Alisha and Jason. He is currently employed by Issaries, Inc. which he founded in 1998 to continue the publication of Gloranthan games and books.



## Peter Metcalfe

Peter Metcalfe lives in Christchurch, New Zealand. He was born in the year of Woodstock and has been trying to act contrary to its ideals ever since. Having misspent most of his adult years in dissolute study of esoteric topics in an ivory-towered asylum, he is now happily free. He has been interested in Glorantha ever since he was in short trousers. Other hobbies of his are all kinds of history, nitpicking and being a smartarse in various forums. This is his first work.



The computer game you've been waiting for...

# KING OF DRAGON PASS



## Adventure and Heroism on a Magical Frontier

King of Dragon Pass puts you in charge of a small clan which colonizes the haunted lands of Dragon Pass. Hundreds of interactive short stories combine with the resource management of a turn-based strategy game to create a grand saga: the unification of Dragon Pass under its first king.

*Greg Stafford says, "This is a great story-telling game that really captures the long-term clan life of Sartarites."*

## You Are Not Alone

Your clan's leaders, each with their own personality and point of view, will advise you as you make essential decisions about your clan's magic, resources, tribal politics,

and relationships. Characters age and mature as the multi-generational story line develops.

## See Glorantha as Never Before

The computer game features over 500 full-color illustrations and 20 detailed myths.

*"It accurately shows what Glorantha looks like, and illustrates the way its people use myths to help them in the world. If you like Glorantha you will love this game."*

[www.a-sharp.com/kg](http://www.a-sharp.com/kg)

To order KING OF DRAGON PASS, visit our web site today.



Windows/Mac



## Be sure to see these other great Issaries Publications!

### ISS1101. *Hero Wars, Role Playing in Glorantha*

ISBN 1-929052-01-4. \$19.95

*Hero Wars* is a new fantasy role playing game, by Robin Laws and Greg Stafford. Mythic scale roleplaying at the end of the world. It has the simplicity of a beginner's game, the appeal of a storytelling game, and the elegance of the sophisticated world which it portrays. Everything needed to play (except dice) is in this book. 256 pages, trade paperback size, ILLUSTRATED.

### ISS9901. *Deluxe Hero Wars Boxed Set*

ISBN 1-929052-06-5. \$44.95

*Deluxe Hero Wars* Boxed Set contains both the above books, *Glorantha* and *Hero Wars*; maps; Scenarios that are ready to play; sample characters; and character sheets.

### ISS1301. *Thunder Rebels: Orlanthe Players Book.*

ISBN 1-929052-03-0

Background information for players who want to understand their barbarian characters and exploit their strong point in the play of *Hero Wars*. Includes clan background, including generating your clan mythology; more Key Words for professions and many new Orlanthe cults. Illustrated, maps.

### ISS1302. *She Guards Us: Lunar Players Book.*

ISBN 1-929052-04-9

Background information for adventurers from the Lunar Empire. Exciting hero backgrounds from across the empire, including Carmanian sorcerers and Rinliddi bird riders. Including many Key Word professions and cults. Illustrated, maps.

### ISS1401. *Sartar Rising! Scenarios in Dragon Pass.*

ISBN 1-929052-05-7

The *Hero Wars* ignite in *Dragon Pass*. Regional information about the people and places in *Sartar*, campaign events for a local campaign, and story arc to help raise the great dragon that devours the Lunar commanders.

### ISS4500. *King of Sartar, Reprint edition.*

ISBN 1-929052-00-6. \$19.95

*Glorantha* documents narrate information about the *Hero Wars* and Prince *Sartar*, a key figure for the 75 years of fighting against the Lunar Empire.



**Issaries, Inc.**

950A 56th St • Oakland, CA 94608

Be sure to see our web site at [www.glorantha.com](http://www.glorantha.com)

# GLORANTHA

## Introduction to the Hero Wars



**Glorantha** is a gigantic cube awash in a limitless ocean, formed by the collision of four forces in primordial eras. It's a world alive with adventure and magic where gods are plentiful and magic real. The realms of power, spirits, gods, and myth are as tangible as the kingdoms of men. It's the home of heroes and monsters, empires and dragons, and of everyday people trying to preserve their way of life.

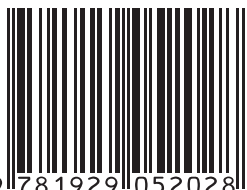
In **Glorantha** a hero makes his name in the mortal sphere; those destined to be great heroes travel the perilous paths of the mythical realm. A hero making his own myth can travel to the distant past to aid or oppose the gods in their battles; journey to the underworld and release the souls of the dead; or bend the wildest demons to his will and harness great magical power.

Our aim is to explain the many people, kingdoms, religions, and gods of **Glorantha**. It's intended to be both a general introduction to the endlessly fascinating fantasy world of **Glorantha** and a companion book to the **Hero Wars** role-playing game. We paint the history and present of **Glorantha** with broad strokes, occasionally highlighting an interesting feature or person.

"A world of adventure awaits you; are you brave enough to face the gods to remake the world?"

- battle cry for the **Hero Wars**

ISBN 1-929052-02-2



5 1995



9 781929 052028



**Issaries, Inc.**

Hero Wars and Issaries, Inc. are the registered trademarks of Issaries, Inc. All rights reserved.

Discover more at [www.glorantha.com](http://www.glorantha.com)